

Gospel Truths

Some Gospel Truths, Catechistically Laid Down, Explained & Vindicated

by John Heydon, 1647

Courteous Reader, the author entreats thee to acknowledge for truths; first, that all books, roles, manuscripts in former times, {that is, before Christ came in the flesh,} that did discover Christ the Messiah that was to come in the flesh were in high esteem of all the Church. Secondly, that such books that hold forth the Lord Jesus already come, in his doctrine, nature, offices, benefits or operations are now to be esteemed of all Christians above great volumes that do not; the fire of God hath so warmed their ennobled affections, that they are much taken in the reading of such books though they come in a plain dress. Thirdly, that all prophets, kings, priests, seers, judges and patriarchs were types of Christ to come, if we could but search into this mystery. Fourthly, that all their worship, sacrifices and prayers, &c., do in like manner set forth the glory of Christ. Fifthly, that the Sabbath was given to the Church to exercise their Faith in the meditation on Christ that was to come, he being indeed the True Sabbath. Sixthly, that the Lord's day and all the public and private ordinances are left to us Christians that we might contemplate and meditate on Christ, and so sets before the view of our Faith, or Understandings, all that Christ is, did or suffered for us, or hath brought unto us, and shall befall us in another world, and this is the chiefest work and greatest care of all Gospel ministers; and they that hold not forth Christ crucified, in all their preaching, writings and printings before the people's eyes, do nothing, or that, that's worse than nothing, trouble, weary, toil out themselves, and grieve others, whom God would have comforted and fed; for I have heard sad complaints. What? Not one bit of children's bread in all the sermon, though the text is, "feed my lambs." Oh, say they, we are utterly disappointed, we did hope to have been instructed in the Faith of God's power; but oh, the lashings, invectives and heavings at some of the most excellent truths {by new terms of reproach} to render Truth

dangerous, and the entertainers of it odious, and what polite and elaborate works are extant to little profit to the truly enlightened believer in Christ, Judge ye! Seventhly, the days of humiliation in former times were soul-fattening, soul-satisfying and soul-quieting days; days of atonement, reconciliation and union with God, in Christ come; that our fasts are Evangelical in Christ who is already come, and if it were taught frequently, that Christ's fasting, conception, birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension and mediation; yea, all his thoughts, words and works were ours, he standing as our Surety, did it all for us; if this were believed really, no doubt but we should find more comfort in our hearts, courage in our fights, and have more soul ravishments in the enjoyment of our fully satisfied Father, than ever the Jews had; but if we fast from false grounds, to wrong ends, no marvel if we are pensive, unsuccessful and unhappy in all our undertakings. Eighthly, that the Covenant of Grace is One, and doth only differ in some circumstantial; namely, in more clear dispensations and opener visions, and that we have far more external privileges than the Jews ever had. Ninthly, that since Christ's ascension God doth satisfy the Church {in the satisfaction Christ hath once made} in all the ways of Grace, God is fully satisfied and demands no more. Christ dies no more, cries, fasts, lieth in the grave, nor prayeth no more, but now he rules all in Heaven and in Earth to the world's end. Tenthly, that the work of Redemption is fully and freely wrought by Christ, it is done already, not a doing, for it was finished on the cross 1634 years ago and above to the view of angels and men; and the discovery and bringing this home to the consciences of men is the work of the Eternal Spirit, by all the means in much mercy afforded us, as ministry, word, prayer, &c., to reveal the Everlasting Gospel to the Church, so that Conversion and the clear Manifestation of our Salvation wrought by Christ is all that Christians are to look after during their life in this case. Eleventhly, that God in and by prayer seeks, finds, and moves us; I say, he doth inform, enlarge, persuade, prevail with and changes our minds, helps our infirmities, supplies our defects and doth comfort our hearts, refreshes our drooping spirits, doth good to and profit us; for we do not add anything to God, neither are our prayers profitable to God, {to speak properly,} but our prayers, {or rather God by them,} do abundantly prevail with others and ourselves are strengthened in the Faith thereby; and indeed, we are overpowered, undeceived and discovered ourselves to ourselves, in, and by prayer, God knowing us thoroughly, &c.; so Moses, the Prophets and James are to be understood. Twelfthly, that whatever is found Orthodox and Truth

in this little book ensuing, he disclaims that it is none of his own, but God's, and is resolved, {Grace assisting him,} to recant of whatsoever is unsound upon information and conviction, and take it for great mercy, in what he hath come short, to see any to enlarge themselves and exalt Christ more. If there be anything come to thy hand that is excellent, embrace it; view the texts well, and the inference from them; and if this take with thee that thou may have the other part as some things in it that are to be found in other authors, and the rest of dig out of the Mine or Sacred Vein of Holy Scripture, which are able to make the man of God perfect. Farewell, thine in the best bond, nearest relation and strongest union, J. Heydon 1647. Preface to a book entitled; "Some Gospel Truths, Catechistically Laid Down, Explained & Vindicated," by John Heydon, 1647.

In Reference to the Papists

Question: What do true Christians hold and maintain against Papists?
Answer: That Justification, Union, Regeneration, Infusion into Christ's Reconciliation, Adoption, Sanctification and Glorification is freely from God conferred on man and wrought in man without any work by man or worth in him. Blessedness is passive and whatever is done by man before Regeneration is sin. That Justification makes the believer's state and condition absolute and entire, it being the complete Remission of Sin and Imputation of Christ's Righteousness. That Christ's perfection is the ground of our acceptance. That peace, joy, magnanimity and sanctification are the effect of Justification. That to do great and good works {as they call them} with an opinion that the Free Grace of Christ is not sufficient to Justification and Salvation unless the keeping of the Law be joined thereunto is to abrogate Grace, to fall away from the Faith and make Christ's death void, as much as in them lieth. That all true believers are one with Christ, and already saved by him, fully and freely, so that nothing can be added thereunto, only that the discovery and enjoyment of it may be enlarged to him, as they are sat with Christ in heavenly places, where they by grace possess blessedness, immortality and glory. That Salvation as well as Justification is free and without works. And true believers in Christ detest such a doctrine as this; namely, that our tears wash away our sins; that repentance, humiliation, promises, good purposes, endeavors on our part to amend our lives, to pacify God's wrath, and procure his love, peace and favor, &c.; likewise, that if we change and turn to God, that he will turn to us; that man by doing good becomes good; that the Law is the seed of

regeneration and the new birth; that the will for the deed is accepted of God; that Christ's and our works together please God, and therefore what we cannot, Christ hath and will make up. Thus many err, not understanding, that II Cor.8:12, {"for if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not;"} was spoken of the saints as accepting their contributions, as it is evident from the context. Neither do they consider that all conditional promises whatsoever in Christ run into faith; to do this and live, be blessed, &c., thou canst not do it thyself, yet believe that Christ hath done it for thee. {Deut.28:1-15, 30:6} Heydon, "Gospel Truths," 1647