

The true state of  
**Gospel Truth,**

**Established upon the Free  
Election of God in Christ.**

**THE  
Agreement, and yet Difference between  
Law and Gospel; so, that the Gospel  
cannot be styled Law.**

**THE  
Inconditionateness of  
the Gospel Salvation.**

**THE  
Procedure of the Day of Judgment; in the  
way of a Conciliatory Discourse upon Mr.  
Williams and his Concessions.**

**Thomas Beverley**

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## Thomas Beverley Biographical Sketch

In the year 1672, when King Charles II issued a Declaration suspending the penal laws against Dissenters; numerous Congregations were soon formed; and, to illustrate the Harmony between Presbyterians and Independents on the leading Doctrines of Grace; as well as to support the Doctrines of the Reformation against the prevailing Errors of Popery, Arminianism, Socinianism, and Infidelity, a weekly lectureship {through the contributions of the principal merchants and tradesmen of their persuasion in London} was established, in which four Presbyterian and two Independent ministers officiated in rotation. Initial speakers included Dr. Bates, Dr. Manton, Dr. Owen, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Jenkyn; and so these weekly lectures were delivered in Pinners' Hall, an ancient building in Old Broad Street, London. Toward the close of the year 1694, an open rupture took place among the lecturers of Pinners' Hall, and another lecture was set up by a few Independents or Congregationalists, as they began now to be called, at Salters' Hall. The occasion of this breach was the re-publication of the Sermons of Tobias Crisp, {this was in 1690, by Crisp's son, Samuel,} a book whose distinctive tendency was to overthrow the religion of man, whilst maintaining clear Law/Gospel Distinctions and setting forth Christ's Pre-eminent Glory, which Gospel Truths thus simply set forth, essentially revived the spirit of the faithful, at a time when men whose limp {mere credal} grasp of the Everlasting Gospel began a downgrade towards Arminianism, as many who professed the truths known as the Doctrines of Grace were drifting away from their Foundational Pillars. In attempts to quench the light of Crisp's distinct setting forth of the Glory of Christ, and to diminish the Glory of Free Grace, Richard Baxter in a lecture on Jan.28th, 1690 at Pinners' Hall, and in his book, "Scripture Gospel Defended," immediately lashed out, and in this book principally succeeded in utterly distorting the views of Crisp, upon which Crisp's son Samuel swiftly came to his father's defense in a pamphlet of his own entitled, "Christ made Sin," {Samuel Crisp, London, 1691.} In the light of Baxter's death in 1691, a few of the Presbyterian ministers of London deputed Daniel Williams

{a disciple of Richard Baxter} to send forth a reply to the book of Sermons by Crisp, which he did in the following year, in a book entitled, "Gospel Truth Stated and Vindicated" {1692.} {Williams not only attacked Crisp, but the Congregational Preacher Richard Davis, whom he accused of Antinomianism, when Davis visited London in 1692.} This book was met with much resistance, as the 'orthodoxy' of Williams was impeached, and charges of Neonomianism, Arminianism and Socinianism were hurled against him by Ministers such as the Congregationalist Stephen Lobb and by Isaac Chauncey, who was an Independent. In 1693, Chauncey, {who would become Williams' chief opponent} wrote {in defense of Crisp} his three-part "Neonomianism Unmasked," and soon thereafter Williams was prohibited from preaching in Pinners' Hall. Many accordingly withdrew and established their own Lecture at Salters' Hall, leaving the Independents in possession of the Pinners' Hall lectures.

In the midst of these events, we find Thomas Beverley, who generally appeared upon the public stage in the reign of James II, as one who aligned himself with the Independents and Congregationalists that assembled together at Pinners' Hall, for his doctrinal sympathies fell in-line with those of the "Crisp" party. Just a year prior to the Revolution of 1688, {often referred to as the Glorious Revolution of 1688, being the overthrow of King James II of England by a union of English Parliamentarians with the Dutch stadtholder William III, otherwise known as William of Orange. William's successful invasion of England with a Dutch fleet and army led to his ascending of the English throne as William III of England, jointly with his wife Mary II of England, who was the daughter of James II, and granddaughter of Charles I, which would re-establish the Protestant Religion in England; it was to this King William, that Beverley dedicated many of his prophetic pamphlets, as he seemed to believe that William himself would be the grand harbinger of the kingdom of Christ, and his millennial reign, and that England was the favoured spot from whence it was to be announced,} he published his first work, being a tract to prove that the Papacy could survive but nine or ten years; and so prepossessed was he with this concept, that almost each succeeding year produced some fresh prophetic calculation in

confirmation of his aerial expectations, until he had the mortification to see the time pass by, {1697,} and himself confused and disappointed, as one whose thoughts were swept away with this crazed notion.

Besides being pastor of a congregation at Cutlers' Hall, Mr. Beverley was also one of the Lord's Day Morning lecturers at Fetter-lane, along with Mr. Stephen Lobb, and some other Independent ministers. In the controversy that followed the publication of Dr. Crisp's works, Dr. Beverley {for such he was called, though it is unknown whether he received a degree in medicine, theology, or some other science,} took some share. The pamphlets he published upon this occasion, hold him up in the light of somewhat of a reconciler between the two parties, for which, it is probable, he received the thanks of neither. His own sentiments seemed to lean heavily towards the Crispian side of the controversy, but he nevertheless speaks respectfully of Mr. Williams, as also of Mr. Baxter, whom he unites with Dr. Crisp, as two persons of estimable memory, whose spirits were with Christ, and their seemingly different apprehensions perfectly reconciled, and concentrated in pure and unmixed truth. {Conciliatory Discourse upon Dr. Crisp's Sermons.} Dr. Beverley resigned his charge of the congregation at Cutlers'-Hall in 1697. To this he was probably impelled by the non-fulfilment of his prophetic calculations, Providence having deferred that important event to a much later period. Mr. Beverley, with the vexation arising from this disappointment, retired into the country, and settled at Colchester, or in the neighbourhood thereabouts, where he lived just a few years afterwards, as nothing further is recorded concerning him. He published a considerable number of pamphlets, the titles of which are as follows.

### **WORKS.**

1. The Command of God to come out of Babylon. 1687.
2. The great Revolution in this Nation according to Revelation 17:16-17, in Pursuance of a Discourse published twelve Months past, viz., "The Command of God to his People to come out of Babylon;" wherein is fully proved that the Papacy can survive but nine or ten Years. Dedicated to the Prince of Orange. 1688.

3. Jehovah Jireh; in the Mount the Lord will be seen.
4. The Blessing of Moses on the Tribe of Asher. Deut.33:15.
5. Gospel Grace of Faith, in its Nature opened. John 17:7-8.
6. Faith by which we are Justified in a Scripture Sense. Rom.5:1.
7. A Conciliatory Discourse upon Dr. Crisp's Sermons; humbly presented to the Preachers of the Merchants Lecture at Pinner's-Hall. Part 1 and 2. 1692.
8. The true State of Gospel Faith; a Conciliatory Discourse upon Dr. Williams' Concessions. 1693.
9. A compendious Assertion and Vindication of the Trinity.
10. An Exposition of the Lord's Prayer. Matt.6:9, Lk.11:1-11.
11. A brief View of the State of Mankind.
12. A Discourse of the Doctrine of Holiness. I Pet.1:15.
13. A Discourse of several Sermons on the Sacrament.
14. A Discourse of Evangelical Repentance unto Salvation, not to be repented of. II Cor.7:10; to which is subjoined, a Discourse on Death-bed Repentance. Luke 22:39. 1693.
15. A Sermon on the Death of the Queen. 1694.
16. A Discourse of the Greatness of the Soul.
17. The Loss of the Soul opened and demonstrated; a Sermon at the Lord's-day Morning Lecture, in Fetter-lane. Matt.16:26. 1694.
18. The Pattern of the Divine Temple, &c.
19. The Line of Time from the first to the last Sabbatism.
20. The Scriptural Line of Time, &c.
21. The prophetic History of the Reformation, &c.
22. A Scheme of Prophecies to be fulfilled. 1696.
23. A fresh Memorial of the Kingdom of Christ.
24. A Table of Sabbatical Time, &c.
25. A Discourse upon the Power of the World to come.
26. A Discourse of Miracles, and the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.
27. A Model of Gospel Sanctification, &c.
28. The Catechism of the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.
29. Christianity the Great Mystery.
30. Apology for the Hope of the Kingdom of Christ, appearing within this approaching Year, 1697, wherein some of the principal Arguments for such an Expectation are briefly couched, and greater Objections answered. Presented to the Notice and Examination of the Archbishops and Bishops in Parliament last. 1696.
31. The Kingdom of Jesus Christ entering its Succession. 1697.
32. A Scriptural Proof from Mahomet's Times to that of Christ's Kingdom must needs be in its Succession. 1697.
33. A further Discover upon the Line of Time. 1697.
34. A Sermon of Mr. Benjamin Perkins', at the Funeral of Mrs. Martha Robient, who died at Colchester, September 15, 1700, enlarged into a

Discourse on the excellent Life, and glorious Death of a Christian. II  
Tim.4:7-8.

In this small volume entitled, "the true State of Gospel Faith," we see a fatal death blow handed out, {throughout its pages,} to all Free-Will Religion of the Arminian type, but more especially to that rank form of Conditionalism, by which work mongers of all persuasions have made sad the hearts of the righteous, even whilst building towering shrines to their own self-righteousness, oft under the guise of a 'sovereign grace' profession. For a small window into this book we extract the following worthy notations:

"I have offered great proof, that the faith, repentance, sanctification, and good works the Gospel requires cannot be justly deemed, or taken for conditions, or qualifications, but are effluxes, as from Electing Love and Grace; so from the Righteousness and Death of Jesus Christ, and his Victorious Resurrection, through which the Holy Spirit is given, and are as free, as Election, and Justification themselves; when they are considered in strict relation to the elect...-...are there not in Scripture highest assertions of Eternal Love and Grace, independent upon qualifications and conditions in them, who shall be made partakers? Do not all stand in a frame and connexion? Election, calling, justification, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption? All as free, and as certain, the one as the other. It is true; the wisdom of God hath so contrived, and ordered this preaching of the Gospel; that it is to be published promiscuously to the non-elect with the elect, and {as I may say} to probe for the elect, and to draw them out with efficacy and power, by the Spirit joining with the Word...-...now as all these are in Christ for us, as the Head and Fountain and Example; one as well as the other; without any notion of Condition, or Qualification, or Means; and so they are to be looked upon therefore in saints; and so Christ stood in eternity before God in that Everlasting Covenant, wherein all was settled in Him, as the Exemplar, Head, and Root of the Church; and not only so, but as a Mediator, Surety, and Testator; upon the foresight of man, a fallen, lost, sinful nature, out of which the elect are recovered by Christ, as such Mediator, Testator, and Surety...-...or to this Everlasting Covenant must everything be reduced, adjusted and reconciled; when the Gospel according to the universal preaching requires Faith, and Repentance, Holiness, and Obedience, as Qualifications and Conditions; this publication of the Gospel reduced to the Everlasting Covenant must be interpreted in relation to the elect, so, that Faith, and Repentance may be understood to be no Qualifications, Conditions, or Means as on our part, nor dependent on us, but as a Free and Absolute Gift to us,

though in us, and rising as from us, when so given to us; and so Scripture speaks often to the same purpose {as is after to be shown} for all was both distinctly, and together settled, and established in the same Eternal Council, and under the sanction, and unmoveable confirmation of an Everlasting Covenant; whom he Predestinated, he Called, he Justified, he Glorified; all in one and the same Eternity in regard of Council, in regard of Covenant, all was then passed; and Christ enfeoffed in all for us, however to be fulfilled in the order of Time, appointed by God with Christ...-...and indeed, thus it must needs be, for upon the infinite fore-knowledge of God he predestinated in whole, and not in parts, to the conformity to the image of his Son; whatever then is in the image of his Son, one thing as well as the other, he hath predestinated unto, "he hath predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ;" whatever we are predestinated unto therefore is essential to the being children of God by Adoption, in and according to Christ, as in one entire sum predestinated to, and as in one act of God upon his fore-knowledge; and then there is a distribution into its distinct heads, fitted to our understanding, calling, justification, glory; and every head is as free, and as certain, one, as another; that which in the manifestation in time comes after, as that which went before; for each single facet of Salvation was by itself singly, and distinctly determined by God, as well as the whole contexture or the order of each head. I call them heads because each is a whole, and not apart, each is of that worth and dignity, that it cannot fall so low, as a condition, or qualification, or means, in respect to, or with relation to any other of those heads...-...thus in pressing Faith and Repentance, it may very well be said; except ye believe, and repent, you shall certainly perish; but concerning the elect, it may be said, you shall certainly be saved, as he that repents, and believes, shall be saved, for they shall certainly repent, and believe, and be saved; and I find not the Scripture to speak or allude to any possibility whatsoever of the elect being damned; but as with a reference of Election it says; to deceive, if possible, the very elect, Matt.24:24; and, except those days had been shortened, no flesh could be saved, but for the sake of the elect, those days shall be shortened. For the Foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal; the Lord knoweth them that are His, II Tim.2:19, this is the Supreme, or Sovereign Seal, and it carries the exhortation, importing the other seal, along with it, let him that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity; for that departure from iniquity is settled equally by way of Gift in the Everlasting Covenant, and not by way of Condition, or Limitation; but by the same Eternal Council Covenant, and Free Gift upon it, even as Justification, or Glorification; one is as free and as indefinable as the other, and as self-subsistent, without dependence upon ourselves, or upon one another, one as the other; saving yet the wisdom of the Divine Order; and no after manner of speaking can turn the Council of the Lord,

for the LORD himself hath called, hath justified, hath glorified; and nothing can be made conditional, or be dependent and uncertain, in the realm, and according to the fixed pattern of his Unconditional Purpose and Grace in Christ. I therefore deny any of the graces, or duties, required by the Gospel can be in a supreme sense called either Condition or Qualification, with relation to any other part of Salvation, or dependence on our acts, when we speak of them whom Scripture stiles, the Election of Grace."

It goes without saying that our author had a compelling sense of urgency pressing upon him to contend earnestly for that Faith, as one harmonious body of doctrinal Truth, once delivered unto the saints, and an ability bestowed upon him to discern many matters which directly affect the glorious Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, especially regarding a believer's valuation of Christ's Person & Accomplishments. We send forth this volume in hopes of further consolidating the union of believers in the everlasting truths of the Gospel. "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom.15:5-6.

*We are largely indebted to the book by Walter Wilson, History and Antiquities of Dissenting Churches, Volume 2, 1808, for the vast majority of the biographical information here supplied.*



## THE PREFACE.

That the jealousy of so many of the Servants of Christ hath been so exceedingly awakened, and enflamed by the suspicious attempts by Mr. Williams to obscure the Doctrine of the Free Grace of God in Christ, is to me a very great prognostic of that Kingdom of Redemption drawing nigh, and that Philadelphian State, to which Christ hath opened a door, which none can shut; and they therefore, who are now nearest to it are obliged by Christ to hold fast his word herein, that among all the professors of Protestantism, who hold it in this part so loose, none should take their crown, who are true Philadelphians.

Hence it appears, that no more disadvantageous a time could have been chosen out by those, who would eclipse that Glory of Free Grace, for their making an attack or impression upon those Doctrines, wherein it is concerned, with success; so I hope it does appear, no happier time, when in this present Sardian State, there is but room for dispute concerning them, could have been singled out for the friends of it than now; when so many zealous maintainers and defenders of it have openly shown themselves, and offered themselves willingly; should I say, to help the Lord against the mighty in the high places of the field of these debates for so great Truths?

And indeed it is a duty on such occasions, to discover the foundation of error and mistake, even to the very root; and if in this search, some precocious truths are found out, and brought forth out of the Scripture Treasury, not only things old, but new; I hope, none will be offended, seeing as it is a duty at all times, so it is more hopeful so near the day dawning, and the Day-Star arising, such humble offers should not be accounted foolish fires; but some beams and rays of that Gospel light, that shall appear more and more to the perfect day.

In the meantime, I have made it my earnest endeavour not only to preserve herein the Analogy of Faith, but to offer as a key, and clue in all these disputes these five grand principles.

1. The whole of our Salvation is from God, through God, by God, and so to God. From God in the Majesty of the Father, through the mediation of the Eternal Word, and Son of God by the efficacy of the Eternal Spirit, to the praise of the glory of his

grace, all in all. Thus the Divine Being is the Father of lights with whom is no variation or shadow of turning, not only in his own perfection, but always looking full on his elect.

2. That the manifestation of this Salvation by that mighty Power and Efficacy of the Spirit, is in due times and seasons, and in the just order, really and effectually vested in the spirits of the elect, and so joins their several faculties, and so the action and conversation, according to all that is spoken of in Scripture.

3. That the Law is the irrevocably standard of all, that man himself is to do, whether imprinted on man in the very creation, or revealed further by God in any after-manifestation of his will; which the Gospel, as occasion requires, takes into its own hand, and makes use of; and whatever is to be found in us according to the Gospel, the Law lays its sanctions upon it.

4. The Gospel commands nothing; if strictly and properly taken; requires nothing, commands nothing, that yet it declares, must be in us an answer to itself; nor that it declares, must, and shall be in us according to the Law; but it making use of the Law, as to all the commanding part; itself gives, and conveys all, as being the Covenant of Grace, from the Father through Christ, the Son of the Father in Grace and Truth, by the Holy Spirit.

5. The judgment of Christ is according to the Law, answered thus by the Gospel, as the Covenant of Grace, in relation to his own elect children, members, and servants; written in the Lamb's Book of Life by the Father's Election from the foundation of the world; and in relation to the Non-elect, his judgment is according to the Law of Righteousness, imprinted on the hearts of men, and according to that Law obliging, upon any manifestations, or intimations of the Gospel revealed to them.

Whoever then keeps these great principles as a pole-star in his eye, shall find himself guided by them in all the various disputes of them; and not fall into either of those great errors the Apostle James warns us against, of saying; when we are tempted, that we are tempted of God, who cannot be tempted of evil, neither tempts any one; nor the second like to it, viz., not to be sensible of the fact that every good gift, every degree of good, much more every perfect gift is from above, and does not rise up, but comes down.

Therefore above all, the assistances of the Divine Spirit guiding us into all Truth, and bringing everything unto our remembrance, I most humbly beseech for them, and for myself, and therein beg the prayers of all, who shall read with any approbation this short discussion of these Truths.

**A Right State of Gospel Truth, Presented to Mr. Williams;  
occasioned by some Assertions of his {so called}  
Defence of Gospel Truth.**

I have upon the view and consideration of Mr. Williams, in his Defence of Gospel Truth, and the many excellent confessions of the true Grace of God, wherein we stand, therein sound; thought it necessary for myself as in a low, and humble capacity, yet having appeared, as a reconciler upon the account of the Sermons of Dr. Crisp; not to come forth as a disputant, much less as a professed adversary, but as a reconciler of some of the collateral, and derivative branches, of that Grace and Truth, I find in that discourse, to their principals; and to prune, what seems not to be so reconcilable, that the whole may be seen in its order and beauty.

And herein I labour to avoid personal reflections, as I am out of the temptation of them, where I profess honour and esteem only; but of any aculeate animadversions on, or encounter with particular expressions, wherein the fundamental interests of Truth are not lodged, or concerned, but I have set myself to establish those grand points of Gospel Truth, which I am persuaded ought at all times to be set in a clear and full light; on all just occasions, in the most stated, and solemn discourses; and at all other times so interwoven; that they may shine out and give their light both to prayer and preaching; while there is just room and scope yet left for all those Scriptural expatiations into instruction, exhortation, expostulation, reproof, as methods of direction into the ways of Righteousness; but still so, as they may be enlightened by these springs of Gospel Light, Truth and Grace, which I am now undertaking to conciliate them unto.

This I have endeavoured in the most plain, and perspicuous method; and so that whatever may appear in Mr.

Williams book of a contrary sentiment, and inclination; may be comprehended so, as to be resolved in some cases of doubt, in others fore-prized, or guarded against; not to say, answered.

And herein I have made it my business to level the discourse to these heads, or points.

1. To state the Gospel Doctrine concerning the Eternal Council of God, with relation to all his elect, who are the principal concerned in all these points; yet with necessary respect to all others, so far especially, as what is said of others or in general, is necessary to be considered; as illustrating these things with relation to the elect.

2. I have made an essay upon that noblest point of debate; how far the Law upon its own authority necessarily, and indispensably falls in with, ratifies, and confirms the power and authority of the Gospel; and how far the Gospel finds necessary to itself, and to its great end, not to make void, but to establish the Law; and whether upon all this, the Gospel can by itself be properly styled a Law; which I on great reason make out in the negative.

3. I have offered great proof, that the faith, repentance, sanctification, and good works the Gospel requires cannot be justly deemed, or taken for conditions, or qualifications, but are effluxes, as from Electing Love and Grace; so from the Righteousness and Death of Jesus Christ, and his Victorious Resurrection, through which the Holy Spirit is given, and are as free, as Election, and Justification themselves; when they are considered in strict relation to the elect, however in relation to the non-elect, or as generally spoken of, they may put on such notions, or representations, as of conditions or qualifications.

4. I have endeavoured to illustrate the procedure of the Day of Judgment to be so described in Scripture, that the primary and supreme representations, and that subordinate all others to themselves, are most exactly agreeable to the Free Grace of the Gospel; not as a Law, nor requiring any qualifications, or conditions, with relation to the elect, but as gloriously appearing with its own product, and effect, as it shall be made to appear the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, and by the appearance of Jesus Christ with his saints, in whom he will be glorified, and admired at that Day.

I begin with the first, and seeing I direct this conciliatory discourse to them, whom I suppose to acknowledge with me an election of a certain number to Salvation and Glory, I make this appeal to them.

Are there not in Scripture, highest assertions of Eternal Love and Grace, independent upon qualifications, and conditions in them, who shall be made partakers? Do not all stand in a frame and connexion? Election, calling, justification, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption? All as free, and as certain, the one as the other.

It is true, the wisdom of God hath so contrived, and ordered this preaching of the Gospel; that it is to be published promiscuously to the non-elect with the elect, and {as I may say} to probe for the elect, and to draw them out with efficacy and power, by the Spirit joining with the Word.

It is also most true, that these cannot be applied to particular persons, but as Electing Grace singles them out by calling, sprinkling the blood of Christ on their hearts, unto Sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the Truth; but they are always true concerning the whole number and body; and so concerning every single person; and they may, and ought to be openly asserted and maintained in Doctrine, and also to be proclaimed in Preaching, and in the Publication of the Gospel, as occasion requires, to compel, and draw souls, by so free absolute and independent a grace declared to lost man in all the Election of God; and who knows, but it may draw this, and that particular person in a congregation; and therefore with great hopes of a Divine co-operation, it ought to be as other Truths, uncompromisingly promulgated. And I doubt not, when God opens the mouths of his servants in the boldest and frankest declarations of Truth, as he will; when that new Song shall be learnt, and so taught by the 144,000 on Mount Zion, with the Father's Name on their foreheads; it shall be sealed, with the greatest number of converts, as it was in Peter's sermon, proclaiming that Grace; which thing I humbly declare myself to be waiting for, as the great Consolation of Israel.

And there are undeniably many great Scriptures, that set out the freest, most absolute and independent Grace, throughout our Salvation from first to last, as patterns or exemplars of all Scripture; such as, before the children had done

either good, or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand; who worketh all things according to the council of his own will; to the praise of the Glory of his Grace; who hath called us with an holy calling; not according to works, but according to his Purpose; not of works, but of him that calleth. Matthew the Publican was called from the Receipt of Custom; and the Apostle Paul in the height of persecution, that he might be a pattern. "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." "The Son of man came to seek, and to save that which is lost;" "I am found of them that sought me not;" "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" "being justified freely by his Grace," &c., "who believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly;" "publicans and harlots go into the Kingdom of Heaven before you."

Now it is most evident, the settlement of the whole of Salvation in the Eternal Council of God is most free, absolute, independent, without having any respect to having done good or evil, and so of Grace, and in such an opposition to works, that here and indeed throughout, grace and works do so remove one another, that they cannot consist in an equal domination, but either Grace must cease to be Grace, or works cease to be works; one of them must lose its very genus, or nature; seeing then, none can so much, as dare to deny that the Gospel gives the pre-eminence to Grace; it is a necessity according to the so positive and peremptory arguing of the Apostle, works must submit and fall under Grace. "And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." Rom.11:6.

If so, it most necessarily follows, works foreseen must be as much excluded, as if they could be supposed present; for else works had the primary ascendancy; and seeing the Scripture ascribes all to Grace; either Grace had not been Grace, or works not works, or all is Grace, and works done by Grace so inherent, and resident in us, as not to be in Christ, as the sun, and fountain, from which it every moment flows; as much shut out, as works done by that rectitude of nature, God at first gave to man; so that they could be neither a condition nor qualification

foreseen by Electing Grace, and so moving God to elect; but works are elected to and not for, or upon, as the Apostles express doctrine assures; for God hath chosen us in Christ, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love, and good works are fore-prepared, as the marginal translation, for us, that we should walk in them, or God hath fore-prepared for good works, that from himself they should be, as he hath provided them a being in their very selves, as well as in us, and that we should walk in them. He hath also fore-prepared; and seeing this fore-preparation even of works, is not of works, lest any man should boast, it must be of Grace even as much, as Election; otherwise work is no more work, or Grace is no more Grace, if works are not throughout of Grace. If you say, then work is not work; I answer, that it is much more suitable to the Gospel, work should lose its Nature into Grace, than Grace into work. But still the precise nature of works and Grace remain distinct in their abstract consideration; yet it is most true, that work is comprised by Grace, for in every work we are his workmanship, which is of Grace.

And indeed, thus it must needs be, for upon the infinite fore-knowledge of God he predestinated in whole, and not in parts, to the conformity to the image of his Son; whatever then is in the image of his Son, one thing as well as the other, he hath predestinated unto, "he hath predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ;" whatever we are predestinated unto therefore is essential to the being children of God by Adoption, in and according to Christ, as in one entire sum predestinated to, and as in one act of God upon his fore-knowledge; and then there is a distribution into its distinct heads, fitted to our understanding, calling, justification, glory; and every head is as free, and as certain, one, as another; that which in the manifestation in time comes after, as that which went before; for each single facet of Salvation was by itself singly, and distinctly determined by God, as well as the whole contexture or the order of each head. I call them heads because each is a whole, and not apart, each is of that worth and dignity, that it cannot fall so low, as a condition, or qualification, or means, in respect to, or with relation to any other of those heads.

So that those entire, supreme, absolute, most acknowledged, and independent acts of God, his fore-knowing a number of persons, and predestinating them to the adoption of children, by making them conformable to the image of his Son, being laid in the foundation, according to his Eternal Love and Grace, the arch-type or first exemplar of all; we may find each of those heads coming forth in its distinct and single dignity.

1. As first he did according to his own grace, purpose; will, and determination; such, as he hath foreknown and predestinated to be conformed to his Son, should come to his Son upon no either fortuitous or supremely free use of their own will, or actuation of their powers by their own work, but upon the certain and efficacious call from himself in his Word, and an instinct, or implantation of wisdom flowing from himself in Christ, that original Wisdom; all their intellectual powers seeing Him, and their applying faculties cleaving, and uniting to Him; now this is styled vocation, or effectual calling, and it is absolute, and by itself, and worthy to be so; and as it first and must needs be so in an intellectual Salvation; and as so distinct from Sanctification, it is called Wisdom, I Cor.2:4-7, so there is no one head, that is more specially ascribed to Grace, and to purpose, than it is, called according to purpose, Rom.8:28, called with a holy calling, II Tim.1:9, not according to our works, but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Jesus Christ before the world began, not of works, but of him that calleth.

And why is this head of Calling kept so distinct, even from Justification and Sanctification, and so ascribed to true Grace; is it, because it is indeed a condition of all the rest? No, because it includes the certainty of all the rest, and all others certainly join themselves; and therefore it is as much, as any, or, if it could be, more, ascribed to Grace.

2. God hath chosen a people, whom he justifies, and makes righteous, and pardons freely in Christ, and by the Imputation of his Righteousness; and in whom the Glory of so great a Righteousness shall appear, as the Righteousness of God in Christ; this is then absolute, and by itself.



3. God hath chosen a people to be holiness to Jehovah in Christ our Sanctification. And this is also so worthy a head, as to be determined single, and for its own sake; as who will deny?

4. God hath chosen children, who shall be conformed to the image of his Son in Glory, who is in us the hope of Glory, Col.1:27, and this is itself so blessed, and worthy a point, that it may be considered by itself; as all will readily grant.

It is true, none of those can be one, without the other, but that they most necessarily implicate, infer, and include one the other; yet there is not one of them, but Scripture speaks of it singly; not only because it includes the other, but because it is worthy to be alone in the Eye of God, and to be the supreme point of his Eternal Council; wherein it can be considered, as distinct; as how often are the foreknown, predestinated, elected, spoken of, without anything else? The people whom he foreknew, Rom.11:2, knowing brethren your election of God; the Lord knows them that are his; predestinated according to the council of him, who worketh all things after the council of his own will; so of Justification Scripture speaks often by itself; in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and glory, Isa.45:25; justified by his Grace, Tit.3:7, and so throughout; and so of Sanctification; inheritance among them that are sanctified, Acts 26:18; he hath forever perfected them that are sanctified, Heb.10:14; so of Glory, written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world, Rev.13:8; and another book was opened, which was the Book of Life; heirs of life, bringing many sons to Glory, Heb.2:10; an exceeding great, and eternal weight of Glory. II Cor.4:17.

Now if this were considered, it would take away much of the dispute about Conditions and Qualifications, seeing that every link of the golden chain, is itself a jewel of inestimable value, and hath in itself the splendour, and riches of all the other.

Yet notwithstanding; it is to be freely acknowledged, that God for the manifestation of his own Grace, hath settled an order and connection, but not so as to lessen the dignity of any head below the worthiness it hath, in the Eternal Council of God to be one head with the other, and were it not, even as all the other; freely given of God, according to the riches of his Grace; take any one of them, that seems fittest to be looked upon, as

a Qualification or Condition; and it would as much deserve, to have some Qualification, Means, or Condition found out for it, as any of those, which seem most removed from being so, and to which any of the other may seem to be so.

But not in a secondary consideration, but equal with the first; all this is to be considered in Christ, the image to which all is to be conformed; the eternal love of God is in Him; calling is to and in Him; the Righteousness of Christ is imputed to us; holiness is derived from Christ, not only by one act of Sanctification, but by a continual efflux from Him, our Head, and Root; even as it is through his whole meritorious and efficacious Sanctification of Himself, that we are sanctified, Jn.17:9, our glory is seeing Him, as He is, I Jn.3:2; being made like to Him, appearing with Him in Glory, in the beams falling from his Glory, encompassing and filling us with his Light.

Now as all these are in Him for us, as the Head and Fountain and Example; one as well as the other, without any notion of Condition, or Qualification, or Means; and so they are to be looked upon therefore in saints; and so Christ stood in eternity before God in that Everlasting Covenant, wherein all was settled in Him, as the Exemplar, Head, and Root of the Church; and not only so, but as a Mediator, Surety, and Testator; upon the foresight of man, a fallen, lost, sinful nature, out of which the elect are recovered by Christ, as such Mediator, Testator, and Surety.

Now if this Eternal Settlement had the solemnity and sanction of a Covenant, for so the Apostle tells us, as there was an Everlasting Covenant in Christ; and if all be settled thus by an Everlasting Covenant, it must be in the same Eternity, wherein the grace and purpose of God was; whatever then was settled in that purpose, and Council was established in, and by that Covenant; and so must stand fast forever; and the Apostle there instances a point, that one would be as ready to suppose a Condition, or Qualification, as any whatever; and yet he makes it a point settled by the Everlasting Covenant; viz., to be made perfect in every good work, to do his will; and the working whatever is well pleasing in the sight of God. What can be more supposed to be a Condition, or a Qualification, than these things? And the Apostle enough assures us; these were settled by the Everlasting Covenant, because he prays to Him, that

brought again from the dead the Shepherd of the Sheep by the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, Heb.13:20, to make perfect in every good work; now as it is most observable, the Spirit of God singles out those attributes of God, that are most enforceive of a gracious answer; seeing then God bringing back the Shepherd of the Sheep by the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant, is chosen as most moving of God in prayer for the making perfect, &c., which shows, that there is a like certainty of the Everlasting Covenant availing to perfect the saints, that there was in bringing Christ back from the dead; the same for the Shepherd, and the sheep; one from the Grave, dying for sin; the other from the death of Sin.

Now then, if there was such an Everlasting Covenant in Christ, {for it must be as Old as the Purpose, and Grace in Christ,} that may be most infallibly argued, then there can be no change; for as the Apostle saith, though it be but a man's covenant, Gal.3:15; yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, nor addeth thereto; and this {saith he} I say; the Covenant that was before confirmed of God to Christ, the Law that was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul. Gal.3:17.

Now how much higher will the argument run concerning the Everlasting Covenant, if every link of the chain of Salvation was equally settled and established, that it should be freely given, and most certainly given; no after model, nor manner of promiscuous, universal Preaching of the Gospel, can add to, or take from the Everlasting Covenant, settled between God, and Christ; that every part of Salvation should not be as unchangeably conserved, and secured by God in Christ; one as another, nor turn any part into Condition and Qualification, or, so much as a means on our parts, on which anything relating to Salvation should be dependent, any law or usage of Scripture speaking to the contrary, in any wise notwithstanding.

For to this Everlasting Covenant must everything be reduced, adjusted, and reconciled; when the Gospel according to the universal preaching requires Faith, and Repentance, Holiness, and Obedience, as Qualifications, and Conditions; this publication of the Gospel reduced to the Everlasting Covenant must be interpreted in relation to the elect, so, that Faith and Repentance may be understood to be no Qualifications, Conditions, or Means as on our part, nor dependent on us, but

as a Free and Absolute Gift to us, though in us, and rising as from us, when so given to us; and so Scripture speaks often to the same purpose {as is after to be shown} for all was both distinctly, and together settled, and established in the same Eternal Council, and under the sanction, and unmoveable confirmation of an Everlasting Covenant; whom he Predestinated, he Called, he Justified, he Glorified; all in one and the same Eternity in regard of Council, in regard of Covenant, all was then passed; and Christ enfeoffed in all for us, however to be fulfilled in the order of Time, appointed by God with Christ.

To say then, if the elect do not believe and repent, they shall be damned; I must confess, may receive some countenance from the Apostle Paul's saying to the company, that sailed with him to Rome concerning the shipmen, Acts 27:22-44, except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved; when by a prior oracle he had assured them, that there should not be the loss of any man's life, but only of the ship, which certainly included all the necessary means of preservation; and so of the shipmen's being kept safe in the ship {that being such a means} before determined; and so the Apostle returns to the first certainty, there shall not a hair fall from any of your heads.

Thus in pressing Faith and Repentance, it may very well be said; except ye believe, and repent, you shall certainly perish; but concerning the elect, it may be said, you shall certainly be saved, as he that repents, and believes, shall be saved, for they shall certainly repent, and believe, and be saved; and I find not the Scripture to speak or allude to any possibility whatsoever of the elect being damned; but as with a reference of Election it says; to deceive, if possible, the very elect, Matt.24:24; and, except those days had been shortened, no flesh could be saved, but for the sake of the elect, those days shall be shortened. For the Foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal; the Lord knoweth them that are His, II Tim.2:19, this is the Supreme, or Sovereign Seal, and it carries the exhortation, importing the other seal, along with it, let him that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity; for that departure from iniquity is settled equally by way of Gift in the Everlasting Covenant, and not by way of Condition, or Limitation; but by the same Eternal Council Covenant, and Free Gift upon it, even as Justification, or Glorification; one is as free

and as indefinable as the other, and as self-subsistent, without dependence upon ourselves, or upon one another, one as the other; saving yet the wisdom of the Divine Order; and no after manner of speaking can turn the Council of the Lord, for the LORD himself hath called, hath justified, hath glorified; and nothing can be made conditional, or be dependent and uncertain, in the realm, and according to the fixed pattern of his Unconditional Purpose and Grace in Christ. I therefore deny any of the graces, or duties, required by the Gospel can be in a supreme sense called either Condition or Qualification, with relation to any other part of Salvation, or dependence on our acts, when we speak of them whom Scripture stiles, the Election of Grace.

Head 2. I come now to the second head, which I stile a noble question, whether the Gospel can by itself be styled a Law, according to which believers are justified. Suppose but upon the very point of believing, or in that they have believed and repented, and obeyed that Law, of the New Covenant, or the Covenant of Grace, and with sincerity {though not to perfection} all the holy Laws, and Rules of it. And this I undertake the negative of; that it ought not to be styled a Law.

And that this principal question may be duly stated, I must first lay down that most prime consideration, both of the Gospel, and Covenant of Grace, and also of the Law, as an Everlasting Covenant of Righteousness, and how these two both conspire in the Eternal Salvation and Blessedness of the elect; and yet how they do, in some critical, or, {as I may so call them,} noble points oppose, and eclipse, one the other.

It is manifest from Scripture, by what hath been already said, that the First and Supreme Point in the Council of God is the Purpose and Grace of having many sons among the children of men, whom the LORD would bring to Glory, and make conformable to the image of his Son, and so as to be holy, and without blame before Him in Love; all which was established in Christ, the Eternal Son of God, the Eternal Son of His Love; and so this Decree, and Purpose is properly called the Adoption of Children.

When this was decreed by God, the creation of these heirs of Life must needs be, and so of the whole Human Nature, must needs be supposed to stand before, and to the Eye of God, in

that Decree as created; and therefore there must be by any that would distinctly and steadfastly understand these points a most intent, and due consideration, of what Scripture hath revealed to us, concerning the first Creation of Man.

1. It must then be acknowledged, that communication of the Divine Glory in the creating an intellectual spirit, and in righteousness, and true holiness, {the most lively expressions of the Divine Being to us,} and so to be happy, and glorious, and blessed in the enjoyment of himself, in a perfection of holiness, and righteousness, is the supreme Scripture account of Creation; and it becomes the immutable and unchangeable Law upon man; that can no more vary, nor alter, than the very Being of God; and therefore in that great relation, wherein Jesus Christ stood in the Creation of man, it is said, I Cor.11:3, God is the Head of Christ, and the man {especially, as we shall presently see, intending Christ} is the image, and Glory of God; Christ speaking of himself even as Mediator in the Human Nature, says, "my Father is greater than I," whilst as Mediator in the Divine Nature, he thought it no robbery to be equal with God. Phil.2:6. This is the primo-prime, as may be said, foundation of holiness, and happiness, to know and enjoy the only true God, which Scripture calls the Glory of God, II Cor.4:6, as first in nature, and is before the Face of Christ; and the Praise of this Glory is Sovereign, even to Election in Christ. Eph.1:3-5. Of this glory, man is fallen short, or become destitute, Rom.3:23, by Sin; but neither Sin nor Redemption can bring down this highest Glory; for notwithstanding Sin, and even Hell itself, an intellectual spirit {mankind} is eternally obliged; and Redemption is bringing or restoring to God, and to an access to the Father; as Jesus Christ in all his mediatory discourses most fully declared, and his Apostles after him; and as all along the Kingdom of God is Christ's Kingdom, so it is at last delivered up to God, all in all; which I lay in the Foundation, to show the absolute excellency, perfection, and immutability of the Divine Law of Creation; standing in participation of, and conformity to the Divine Nature in Holiness, for the participation also of its blessedness, both which are the Glory of God.

2. It is much to be considered, and deeply pondered, what Scripture so often says of man being made in the image of God, this image of God, Jesus Christ is most positively affirmed to be,

II Cor.4:4, Col.1:15, he is the image of the Invisible God. The Eternal Word fore-seen in Human Nature is the brightness of his Glory, and the express image of his Person, Heb.1:3, and as in Human Nature Christ is the First-born of every creature, Col.1:15, the Glory of God spoken of so much in the former particular is in the Face of Jesus Christ, II Cor.4:6, and Christ is the Head of every man, I Cor.11:3, even as God is the Head of Christ, and man, viz., that great supreme man is primarily the image and glory of God, I Cor.11:7, for Christ being the Head of man, as between God and man, it is He that must be the image, and glory of God; else God without Christ intervening would be the Head of every man, which the Apostle says expressly Christ is; and God the Head of Christ, as whose image and glory the man Christ is; therefore is the man, Rev.12:5, or man, I Cor.11:7, foreseen in human nature, and not every man immediately; and so the Apostle's argument in that place reaches from Christ to every man; all these great expressions of Christ show more clearly, who that image of God is, in which Adam was made; for all these cannot be supposed to come in upon Sin, and on that occasion or necessity only, as they have place before it; and this I say not only to ascribe excellency to our Mediator, but to show, how fit he is to be so, who is thus the original image of God, by whom as the Eternal Word he made and created all; I speak it also with a peculiar respect to the point to be discoursed, concerning that admirable agreement and conspiracy between the Law and the Gospel; and so to resolve whether the Gospel can be called a Law; on all which these things well apprehended will reflect great light.

3. When man was thus made in the participation of the Divine Nature, and in the image of God, {which Image Christ is,} in order to the eternal enjoyment of God in blessedness, and in his Glory; as it became an immutable unchangeable Law upon man, which can no more be put off than his very being; so it must needs be secondarily a Law upon him to be like Christ, who is the image of God; now therefore here it comes to be solemnly enquired, whether Adam had any notices of Jesus Christ the image of God, wherein he was made; and there are two great reasons that he had notices.

1. Because it being so expressly said, God made Adam in that image, which is Christ, it is not probable that he could be

ignorant of it in so perfect a state of holy understanding, as wherein he was made.

2. Because the Apostle says, Adam was the type of Him to come, as the great and supreme Adam, though the second in order of time of appearance, yet the First in Dignity and Designation; again therefore here I argue, Adam in so perfect a state, could not probably be ignorant of so great a truth, as of the Second-First-Adam, of whom he was a type; and this I desire the further observation of, as much tending to show, how close the Gospel, and this Law may conspire.

3. Though the perfection of man's being, was, as hath been said, a law adequate to his being; as in conformity to the Divine Being, and to the image of God, Jesus Christ; yet because man was but a living soul, and not a quickening spirit, as the Second Adam; that is, he was but a vessel, that had its measure, and not a fountain, or spring, still supplying itself; therefore whatever further revelation of the will and pleasure of God, to which he should be obedient, God would please to vouchsafe Adam for the securing his perseverance, and the confirming him in a continuation of that happy state, wherein his Creator had placed him; such revelation became, as much of the essence of the Law of his Creation, as his conformity in any branch of it whatever to the Divine Being in the image of God, viz., Christ; both because of the authority and goodness of the Revealer, to which the Law must needs oblige him; as also because it tended to secure, and confirm him in that blessed estate; for whatever did so, must needs bind him, even as the preservation of that conformity to God and his image in any other essential branch did; and herein, if possible more, because it secured and confirmed all the rest.

It pleased therefore that infinite Wisdom and Goodness, as well as Supreme Authority of God, to appoint in Paradise, wherein he placed Adam, as the representation of his holy and happy state, two Sacramental Trees; one the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil; and the other the Tree of Life. By the one he was under an obligation of obedience in refraining from it; by eating of the other, he was to receive a visible pledge, and seal of the confirmation of his blessed state. The refraining therefore from the one was to be but for a time; till which time of abstinence observed, and expired, he had no right



to eat of the other; for so is signified, in that the Tree of Life was plainly prepared to be eaten, so there must be a time for the eating of it; and in the care God took, Adam should not eat of it, after he had sinned, it appears God intended Adam should not Eat of it, and die; for it was a sacrament of living forever as God said, least he put forth his hand and eat of the Tree of Life, and live forever; which however spoken in derision, yet imports the sacramental sense of the Tree of Life; according to all which sense, it is said of the true and substantial Tree of Life, blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the Tree of Life, Rev.22:14, alluding to the first Tree of Life, of which Adam, if he for the time appointed {speaking strictly in a metaphorical sense, for the Council of the LORD will stand, even in this regard, for we clearly see that there was no half-hazard intention in this sin, for we read explicitly, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof" – not if you eat, but rather, you will certainly eat thereof, "according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," Eph.3:11, "thou shalt surely die,"} had kept the command of God in not eating of the tree forbidden, would in due season have had right to eat of the Tree of Life.

Now we may conceive two great reasons of God's forbidding the fruit of this Tree.

1. The observation of this command had fixed Adam in universal obedience, and perfected him in a conformity to God, in love, humility, dependence, self-resignation, love and care of his posterity; righteousness, justice, and not invading, what was not his; sobriety, temperance, universal holiness and goodness being some way drawn up into it; on which account it might justly be styled the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

2. The Tree of Life being a sacramental type, plainly and undoubtedly looking to Christ, by the so often use of it, and application to the eternal wisdom, and in the revelation, it argues strongly that the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, was a sacrament of Adam's subsistence, for the preservation of his integrity and happiness, in the Eternal Word, to come in Human Nature, or the Second Adam, represented to him by the Tree of Life. For seeing these two trees were coupled one to the other, such as the one, such was the other; if one looked to Christ, so did the other; now the greatest temptation to the

forbidden fruit, was to be as God, knowing good and evil; that is, having the full dominion over good and evil in himself; and so securing that holy and happy state by himself and in himself, and not in Christ his Head, the image of the Invisible God, the First Born of every creature, the Second Adam to come, the Head of every man; as the Apostle stiles him, referring to the first and original constitution. And I have not the least doubt, Jesus Christ in so many great expressions, that have no reference to the sin of man, was proposed as the Surety of Creation, and the Mediator of it, and not only as to men but to angels. But as I remember Zanchi on John 8, expounds, the devil was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth, that is, not in Christ the Mediator, who is the Truth; before all angelical and human being, by whom all were made, and consist; so that confirmation of both the angelic, and human nature was in Him; and even as the devil fell by not abiding in Christ, so he tempted man, deceived them on the same point of not abiding in the Truth, that is, in Christ, but coveting to have all in Himself; by the delusion of the Liar, the father of lies.

Now this I have thus far insisted upon, to open so great a Truth in such a way as may most show the harmony of the Law and the Gospel in the same grand point of the Salvation of the elect, as shall be further shown; how great influence this stating of the original constitution hath upon it.

But we must yet further consider the relation, this command of not eating the forbidden fruit, or the eating it, had to the posterity of Adam, or to all in him.

For it is most plain from Scripture; Adam by having kept the command of God, in not eating the forbidden fruit, had conveyed holiness and happiness, even life and glory from God, and Christ the image of God to all descending from him; this may be undeniably argued from two things.

1. He could not have conveyed sin and death, if he had not been first appointed by God to convey holiness and life; for he was ordained by God to be a common head; else, though the parent of the world, he could not have been so; he could not be ordained of God, first, a conveyer of evil, that came in by his own sin; God indeed in highest Justice, as he continues the descent of mankind from him, continues the sanction of conveyance of what he was, and had, which was righteousness

and life, as he was by God established to convey; when by his sin he had lost both righteousness and life; as God does not cut off that power of propagating the world, given him in that first blessing of fruitfulness, and multiplication; so he does not reverse the sanction of his conveying, what he should make himself a root and original of, by the special ordination of God upon his obedience, or disobedience in that one single act of eating or not eating; having then by that act of disobedience plunged himself in Sin and Death, he conveys it with that derivation of human nature from him to the very end of the world; Christ alone coming into the world under a peculiar law of both generation and holiness of nature.

2. Adam could not have been a type of Christ to come, if he had not been appointed by God a conveyor of righteousness and life, for Christ is so alone; after the transgression, Adam was a type of Christ only in conveyance, as a common head, as of sin and death; for so he is an opposite to him, who conveys Righteousness and Life. So therefore must Adam needs be as from God, that he might be a type; the nobler part of his being a type he lost by Sin, and is now become only an opposite type; he conveys but contrary to Christ, not Righteousness, and Life, but Sin, and Death; and so he begat Seth, not in the image of God, who is Christ, but in his own image. Gen.5:3.

But thus in everything, as the Apostle says, the Scripture foreseeing, God would do all he does, in Eternal Grace, and Love by Jesus Christ, preached before the Gospel to Adam, in that Tree; the symbol of removing him from the thoughts of being a God to himself in the dominion over good and evil, called the knowledge of it, according to the great importance of the word, "knowing" in Scripture; but that he should trust in him, shadowed to him, by the Tree of Life. Again he preached the Gospel to him by making him a type of One to come, as a Second Adam by way of appearance, but he was before him, for he was before all things, as the Eternal Word to be made man, and by him, they all consist; so the first man was to be an Adam, or universal original of righteousness and life subordinate to Christ, dependent upon him, and to be confirmed by him, by such an appointment given him of obedience and trust, and not taking upon himself that which was not his; for so the Apostle portrays lust, I Jn.2:16, by its first parent lust, the lust of the eye; the

forbidden fruit was fair to the eye; the lust of the flesh, it was good to taste; the taking upon the pride of life, we shall be as gods, &c., Adam therefore taking upon himself, and not trusting in Christ to be sustained for ever, lost himself and his posterity, excepting redeemed by Christ; as first declared, a head of confirmation; now of recovery.

And though this making Adam a common head, as it hath proved, is a scandal to proud reason; yet it was first, an Ordination of Grace, and Wisdom, and, as I may say, a compendious contrivance for happiness and blessedness to mankind; by one man, the common parent, and head, having by Faith in Christ, represented by the Tree of Life, trusted in him, and not taken upon himself; and saying with the prodigal, let me have my portion of good, all in my own hands.

Thus all mankind had been secured, and not left to the hazard of every single person, betraying himself; for it is most apparent by Adam what everyone would have done; he having all possible advantages in a fresh vigorous holiness, an unstained world; such a lively invitation of the Tree of Life, such a short act of self-denial, or refusing to be a God to himself, as he thought to be, by eating of that forbidden Fruit.

But now, let us see, what all this contributes to the points we are upon, which will be found to be exceeding in enlightening both the Law and the Gospel to us.

1. From hence it appears that the Law is an immutable and unchangeable Law of Holiness, and of Everlasting Obligation, whilst there is such a being human nature, for it arises from the Being of God to be enjoyed in holiness, and blessedness, by man, made so to enjoy; and it arises from the image of God, Jesus Christ, in and by whom that state was to have been confirmed, and so for ever enjoyed; and by whom it is to be so recovered.

2. From hence it appears, there can be no new Law, but what must of necessity entwine, and incorporate into that First Law, and merge into it, so adequate to the being of man, enjoying the holy and blessed God, by Jesus Christ the image of God; such was that Law of not eating the forbidden fruit; it was a Law of trust in Christ the image of God, the Way, and the Truth, and the Life, by way of confirmation, and so was immediately adopted into that Law of Righteousness and

Holiness; the law of faith in Christ the Redeemer, and of repentance is in this sense no new law, but that Old Commandment, and a New Commandment only, by being new illustrated by a more glorious light; but it unites with that Law first given of holiness, in and by Christ the image of God for the enjoying God in conformity to him; now in a way of Redemption, Expiation, and Recovery, and thereby a return to our first state, according to the first Law.

3. From hence it appears, the Everlasting Covenant of God in predestinating a elect number of mankind to be conformed to the image of his Son, cannot be disannulled, or added to, nor taken from by any dispensation or manner of speaking that comes after it, according to that fore-mentioned rule of the Apostle, understanding it of the elect of God, controlling all doubts; so that what Christ was to do as the image of God by way of confirmation, he now does by way of Redemption, by that mighty effectuating image of the Glory of God in Christ by his Spirit.

4. From hence it appears, that Jesus Christ in the first and original right of being, the Head of every man, and the image of the invisible God, by whom, and for whom all things were made, and without whom nothing was made, that was made, and in whom they consist, upholds a present state of the world in the patience, and long-suffering of God; and also bears up, as he pleases, the natural law, in which man was made, enforcing the reasonableness, justice, and equity, to turn by repentance to that God; who leaves not himself without witness, in giving fruitful times, and seasons, and filling men's hearts with food, and gladness, {and so signifies Grace, and Mercy,} and to recover themselves, as far as to the utmost they can to that state of righteousness, of which they find such plain mentions of in their hearts; and finding the shortness of their own power to cast themselves upon Divine Grace, and Help.

And where the light of the glorious Gospel comes according to all degrees of Divine Revelation, the obligation rises higher, and becomes stronger. For the transgression and ruin of human nature does not take off the obligation of duty, but it stands wherein soever God does not immediately execute the penalty, or vouchsafes any remainder of power at first given, or increase, and advantage of that remainder; and wherein soever

men do not thus, there is a just particular, personal condemnation; but yet it remains according to the first standard Law of Creation, every man must be miserable for ever, and die the Death, whoever is not found in the image of God, in Christ in Righteousness, and true holiness.

5. From hence it lastly appears that the elect of God in Jesus Christ must be perfectly restored into a state of Righteousness, and freedom from Guilt, into a state of Holiness and Purity, for the enjoyment of God; and seeing this cannot be in man fallen, sinful, unholy, and so miserable for ever; it must be by the sacrifice, righteousness and obedience of Christ imputed; by the restoration of his Spirit, and all according to Grace, and the riches of Grace, and to the praise of the glory of that Grace, which Adam first refused; but is hereby exalted to a far higher Glory by Jesus Christ appearing thus a Redeemer, a Reconciler, an Eternal Spirit so closely united, and fully declared in Redemption, for the Lord, even Christ, and his Incarnate Spirit is that Spirit changing into his own image from Glory to Glory by that Spirit, who is Himself Jehovah.

That I may now make a nearer approach to resolve this great and weighty question; whether the Gospel can be in a true, proper, and strict sense styled a Law; I will now propose these two heads to discourse it upon.

1. I will show, how far, the Law, as it is a Law, must yet needs join its authority, for and with the Gospel, according to its eternally holy, and righteous nature; and then I will on the other side show, how far the Gospel without any abatement of its purest Gospel-Nature, makes use of the Law, as a most righteous holy Law, to its own most gracious ends.

2. I shall make it yet most evident from Scripture, that the Law can never, as it is Law in the Scripture definings and discourses of it become Gospel; nor on the other side, can the Gospel, as it is Gospel, and drawn out according to the Everlasting Covenant, pass into the nature of Law, according to a Scriptural definition of Law.

I begin with the first head, to show how far the Law cannot, even as Law, but join its authority to the Gospel.

1. That the law of reason and understanding; of righteousness, holiness, goodness, that God hath engraven upon the heart of man, and seated in his conscience, cannot but

establish the Revelation of Christ, and Grace by him, manifested by such a mighty power from Heaven, and asserted by so many infallible proofs to be from God; so full of goodness and grace, above the very Law of Creation itself implanted in man's heart; it cannot, I say, but establish it as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, of both faith, love and obedience; so that in this very regard, it may be truly and properly styled a law of faith and obedience to the Gospel among all nations, to whom it comes, and is most strictly enjoined, and commanded by it; and so the Apostle might most elegantly say, boasting is excluded; by what Law? Of works, viz., the Law as it commands works; nay, by the Law, as it commands Faith, or the embracement of Christ as Saviour, and his righteousness, by mere gift, and of Grace; in which righteousness hath so great honour, and full Satisfaction paid to it, that it cannot but accept, and charge upon all that hear of it the acceptance of it. But because thus faith will stand as a work, though {as I may call it} a post-work, or a work after Sin, I rather understand the Apostle using here the word, law of faith, in a lax and allusive sense, as any doctrine, or Divine manifestation may be called a Law or Principle of Faith.

2. The Law hereupon cannot but enlarge its promises, according to this Divine constitution, for if God has declared, that he gives eternal life to all believers in Christ, who turn from iniquity by repentance, and take hold upon the righteousness of Christ imputed to their persons; the Law must needs join issue with these declarations of God, and with what infinite Truth and Grace have said, and confirm with its own sanctions, all these promises, as earnestly to be desired and laid hold of, yet still this belongs to the Law, as Law, and interferes not with Gospel, as Free Grace.

For as all the commands of the Law are grounded upon the sovereignty and righteousness of God; so are its promises grounded upon the power, truth, goodness, and unchangeableness of God; if then the Gospel declares a righteousness of God, a righteousness of God by faith in Jesus Christ, accepted of God beyond any righteousness by the works of the Law; the very Law itself opens, and enlarges all its promises to that righteous person, by the Righteousness of Christ; and as this Righteousness, on which such a person is

justified, is exceeding unto him, and upon him, as the Apostle speaks; that is, every way overflows him, and so beyond all other righteousnesses; so does the Law extend its promises to the utmost in relation to it, and therefore God is said {as in triumph} to declare herein, and at that very time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believes in Jesus, Rom.3:26, and the Apostle John saith, "if we confess our sins," that is, acknowledge our absolute necessity of such a righteousness by Christ, and receive it, the LORD is faithful and just, even according to the Law of Righteousness to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; so they who receive abundance of Grace, and of the Gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by Jesus Christ, Rom.5:17, not only live, as the Law saith to the man, who doth its works, but reign in life; the promises of the Law being stretched out, and accumulated upon such a person so justified by the transcendent Righteousness of Christ. "That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom.5:21.

3. The Law opens wide its threatenings in the cause of, and on injury done to the Gospel, and the Grace of God revealed in it; for seeing, it is essential to the Law of Righteousness to condemn sinners; it is also essential to it to condemn and adjudge to its punishments according to the degrees of sin, and guilt; for, saith the Apostle, he that transgressed the Law of Moses, died without mercy, under two or three witnesses, and every transgression received a just recompense of reward, that is, according to the degree of guilt and demerit. Of how much sorer punishment suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trod underfoot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant a common thing, and done despite to the Spirit of Grace? Heb.10:28-29. This is plainly according to the Law of Righteousness, according to which also Christ said, it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah. Matt.10:15. Thus we may see how far the Law must needs attend the Gospel with all its authority.

I will now show how the Gospel takes in the Law, and makes use of it for its own great ends, and purposes; upon



account of which the Apostle says, do we make void the Law? Nay we establish it. Rom.3:31.

The Law stands fair in the Gospel, and in its full perfection of breadth, and length; that it may show the glory of the Righteousness and Obedience of Jesus Christ; and also it stands with all its penalty, severity, curse, and condemnation, that it may show the depth of the sufferings of our great Mediator; and interpret to us the agony, wherein he sweat drops of blood, and the meaning of that loud cry, "my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" For, said Christ, "thus in every iota of the revealed will of God, it became him to fulfil all righteousness." Matt.3:15.

2. That it may show to all the glory from which they are fallen, and from which they daily fall lower, and lower; the deformity of their own state; the dread and horror of that ruin, and condemnation of hell, and death, that is so justly come upon sinners, fallen short of that Glory of God; for this holy, righteous, and good Law, of such purity, and cleanness; a fiery Law, a royal Law, a perfect Law of liberty, shows all the hatefulness of sin, and justice of punishment, and condemnation; and all this is in order to humiliation, sight, and sense of sin, conversion from it; and especially to show the great necessity of Christ's redemption, grace, the free gift of righteousness, and justification by him. For thus by the Law is the knowledge of sin; thus the Law worketh wrath; that is, it both stirs up the due apprehension of it, and if not prevented by Pardon and Justification, it calls up vengeance against the offender; wherefore the Law is our schoolmaster, to bring us unto Christ, Gal.3:24, by the severity and rigor of its justice, and as such it is in the hand of the Gospel.

3. That the Gospel may by the Law show that perfect pattern, and exemplar of holiness, and purity of thoughts, words and actions, to which we are to aspire; that cleansing of ourselves from the filthiness of flesh and spirit, to perfect holiness, in the fear of God; that exceeding broad commandment, that sets an end, or bound, showing all other perfection too short, and too narrow compared with itself; and so the Law may be as a rule of holy life, and action, to which we should follow on according to the mark even of perfection itself;

if it could be, to attain the very state of that perfection, that shall be in the resurrection of the dead.

And herein there are four great Gospel ends, aimed at by the Gospel, thus taking the Law under itself.

First. That we may feel a continual necessity of making recourse to the blood of Christ, the fountain set open for sin and for uncleanness; because, by this holy Law, there is a discovery of daily defilements, failings, falls, imperfections, and infirmities; concerning which, there can be no atonement between God and us, but by the blood of the Lamb, offered by the Eternal Spirit, and his appearing in that blood before the very face of God for us in heaven; for on the least failing, or offence, the Law hath nothing to offer us; so that there can be nothing but condemnation; on this account therefore we find in the Gospel so many of the Laws severities, that we may be continually awakened to go to Christ.

Secondly. That we may find inability in ourselves to do anything suitable, or agreeable to that holy Law, which commands with an astonishing and admirable excellency of holiness, but gives not the least power, or strength to perform what it commands; and in both respects, the Apostle may be very well understood, if there had been a Law that could have given life, Gal.3:21, verily righteousness should have been by the Law. But the Law that commands, and gives not power, is therefore called a letter that kills. II Cor.3:6.

Thirdly. That herein the Gospel may show itself to be a Gospel indeed; in the ministration of righteousness opposite to the Law, the ministration of condemnation; and in the ministration of life, and power, by the Spirit giving strength to do what is commanded; and so enabling the spirits of saints to become the Epistle, and Gospel of Christ; ministered by the servants of Christ in preaching the New Testament, but written not with ink, or in the leaves of the Bible, but with the Spirit of the Living God; and not in tables of stone, but in the fleshly tables of the heart, II Cor.3:3; and therefore is the Gospel in all its most proper ways of speaking so constantly interlineated with Christ, and his Spirit.

Fourthly. Seeing what even the Spirit is pleased to vouchsafe in the present state, is so much below the very glory, the Gospel holds out; there is a continual incitation, the Gospel

sets before us to desire that change from the beginning glory of the present state, to the glory, that shall be in the perfect state, of the Kingdom of Christ; and on this account is that future state, so often mentioned, when indeed with a face perfectly open, we shall behold as in a mirror, not as in ordinary mirrors, our own natural faces, but Jesus Christ the image of God in his own glory; and we now are in degrees, and shall be perfectly changed into the same image from glory begun now, II Cor.3:18, to the perfection of the same glory in the kingdom of Christ, as by that Spirit Jehovah. And this gives us the true excellency of the Gospel; the Law, like our ordinary mirrors, shows our own faces by that light, which first indeed represents what we ought to be, but we not being that, it reproves and condemns such sinners, or imperfect saints, as the best are; but it shows no glorious image in Christ, with an efficacious changing Grace and Power, but this the Gospel does for us.

4. The Gospel takes the Law into itself that it may, though it be in itself a ministration of righteousness, and life, and spirit; yet that it may by the Law show the greatness of the sin of unbelief, and impenitency, rejection of itself, and refusal of its proclamations of Grace.

And this it does on two great reasons.

1. That all those manifestations of the sin and danger of an unbelieving, impenitent state, may be rational instruments, and conveyances, in the hand of the Spirit, of that power of faith, and repentance, flowing from itself in the New Testament into the hearts of the elect.

2. That the Gospel may have in readiness the Law to revenge every disobedience against itself; and yet preserve its own high title of the New Testament, and the Covenant of Grace; for as the Lord saith, I accuse you not, you have one that accuses you, even Moses in whom you trust, Jn.5:45; and I judge you not, the words that I have spoken, Jn.12:48, they shall judge you at the last day, viz., in the virtue and the authority of that Law of Righteousness, which, as hath been shown, cannot but pass along with that so gracious Gospel Dispensation.

And thus when the Gospel hath made proclamation of itself, and all the Grace of it without the accompanying Power of Effectual Grace in saving efficacy, the Law and Justice,

according to it, seizes upon the sinner for sin, against that eternal righteousness essential to itself; and against the unspeakable Grace of the Gospel, with dread-fullest aggravations of condemnation; and herein Jesus Christ the Eternal Son of God in our nature is the Righteous Judge at that day; though here on earth he judged not, being come not to judge, but to save.

And his judgment is according to that law, seated in the heart, and thoughts of men; and yet according to the Gospel, as the Apostle speaks, declaring that his judgment, agreeable with the law written in men's hearts, and so in the word of God; which very law written in the heart, and thoughts of men, accusing or excusing, is now in the hand of Christ, and of the Gospel to its own great ends of drawing them to Christ, who are his, and leading them under the conduct of his Spirit; and God is said there to judge the secrets of men's hearts according to the Gospel, concerning that light and sense of natural conscience; because the Grace of the Gospel both exalts this light; and because also according to the saving effects of the Gospel upon these powers of natural conscience, so preserved by Christ, every man is found to honour, praise, and glory; or else falls under the revelation of the righteous judgment of God upon their hard and impenitent hearts, and ways; by which they have treasured up wrath against the day of wrath.

And of all things in both states, Jesus Christ is most righteously and properly constituted the Judge, as shall be further made out.

But notwithstanding the Law and the Gospel, do thus far join themselves, one to another, yet {which will come up close to the decision of this question,} the Law can never pass into the nature of the Gospel, nor can the Gospel become a Law.

First, it is most evident that the Law can never become Gospel, or of the excellent nature of it; as shall be seen in a brief comparison of the one with other, in these following particulars.

1. The Gospel, or New Testament gives the image of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; an image of the admirable beauty, and life, in Christ the Wisdom of God, the Righteousness of God, and the Power of God, perfect, increasable, invariable, eternal, ready to communicate itself in richest abundance to all the election of God; but the Spirit of God itself

represents the Law, a holy, and righteous rule, as it must so needs be; but it is engraven only in tables of stone, or written with ink; for Jesus Christ, the image of God, in which Adam was made, withdrew upon the sin, and fall of Adam; and what Adam had, was lost, and defaced, so that there is a rule of glory, but no image of glory; as in the Gospel, that by the Covenant of Grace is to communicate itself.

2. The Gospel having such a communication of righteousness, so high, so perfect, can accept a sinner by putting upon him a perfect righteousness and obedience, and so blot out all his transgressions, and imperfections by a full and free pardon; the penalty being fully answered, and discharged by Christ's death and sufferings, even as the righteousness is fulfilled by him, who is that image of glory; but the Law being only a rule and no more, can accept no less, than a whole and perfect obedience; for the least offence being {as they speak} a convulsion or breach of the whole frame of righteousness, the Law can pronounce nothing but condemnation to a sinner, who hath not that full and perfect righteousness of the Gospel to offer to it; but solicits, and stirs up, and works wrath by the discovery of sin; and it stains all imperfect righteousness by declaring the offender in one point guilty of all; it brings to nothing all outward righteousness, by showing the very first desire, or coveting to be sin.

3. The inward grace of Christ, manifesting itself in a life conducive to Gospel holiness and righteousness, so absolutely vital in every person redeemed by Christ, and united to him, is not only enjoined upon him by a letter that kills, by commanding, and giving no power; but is conveyed to him by a quickening spirit, changing him into the same image from beginning glory, to perfect glory; as by that Lord, who is that Spirit Jehovah; one with that spirit, and who himself is that image, and that Spirit; so that everyone redeemed by Christ is the Epistle and Gospel of Christ itself, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; this the Law can never do; it commands, and supposes the power, which was once given; but the Law never considers the ruin by the fall, nor takes compassion of it; so it can never become a Gospel; for the Gospel brings every good work from the treasury of eternal love, and grace, from the blood of the Everlasting Covenant by a

meeting of the spirit of the Gospel in the heart of every vessel elected in Christ; and from providential opportunities, and advantages of such holy action, and good work, according to the will of God.

4. The reward therefore, and the whole procedure of judgment is according to the Gospel; of, and according to mere grace to all the elect of God, though in, and with a splendour of holiness and purity; even to all those who are partakers of the blessing of the Gospel in Christ; but all is solemnly turned to condemnation, and aggravation of punishment; even to, and upon all those who are not the evangelized, the children of the Gospel by election; and yet in a way of clearest justice, and righteousness, according to their works, in that righteous judgment; as shall presently be, in a particular head of this discourse made out concerning that great day.

5. The Gospel hath this most illustriously peculiar to it; that it touches nothing, even that is in its own nature most severe, and farthest from Grace, but it by its high dominion of Grace, subordinates it to the ends, purposes, and service of Grace; even the Law, Sin, and Death, that where they abound, Grace does much more abound; where sin by the Law does reign unto death, all, who receive abundance of Grace, and of the gift of Righteousness, shall much more reign in life by Jesus Christ, and Grace itself so reigns, as therefore it hath been made out; even the Law is throughout taken into this great service of the Gospel, for the great ends and purposes of Grace; but now the Law takes nothing under its cognizance, but so far as it comes under its hand, with relation to fallen man, it turns it, like itself, into a killing letter, and into a ministration of condemnation.

Let us therefore consider the most different influence of the Law; in three dispensations that comprehend all the dealings, or manner of treaties, God hath had with man, since the transgression of Adam.

1. That which is the most universal dispensation of God towards all mankind, and is generally styled the Law, or light of nature, or as the Apostle calls it, the work of the Law written in the heart, wherein all should be doing by nature the things contained in the Law, men being a law to themselves; and this, though it be the lowest of Divine dispensations to men; in order to recovery of the elect, in order to human society for the elect's

sake; yet it is general to all; only in children, and idiots, it is hidden and close folded up, for want of the use of the faculties, else it is the same; and it is by the interposal of the Mediator for the elect's sake, that there should be a world under the patience and long-suffering of God; and by the same patience and long-suffering there was a reserve, and reprieve from the utter loss of the image of God, as from Christ communicated; on account of which he is said to enlighten every man that comes into the world; which light is capable of more and more natural degrees of clearness, and power, if closely attended to; whereby the world becomes habitable by being under the Government of that Eternal Wisdom, by which kings reign, princes, Prov.8:15, and all the judges of the earth decree justice.

Now this reserve of the image of God in man, as it falls under the Law, or the strict rule of holiness, serves only to self-accusation, as to every particular person, that hath not acted up to that law, and light within; and yet still if they did live up to the highest degrees, it could not make a recovery or restoration of any man without Christ; for without even the least acceptance of what is done according to it; it only aggravates what was not done to the height; so that that accusation of thoughts the Apostle speaks of, the Law hath its power over; and the excusing or apologies of thoughts are from the Grace of the Gospel, which does allow them an abatement of condemnation, for any good thing found in them, or done by them; and therefore the Apostle says, God will judge the secrets of all hearts at that day according to this Gospel by Jesus Christ, Rom.2:16; showing, that with relation to this light given by the Mediator, and for his sake, God will proceed with great Gospel equity and mercy; which may be another, and greater sense of those words before given, to all those, who have laid together those remainders, or reserves of the light of nature, and the patience, and goodness of God; of which he hath given so many witnesses; so that it shall be more tolerable for such, than others; who have trodden all these under foot, and run into all excess of riot, cruelties, and all uncleanness with greediness.

But in all the elect, the Grace of the Gospel makes a much higher use of this light, for it lifts them up above it into a new creation, and regeneration by the Spirit of Life, and Grace, from Christ; and of this the Apostle discourses after the mentions of

the law of nature, and the Gentiles conformity to it in some parts; the Grace of the Gospel turns the uncircumcision into circumcision of the spirit, as he goes on.

2. Let us consider the great difference between the Law and the Gospel in that, which Scripture in the New Testament so universally stiles the Law, viz., the whole frame of the Mosaic Law; and as this was purely by itself, and as it did not look to Christ, it is represented, as that rigorous and severe dispensation, that is, the killing letter, the ministration of death, of condemnation, the Law that worketh wrath; by which is the knowledge of sin, by which no flesh can be justified in his sight; a Law of works done by our own power, in number, weight, and measure; or else it brings under the curse; a Law therefore, that can by no means give life, and so righteousness cannot be by it unto justification of life; and all the ceremonies are, but so many labels, hand-writings, and seals against us, and contrary to us; binding us to keep the whole Law, so opposite to Christ that where they are observed since reversed by the Gospel, he can profit us nothing; opposite to grace, so that he that adheres to them for righteousness, falls from Grace, and is under the works of the Law, and under the curse; as the Apostle says, whoever sins having the Law, perishes by it, and with having it. It is a Covenant, that is found fault with, because God finds fault with them, who are under it for breaking it; and yet all this time the Law is holy, just and good; and therefore there was a glory in regard of its so intimate, and essential goodness, that reflected a glory on the face of Moses, when God gave the two tables; as it were, in remembrance of the first glory of Adam; but it soon vanished into a ministry of death and condemnation, showing how soon Adam fell from the glory of God; and yet even this whole Mosaic frame was designed with all its ceremonies to lead to Christ, according to all the service of the Law to the Gospel, when it is in the hand of the Gospel, as hath been before explained; in which regard the face of Moses shone, receiving the rays of the Divine Glory in the face of Jesus Christ; but because the efficacy of Gospel Grace was only to the elect, the Law became superior, and the ceremonies thickened as a veil upon that glory; embalmed by the veil on the face of Moses, which hid the glory of Christ; which veil so sadly lies on the minds of the Jews, blinding them to this day. But this Law being



in the hand of the Gospel to the elect, was a Law directing the soul to Christ, making wise, and unveiling the way of Life, as all its ceremonies led to Christ, and his glory shone through them all; although, because it was not a dispensation high and spiritual enough for that glory of Grace, they saw, that glory was to be done away in Christ, and not to remain; and therefore, even as God did often undervalue all the legal state in comparison with Gospel Grace; so did his saints also in the time of the Old Testament, but under the Gospel it is done away; so the substantial goodness of it was then, and ever shall be in the hand of the Gospel; as hath been more fully set out in the last head of discourse.

3. Let us now lastly duly weigh, how far even the dispensation of the Gospel becomes Law to them, who by not being in Christ, are under the Law, although they have the light of the Gospel vouchsafed to them in the outward administration; for to whomsoever the Gospel is hid or veiled, and a savour of death, they are left to the dominion of the Law over them, however the Gospel be never so clearly proclaimed to them; the Law then having nothing to do with the promises of Grace, it urges upon us, whatever is to be done by ourselves; it presses the free declaration of Christ, and of his righteousness, a conformity to his holiness, and to his holy precepts, as the only way to recover ourselves; but it having no power of promise, according to the Gospel in its own proper ordination, or dispensation, it calls upon us in our own strength and improvements of ourselves to obtain both righteousness and life; and so forces upon us the manner of works, to seek pardon of sin, righteousness and sanctification by Christ; which is turning the Gospel into a Law, to all, who are not the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ; hereupon it proceeds to aggravate guilt and condemnation, and to make it more tolerable for any, than for those who having had the Gospel, have not yet obtained Justification, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Holiness, by and from the Gospel according to it.

But now the Gospel proceeds quite otherwise with all those, who are the evangelized, truly the children of promise; for it gives all to them freely, and as a ministration of righteousness, of life, and of the Spirit; even that very righteousness, and spirit of Gospel truth directing them to all

righteousness in Christ; as it does not set the elect of God to correct their faces, the face of their hearts and lives by it, as by a glass, or mirror, showing them what they are; but it presents Jesus Christ the image of God, who is also the Lord, that Spirit changing the saints into the same image; though indeed it be, but a beginning glory, onwards still to perfection of glory; so that there are rays of glory shining from Christ upon the soul, and the spirit of every one, united to Christ, which are far greater than the rays of glory seen on the face of Moses, shining from God in his Law, by his image Christ, as Mediator, as the Eternal Word in our nature, and as in the first creation, our Representative and Eternal Surety in the New Covenant, and New Creation; so that glory was none, being so much exceeded by Christ as Mediator; which is also a remaining glory, always, going on to the perfection of glory.

Whatever therefore of righteousness arises any way to, or in man, not thus derived from Christ, Scripture calls it flesh, as being man's righteousness, not the righteousness of God; and the righteousness of flesh, that is, of human erection, not God's righteousness; and so the holiness rising from men's faculties, and power, is born of flesh, and so is flesh, and is not spirit, not after the Spirit; therefore it cannot see, enjoy, or enter into the kingdom of God. And this must needs be plainly our Lord's sense, and thus he does not speak of flesh, corrupt flesh, as it speaks lust, and foul corruption; for that cannot pretend to have anything to do in the matter of righteousness, and holiness; but by flesh, is to be understood creature-righteousness and holiness, as in our present fallen state; and in regard of this, no flesh, {that is, man with all his powers, even of soul in this sinful lapsed nature; whatever is not of God in Christ is this flesh,} I say, no such flesh shall boast, or glory in his presence as having obtained the glory of God, nor be justified in his sight.

Now by all this, it plainly appears, the Gospel is so distinct, in each particular from the Law, that it can no more return back into a Law, according to Scripture discourse, when it speaks strictly of Law, as Law, than the Law become Gospel; yet I shall further argue it more particularly, that the Gospel cannot be a Law in the proper Scripture sense of a Law; although it is to be acknowledged, the Law can never cease to

be, because it is eternal righteousness; and it hath, and ought to have power upon all the reserve of the light, and law of nature, and upon all the improvements of it from a general dispensation of Grace, as the helps of truth revealed in the word of God; yea, even the very saints, and servants of Christ are hereby kept within bounds at any time, or in any acts, wherein the Grace of Christ is not present to them more abundantly; they are hereby acted to their duty; and the supreme wisdom and grace of the Gospel subordinates it to its own purposes, both in the elect, and in the non-elect, as hath been shown.

And this answers all cavils about the doctrine of Free Grace, as if the teaching of it were Antinomianism, and let men loose either to carnal licentiousness, ease and security, till the Grace of God should come, and work. But even while the eye of the soul is supremely upon Free Grace, the Free Gift of Righteousness, and of the Spirit; yet the Law binds every soul to its ultimum posse, the all it can do; and the Gospel subordinates the Law to engage men so to do; and though this be no condition, or qualification, on which Free Grace is determined; yet it is oftentimes the way, and method of Supreme Grace to come upon such motion, and action of the soul; not for the sake of that, but for its own sake, therefore to excite thereunto; and it is one of the wise methods of God's government of the world to make it habitable for the sake of the elect, to influence the hearts, and actions of men either by that light of nature, or by his Gospel; all which I have prefixed, as necessary to remove all scruple, and doubt of what is to come after in the proof of this, that the Gospel is not a Law.

For by what is said, it appears, the Gospel and the Law are joined; one to and with another, in sweetest consent, so that all in Christ are under Law to Christ, and neither entrench upon, nor interfere, one with the other; but if they are divided or set one in opposition to the other, either Antinomianism truly so called, or a covenant of works is brought in; even as the Jews separating that Law from Christ, turned it to their own great ruin into a covenant of works; and the Apostle intimates everywhere the great danger of turning the Grace of God into licentiousness, or proclaiming a liberty to sin, that grace may abound; if we do not subordinate the Law under the Gospel.

But thus joining, and setting them in a consent, and union in the great end; the glory of Grace from the foundation of the world; we honour, and establish both; and plainly understand, that the Gospel is a Covenant of Grace, a ministration of righteousness, life, and spirit; and yet hath so many admirable incentives of holiness, such powerful commands and exhortations to it; as also to faith in Christ, and repentance, so many dreadful threatenings and denunciations, and so severe a judicature at the last, not in itself, but by the ministry of the Spirit, in that the Law is so prepared, as to serve it fully and adequately thereunto; and the Gospel only, {as hath been said,} is a ministration of righteousness and life.

Objection: Now, if any should say, by what means can the Gospel thus preach the Law, and hold out all the perfections and severities of it, both as to itself, as a declaration of free Grace only; or as to the Law, as a Law of righteousness, and not be turned into a Law?

Answer: The Gospel being the manifestation of life, and salvation in Christ, it must needs come with a great glory of light, and truth, on everything; wherein the whole nature of life and death, happiness and misery, that human nature can be concerned in, stands; so that though, it is not a Law, it is yet a doctrine of the greatest amplitude, compass and extent in all things, that pertain to life and godliness, or on the other side, to sin, and death; so that as the Apostle says, it hath brought life and immortality to light, II Tim.1:10; so it hath brought all the other things any way related thereto to light; so then it is out of all doubt, whenever the Gospel comes, a great light comes, like the morning spread on the mountains, it is therefore called, the dayspring from on high, Lk.1:78, opposed to night and darkness, and the valley of the shadow of death; and so that there is a support of, and in all our greater illuminations, of natural conscience, by that Eternal Word, enlightening every man that comes into the world; and on this very account were those more heroic efforts of natural light, and moral philosophy, by Seneca, Plutarch, Plotinus, Simplicius, &c., about the very time of the spread of the Gospel light by the Apostles.

I come therefore to decide that noble question, as I stile it, whether the Gospel can bear or comport with the true notion or sense of a law. To answer this question, there must be first a

due understanding, and notion of a law; in the general, law may be applied to any doctrine, or determinate frame, constitution, or settlement, that cannot be changed, or varied. And in this regard the Gospel may be called a law.

But this is but a very general and loose notion of a law. There is a more strict sense of it; and it imports three things.

1. A rule of action, given by a just authority that must be observed.

2. It supposes a power resident in the person under that command, and therefore it expects obedience without any further assistance, or gift of power, to enable in the obedience.

3. Rewards, or punishments are suspended upon the obedience, or disobedience, and a just judgment must accordingly be given.

But such a Law, as this the Gospel, a Covenant of Grace, cannot be, as may be argued upon these great accounts.

Argument 1. There can be no law given, no rule of holy action, but it must needs merge and fall into the Law of Righteousness, and be the same with it, being so perfect, {and so fulfilled in Christ, as hath been shown,} and so that upon a supposal of a new application of Grace, the obedience of faith, Rom.16:26, is as much ordered by the Law, as any of the most natural moral duties of fear of God, or righteousness; and the same may be said of repentance.

Argument 2. The supposal of the Gospel's being a new law, necessarily supposes a new power given, as large as that of the Law; so that whoever teaches the Gospel a law, must also assert, all to whom the Gospel comes, must have a power vouchsafed enabling them to faith and repentance; which seeing Mr. Williams disowns, as given to all the elect in Christ, the argument, is very heavy upon him; but, as I have stated, faith and repentance within the first Law, the first power given obliges without any power vouchsafed anew, even as to all other duties of obedience, as hath been said.

For the further illustration of the point, that a new law requires new power.

Let it be supposed Adam had no power of faith, or repentance, ever given him; he could not forfeit from his posterity, what he never had.

If there be then a law of faith, and repentance given, there must be a power of faith and repentance answering that law; and so there must be such universal power of Grace given, as may answer that law in all, to whom it extends, as a law.

But now, let us look upon faith, and repentance to be a law included within the universal Law of Righteousness, as I do; and as must needs be done, viz., upon two suppositions.

1. That man is fallen into sin.

2. That God is pleased to provide a Mediator and a Pardon, and so to accept the righteousness of another, it will then follow, the faith and repentance commanded, are but the exertions of that power of the image of God first given; for the same power that tends to conservation in the first righteousness, works to restitution to that righteousness, when lost, upon any possibility of recovery.

Herein therefore is the grace of the Mediator to mankind, that he hath shored up the lapsed faculties of human nature universally; that there are some reserves of that law, and light of the first creation, some of the characters, and first impressions for very great ends, both as to the government of the world; as also to fasten the Grace of the Gospel unto, to whom it comes; and seeing the patience and longsuffering and bounty of God to mankind is a witness of some merciful intention.

Finding therefore such motions of the law of nature within, and of merciful providence without; here is so much of the general goodness of God leading men to repentance, as will leave even the Gentiles without excuse at that day.

Now then God requiring of fallen man no other thing, than what he gave him power for at first, and what he hath by the Mediator sustained him in some reserves of, according to the thoughts, therefore accusing, or excusing in the day of Christ, and according to God judging the secrets of all hearts by the Gospel, preserving these remaining's of the law of nature, shall all be determined upon, at that day.

And thus everything stands clear and fair, according to the discourses of Scripture, according to sound reason; whereas all else must be full of trouble, and be antagonistic, against the Grace of the Gospel, as against that so evident experience of God's giving the very light of the Gospel by his own Purpose and

Grace; and those laws of human justice and equity, of which we have so inward a sense; and surely in everything it appears, that the first law of righteousness, continues, and stands fast; thus its authority falls freely with the Gospel, either as there is any witness of it among the heathen; or as it is published, and made known to any by the immediate preaching and reading of it; and as the Gospel for all its great uses, and ends takes it into itself; but yet still it is itself a ministration only of Life, of Righteousness, and of the Spirit, and the transcript of the everlasting gracious purposes of God from eternity.

Argument 3. If the Gospel be a new law, it must have a promulgation, as universal, as it is a law, and seeing that the name of Christ is the only name under heaven, given to the children of men, whereby they can be saved; if it were a law, it would certainly be by the goodness and equity of God proclaimed and made known to all mankind, even to every person, for faith, repentance, and obedience; but as it is a counterpart of that supreme purpose of Grace in God towards his elect, and not a law, it is enough that it be made known to so many as are called according to purpose, to all others God is at freedom; for even the general patience, and bounty of God are sufficient manifestations of some mercy, that should excite men to seek after God, and to turn from sin, and leaving them inexcusable if they do not; that natural law requiring it, when there are such hopes, to seek after God, as far as they can, according to those hopes, and manifestations, even as in all natural duties; and the case is but the same in perishing without Gospel, as in perishing without Law; for thus the Apostle argues, while he is discoursing with pagans, {Rom.2:3-4,} according to natural light. But this promulgation is not sufficient for a new law of so great good to all mankind.

Argument 4. The Gospel, if it were a new law, it must needs be a law of works, and indeed else it were no law; for though it be founded in Grace, and though it be a law accepting sincerity in the place of perfect obedience; yet it must, if it be a law, {as some mistakenly speak and would have it,} resolve itself into the last issue, into something done by ourselves, by our own power; even though we are assisted by the Grace of the Spirit in it; yet there must be a power in us to accept, or refuse that assistance; and if so, beside the Apostle's constant

remonstrance to any such works, or law of works in the Gospel Covenant. 1. It is evident by Adam falling under the dominion of sin, how hazardous the smallest dependence on our own created will is. So the promise could not be sure to the seed, as the Apostle discourses. Rom.4:16. 2. The reward would be of debt, and not of Grace, because to him that worketh, though in the least of work, as the Apostle expressly says, it is so. Rom.4:4. 3. There would arise cause of boasting to him that should so work; because by that part how little soever, it should be of work, he improves, and exerts his power so, as thousands do not, which gives cause of boasting; now there is nothing the Apostle more excludes than boasting, as most contrary to the design of God in the Gospel.

Argument 5. If the Gospel be a law, it is necessarily supposed to be founded in the Grace of the Redeemer, and in everything weighed out by him, that it should need no further grace for the pardon of sins against it; it being a law purchased by the blood of the Redeemer. Now, if no sin against the Law of the Gospel, as that Law is apprehended a law of all evangelical obedience, have the benefit of a pardon, how dreadful were all our case; for if this Law allow no pardon, it is expressly assured, there remains no more sacrifice for sin, but that of the Gospel; and if that extends not to sins against the Gospel, there would remain nothing to us, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation. If it be said, there is no sin against this Law, but final unbelief, impenitency, or insincerity, or an apostasy including all these, how imperfect then is the evangelical Law that hath command only upon those final results of our state and case; and the subjects of it are either left to the law of works in all other cases; or else being under no law, there is no transgression but those fore-named.

But if the Law do so ratify and confirm the Gospel in those grand points of Faith; and Repentance, by its own authority, and in all things else stand the immutable rule of holiness; then the Grace of the New Covenant does offer Pardon and Remission, by the blood of that Everlasting Covenant, and needs not be a law, but a fountain of pardon, and remission, and of power and strength only, as hath been explained; enabling to every act of obedience, both of faith and repentance, and all holiness, and making atonement for every disobedience, and imperfection;



which it does not prevent. From all which is much the fairer and clearer state of the case in reason, and more agreeable to the Scripture, duly considered and compared.

Add hereunto, that the condemnation of every unbeliever is according to the Law of righteousness, because he loves darkness rather than light, in that his deeds are evil, Jn.3:19, and so he dares not come to the light; this, saith Christ, is the condemnation. And thus, if the Law does ratify and confirm the Gospel with its own proper authority, as hath been asserted; every offence seemingly against the sanction of Grace is condemned by the Law, as primarily against itself, and so the Covenant of Grace is applied to for the pardon of it, and as against itself; which is all Grace, as a Covenant, and hath nothing of Law; but as sin against the Gospel it cannot but be against that law to refuse grace when proclaimed in the Gospel by Christ, as will fully appear by the next argument.

Argument 6. The Apostle says, the Gospel, or New Testament, truly, properly, or strictly defined, is a ministration only of righteousness, of life, of the spirit, not of the letter that killeth, but of the Spirit that giveth life; it can therefore be no law, except upon itself; for if it minister life, righteousness, spirit only; if it write not in tables of stone, nor with ink in paper, but in the tables of hearts, and by the Spirit of the living God; and if it is not only written in the heart, {as the Apostle says, the Law is written in the hearts of all men; which may be turned by disobedience to it, into an accusing record;} but gives a mighty Spirit enabling, and a gracious Pardon remitting, as is evident by the whole Covenant of Grace; if all this be so, then whatever it charges, it charges upon itself; that it hath not so ministered as it takes upon to minister; and that it hath not ministered as such a ministration, as it asserts itself to be to all, that are within it as its proper subjects; it must fault itself, as the other covenant was found fault with, because they broke it that were under it. But seeing this cannot be supposed of so glorious a ministration; the Gospel cannot be a Law requiring and condemning, when not obeyed; but a Covenant of Grace ministering Righteousness and Pardon, and not Condemnation, for whatever is against the Law, on the Gospel account, as well as on the Law's account; and so giving power, and enabling to whatever the Law requires on its own, or the Gospel account.

Lastly, ministering righteousness, and pardon in whatever, it ministers only in degrees, and not to perfection.

Having thus determined upon the second head, that however the Law and the Gospel unite, one with the other in several great concernments, and interests of both; yet neither can the Law pass into Gospel, nor the Gospel become a Law. I come therefore to the third head to make out, that the humiliation under the sight and sense of sin, effected by the spirit of bondage; faith in Christ, and repentance, are not qualifications, or conditions of an interest in Christ or Justification by his righteousness, but are effluxes from electing love, and from Christ the Mediator, and from his righteousness and redemption; and whoever has a sense of these great concernments of eternity, is not to wait for these as qualifications, or conditions, but to hasten to Christ, to fly to him for refuge, to be found in him, and look to Christ for all these great effects, and to expect them from him; as such effects; for such they are to all the elect; though to the non-elect, they are branches of the same eternally righteous Law; upon promulgation of the Gospel of salvation by Christ, and upon the very acknowledgment of Christ as a Saviour, and the general sense of our lost state.

I lay in the non-elect also, a uniformity in the order, of first looking to Christ upon those two great declarations of the Gospel. 1. That all men are lost and undone in themselves; which rises up also from evident, even sense and experience. 2. That in Jesus Christ there is life and salvation for sinners; from whence also it naturally follows in reason and true arguing, as the Apostle observes; if one died for all, then were all dead, II Cor.5:14; so that proposition, that Christ hath died for sinners, may be in Divine Declaration, as well first, as the other, viz., that all are lost without Christ; the very preaching of Christ, infers in all true judgment, as the Apostle reasons, that all are lost in themselves; I know not then why in regard of its dignity, it may not be first, that Jesus Christ died for sinners; or why not so in most absolute consideration? For though it is true in our state, our lost state is before the proclamation of salvation in Christ in time; yet Grace in Christ is first in the purpose of God before the world began, and the fall, and of our lost state upon it, came in after. I know not therefore why that great

proposition, God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him, should not perish, but have eternal life, should not be throughout, the supreme, and first, and carry the other in it, that then all were dead, and when the proposition the Apostle gives, that Christ died for the chief of sinners, is primary, then the belief and certainty thereof shall follow; and the abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness, draw, compel, and invigorate the reception thereof.

I say therefore, even to non-elect, as well as to the elect, the first thing to be proclaimed is Christ himself, to be received and believed on; he then is the foundation and fountain of all, even of that which is called condition and qualification; for if we do but weigh two things, it must needs resolve us in this matter.

Argument 1. If redemption be redemption, it must itself be before all qualifications or conditions, else it were not redemption; according as Christ is said to be the Author of salvation to them, who, {he being the Author of it,} obey him; forasmuch, as that is so great a point of salvation, and he the Author of all salvation, is therefore of that, viz., obeying him. Does not the Father draw all the elect to Christ? Is not the Grace of our Lord abundant with faith and love that are not brought to him, but in him? Does not the eye, the look of the Grace of Christ upon any sinner move him as Peter, to sorrow after God, to faith, repentance, and a humbled sense of sin? And therefore what is a sinner to do but to look to Christ to be saved, to look on him whom he hath pierced? And even such prescriptions, to look to him, to come to him, are declared to souls, principally though our duty be included, but in attendance on the Grace of Christ, to see how, where, and on whom it will move; and in the very nature of the thing, it is impossible that any qualification should be beforehand to him, who is come not only to save, but to seek that which is lost. It is most true therefore if any be Christ's, these things shall in their time be all manifested in them, for they are prepared for them.

Argument 2. What is it by which we are redeemed? Is it not the righteousness, sufferings, death, blood and obedience of Christ? Must not these then be in their power, motion, and actuation before anything else? Seeing by faith we are saved, which is the gift of God; must not the Author of salvation and of

faith give that? And does God give any such grace, by which we are saved, but through the redemption of Christ, for his sake? And because he hath first given his Son, does not he give all these to unite us to him? Does not his blood purchase, and bestow that faith in his blood? Must it not needs be then true; as we believe that we are justified by Christ; so also most true, that those sheep for whom Christ hath laid down his life, those he must bring in; and how are they brought in, but by believing? If therefore they are brought in by faith, he that must bring them in, must take effectual care, that they may believe; and seeing he laid down his life for his sheep, and gives them eternal life, all must be on the same title, and tenure, viz., his life laid down for the sheep; so Faith is no more a Condition, or Qualification, than Justification, or Eternal Life, nor any other grace preparatory, but what Free Grace itself undertakes for.

Objection. But it may be said there is an order of the links of the chain of salvation; and vocation {wherein faith and repentance are contained} is in order before Justification, and so may stand as a qualification, and condition to Justification, and none may presume to touch at Justification or Pardon till they are qualified by faith, and repentance, given in vocation before Justification.

Answer. It hath been already acknowledged that there is a wise and holy order in the several links of the chain of Salvation, but not by such a way of dependence, as should lessen the dignity, the equal determination, and certainty of each part in the eternal fore-knowledge, and electing love of God in Christ. Accordingly therefore, it is acknowledged there is an order of vocation, or calling before Justification, Rom.8:30, and of wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, I Cor.1:30, but this calling is the first change of the state of every elect person from sin to God; the delivery from the power of darkness, and translation into the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, the dear Son of God; for he hath called us, saith the Apostle, out of darkness into his marvellous light, I Pet.2:9, it is the turning from darkness to light, it is the cutting out of the olive, and vine, wild by nature, and the implanting into the True Vine, and Olive Tree; it is the beginning of faith, and repentance, and of all holiness, and sense of eternity, {though they have a further state in sanctification, and distinct from calling,} which

is the true passing from death to life, and always abides so. It is a voice alarming the soul at the first. It is the voice of the Son of God, quickening whom he will; not a condition or qualification, but a holy calling, even unto eternal glory. It is wisdom without any change, as the word certainly assures; there can be no more return to folly. It is a calling in this regard, it is a certain abiding therein with God; so Scripture everywhere speaks of it; it is a calling to glory, and virtue; a calling to obtain salvation; so saith the Apostle, you see your calling; who hath called us with an holy calling, called according to purpose, as he who hath called you is holy; all these expressions plainly show, that this calling is a settled establishment of Grace, even as Justification, and together with it entering into glory; so that to make calling a mere qualification, or condition, is to degrade it from the high dignity that Scripture hath invested it with; I account it the first hand of Grace still holding the soul, so that though there be Justification, and Sanctification, a work of faith fulfilled with power, repentance never to be repented of, and the whole way of sanctification in Christ; yet that first work is itself secured by Grace, as all the rest of the workings of Grace; so that, as the Apostle says, the gifts and calling of God are without repentance, it is never recalled; and in the same manner may be discoursed concerning sanctification. It is no qualification for, or condition of glory, but there is a real self-subsistence of each of these, for their own worth and excellency; and though they are seated for, and connected one with the other in infinite wisdom in Christ, Eph.1:8, yet they are also independent, and self-subsistent also, in the Divine Decree; each one by itself, and all from Free Grace.

This then assures, none of those great links of salvation, however joined one to another, but yet of themselves, and by themselves, but all of Free Grace, because none of them go off, but remain together with all the others to eternity. The very first call hath an eternal abiding; Justification by the righteousness of Christ, sanctification by the Spirit in Christ abiding, and continuing, even as glory itself; calling as free as Justification, for except that grand foundation, being of God in Christ, by eternal election, what qualification or condition, can there be of cutting out of the wild olive or vine, unless to be in the wilderness, or in darkness, are made a condition? Sanctification,

or making perfect in every good work to do his will, and working in us what is well-pleasing in his sight is as much secured as glorification is; and Justification may as well be called a condition of Sanctification, {for God sanctifies none but whom he justifies,} as calling a condition of Justification, or Sanctification of Glorification.

Seeing then {cutting off only some particularities} as proper to the present state; all these are of God in Christ, and are found together in the state of Grace here, and perfected each distinct in glorification; and glorification distinct from them all, and by itself in that illustrious state of saints; superadded to all that perfection of Grace, even in Glory; I may conclude none of them is either a qualification or condition, but of and by itself of Free Grace. And this is caution, limitation, prevention of deception sufficient; that no one part can be without the other.

Scripture therefore speaking of these things so freely, so manifold; it shows all is alike, free-gift, free-grace; all is in connection, and inseparable concatenation, and indefinable certainty to the elect; and Grace is displayed sometimes one way, and sometimes another, as to appearance or manifestation. But whoever is to be advised or directed to the most wise and hopeful method, in case of doubt; it is to lie at the foot of God through Christ, for all Grace from first to last; and not to stay for, or rest in any of our preparations, or qualifications; but to press up as near, and as close to Christ as we can; and happy is he, whom he calleth so to do, for from whom else can we hope for any, for so much as the initial turn of our souls to God, himself, and into the whole way everlasting, as from, in, and through Christ alone.

And now having dispatched the third head which I proposed, and come to the fourth and last, I am yet to speak to, and that is, that the procedure of the judgment of Christ at that great day, however it be represented in regard of the exactness, righteousness, and equity of it, as if it was, and shall be by the examination of every man's works, and an application of those works to Law, and that the Law, as vindicating the Gospel; yet from undoubted, and undeniable grounds of Scripture it must needs be, that the good, and the bad are judged by their very appearance in, and out of Christ, and so found written, or not found written, in the Book of Life; and that

so every man's case is determined, and yet that the works of the servants of Christ adorn them; or as the Scripture says, follow them; and the works of evil men, or their sin finds them out, coming, as water into their bowels, and as oil to their bones; is as the garment that covers them, and as the girdle, wherewith they are girded continually. Notwithstanding this, all these three things are most admirable in the grand economy of that day, which the Father only, and not so much, as the created Human Nature of Christ could adjust, or set in order, or in that sense knows, or hath cognizance of.

1. The very company, and especially the great Head and Prince under whom, and with whom the saints appear does most illustriously show their pardon, and perfect Absolution and Justification from all their sin; and the perfected, completed holiness, and righteousness, received from the imputed righteousness of Christ, communicated by his Spirit; so that they appear in robes made white in the blood of the Lamb, and with palms of victory in their hands. They are just men made every way perfect; their sins are blotted out, when the times of refreshing come from the presence of the Lord; and herein they are above judgment in themselves, even as Christ their Head; their appearing with Him is their immediate Justification; both according to the Law, and everlasting Gospel, and with him they judge angels, and the world; but those who have no interest in Christ, not being with him, even that is their condemnation; that he knows them not, that they are made to depart, and to go away from him; thus he that is justified is for ever justified, and he that is filthy, and unrighteous is so for ever. Rev.22:11. All which is in one view determined by being with, or not with Jehovah our Righteousness, the Sun of Righteousness, arising with glory in his rays, or righteousness upon us, or healing in his wings, Mal.4:2, and this is according to what hath been said and according to all that hath been discoursed of our being found in Christ, and receiving all from him; and so apprehending that state of perfection, for which we are apprehended of Christ Jesus.

2. The very view, and appearance in bodies of glory and light, and purity; called armies of heaven, on white horses, in linen white and clean, bodies made like to his glorious body, by that power of his subduing all things to itself; the being made

like to Christ by seeing him, as he is; does without any other law, but the Law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, set free from the Law of sin and death sufficiently; declare saints to be so without laying them under any other law; and all the wicked are known by their bodies of shame and contempt; like men condemned, and known to be so by their prison clothes, their chains, and fetters; thus sheep are presently known, and goats appear goats by that very law of appearance.

And thus I have laid down the great doctrine of the New Testament in these points, as I have reason from such an abundant Scripture evidence to be assured; let me for a conclusion recommend to all the ministers of the Gospel, the due consideration of the whole matter, for it is of most exceeding concernment to our ministry; this is our enablement, our sufficiency, as ministers of the New Testament, to preach not the letter, but the Spirit; to preach it as a ministration of righteousness, and not of condemnation; as a ministration not of the letter, but of the Spirit, for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. Thus we shall minister it in its abiding, continuing glory, as it shall continue in the kingdom of Christ, set out in all its freeness, and in all its efficacy. We cannot else triumph in manifesting the savour of the knowledge of Christ, nor will our ministry be of sufficiency to be a savour of death unto death to the lost, as it ought to be according to the divine ordination laid down by the Apostle. II Cor.2:15-16. For if the full, and true Grace of the Gospel be not set out, as a ministration of Righteousness, of Life, and of the Spirit, it does not declare to men the great message of the Gospel, whether it is unto them a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death; they have not that high savour of the knowledge of Christ, that is the instrument of Grace, as by a most divine, and heavenly suffumigation or perfume of life to excite, and bring to life, such a stream of life to give life from the Spirit; nor on the other side, till this be administered, can it according to this Gospel Canon or Rule be said, that the ministry of it is a savour of death unto death; for to whomsoever this high savour of life is not administered, there is not that conclusion to be made, it is of death unto death; herein being the strength of the crisis, or distinction, if the highest savour of the Gospel give not life, the only savour of life be not effectual to life, be but like a dead



savour, effect nothing, produce nothing of life; it must needs be argued, such are unto death; and even the Gospel preached, concludes them unto death, when it does not prevail by the power of the Gospel; if the most radiant light of Christ the image of God shining to men does not enlighten; such a hiding demonstrates such lost, and their case desperate.

Rationalizing, moralizing upon the Gospel; yea, Scripture legalizing upon it, without a continual interweaving this high spirituality, and rich grace of it, cannot thus conclude, seal and bind up; if the fountain and sources of light and life be not kept clear, and open; though men do indeed die, and perish for want of life and light, yet they are not sealed and bound up for death as the true preaching of the Grace of the Gospel by this ordination of God declared here by the Apostle, does. The close experiment for want of this ministration of the New Testament is not made, for the Apostle says, who is sufficient so to preach the Gospel, as that it should be, if not a savour of life unto life, the principal purpose, design and scope of it, then of death unto death; this sufficiency, saith he, is of God, who is therein sufficient to minister the New Testament, not as of a letter that kills; but as of the Spirit that giveth life; so that though it be not indeed to all a ministration of the Spirit giving life, yet it is not at our disposal; for we are by such a faithful discharge of ourselves a savour of death unto death, without which so faithful a discharge, we could not be so; for such a preaching only, as was said, puts such a crisis upon persons, makes such a tremendous Gospel experiment, which God in his wisdom hath ordained, should be made by the free proclamation of the Gospel.

And that this experiment may be made, saith the Apostle, we take great care not to allay the high savour of the Gospel, by any mixture of the doctrine of works with that of Grace; as they, who minding their own advantages, make a trade of debasing, what is most excellent, by vending worse in temperament with nobler liquors; but with greatest sincerity as in the sight of God, we bring forth only pure Gospel of supreme Grace in Christ; and herein we use all freedom, clearness, frankness, openness and boldness, in manifesting this. No darkened, unintelligible doublings between grace and works, as Moses who veiled so the Gospel-part of his ministry, that it

became a ministration of death; and because Paul knew how distasteful this purity of preaching is to the condemned world, that would yet be righteous; and to the proud and stately powers of reason and free will, he says, we arm ourselves with a divine courage, and constancy in pursuing this ministry; and will not on any account whatsoever, use art, or guile; but with all integrity represent truth in its own light, and leave to God the discrimination thereof; to whom this preaching is as the jealousy-water, to discover them, when their very mind, the highest rational part, being blinded by the god of this world, find not the rays of the glory of the Gospel of Christ, {who is the image of God, and all our perfection,} shining to them.

Wherein the Apostle manifestly alludes, to what he had said of the superior glory of the Gospel to that of the Law, though that gave such a glory to the face of Moses, and he alludes also to the veil on the face of Moses, upon that glory, and to the veil on the hearts of the Jews to this day. Implying, that not to receive this pure Gospel light, is like Jewish unbelief, who stumbled at that stumbling-block of exalting works, and their own righteousness above Christ and Grace.

It is true indeed, this preaching up of our works, endeavours, relying upon our own action, is very plausible, and seems to carry greater force, as being more akin to our first constitution under the first Adam. And of this the Apostle also gives a secret {as we say} gird, when in this so great point, he interposes not without great design that we preach not ourselves, as if preaching, intermingled with works, and human powers of holiness, were setting up and exalting ourselves into a dominion over men's consciences; but saith he, "we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake," II Cor.4:5, in so high a ministry; and in this epistle, II Cor.11:13-15, they who with design against the Grace of the Gospel, teach the Law, are as the Apostle says, in the appearance of angels of light, and ministers of righteousness, zealous enforcers of holiness, and a good life; if yet they stop up these springs, and are enemies of this grace, they are false apostles, and ministers of Satan; evil workers, as the Apostle calls them, in a taunt of their high pretence to works; and others for want of true distinguishing thoughts, desirous, and most propended to be teachers of the Law, and

yet dare not desert the grand Gospel-principles, know not what they speak, nor whereof they affirm; that is, do not accurately think, nor speak, nor reconcile themselves to themselves; for, the Law is good if a man use it lawfully, that is, according to the Gospel direction of it; but pure perfect Law, is only pointed, set against those, upon whom the Gospel hath not effect, who are given up by it as incurable, and unto death. This I speak not, {I appeal to the Lord, who searches hearts,} with no reflection on any person, or sort of persons, and least upon Mr. Williams; of whom I desire much other esteem, but to move and persuade him and all preachers of the Gospel to reconcile all their notions and disputes; preaching the glorious Gospel of the blessed God committed to their trust; which the Apostle hath defined to be then sufficiently preached, when it is primarily, and till the Gospel hath remanded the lost under the aggravated condemnation of the Law, for refusing the Grace of the Gospel; till then, I say, the New Testament is to be preached, as a ministration of the Spirit, and not of the letter; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life, a ministration of life, not of death, not of condemnation, but of righteousness; which ministration shall in a short time be with open face, and all veils removed; the Lord drawing near, and all turning to him, beholding Christ the image of God, and the glory of God, in the face of Christ; we shall be changed into the same image, from the glory of a lower degree now, to the glory that shall be in perfection, by the mighty effusions of that Spirit, who is Jehovah, that shall so soon be. Now, this high and richest Gospel treasure we have, saith the Apostle, at the present, but in vessels of earth, men of like corruptions, and guilt; low, and base appearances of outward condition and state, and of the vile and dying bodies of sin; that the excellency of Divine Grace, and power may be exalted alone throughout, and throughout; for at the present we have, as the Apostle saith, all this glory but in hope; we see yet but as in a glass, though with an open face, this glory, but when the angelical ministry, Rev.14:6, shall in the kingdom of Christ be missioned and sent out, this ministration shall so exceed in glory, that all other prefabricated notions of human righteousness shall utterly disappear; and when it comes, it shall forever remain. And this shall be when the Israel of God, shall be called, and turned to the Lord; and

that shall be when the Gentile times are at an end, as Christ says, Lk.21:24; and when the eclipse on the Gentile Churches going off, they shall have a full orb'd light, as that word, Rom.11:25, opposed to the eclipse in that chapter, properly signifies; and all this shall, I doubt not, begin in 1697.

**FINISH.**