

THE
MARROW
OF
MODERN DIVINITY:

IN TWO PARTS.

PART I.

THE COVENANT OF WORKS AND THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

PART II.

AN EXPOSITION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

BY

EDWARD FISHER, A.M.

First published 1645

WITH

NOTES

BY THE REV. THOMAS BOSTON, 1726.

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, ETTRICK.

and

Appendix with Commission Queries and Answers by the Ministers on
THE MARROW CONTROVERSY

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CONTENTS

RECOMMENDATIONS.....	vi
PART I.....	1
PREFACE.....	1
HON. COLONEL JOHN DOWNES,.....	4
TO ALL THOSE HUMBLE-HEARTED READERS,	5
INTRODUCTION.....	9
Sect. 1. — Differences about the Law.....	9
Sect. 2. — A threefold Law.....	10
CHAPTER I. OF THE LAW, OR COVENANT OF WORKS.....	13
Sect. 1. — The Nature of the Covenant of Works.....	13
Sect. 2. — Adam’s Fall.....	16
Sect. 3. — The Sinfulness and Misery of Mankind by the Fall.....	17
Sect. 4. — No Recovery by the Law, or Covenant of Works.....	19
Sect. 5. — The Covenant of Works binding, though broken.....	20
CHAPTER II. OF THE LAW OF FAITH, OR COVENANT OF GRACE.....	21
SECTION I. — OF THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GRACE.....	21
SECTION II. — OF THE PROMISE.....	24
Sect. 1. — The Promise made to Adam.....	24
Sect. 2 — The Promise renewed to Abraham.....	27
Sect. 3. — The Law, as the Covenant of Works, added to the Promise.....	29
Sect. 4. — The Promise and Covenant with Abraham renewed with the Israelites.....	37
Sect. 5. — The Covenant of Grace, under the Mosaic Dispensation.....	39
Sect. 6 — The natural bias towards the Covenant of Works.....	50
Sect. 7. — The Antinomian Faith rejected.....	56
Sect. 8. — The evil of Legalism.....	58
SECTION III. — OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROMISE.....	60
Sect. 1. — Christ’s fulfilling of the Law in the room of the Elect.....	60
Sect. 2. — Believers dead to the Law as the Covenant of Works.....	65
Sect. 3. — The warrant to believe in Christ.....	75
Sect. 4. — Evangelical Repentance a consequent of Faith.....	85
Sect. 5. — The spiritual Marriage with Jesus Christ.....	90
Sect. 6. — Justification before Faith refuted.....	94
Sect. 7. — Believers freed from the commanding and condemning Power of the Covenant of Works.....	95
CHAPTER III. OF THE LAW OF CHRIST.....	103
Sect. 1. — The nature of the Law of Christ.....	103

Sect. 2. — The law of the Ten Commandments a rule of life to believers.	105
Sect. 3. — Antinomian objections answered.	108
Sect. 4. — The necessity of marks and signs of grace.....	112
Sect. 5. — Antinomian objections answered.	114
Sect. 6. — Holiness and good works attained to only by faith.....	115
Sect. 7. — Slavish fear and servile hope are not the springs of true obedience.....	121
Sect. 8. — The efficacy of faith for holiness of heart and life.	125
Sect. 9 — Use of means for strengthening of faith.	131
Sect. 10. — The distinction of the Law of Works, and Law of Christ, applied to six paradoxes.....	131
Sect. 11. — The use of that distinction in practice.	134
Sect. 12. — That distinction a mean between Legalism and Antinomianism.	141
Sect. 13. — How to attain to assurance.	142
Sect. 14. — Marks and evidences of true faith.	144
Sect. 15. — How to recover lost evidences.	145
Sect. 16. — Marks and signs of union with Christ.	146
CHAPTER IV. OF THE HEART'S HAPPINESS, OR SOUL'S REST.....	149
Sect. 1. — No rest for the soul till it comes to God.	149
Sect. 2. — How the soul is kept from rest in God.	150
Sect. 3. — God in Christ the only true rest for the soul.	155
CONCLUSION.....	158
PART II.	160
DEDICATION	160
THE AUTHOR TO THE WELL-AFFECTED READER.	162
INTRODUCTION.....	164
Ignorant men confine the meaning of the Ten Commandments	164
The Ten Commandments an epitome of the law of God	165
Six rules for the right expounding of the Ten Commandments	165
SUM OF COMMANDMENT 1.....	166
SUM OF COMMANDMENT 2.	170
SUM OF COMMANDMENT 3.	173
SUM OF COMMANDMENT 4.	178
SUM OF COMMANDMENT 5.	180
SUM OF COMMANDMENT 6.	185
SUM OF COMMANDMENT 7.	187
SUM OF COMMANDMENT 8.	188
SUM OF COMMANDMENT 9.	190

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 10.	191
The Lord requires perfect obedience to all Ten Commandments	193
The Use Of The Law.	193
Christ has redeemed believers from the curse of the law	194
Every man's best actions are corrupted and defiled with sin.	197
The least sinful thought makes man liable to eternal damnation.	198
Though man cannot be justified by his obedience to the law, yet his obedience shall not be in vain	200
Man is naturally apt to think he must do something towards his own justification, and act accordingly	201
Christ requires that believers desire and endeavour to yield perfect obedience to all the Ten Commandments	204
Believers shall be rewarded for their obedience, and with what	204
In what manner believers are to confess their sins on a day of humiliation.....	205
Why and to what end believers are to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper	207
THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.....	208
APPENDIX.....	212
The Occasion of the "Marrow" Controversy, stated by the late Rev. John Brown, of Haddington.	212
Queries agreed to by the Commission of the General Assembly, and put to those Ministers who submitted a Representation and Petition against the 5th and 8th Acts of Assembly 1720, with the Answers given by these Ministers to those Queries.	213
QUERY. 1. — Are there any precepts in the gospel that were not actually given before the gospel was revealed?	213
QUERY 2.—Is the believer not bound now by the authority of the Creator, to personal obedience to the Moral Law, even though it is not required for justification?	216
QUERY 3. — Does annexing a promise of life, and a threatening of death, to a precept, make it a Covenant of Works?	218
QUERY 4. — Did the Moral Law, antecedent to receiving the form of a Covenant of Works, have a threatening of hell annexed to it?.....	219
QUERY 5. — Is it unique to believers to be free of the commanding power of the law, as a Covenant of Works?	219
QUERY 6. — (1) Does a sinner, being justified, have all things at once that are necessary for salvation? And (2) Are personal holiness, and progress in holy obedience, not necessary to a justified person's possession of glory, in case of his continuing in life after his justification?	221
QUERY 7. — Does preaching the necessity of a holy life in order to obtain eternal happiness, have a dangerous consequence to the doctrine of free grace?	222
QUERY 8. — Does knowledge, belief, and persuasion that Christ died for me, and that he is mine, and that whatever he did and suffered, he did and suffered for me, the direct act of faith by which a sinner is united to Christ, and interested in him, as instituted in God's	

Covenant of Grace? Or is that knowledge a persuasion that is included in the very essence of that justifying act of faith?	225
QUERY 9. — What is that act of faith, by which a sinner appropriates Christ and his saving benefits to himself?	232
QUERY 10. — Can the revelation of the divine will in the word — affording a warrant to offer Christ to all, and a warrant to all to receive him —be said to be the Father’s making of a deed of gift and grant of Christ to <i>all</i> mankind? Is this grant to <i>all</i> mankind by sovereign grace? And is it absolute or conditional?	232
QUERY 11. — Is the division of the law, as explained and applied in <i>The Marrow</i> , justified? And can it not be rejected without burying several gospel truths?	234
Query. 12. — Is the hope of heaven and fear of hell to be excluded from the motives of the believer’s obedience? And if not, how can <i>The Marrow</i> be defended, which expressly excludes them, though it allows other motives?	235

RECOMMENDATIONS.

I HAVE perused this ensuing Dialogue, and find it tending to peace and holiness; the author endeavouring to reconcile and heal those unhappy differences which have lately broken out afresh among us, about the points therein handled and cleared; for which cause I allow it to be printed, and recommend it to the reader, as a discourse stored with many necessary and seasonable truths, confirmed by Scripture, and avowed by many approved writers: all composed in a familiar, plain, moderate style, without bitterness against, or uncomely reflections upon others, — which flies have lately corrupted many boxes of otherwise precious ointment.

May 1, 1645. JOS. CARYL.

The marrow of the second bone is like that of the first, sweet and good. The commandments of God are marrow to the saints, as well as the promises; and they shall never taste the marrow of the promise who distaste the commandments. This little treatise breaks the bone, the hard part of commandments, by a plain exposition, so that all, even babes in Christ, yes, such as are yet out of Christ, may suck out and feed upon the marrow by profitable meditation.

Sept. 6, 1648. JOS. CARYL.

If you will please to peruse this little book, you shall find great worth in it. There is a line of a gracious spirit drawn through it, which has fastened many precious truths together, and presented them to your view: according to the variety of men's spirits, the various ways of presenting known truths are profitable. The grace of God has helped this author in making his work. If it in like manner helps you in reading, you shall have cause to bless God for these truths thus brought to you, and for the labours of this good man, whose ends, I believe, are very sincere for God and your good.

JER. BURROUGHS.

OCCASIONALLY lighting upon the dialogue, under the approbation of a learned and judicious divine, I was thereby induced to read it, and afterwards, on a serious consideration of the usefulness of it, to commend it to the people in my public ministry.

Two things in it especially took with me: *First*, The matter; the main substance being distinctly to discover the nature of the two covenants, upon which all the mysteries, both of the law and gospel, depend. To see the first Adam to be *primus foederatus*¹ in the one, and the second Adam in the other: to distinguish rightly between the law standing alone as a covenant, and standing in subordination to the gospel as a servant: this I assure myself to be the key which opens the hidden treasure of the gospel. As soon as God had given Luther but a glimpse of it, he professes that he seemed to be brought into paradise again, and the whole face of the Scripture to be changed to him: and he looked upon every truth with another eye.

Secondly, The manner; because it is an *irenicum*² and tends to an accommodation

6 RECOMMENDATIONS.

and a right understanding. Times of reformation have always been times of division. Satan will cast out a flood after the woman,³ as knowing that more die by the disagreement of the humours of their own bodies, than by the sword; and that if men are once engaged, they will contend, if not for truth, yet for victory.

¹ First allied.

² The Greek εἰρηνικόν (*eirenikon*), or a peace proposal, is *irenicum* in its Latin version.

³ **Rev 12:15** So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood.

Now, if the difference is in things of lesser consequence, the best way to quench it would be silence. But if the difference is of greater concernment than this, the best way to decide it, is to bring in more light, which this author has done with much evidence of Scripture, and backed with the authority of most modern divines. So that whoever desires to have his judgment cleared in the main controversy between us and the Antinomians, with a small expense either of money or time, he may receive ample satisfaction here. This I testify upon request, professing myself a friend both to truth and peace.

W. STRONG.

This book, at first well accommodated with so valuable a testimony as Mr. Caryl's, besides its better approving itself to the choicer spirits everywhere, by the speedy distribution of the whole impression; it might seem a needless or superfluous thing to add any more to the praise of it; yet meeting with detracting language from some few, by reason of some phrases, either not duly pondered by them, or not rightly understood, it is thought fit, in this second impression, to relieve that worthy testimony which still stands to it, with fresh supplies, not for any need the truth contained in it has, but because either the prejudice or darkness of some men's judgments requires it. Therefore, having thoroughly perused it, I can only testify that if I have any of the least judgment, or relish of truth, he that finds this book finds a good thing, and not unworthy of its title; and he may account the saints to have obtained favour with the Lord in the ministration of it, as that which, with great plainness and evidence of truth, comprises the chief, if not all the differences that have been lately engendered about the law. It has, I must confess, not only fortified my judgment, but also warmed my heart in the reading of it; as indeed inculcating, throughout the whole dialogue, the clear and familiar notion of those things by which we live, as Ezek. 16 says in another case; and it appears to me to be written from much experiential knowledge of Christ, and teaching of the Spirit. Let all men that taste the fruit of it confess to the glory of God, that he is no respecter of persons; and endeavour afterward to know no man after the flesh, nor envy the compiler if he receives the honour of being accounted a healer of breaches, and a restorer of the overgrown paths of the gospel, as God has made him in this point. As for my own part, I am so satisfied in this testimony I lend, that I reckon whatever credit is thus pawned, will be a glory to the name that stands by and avows this truth, so long as the book shall endure to record it.

JOSHUA SPRIGGE.

I HAVE, according to your desire, read over your book, and find it full of evangelical light and life; and I do not doubt that the oftener I read it, the more true comfort I shall find in the knowledge of Christ thereby; the matter is pure, the method is apostolical, in which the works of love, in the right place — *after* the life of faith — are effectually required. God has endowed his *Fisher* with the net of a trying understanding, and discerning judgment, and

RECOMMENDATIONS. 7

discretion, whereby, out of the christaline streams of the well of life, you have taken a mess of the sweetest and wholesomest fish that the world can afford, which, if I could daily have enough of them, I would not care for the flesh, or its works.

SAMUEL PRETTIE.

This book came into my hand by a merciful and most unexpected disposure of providence, and I read it with great and sweet complacence. It contains a great deal of the marrow of revealed and gospel truth, selected from authors of great note, clearly enlightened, and of the most digested experience; and some of them were honoured to do eminent and heroic services in their day. Thus the Christian reader has the flower of their labours communicated to him very briefly, yet clearly and powerfully. And the manner of conveyance, being by way of amicable discussion, is not only fitted to afford delight to the judicious reader, but lays him also at the advantage of

testing, through grace, his own heart more exactly, according to what echo it gives, or how it relishes or is displeased with the several speeches of the communers. Here we have the great depths, and most painted delusions of hell, in opposition to the only way of salvation, discovered with marvellous brevity and evidence; and that is by the concurring suffrages of burning and shining lights, men of the clearest experience, and honoured of God to do eminent service in their day, for advancing the interests of our Lord's kingdom and gospel.

The reluctance¹ of gospel light has been the choice mean, blessed by the Lord, for effecting great things in the several periods of the Church — since that light broke up in paradise after our first sin and fall. And ever since, the balance has swayed and will sway, according to the better or worse state of matters in that important regard. When gospel light is clear, and attended with power, Satan's kingdom cannot stand before it; the prince and powers of darkness must fall as lightning from heaven. And on the contrary, according to the recessions from it, Christian churches went off by degrees from the only foundation, even from the rock Christ, until the man of sin, the great antichrist, mounted the throne. Nevertheless, while the world is wandering after the beast, behold! Evangelical light breaks forth in papal darkness, and hereupon antichrist's throne shakes and is at the point of falling; yet his wounds are cured, and he recovers new strength and spirits, through a darkening of the glorious gospel and the perversion of it, by anti-evangelical errors and heresies.

That the tares of such errors are sown in the reformed churches, and by men who profess the reformed faith, is beyond debate; and these [essays] lay to heart the purity of gospel doctrine. Yet dregs of anti-christianism remain, or are brought in among us. In this, the words of the apostle are verified: "From among your own selves, will arise men speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them."² As this renders these essays all the more necessary and seasonable for a further diffusion of evangelical light, so there is ground to hope that in these ways, the churches of Christ will gradually get the ascendant over their enemies, until the great antichrist shall fall as a trophy before a gospel dispensation. For the Lord will "destroy him by the breath of his mouth, and with the brightness of his coming." That this excellent and spiritual piece may be blessed to the reader, is the prayer of their sincere well-wisher and servant in the work of the gospel,

Carnock, December 4, 1717. JAMES HOG.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS.

THE legislative Act concerning the "Marrow" occasioned great thoughts of heart among us. I have been acquainted with that book about 18 or 19 years; and many times I have admired the gracious conduct of holy Providence which brought it to my hand, having had an occasion to light upon it in a house of the parish where I was first settled. As to any distinct uptakings of the doctrine of the gospel that I have, such as they are, I owe them to that book. — *Extract of a Letter from Mr. Boston to Mr. Hog.*

I NEVER read the "Marrow" with Mr. Boston's Notes, till this present time, 1755; and I find, by not having read it, I have sustained a considerable loss. It is a most valuable book; the doctrines it contains are the life of my soul, and the joy of my heart. Might my tongue or pen be made instrumental to recommend and illustrate, to support and propagate such precious truths, I should bless the day in which I was born. Mr. Boston's Notes on the "Marrow" are, in my opinion, some of the most judicious and valuable that were ever penned. — *Extract of a Letter from Mr. Hervey to Mr. William Hog.*

¹ "Reluctance" may be an English construct of the Latin *luctor*, for "struggle" – re struggling for the Gospel truth is God's chief means to advance the Gospel; or, the Gospel Light must be rediscovered from time to time.

² Act 20.30.

I HAVE frequently perused, with great satisfaction, the “Marrow of Modern Divinity,” first and second parts; and, as far as I can judge, it will be found by those that read it, very useful for illustrating the difference between the law and the gospel, and preventing them from splitting either on the rock of legality on the one hand, or that of Antinomianism on the other; and, accordingly, I recommend it [by desire] as a book filled with precious, seasonable, and necessary truth, clearly founded upon the sacred oracles.

Falkirk, December 9, 1788. JOHN BELFRAGE.

It is considered necessary to add the following account of the author of “The Marrow of Modern Divinity” from Wood’s *Athenae Oxonienses*, vol. ii. p. 198:

EDWARD FISHER, the eldest son of a knight, became a gentleman-commoner of Brasen-nose College, August 25, 1627, took on his degree in arts, and soon after left that house. Afterwards, being called home by his relations, who were then, as I have been informed, much in debt, he improved that learning which he had obtained in the university so much, that he became a noted person among the learned, for his great reading in ecclesiastical history, and in the fathers, and for his admirable skill in the Greek and Hebrew languages. His works are, — 1. ‘An Appeal to the Conscience, as you will answer it at the great and dreadful day of Jesus Christ.’ Oxford, 1644. Quarto. — 2. ‘The Marrow of Modern Divinity.’ 1646, Octavo. — 3. ‘A Christian Caveat to Old and New Sabbatarians,’ 1650. — 4. ‘An Answer to Sixteen Queries, touching the Rise and Observation of Christmas.’

PART I.

PREFACE.

Whoever you are, into whose hands this book comes, I presume to put you in mind of this divine command, binding on your conscience: Deu. 1.17, "You shall not respect persons in judgment; but you shall hear the small as well as the great." Do not reject the book with contempt, or with indignation either, when you find it entitled *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, lest you do it to your own hurt. Remember that our blessed Lord himself was "considered a friend of publicans and sinners," Mat. 11.19. — "Many said of him, He has a devil, and is mad; why hear him?" John 10.20. The apostle Paul was slanderously reported to be an Antinomian; that he was one who, by his doctrine, encouraged men to do evil and "make void the law," Rom. 3.8, 31. And the first martyr in the days of the gospel was stoned for his pretended "blasphemous words against Moses and against the law," Acts 6.11, 13.

The gospel method of sanctification, as well as justification, lies so far outside the understanding of natural reason, that if all the rationalists in the world, philosophers and divines, had consulted together to lay down a plan for repairing the lost image of God in man, they would never have hit upon what divine wisdom has settled on; namely, that sinners should be sanctified in Christ Jesus, 1Cor. 1.2, by faith in him, Acts 26.18. Indeed not, for if laid it before them, they would have rejected it with disdain, as foolishness, 1Cor. 1.23.

In all those views which fallen man has towards the means of his own recovery, the natural bent is toward the way of the Covenant of Works. This is evident in the case of the vast multitudes throughout the world who embrace Judaism, Paganism, Mahometanism, and Popery. All these agree in this one principle: that men must live by doing, even though they hugely differ as to the things to be done for life.

10 PREFACE.

The Jews, in the time of Julian the Apostate, attempted to rebuild their temple after it had lain in ruins for many years; by the decree of heaven it was never to be built again; and they did not cease till by an earthquake — which shook the old foundation and tore it all down to the ground — they were forced to forbear, as Socrates the historian tells us. But the Jews were never more addicted to that temple than mankind is naturally addicted to building on the first covenant. And Adam's children will by no means quit it, until Mount Sinai, where they desire to work what they work, is on fire all around them. Oh, that those who have been frightened from it were not so ready to go back to it!

Yet that can never be the channel of sanctification, whatever way men prepare it and fit it out for that purpose, because by divine appointment, it is not the "ministration of righteousness and life," 2Cor. 3.9.

Hence it is always to be observed that as the doctrine of the gospel is corrupted (to introduce a more rational sort of religion), the flood of looseness and licentiousness swells proportionately. *Morality*, substituted for doctrine in the place and stead of the gospel of the grace of God, never fails to be in effect, a signal for an inundation of *immorality* in practice. A plain instance of it is to be seen in the grand apostasy from the truth and holiness of the gospel, as exemplified in Popery. And on the other hand, real and thorough reformation in churches is always the effect of gospel light breaking forth again from under the cloud which had covered it; and the Church of Scotland, among others, has more than once had a comfortable experience of this.

The real friends of true holiness, then, exceedingly mistake their measures in affording a handle on any occasion whatsoever, to advance the principles of legalism, for bringing under contempt

the good old way in which our fathers found rest for their souls, and for removing the ancient landmarks which they set.

PREFACE. 11

It is now over eighty years since this book made its first entrance into the world, under the title of *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, not unfitly prefixed to it at that time; but it is too evident that it has outlived the fitness of that title. The truth is, the divinity taught in it is now no longer the modern, but the ancient divinity, as it was recovered from underneath the Antichristian darkness; and as it stood before the tools of the recent refiners of Protestant doctrine were lifted up against it — a doctrine which, being from God, must be according to godliness.

It was to contribute to preserving this doctrine, and to withstanding its being run down under the odious name of *Antinomianism* (in the disadvantageous situation it has in this book, whose undeserved lot it is to be spoken against everywhere), that the following notes were written.

Two things chiefly have had weight in this. One is to avoid this doctrine being given such a bad name, that it becomes the object of the settled aversion of sober persons, thus betraying them into legalism by it. The other is (in these days of God's indignation that so much appears in his spiritual judgments) to avoid someone taking from the hand of this author and ancient divines, its principles for truths in such a sense, scope, and design (because of its now common fame) that they are betrayed into *real* Antinomianism.

Reader, lay aside prejudices, — look and see with your own eyes, — call things by their own names, and do not reckon Anti-Baxterianism or Anti-Neonomianism to be Antinomianism, and you will find no Antinomianism taught here; but you will perhaps be surprised to find that this same tale is told about Luther and other famous Protestant divines, under the borrowed name of the despised Mr. Fisher, author of *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*.

12 PREFACE.

In the Notes you will find that obsolete or ambiguous words, phrases, and things are explained; truth is clarified, confirmed, and vindicated; and the annotator has no hesitation to declare his dissent from the author where he saw just ground for it.

I have no doubt that he will be thought by some to have constructed several passages too favourably; but it is nothing strange that he inclines to the charitable side, the book having been blessed by God to his own soul many years ago. So if he has erred on that side, it is the safest of the two for you and me, judging the words of another man whose intention, I believe with Mr. Burroughs, to have been very sincere for God and the reader's good. However, I am satisfied that he has dealt candidly in that matter, according to his light.

Be advised always to read over a lesser section of the book, before reading any of the notes on it, so that you may have a clearer understanding of the whole.

I conclude this preface, in the words of two eminent professors of theology, deserving our serious regard: —

“I dread mightily that a rational sort of religion is coming in among us: I mean by that, a religion that consists in a bare attendance on outward duties and ordinances, without the power of godliness: and from this, people will fall into a way of serving God which is a mere deism, having no relation to Jesus Christ and the Spirit of God.”¹

¹ Memoirs of Mr. Halyburton's Life, page 199.

“I warn each one of you, and especially those who are to be directors of the conscience, that you exercise yourselves in study, reading, meditation, and prayer, so that you may be able to instruct and comfort both your own and other’s consciences in the time of temptation, and bring them back from the law to grace, from active (or working) righteousness, to passive (or received) righteousness; in a word, from Moses to Christ.”¹

¹ Luther, Comment in Epist. ad Gal. page 27.

TO THE

HON. COLONEL JOHN DOWNES,

One of the Members of the Honourable House of Commons, etc., E. F. wishes
the true knowledge of God in Jesus Christ.

MOST HONOURED SIR,

ALTHOUGH I observe that new editions, accompanied with new additions, are sometimes published with new dedications; yet so long as the one who formerly owned the subject yet lives, and has the same affections towards it, I conceive there is no need for a new patron, but for a new epistle.

Be pleased then, most honoured sir, to let me tell you, that your eminent place somewhat induced me, both now and before, to choose you for its patron; but your endowments with grace invited me to it, God having bestowed upon you special spiritual blessings in heavenly things in Christ: for it has been declared to me, by those that knew you when you were but a youth, how Christ met with you then, and by sending his Spirit into your heart, *first* convinced you of sin, as was manifest by those conflicts which your soul then had both with Satan and itself, while you did not believe in Christ; *secondly*, of righteousness, as was manifest by the peace and comfort which you afterwards had by believing that Christ had gone to the Father, and appeared in his presence as your advocate and surety who had undertaken for you; *thirdly*, of judgment, as has been manifest ever since, in that you have been careful, with the true godly man in Psalm 112.5, to “guide your affairs with judgment,” in walking according to the mind of Christ.

I have not forgotten what desires you have expressed to know the true difference between the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace; and to be experientially acquainted with the doctrine of free grace, the mysteries of Christ, and the life of faith. Witness not only your highly approving of some topics from a sermon I once heard a godly minister preach, and repeated in your hearing, about the life of faith; but also your earnest request to me to write them out fairly, and send them to you in the country; indeed, witness your highly approving

14 PREFACE.

of this dialogue when I first acquainted you with its contents, encouraging me to expedite it to the press, and your kind acceptance, together with your cordial thanks for my love manifested in dedicating it to your honourable name.

Since then, worthy sir, it has pleased the Lord to enable me both to amend and enlarge it. I hope your affection will also be enlarged towards the matter contained in it, considering that it tends to clarify those forenamed truths, and through the blessing of God, it may be a means to root them more deeply in your heart. And truly, sir, I am confident that the more they grow and flourish in any man's heart, the more all heart-corruptions will wither and decay. O sir, if the truths contained in this dialogue were only as much in my heart as they are in my head, I would be a happy man; for then I would be more free from pride, boastfulness, wrath, anger, self-love, and love of the world, than I am; and then I would have more humility, meekness, and love, both to God and man, than I have. Oh! Then I would be content with Christ alone, and live above all things in the world; — then I would experientially know both how to abound and how to want; — and then I would be fit for any condition: nothing could come amiss to me. Oh, that the Lord would be pleased to write them in our hearts by his blessed Spirit!

Most humbly beseeching you still to pardon my boldness, and grant to take it into your patronage and protection, I humbly take my leave of you, and remain your obliged servant to be commanded,

EDWARD FISHER.

TO ALL THOSE HUMBLE-HEARTED READERS,

WHO SEE ANY NEED TO LEARN EITHER TO KNOW THEMSELVES, OR GOD IN CHRIST.

LOVING CHRISTIANS,

Consider, I ask you, that as the first Adam, as a person common to men, entered into covenant with God for all mankind and broke it: whereby they became sinful and guilty of everlasting death and damnation; even so Jesus Christ, the second Adam, as a person common to men, entered into covenant with God his Father for all the elect,¹ that is to say, for all those that have or shall believe on his name,² and kept it for them:³ whereby they become righteous, and heirs of everlasting life and salvation.⁴ Therefore it is our great wisdom, and ought to be our great care and endeavour, to come out of and from the first Adam, unto and into the second Adam,⁵ so that we “may have life through his name,” John 20.31.

And yet, alas! There is no point in all practical divinity that we are so naturally averse and backward to, as we are to this; nor does Satan strive to hinder us so much from doing anything else as this. This is why all of us are naturally apt to abide and continue in that sinful and miserable state that the first Adam plunged us into, without either taking any notice of it, or being at all affected by it, and so far from coming out of it. And if the Lord is pleased by any means to open our eyes to see our misery, and thereupon we

16 TO THE READER.

begin to step out of it, yet, alas! we are rather prone to go backwards towards the first Adam’s pure state,⁶ in striving and struggling to leave sin, and perform duties, and do good works; hoping thereby to make ourselves so righteous and holy, that God will let us into paradise again, to eat of the tree of life, and live forever. And we do this until we see the “flaming sword at Eden’s gate turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life,”⁷ Gen. 3.24. Is it not ordinary, when the Lord convinces a man of his sin (either by means of his word or his rod) to cry in this manner: ‘Oh! I am a sinful man! for I have lived a very wicked life, and therefore surely the Lord is angry with me, and will damn me in hell! Oh! What shall I do to save my soul?’ And is there not at hand some ignorant, miserable comforter, ready to say. Do not despair, man, but repent of your sins, and ask God’s forgiveness, and reform your life, and do not doubt that he will be

¹ “The Covenant (*namely* of Works) being made with Adam, not only for himself but for his posterity, all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, sinned in him, and fell with him in his first transgression.” Shorter Catechism, quest. 16. — “The Covenant of Grace was made with Christ, as the second Adam, and in him, with all the elect, as his seed.” Larger Cat., quest. 31.

² See chap. 2. sect. 3. note.

³ Namely, by doing and dying for them, namely: the elect.

⁴ Thus the impetration or purchase of redemption, and its application, are taught to be of the same extent; even as Adam’s representation extends to the elect, and the ruin by his fall extends to all mankind.

⁵ Uniting with Christ by faith.

⁶ That is, to the way of the Covenant of Works, which innocent Adam was set upon fulfilling.

⁷ That is, till we are brought to despair of obtaining salvation in the way of the Covenant of Works. Mark here the spring of legalism: namely, the natural bias of man’s heart towards the way of the law as a Covenant of Works, and ignorance of the law in its spirituality and vast extent, Rom. 7.9; 10.2, 3.

merciful to you;¹ for he has promised, you know, “that at whatever time a sinner repents of his sins, he will forgive him.”²

TO THE READER. 17

And does he not comfort himself with this, and say in his heart at least, Oh! If the Lord will only spare my life, and lengthen my days, I will become a new man! I am very sorry that I have lived such a sinful life; but I will never do as I have done for all the world! Oh! You shall see a great change in me! Does he not believe it?

And upon this he applies himself to a new course of life; and it may be that he becomes a zealous professor of religion, performing all the Christian exercises, both public and private, and leaves his old companions, and keeps company with religious men; and so it may be that he goes on till his dying day, and thinks himself sure of heaven and eternal happiness; and yet it may be that all this while he is ignorant of Christ and *his* righteousness, and therefore he establishes his own.

Where is the man, or where is the woman, who has truly come to Christ, that has not had some experience in themselves of such a disposition as this? If there are any that have reformed their lives, and have become professors of religion, and have not taken notice of this in themselves more or less, I wish they may have gone beyond being a legal professor, or one that is still under the Covenant of Works.

No indeed, where is the man or woman that is truly in Christ, that does not find in themselves a tendency to withdraw their hearts from Christ, and to put some confidence in their own works and doings? If there are any that do not find it, I wish their hearts may not deceive them.

Let me confess ingenuously, I was a professor of religion at least a dozen years before I knew any other way to eternal life, than to be sorry for my sins, and to ask forgiveness, and strive and endeavour to fulfil the law, and keep the commandments, as Mr. Dod and other godly men had expounded them; and truly, I remember I hoped I would at last attain to perfectly fulfilling them; and in the meantime, I conceived that God would accept the will for the deed; or that what I could not do, Christ had done for me.

And though at last, by means of conferring with Mr. Thomas Hooker in private, the Lord was pleased to convince me that I was yet but a proud Pharisee, and to show me the way of

18 TO THE READER.

faith and salvation by Christ alone, and to give me, I hope, a heart to embrace it in some measure; yet, alas! through the weakness of my faith, I have been, and am still apt to turn aside

¹ There is not one word of Jesus Christ the glorious Mediator, nor of faith in his blood, in all the advice given by this [proposed] casuist to the afflicted; and agreeable to that, is the effect it has on the afflicted, who comforts himself, without looking to the Lord Jesus Christ at all, as it appears from the next paragraph. Behold the Scripture pattern in such a case: Acts 2.37, 38, “Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said to them, Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins.” Chap. 16.30, 31, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved.” And thus we read in the *Directory [for the Public Worship of God – Edinburgh 1645]*, entitled “Concerning Visitation of the Sick”: “If it appears that he does not have a due sense of his sins, endeavours ought to be used to convince him of his sins — to make known the danger of deferring repentance, and of salvation at any time offered, to awaken the conscience, and to rouse him out of a stupid and secure condition, to apprehend the justice and wrath of God; — here this miserable comforter finds the afflicted, and should have taught him concerning an offended God, as there immediately follows — “before whom none can stand but he that, being lost in himself, lays hold of Christ by faith.”

² This sentence, taken from the English service-book, is in the “Practice of Piety,” p. 122, cited from Ezek. 33.14, 16; it is reckoned among these Scriptures to be an ignorant mistake which keeps a sinner from the practice of piety. But the truth is, it is not to be found in the Old or New Testament; and therefore it was objected against, as standing in the service-book under the name of a “Sentence of Scripture,” pretended to be cited from Ezekiel 18.21, 22.— *Reasons Showing the Necessity of Reformation* [by Cornelius Burges, London 1660], etc. p. 26.

to the Covenant of Works; and therefore I have not attained that joy and peace in believing, nor that measure of love to Christ, and to man for Christ's sake, as I am confident many of God's saints do attain in this life. The Lord be merciful to me, and increase my faith!

And are there not others, though I hope but few, who being enlightened to see their misery by reason of the *guilt* of sin, though not by reason of the *filth* of sin, and hearing of justification freely by grace, through the redemption which is in Jesus Christ, applaud and magnify that doctrine. They follow those who most preach and press it, seeming to be, as it were, ravished with the hearing of it, out of a conceit that by Christ they are freely justified from the guilt of sin, though still they retain the filth of sin? ¹ These are the ones who content themselves with a knowledge of the gospel, with mere notions in the head, but not in the heart; they glory and rejoice in free grace and in justification by faith alone; they profess faith in Christ, and yet they are not possessed by Christ; these are the ones who can talk like believers, and yet do not walk like believers; these are the ones who have language like saints, and yet conduct themselves like devils; these are the ones who are not obedient to the Law of Christ, and therefore they are justly called *Antinomians*.

Now, both these paths² leading from Christ, have been justly judged as erroneous; and to my knowledge, it is not only a matter of eighteen or twenty years ago, but also within these last three or four years, there has been much ado by preaching, writing, and disputing, both to remove men out of these paths, and to keep them from them; and there have been hot contentions on both sides; and all, I fear, to little purpose. For has not the strict professor according to the law, in striving to remove loose professors of the gospel out of the Antinomian path, faster entangled both himself and others

TO THE READER. 19

“in the yoke of bondage?” Galatians 5.1. And has not the loose professor of the gospel, in striving to remove the strict professor of the law out of the legal path “by promising them liberty from the law, taught others, and been himself the servant of corruption?” 2Peter 2.19.

For this reason, though I am nothing, I have by the grace of God endeavoured in this Dialogue to walk as a middle man between them both, in showing to each of them his erroneous path, with the middle path (which is Jesus Christ received truly, and walked in accountably)³ as a means to bring them both to him, and make them both one in him. Oh! That the Lord would be pleased to so bless it to them, that it might be a means to produce that effect!

I have, as you may see, gathered much of it out of known and approved authors; and yet I have wronged no man in this, for I have restored it to the right owner again. My manuscripts have afforded me some of it; and of the rest I hope I may say, as Jacob said of his venison, Gen. 27.20, “the Lord has brought it to me.” Let me say without boasting, that I have endeavoured in this to

¹ Mark here the spring of Antinomianism: namely, the lack of a sound conviction of the odiousness and filthiness of sin, rendering the soul loathsome and abominable in the sight of a holy God. Hence, as the sinner does not see his need of Christ, so neither will he receive and rest on Christ for all his salvation, but will go about halving it, grasping at his justifying blood, but neglecting his sanctifying Spirit, and so he falls short of all part or lot in that matter.

² Namely, legalism and Antinomianism.

³ A short and pithy description of the middle path, the only pathway to heaven — “Jesus Christ (the Way, John 14.6) received truly (by faith, John 1.12; this is overlooked by the legalist) and walked in accountably,” by holiness of heart and life, Col. 2.6; this is neglected by the Antinomian. The Antinomian's faith is only pretended, and not true faith, since he does not walk in Christ accountably. The legalist's holiness is only pretended and not true holiness, since he has not “received Christ” truly; therefore he is incapable of walking in Christ, which is the only true holiness competent to fallen mankind. Thus, the legalist and the Antinomian are each destitute of true faith and true holiness; because there can be no walking in Christ without a true receiving of him; and there cannot be a true receiving of him without walking in him: so both of them are off from the only way of salvation; and continuing so, they must perish. Therefore it concerns everyone who has a value for his own soul, to take heed that he be found in the middle path.

imitate the laborious bee, who out of diverse flowers gathers honey and wax, and makes one comb of it. If any souls sense any sweetness in it, let them praise God, and pray for me, who am weak in faith, and cold in love.

E. F.

A Catalogue of those Writers' Names, out of whom I have collected much of the matter contained in this ensuing Dialogue.

Mr. Ainsworth,
Dr. Ames,
Bishop Babington,
Mr. Ball,
Mr. Bastingius,
Mr. Beza,
Mr. Robert Bolton,
Mr. Samuel Bolton,
Mr. Bradford,
Mr. Bullinger,
Mr. Calvin,
Mr. Careless,
Mr. Caryl,
Mr. Cornwall,
Mr. Cotton,
Mr. Culverwell,
Mr. Dent,
Mr. Diodati,
Mr. D. Dixon,
Mr. Downham,
Mr. Du Plesse,
Mr. Dyke,
Mr. Elton,
Mr. Forbes,
Mr. Fox,
Mr. Frith,
Mr. Gibbons,
Mr. Thos. Godwin,
Mr. Gray, jun.,
Mr. Greenham,
Mr. Grotius,
Bishop Hall,

Mr. Thos. Hooker,
Mr. Laestanno,
Mr. Lightfoot,
Dr. Luther,
Mr. Marbeck,
Mr. Marshal,
Peter Martyr,
Dr. Mayer,
Wolfgangus Musculus,
Bernardine Ochin,
Dr. Pemble,
Mr. Perkins,
Mr. Polanus,
Dr. Preston,
Mr. Reynolds,
Mr. Pollock,
Mr. Rouse,
Dr. Sibs,
Mr. Slater,
Dr. Smith,
Mr. Stock,
Mr. Tyndale,
Mr. Robert Town,
Mr. Vaughan,
Mr. Vaumeth,
Dr. Urban Regius,
Dr. Ursinus,
Mr. Walker,
Mr. Ward,
Dr. Willet,
Dr. Williams,
Mr. Wilson.

THE
MARROW
OF
MODERN DIVINITY

EVANGELISTA, a Minister of the Gospel.

NOMISTA, a Legalist.

ANTINOMISTA, an Antinomian.

NEOPHYTUS, a Young Christian.

INTRODUCTION.

Nom. Sir, my neighbour, Neophytus and I have recently had some discussions with our friend and acquaintance, Antinomista, about some points of religion. He differs from us both. But at last he said he would be content to be judged by our minister. Therefore, we have been bold to come to you, all three of us, to ask you to hear us, and judge our differences.

Evan. You are all very welcome to me; and if you would please let me hear what your differences are, I will tell you what I think.

Sect. 1. — Differences about the Law.

Nom. The truth is, sir, he and I differ in very many things; but more especially *about the law*: for I say, the law should be a rule of life to a believer; and he says, it should not.

Neo. And surely, sir, the great difference between him and me, is this: he would persuade me to believe in Christ; and bids me rejoice in the Lord, and live merrily, though I feel ever so many corruptions in my heart, yes, though I am ever so sinful in my life; this I cannot do, nor do I think I ought to do it; but rather I ought to fear, and sorrow, and lament my sins.

22 THE MARROW OF

Ant. The truth is, sir, the great difference between my friend Nomista and me, is *about the law*; and therefore that is the great matter we come to you about.

Evan. I remember the Apostle Paul would have Titus “avoid contentions and strivings about the law, because they are unprofitable and vain,” Tit. 3.9; as I fear yours have been.

Nom. Sir, for my own part, I hold it very fitting that every true Christian should be very zealous for the holy law of God; especially now when a company of these Antinomians set themselves against it, and do what they can to completely abolish it and utterly root it out of the church. Surely, sir, I think it is not fitting that they should live in a Christian commonwealth.

Evan. I beg you, neighbour Nomista, do not be so hot, nor let us have such unchristian-like expressions among us; rather, let us reason together in love, and with the spirit of meekness, 1Cor. 4.21, as Christians ought to do. I confess with the apostle, “It is good to always be zealously affected in a good thing,” Gal. 4.18. Yet, as the same apostle said of the Jews, so I fear I may say of some Christians, that “they are zealous of the law,” Acts 21.20; indeed, some would be doctors of the law, and yet they neither understand “what they say, nor what they affirm,” 1Tim. 1.7.

Nom. Sir, I have no doubt that I know both what I say, and what I affirm, when I say and affirm that the holy law of God ought to be a rule of life to a believer; for I would dare to pawn my soul on the truth of it.

Evan. But what law do you mean?

Nom. Why, sir, what law do you think I mean? Are there any more laws than one?

Sect. 2. — A threefold Law.

Evan. Indeed, in the Scriptures there is mention made of various laws, but they may all be comprised under these three heads: the Law of Works, the Law of Faith, and the Law of Christ; ¹ Rom. 3.27, Gal. 6.2; and, therefore, I ask you,

¹ These terms are scriptural, as it appears from the whole texts quoted by our author, namely, Rom. 3.27, "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No indeed: but by the Law of Faith." — Gal. 6.2, "Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ." By the Law of Works is meant the law of the Ten Commandments, or the Covenant of Works. By the Law of Faith is meant the gospel, or Covenant of Grace; for justification being the point on which the apostle states the opposition between these two laws, it is evident that only the former is the law that does not exclude boasting; and that only the latter is that by which a sinner is justified in a way that does exclude boasting. By the Law of Christ is meant the same law of the Ten Commandments, as a rule of life in the hand of a Mediator, to believers who are already justified, and not any one command of the law only; for "bearing one another's burdens" is a "fulfilling of the Law of Christ," as it is loving one another: but according to the Scripture, that love does not fulfill one command only, but of the whole law of the Ten Commandments, Rom. 13.8-10. — "He that loves another has fulfilled the law. For this law — you shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not covet; and if there is any other commandment — is briefly comprehended in this saying: namely. You shall love your neighbour as yourself. Therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." It is a fulfilling of the second tablet directly, and of the first tablet indirectly and consequentially. Therefore, by the Law of Christ is meant not only one command, but the whole law.

The Law of Works is the law to be *done* so that one may be saved; the Law of Faith is the law to be *believed*, so that one may be saved; the Law of Christ is the law of the Saviour, binding his saved people to all the duties of obedience, Gal. 3.12; Acts 16.31.

The term *law* is not used here unequivocally; for the Law of Faith is neither in the Scripture sense, nor in the sense of our author, a *law*, properly so-called. The apostle uses that phrase only in imitation of the Jews' way of speaking, who had the law continually in their mouths. But since the promise of the gospel proposed to faith, is called "the Law of Faith" in Scripture, our author was sufficiently warranted to call it so too. So the Law of Faith is not a proper preceptive law.

The Law of Works, and the Law of Christ, are but one law in substance — the law of the Ten Commandments — the Moral Law — that law which was from the beginning, and continues still the same in its own nature, but vested with different forms. And since that law is perfect, and sin is any lack of conformity to it, or transgression of it, whatever form it is vested with — whether as the Law of Works or the Law of Christ — all commands of God to men must be comprehended under it; particularly the command to repent. This command is common to all mankind, pagans not excepted, who doubtless are obliged, as others are, to turn from sin to God; just as the command to believe in Christ is also binding on all to whom the gospel revelation comes; though in the meantime, this law stands under different forms for those who are in a state of union with Christ by faith, and those who are not. The Law of Christ is not a new, proper, preceptive law, but the old, proper, preceptive law which was from the beginning, but under a new incidental form.

The distinction between the Law of Works and the Law of Faith cannot be controverted, since the apostle so clearly distinguishes them in Rom. 3.27.

The distinction between the Law of Works and the Law of Christ, as explained above, according to the Scriptures and in the mind of our author, is in effect the same as the Covenant of Works; it is a rule of life to believers, and it ought to be admitted (*Westm. Confess.* chap. 19, art. 6). For (1.) Believers are not under, but dead to the Law of Works, Rom. 6.14, "For you are not under the law, but under grace." — Chap. 7.4, "Wherefore my brethren, you also have become dead to the law, that you should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead." — 1Cor. 9.21. "Being not without law to God, but under the Law of Christ." Some copies read here "of God," and "of Christ;" which I mention, not out of any regard for that different reading, but that the sense of it is admitted by the learned to be the same either way. To be under the law to God, is without question to be under the law of God; whatever it may be judged to import more, it can import no less; therefore to be under the law to Christ, is to be under the Law of Christ. This text gives a plain and decisive answer to the question, "How is the believer under the law of God?" namely, as he is under the law to Christ. (2.) The Law of Christ is an "easy yoke," and a "light burden," Mat. 11.30; but the Law of Works, to a sinner, is an unsupportable burden, requiring works as the condition of justification and acceptance with God, as is clear from the whole of the apostle's reasoning in Rom. 3 (and therefore it is called the Law of Works, for otherwise the Law of Christ requires works too), and cursing "everyone that does not continue in all things written in it, to do them," Gal. 3.10. The apostle assures us that "whatever things the law says, it says to those who are under the law," Rom. 3.19. The duties of the Law of Works as such, as I conceive it, are called by our Lord himself, "heavy

MODERN DIVINITY. 23

tell me, when you say the law ought to be a rule of life to a believer, which of these three laws do you mean?

Nom. Sir, I do not know the difference between them; but this I know, that the law of the Ten Commandments, commonly called the *Moral Law*, ought to be a rule of life to a believer.

24 THE MARROW OF

Evan. But the law of the Ten Commandments, or the Moral Law, may be said to be either the matter of the Law of Works, or the matter of the Law of Christ: and therefore I ask you to tell me, in which of these senses do you conceive it ought to be a rule of life to a believer?

MODERN DIVINITY. 25

Nom. Sir, I must confess, I do not know what you mean by this distinction; but this I know, that God requires every Christian to frame and lead his life according to the Ten Commandments; if he does this, then he may expect the blessing of God upon both his own soul and body; and if he does not, then he can expect nothing but God's wrath and curse upon them both.

Evan. The truth is, Nomista, the law of the Ten Commandments, as it is the matter of the Law of Works, should *not* be a rule of life to a believer. But in what you said, you have affirmed that it ought to be; and therefore you have erred from the truth in this. And now, Antinomista, that I may also know *your* judgment, when you say the law should not be a rule of life to a believer, please tell me, what law do you mean?

burdens, and grievous to be borne," Mat. 23.4. — "For they," namely: the Scribes and Pharisees, "bind heavy burdens, grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers." These heavy burdens were not human traditions and rites devised by men; for Christ would not have commanded us to observe and do these, as in this case he did, verse 3, "Whatever they ask you to observe, observe and do that;" nor were they the Mosaic rites and ceremonies which were not yet abrogated. For the Scribes and Pharisees were so far from not moving these burdens with one of their own fingers, that the whole of their religion was confined to them — namely to the rites and ceremonies of Moses' law, and those of their own devising. Yet in their own practice, they had no conscience about the duties of the Moral Law that they laid on others, binding them on with the tie of the Law of Works; nevertheless, our Lord Jesus commanded they be observed and done ([Mat 23:3](#)).

"He who has believed on Jesus Christ (though he is freed from the curse of the law) is not freed from the command and obedience of the law, but is tied to it by a new obligation, and a new command from Christ. This new command from Christ imports help to obey the command." — *Westm. Conf., Practical Use of Saving Knowledge*, "The Third Warrant to Believe," fig.5.

What this distinction amounts to is that thereby a difference is constituted between the Ten Commandments as coming from an absolute God *apart from Christ* unto sinners, and the same Ten Commandments as coming from God *in Christ* unto them; a difference which the children of God, assisting their consciences before him to "receive the law from his mouth," will value as their life, however they may disagree about it in words and manner of expression. But that the original indispensable obligation of the law of the Ten Commandments is in any measure weakened by the believer's taking it as the Law of Christ, and not as the Law of Works — or that the sovereign authority of God the Creator, which is inseparable from it for the ages of eternity, in whatever channel it is conveyed to men, is thereby laid aside, — will appear utterly groundless, upon an impartial consideration of the matter. For is not our Lord Jesus Christ, equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, Jehovah, the Sovereign, Supreme, Most High God, Creator of the world? Isa. 47.4; Jer. 23.6; with Psalm 83.18; John 1.3; Rev. 3.14. Is not the name (or sovereign authority) of God in Christ? Exo. 23.21. Is he not in the Father, and the Father in him? John 14.11. Indeed, does not all the fulness of the Godhead dwell in him? Col. 2.9. How, then, can the original obligation of the law of the Ten Commandments, arising from the authority of the Creator — Father, Son, and Holy Ghost — be weakened by its being issued to the believer from and by that blessed channel, the Lord Jesus Christ?

As for the distinction between the Law of Faith and the Law of Christ, the latter is subordinated to the former. All men by nature are under the Law of Works; but taking the benefit of the Law of Faith, by believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, they are set free from the Law of Works, and brought under the Law of Christ. — Mat. 11.28, 29, "Come to me, all you that labour and are heavy laden — take my yoke upon you."

Ant. Why, I mean the law of the Ten Commandments.

Evan. But do you mean that law, as it is the matter of the Law of Works, or as it is the matter of the Law of Christ?

Ant. Surely, sir, I conceive that the Ten Commandments are in no way to be a rule of life to a believer; for Christ has delivered him from them.

26 THE MARROW OF

Evan. But the truth is, the law of the Ten Commandments, as it is the matter of the Law of Christ, ought to be a rule of life to a believer;¹ and therefore having affirmed the contrary, you have also erred from the truth in this.

MODERN DIVINITY. 27

Nom. The truth is, sir, I must confess that I never took any notice of this threefold law which, it seems, is mentioned in the New Testament.

Ant. And I must confess, if I took any notice of them, I never understood them.

Evan. Well, let me tell you that so far as any man comes short of the true knowledge of this threefold law,² he comes short both of the true knowledge of God, and of himself; and therefore I wish you both to consider it.

¹ The law of the Ten Commandments, being the natural law, was written on Adam's heart at his creation; while it was not yet either the Law of Works, or the Law of Christ, in the sense in which these terms are used in Scripture and by our author. But after man was created and put into the garden, this natural law, having made man liable to fall away from God, a threat of eternal death in case of disobedience, also had a promise of eternal life annexed to it in case of obedience. In virtue of this, having done his work, he might thereupon plead and demand the reward of eternal life. Thus it became the Law of Works, of which the Ten Commandments were and are still the matter of it. All mankind being ruined by the breach of this law, Jesus Christ obeys and dies in place of the elect, so that they might be saved; those who are united to him by faith are, through his obedience and satisfaction imputed to them, freed from eternal death, and become heirs of everlasting life — so that the Law of Works being fully satisfied, it expires as to them, as it would have done, of course, had Adam not fallen in the time of his trial. However it remains in full force as to unbelievers. But from the moment the Law of Works expires, the natural law of the Ten Commandments (which can never expire or terminate, but is obligatory in all possible states of the creature in earth, heaven, or hell) is issued to believers (who are still liable to infirmities, though not to falling away like Adam) in the channel of the Covenant of Grace: it bears a promise of help to obey (Ezek. 36.27); and it agrees to their state before the Lord, having annexed to it a promise of the tokens of God's fatherly love for the sake of Christ in case of their obedience; and a threatening of God's fatherly displeasure in case of their disobedience. John 14.21, "He that has my commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves me; and he that loves me, shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." — Psalm 89.31-33, "If they break my statutes, and do not keep my commandments; then I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, I will not utterly take my loving kindness from him, nor allow my faithfulness to fail." Thus it becomes the Law of Christ to them; also the same Ten Commandments are likewise the matter of this law. In the threatenings of this law, there is no revenging wrath; and in its promises there is no proper conditionality of works. But here is the order in the Covenant of Grace to which the Law of Christ belongs: a beautiful order of grace, obedience, particular favours, and chastisements for disobedience. Thus the Ten Commandments stand, both in the Law of Works and in the Law of Christ at the same time, being the common matter of both; but as they are the matter of (*i.e.* stand in) the Law of Works, they are actually a part of the Law of Works; nonetheless, as they are the matter of, or stand in, the Law of Christ, they are actually a part, not of the Law of Works, but of the Law of Christ. And as they stand in the Law of Christ, our author expressly asserts against the Antinomian, that they ought to be a rule of life to a believer. But against the legalist, he justly denies that they ought to be a rule of life to a believer, as they stand in the Law of Works. Even as when one and the same crime stands forbidden in the laws of different independent kingdoms, it is obvious that the rule of life for the subjects in that particular, is the prohibition as it stands in the law of that kingdom of which they are subjects respectively, and not as it stands in the law of that kingdom of which they are *not* subjects.

² Not of the terms used here to express it, but of the things meant by it, namely: the Covenant of Works, the Covenant of Grace, and the Law as a rule of life to believers, in whatever terms these things are expressed.

Nom. Sir, if it is so, then you may do well to be a means to inform us, and help us to the true knowledge of this threefold law; and therefore I ask you, first tell us what is meant by the Law of Works.

CHAPTER I. OF THE LAW, OR COVENANT OF WORKS.

Sect. 1. — The Nature of the Covenant of Works

Evan. The Law of Works, as opposed to the Law of Faith (Rom. 3.27), holds forth as much as the Covenant of Works; for it is manifest, says Musculus,¹ that the word which signifies *covenant*, or bargain, is put for *law*: so that you see the Law of Works is the same as the Covenant of Works. The Lord made this covenant with all mankind in Adam before his fall, the sum of which was this: “Do this, and you shall live,” Lev. 18.5; “and if you do not do it, you shall die the death,” Gen. 2.17. In this covenant was first contained a *precept*, “Do this;” secondly a *promise* joined to it, “If you do it, you shall live;” thirdly, a similar threatening,

28 THE MARROW OF

“If you do not do it, you shall die the death.” Imagine, says Musculus, that God had said to Adam, Look, with the intent that you may live, I have given you liberty to eat, and I have given you abundantly to eat: let all the fruits of paradise be in your power, except one tree; see that you do not touch it, for I keep it to my own authority: it is “the tree of knowledge of good and evil;” if you touch it, its food shall not be life, but death.

Nom. But, sir, you said, that the law of the Ten Commandments, or Moral Law, may be said to be the matter of the Law of Works; and you have also said, that the Law of Works is the same as the Covenant of Works, whereby it seems to me that you hold that the law of the Ten Commandments was the matter of the Covenant of Works, which God made with all mankind in Adam before his fall.

Evan. That is a truth agreed upon by all authors and interpreters that I know. And indeed, the Law of Works (as a learned author says) signifies the Moral Law; and the Moral Law, strictly and properly taken, signifies the Covenant of Works.²

MODERN DIVINITY. 29

Nom. But, sir, what is the reason that you call it only the *matter* of the Covenant of Works?

¹ Wolfgang Musculus (1497-1563) – a leading Reformer in the cities of Augsburg and Berne.

² The Moral Law is an ambiguous term among divines. (1.) The Moral Law, simply, is taken from the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments. So the law in the Ten Commandments is owned to be commonly called the Moral Law, *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 19. art. 2, 3. And thus our author has used that term up to this point, reckoning the Moral Law to be not the Covenant of Works itself, but only the matter of it. (2.) The Moral Law is taken for the Ten Commandments, having the promise of life, and threatening of death annexed to them; that is, taken for the Law, or Covenant of Works. Thus the Moral Law is described to be, “the declaration of the will of God to mankind, directing and binding everyone to personal, perfect, and perpetual conformity and obedience to it, in the frame and disposition of the whole man, soul and body, and in the performance of all these duties of holiness and righteousness which he owes to God and man, promising life upon its fulfilling, and threatening death upon its breach.” *Westm. Larger Catech.* Quest. 93. That this is the Covenant of Works, is clear from the *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 19. art. 1, “God gave to Adam a law, as a Covenant of Works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it.” And this our author admits to be the sense of that term, strictly and properly taken — the reason for which I conceive that the Moral Law, properly signifying the law of manners, answers to the Scripture term, *the Law of Works*, by which is meant the *Covenant* of Works. And if he had added that in this sense, believers are delivered from it, he would have said no more than the *Larger Catechism* does, in these words: “Those who are regenerate, and believe in Christ, are delivered from the Moral Law as a Covenant of Works,” Quest. 97. But, in the meantime, it is evident he does not use that term in this sense here; and in the next paragraph, he gives a reason why, save once, he did not use it in that sense.

Evan. The reason why I choose to call the law of the Ten Commandments the *matter* of the Covenant of Works, rather than the covenant itself, is because I conceive that the matter of it cannot properly be called the Covenant of Works, unless the form is put upon it; that is to say, unless the Lord requires it, and man undertakes to yield perfect obedience to it, on condition of eternal life and death.

And therefore, till then, it was not a Covenant of Works between God and all mankind in Adam. For example, you know that even though a servant¹ has an ability to do a master's work, and even though a master has wages to bestow on him for it, yet there is no covenant between them till they have agreed upon it. Even so, though man at first had power to yield perfect and perpetual obedience to all the Ten Commandments, and God had an eternal life to bestow on him; yet there was no covenant between them till they were agreed upon it.

Nom. But, sir, you know there is no mention made in the book of Genesis of this Covenant of Works, which you say was made with man at first.

Evan. Though we do not read the word "covenant" between God and man, yet we have recorded there what may amount to as much; for God provided and promised to Adam eternal happiness, and called for perfect obedience, which appears from God's threatening in Gen. 2.17; for if man must die if he disobeyed, then it implies strongly that God's covenant was with him for life if he obeyed.

Nom. But, sir, you know the word "covenant" signifies a *mutual* promise, bargain, and obligation between two parties. Now, though it is implied that God promised man to give him life if he obeyed, we do not read that man promised to be obedient.

Evan. I ask you to take notice that God does not always tie man to verbal expressions, but often contracts the covenant in real impressions in the heart and frame of the creature;²

30 THE MARROW OF

and this was the manner of covenanting with man at first.³ For God had furnished his soul with an understanding mind whereby he might discern good from evil, and right from wrong; and not only this, but there was also in his will the greatest uprightness, Eccl. 7.29; and his instrumental parts⁴ were framed to obedience and order. The truth is, God engraved in man's soul wisdom and knowledge of His will and works, and integrity in the whole soul, and such a fitness in all its powers, that the mind neither conceived, nor the heart desired, nor the body executed anything except what was acceptable to God; so that man, endued with these qualities, was able to serve God perfectly.

Nom. But, sir, how could the law of the Ten Commandments be the matter of this Covenant of Works, when they were not written, as you know, till the time of Moses?

Evan. Though they were not written in tablets of stone until the time of Moses, yet they were written in the tablets of man's heart in the time of Adam: for we read that man was created in

¹ Not a hired servant, for there is a covenant between such a servant and the master; rather, a bond-servant, bought with money from another person, or born in the master's house, who is obliged to serve his master, and is liable to punishment in case he does not; but he cannot demand wages, since there is no covenant between them. This was the case of mankind with relation to the Creator, before the Covenant of Works was made.

² The soul approving, embracing, and consenting to the covenant; without any more, this is plain language, even if not to men, yet to God who knows the heart.

³ The covenant being revealed to man, created in God's own image, he could not help but perceive the equity and benefit of it; and so he heartily approved, embraced, accepted, and consented to it. And this accepting is plainly intimated in Eve's words to the serpent, Gen. 3.2, 3, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden; but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said, you shall not eat of it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die."

⁴ His executive faculties and powers, whereby the good that was known and willed, was to be done.

the image or likeness of God, Gen. 1.27. And the Ten Commandments are a doctrine agreeing with the eternal wisdom and justice that is in God; in this he has so painted out his own nature, that in a way it expresses the very image of God, Col. 3.10.¹ And does not the apostle say (Eph. 4.24) that the image of God consists in knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness? And is not knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness, the perfection of both tablets of the law? And indeed, says Mr. Rollock, it could not well stand with the justice of God, to make a covenant with man, on condition of holy and good works and perfect obedience to his law, unless he had first created man holy and pure, and engraved his law in his heart, from which those good works should proceed.

MODERN DIVINITY. 31

Nom. Yet I cannot but marvel that God, in making the covenant with man, made mention of no other commandment than that of the forbidden fruit.

Evan. Do not marvel at it: for by that one species of sin, the whole genus or kind of sin is shown; just as the same law, being more clearly unfolded, expresses, Deu. 27.26; Gal. 3.10. And, indeed, in that one commandment consisted the whole worship of God, such as obedience, honour, love, confidence, and religious fear; together with outward abstinence from sin, and reverend respect for the voice of God. Indeed, in this also consists his love, and so his whole duty to his neighbour;² so that, as a learned writer says, “Adam heard as much (of the law) in the garden, as Israel did at Sinai, only in fewer words, and without thunder.”³

Nom. But, sir, should not man have yielded perfect obedience to God even though this covenant had not been made between them?

Evan. Yes, indeed; perfect and perpetual obedience was due from man to God, even though God had made no promise to man; for when God created man at first, he put forth an excellency from himself into man; and therefore it was the bond and tie that lay upon man to return that again to God;⁴ so that being God’s creature by the law of creation, man owed all obedience and subjection to God his Creator.

Nom. Why, then, was it necessary that the Lord make a covenant with him, by promising him life, and threatening him with death?

Evan. For the answer to this, in the *first* place, I ask you to understand that man was a reasonable creature; and so, out of judgment, discretion, and election, he was able to make a choice of his way; and therefore it was fitting that there should be such a covenant made with him that he might serve God in a reasonable manner, according to God’s appointment. *Secondly*, It was fitting that there should be such a covenant made with him

32 THE MARROW OF

to show that he was not such a prince on earth, that he did not have a sovereign Lord: therefore, God set a punishment upon the breach of his commandment,⁵ so that man might know his inferiority, and that things between him and God were not as between equals. *Thirdly*, It was

¹ Col 3:10 put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him;

² That one commandment was in effect a summary of the whole duty of man; this clearly appears if one considers that its breach was a transgressing of all ten commandments at once, as our author afterwards distinctly shows.

³ John Lightfoot, *Miscellanies Christian and Judiciall* (London, 1629), 182-83.

⁴ God having given man a being after his own image, a glorious excellency, it was man’s natural duty to make suitable returns to the Giver by way of duty, by living and acting for him; even as the waters which originally are from the sea, return to the sea again in brooks and rivers. Man, being of God as his first cause, was required to have God as his chief and ultimate end, Rom. 11.36.

⁵ The punishment of death upon the breach of his commandment touching the forbidden fruit.

fitting that there should be such a covenant made with him, to show that he had nothing by personal, immediate, and underived right, but it was all by gift and gentleness: so that you see it was an equal covenant,¹ which God, out of his royal prerogative, made with mankind in Adam before his fall.

Nom. Well, sir, I do perceive that Adam and all mankind in him were created most holy.

Evan. Yes, and most happy, too: for God placed him in paradise in the midst of all delightful pleasures and contents, in which he enjoyed most near and sweet communion with his Creator, in whose presence is fulness of joy, and at whose right hand are pleasures evermore, Psalm 16.11. So that if Adam had received from the tree of life by taking and eating from it, while he stood in the state of innocence before his fall, then he would certainly have been established in a happy estate forever;² and he could not have been seduced and supplanted by Satan, as some learned men think, and as God's own words seem to imply, Gen. 3.22.³

MODERN DIVINITY. 33

Sect. 2. — Adam's Fall.

Nom. But it seems that Adam did not continue in that holy and happy estate.

Evan. No indeed; for he disobeyed God's express command in eating the forbidden fruit, and so he became guilty of the breach of the covenant.

Nom. But, sir, how could Adam, who had his understanding so sound, and his will so free to choose good, be so disobedient to God's express command?

Evan. Though he and his will were both good, yet they were mutually good; so that he might stand or fall at his own election or choice.

¹ That is, an equitable covenant, fair and reasonable.

² This contradicts the text of Scripture in asserting that Adam was previously forbidden from the Tree of Life; clearly, only the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil was forbidden (2.17). Adam would have lived forever in the Garden, eating of the Tree of Life, if he had not eaten the forbidden fruit. But lest he live forever in sin, God blocked Adam from eating of the Tree of Life anymore, having made provision for eternal life in the sanctifying blood of Christ.

³ The author says that some learned men think so, and that the words of Gen. 3.22 seem to imply as much; but all this does not amount to a positive determination of the point. The words of that verse are these: "Behold, the man has become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever," etc. Whether or not these words seem to imply some such things, I leave to the judgment of the reader, whom I am not inclined to entertain with my own or others' conjectures on this topic; but three things I take to be plain and beyond conjecture in this text: (1.) That there is no irony or scoffing here, as many think there is; but, on the contrary, a most pathetic lamentation over fallen man. The literal version and sense of the former part of the text runs thus: "Behold the man that was one of us," etc., compare for the version. Lam. 3.1; Psalm 3.7; and for the sense of it, Gen. 1.26, 27, "And God said. Let us make man in our image. — So God created man in his own image," etc. The latter part of the text I would read thus, "And eat that he may live forever." Compare for this version, Exo. 4.23; 1 Sam. 6.8. It is evident the sentence is broken off abruptly; the words, "I will drive him out," being suppressed; even as in the case of a father, with sighs, sobs, and tears, putting his son out of doors. (2.) That it was God's design to prevent Adam's eating of the tree of life, as he had forbidden eating of the tree, "lest he take also of the tree of life;" thereby mercifully taking care that our fallen father, to whom the Covenant of Grace was now proclaimed, might not, according to the corrupt natural inclination of fallen mankind, run back to the Covenant of Works for life and salvation, by partaking of the tree of life — a sacrament of that covenant — and so reject the Covenant of Grace by eating of that tree now, as he had before broken the Covenant of Works by eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. (3.) That at this time, Adam thought that by eating of the tree of life, he might live forever. I do not dip further into this matter here.

Nom. But why then did the Lord not create him immutable? Or, why did he not over-rule him in that action, so that he might not have eaten the forbidden fruit? ¹

Evan. The reason why the Lord did not create him immutable, was because he would be obeyed out of judgment and free choice, and not by fatal necessity and absolute determination;² and with this, let me tell you, it was not reasonable to restrain God on this point, to make man such that he would not or could not sin at all; for it was at God's choice to create man how he pleased. But why he did not uphold him with strength of steadfast continuance; that rests hidden in

34 THE MARROW OF

God's secret council. Nevertheless, we may certainly conclude that Adam's state was such that it served to remove all excuse from him; for he received so much, that of his own will he wrought his own destruction;³ because this act of his was a wilful transgression of a law, under the precepts of which he was most justly created; and under the malediction of which he was just as necessarily and righteously subject if he transgressed. For just as being God's creature meant he was subject to God's will, so being God's prisoner, he was as justly subject to his wrath. That was made more just by how much more the precept was just, the obedience easier, the transgression more reasonable, and the punishment more certain.

Sect. 3. — The Sinfulness and Misery of Mankind by the Fall.

Nom. And was Adam's sin and punishment imputed to his whole offspring?

Evan. Yes, indeed; for the apostle says in Rom. 5.12, "Death passed upon all men, for all have sinned;" or, "in whom all have sinned," that is, in Adam. The very truth is that by his fall, Adam threw down our whole nature⁴ headlong into the same destruction as his own, and drowned his whole offspring in the same gulf of misery.⁵ And the reason for this is because, by God's appointment, he was not to stand or fall as a single person only, but as a common public person, representing all mankind that would come from him.⁶ Therefore, just as all that happiness, and all those gifts and endowments which were bestowed on him, were not bestowed on him alone,

¹ These are two distinct questions, both of them natively arising from a legal temper of spirit: and I doubt if ever the heart of a sinner will receive a satisfying answer to either of them, until it comes to embrace the gospel-way of salvation — taking up its everlasting rest in Christ for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

² Immutability, properly so-called, or absolute unchangeableness, is an incommunicable attribute of God, Mal. 3.6; James 1.17; and mutability, or changeableness, is so of the nature of a creature, that it would cease to be a creature or a dependent being if it were to cease being mutable. But there is an immutability, improperly so-called, which is competent to the creature, whereby it is free from being actually liable to change in some respect; which in reference to man, may be considered in two ways. 1. As putting him beyond the hazard of change by another hand than his own. 2. As putting him beyond the hazard of change by himself. In the former sense, man was indeed made immutable in as to moral goodness; for he could only be made sinful or evil by himself, and not by any other. If he had been made immutable in the latter sense, that immutability was necessary either to have been woven into his very nature, or else to have arisen from confirming grace. Now God did not create man thus immutable in his nature; which is what the first question aims at; and for this very good reason, namely: that at that rate, man would have obeyed by fatal necessity and absolute determination, as one not having so much as a remote power in his nature to change himself. And thus neither glorified saints nor angels are immutable; their immutability in goodness entirely depends on confirming grace. As for immutability by confirming grace, which is what the second question aims at, it is conferred on glorified saints and angels; but why it was not afforded to Adam at his creation, our author wisely declines to give any reason. "The reason," he says, "why the Lord did not create him immutable was because," etc.; but why he did not uphold him with the strength of steadfast continuance, that rests hidden in God's secret counsel.

³ That is, he received so much strength, that it was not of weakness, but wilfulness, that he destroyed himself.

⁴ That is, all mankind.

⁵ With himself.

⁶ By virtue of the blessing of fruitfulness given before the fall.

but also on the whole nature of man; and just as that covenant which was made with him, was made with the whole of mankind — even so, by breaking the

MODERN DIVINITY. 35

covenant he lost all, for us as well for himself. Just as he received all for himself and us, so he lost all for himself and us.

Nom. Then, sir, it seems that by Adam's breach of the covenant, all mankind was brought into a miserable condition?

Evan. All mankind by the fall of Adam received a twofold damage: *First*, A deprivation of all original goodness. *Secondly*, A habitual natural proneness to all kinds of wickedness. For the image of God, after which they were created, was immediately blotted out; and in place of wisdom, righteousness, and true holiness, came blindness, uncleanness, falsehood, and injustice. The very truth is that our whole nature¹ was thereby corrupted, defiled, deformed, depraved, infected, made infirm, frail, malignant, full of venom, contrary to God; yes, we were made enemies and rebels to him. So that, as Luther says, this is the title we have received from Adam: in this one thing we may glory, and in nothing else at all; namely, that every infant that is born into this world, is wholly in the power of sin, death, Satan, hell, and everlasting damnation. Indeed, says Musculus, "The whirlpool of man's sin in paradise is bottomless and unsearchable."

Nom. But, sir, I think it strange that so small an offence, as eating the forbidden fruit seems to be, should plunge the whole of mankind into such a gulf of misery.

Evan. Though at first glance it seems to be a small offence, yet, if we look more wistfully² upon the matter, it will appear to be an exceedingly great offence. For intolerable injury was done to God by it; such as, *First*, His dominion and authority in his holy command was violated. *Secondly*, His justice, truth, and power, in his most righteous threatenings, were despised. *Thirdly*, His most pure and perfect image, in which man was created in righteousness and true holiness, was utterly defaced. *Fourthly*, His glory which the creature should have brought to him by active serving, was lost and despoiled. No indeed, how could there be a greater sin committed than when Adam, at that one clap, broke all ten commandments?

Nom. He broke all ten commandments, you say? Sir, I beseech you, show me how.

36 THE MARROW OF

Evan. 1. He chose another God for himself when he followed the devil.

2. He idolized and deified his own belly³ as in the apostle's phrase, "He made his belly his God."

3. He took the name of God in vain, when he did not believe him.

4. He did not keep the rest and estate in which God set him.

5. He dishonoured his Father who was in heaven; and therefore his days were not prolonged in the land which the Lord his God had given him.

6. He massacred himself and all his posterity.

7. He was a virgin from Eve, but in his eyes and mind he committed spiritual fornication.

8. He stole, like Achan did, what God had set aside as not to be meddled with; and his stealth is what troubles all Israel — the whole world.

9. He bore witness against God when he believed the witness of the devil above God.

¹ That is, all mankind.

² That is, earnestly; or thoughtfully.

³ That is, as the apostle's, etc.

10. He coveted with an evil covetousness, like Amnon,¹ which cost him his life and all his progeny.

Now, whoever considers what a nest of evils were committed here in one blow, must see with Musculus, that our case is such that we are compelled to commend the justice of God in every way,² and to condemn the sin of our first parents. Concerning all mankind, we must say as the prophet Hosea said concerning Israel, “Israel, you have destroyed yourself,” Hos. 13.9.

Sect. 4. — No Recovery by the Law, or Covenant of Works.

Nom. But sir, would it not have been possible for Adam to help himself and his posterity out of his misery, by renewing the same covenant with God, and keeping it afterwards?

Evan. No, by no means; for the Covenant of Works was a covenant in no way capable of renovation.³ Once he had broken it, he was gone forever; because it was a covenant

MODERN DIVINITY. 37

between two friends; but now fallen man had become an enemy. And besides, it was an impossible thing for Adam to have performed the conditions now, which the justice of God necessarily required at his hands; for he had now become liable for the payment of a double debt; namely, the debt of satisfaction for his sin committed in time past, and the debt of perfect and perpetual obedience for the time to come; and he was utterly unable to pay either of them.

Nom. Why was he unable to pay the debt of satisfaction for his sin committed in the past?

Evan. Because his sin in eating the forbidden fruit (which is the sin I mean)⁴ was committed against an infinite and eternal God, ⁵ and therefore it merited an infinite and eternal satisfaction: either some temporal punishment equivalent to eternal damnation, or eternal damnation itself. Now Adam was a finite creature. Therefore, between finite and infinite there could be no proportion; so it was impossible for Adam to make satisfaction by any temporal punishment. And if he had undertaken to satisfy by an eternal punishment, he would always be satisfying and never have satisfied it, as is the case of the damned in hell.

Nom. And why was he unable to pay the debt of perfect and perpetual obedience for the time to come?

Evan. Because his former power to obey was utterly impaired by his fall. For by his fall, his understanding was both enfeebled and drowned in darkness; and his will was made perverse, and utterly deprived of all power to will good; and his affections were set completely out of order; all things belonging to the blessed life of the soul were extinguished, both in him and us; so that he had become impotent, indeed, dead — and therefore he was not able to stand in the lowest terms to perform the meanest condition. The truth is, our father Adam, in falling from God, so dashed himself and all of us into pieces by it, that there was no whole part left either in him or in us, that was fit to base such a covenant upon. And the apostle witnesses this, both

¹ 2 Sam. 13. [Amnon, firstborn of David, raped his half-sister Tamar; her brother Absalom killed him for it.](#)

² That is, to justify God.

³ The Covenant of Works could by no means be renewed by fallen Adam so as to thereby help himself and his posterity out of his misery, which is the only thing in question here; otherwise indeed it might have been renewed, which is evident by this sad token, that many do actually renew it in their covenanting with God, being prompted to it by their ignorance of the high demands of the law, their own utter inability, and the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. And from the same principle, our legalist here does not question that Adam might have renewed it, and kept it too for the after-time; he questions only whether Adam might thereby have helped himself, and his posterity too, out of the misery they were brought into by his sin.

⁴ That being the sin in which all mankind fell with him, Rom. 5.15.

⁵ [Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica \(1265-1274\), 1st part of the Second Part, Q. 87. “The Debt of Punishment.”](#)

when he says, “We were of no strength,” Rom. 5.6; and, “The law was made weak, because of the flesh,” Rom. 8.3.

Nom. But, sir, might not the Lord have pardoned Adam’s sin without satisfaction?

38 THE MARROW OF

Evan. O no! For justice is essential in God, and it is a righteous thing with God that every transgression receives a just recompense:¹ and if recompense is just, then it is unjust to pardon sin without satisfaction. Though the Lord had pardoned and forgiven his former transgression, and thus restored Adam to his former condition of amity and friendship, yet having no power to keep the law perfectly, Adam could not have continued in it.²

Nom. And is it also impossible for any of his posterity to keep the law perfectly?

Evan. Yes, it is impossible for any mere man in this life to keep it perfectly; indeed, even if he is a regenerate man. For the law requires from man that he “love the Lord with all his heart, soul, and might;” and the holiest man alive is but flesh as well as spirit, in all the parts and faculties of his soul; therefore he cannot love the Lord perfectly. Yes, and the law forbids all habitual concupiscence, not only saying, “You shall not consent to lust,” but, “You shall not lust:” it not only commands the binding of lust, but it also forbids the existence of lust: and who can say in this case, “My heart is clean?”

Ant. Then, Nomista, take notice, I ask, that as it was altogether impossible for Adam to return into that holy and happy estate in which he was created by the same way that he left it,³ so it is impossible for any of his posterity. Therefore, I remember one says very wittingly, “The law was Adam’s lease when God made him a tenant of Eden; and when he did not keep the conditions of that bond, he forfeited all for himself and us.” God read a lecture of the law to him before he fell, to be a hedge to him to keep him in paradise. But when Adam would not keep within its compass, this law has now become like the flaming sword at Eden’s gate, to keep him and his posterity out.

MODERN DIVINITY. 39

Sect. 5. — The Covenant of Works binding, though broken.

Nom. But sir, you know that when a covenant is broken, the parties that were bound are freed and released from their engagements; and therefore I think both Adam and his posterity should have been released from the Covenant of Works when it was broken, especially considering they have no strength to perform its condition.

Evan. Indeed it is true that in every covenant, if either party fails in his duty, and does not perform his condition, the other party is thereby freed from doing his part; but the party that fails is *not* freed until the other party releases him. Therefore, even though the Lord is freed from performing his condition, that is, from giving man eternal life, man is not freed from his part, even though the strength to obey is lost. Having lost it by his own default, the obligation to

¹ 2 Thess. 1.6, “Seeing it is a righteous thing with God, to recompense tribulation to those who trouble you.” Heb. 2.2, “Every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense.”

² Rather, Adam would have sinned again, and thus fallen under the curse anew.

³ Walking back by the way of the Covenant of Works, which he left by his sinning.

Objec. “Do we then make void the law” (Rom. 3.31), leaving an imputation of dishonour upon it, as a disregarded path, by pretending to return another way? **Ans.** Sinners being united to Christ by faith, return, being carried back the same way they came — only their own feet never touch the ground; but the glorious Mediator, sustaining them all, walked every bit of the road exactly, Gal. 4.4, 5. Thus, in Christ, the way of free grace and of the law, sweetly meet together; and through faith we establish the law.

obedience still remains. Thus Adam and his offspring are no more discharged from their duties because they lack the strength to do them, than a debtor is acquitted of his bond because he lacks the money to pay it. And thus, Nomista, according to your desire, I have endeavoured to help you to the true knowledge of the Law of Works.

CHAPTER II. OF THE LAW OF FAITH, OR COVENANT OF GRACE.

Ant. I BESEECH you sir, proceed to help us to the true knowledge of the Law of Faith.

Evan. The Law of Faith is the same as the Covenant of Grace, or the gospel, which signifies *good, merry, glad, and joyful tidings* — which are these: In God's eternal knowledge, all things are present, and nothing is past or to come. Having foreseen man's fall, He purposed before all time,¹ and he promised in time,²

40 THE MARROW OF

and he performed in the fulness of time,³ the sending of his Son Jesus Christ into the world to help and deliver fallen mankind.⁴

SECTION I. — OF THE ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GRACE.

Ant. I beseech you, sir, let us hear more of these things; and first of all, show us how we are to conceive of God's eternal purpose in sending Jesus Christ.

Evan. Why, here the learned frame a kind of conflict in God's holy attributes. And from the language of holy Scripture, using a liberty which the Holy Ghost allows them, they speak of God in the way of men — as if he were reduced to some straits and difficulties by the cross-demands of his several attributes.⁵ For *Truth* and *Justice* stood up and said that man had sinned, and therefore man must die; and so they called for the condemnation of a sinful and therefore worthily accursed creature; otherwise Truth and Justice must be violated. For You said (they said to God), "In that day that you eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall die the death." *Mercy*, on the other side, pleaded for favour, and appeals to the great court in heaven.

MODERN DIVINITY. 41

There it pleads, saying, "Wisdom, and power, and goodness, have all been manifest in the creation; and anger and justice have been magnified in man's misery that he is now plunged into by his fall. But I, *Mercy*, have not yet been manifested."⁶ O let favour and compassion be shown

¹ 2 Tim. 1.9, "Who has saved us according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." — Eph. 3.11, "According to the eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."

² Rom. 1.1, 2, "The gospel of God, which he had promised before by his prophets in the Holy Scriptures."

³ Gal. 4.4, 5, "But when the fulness of the time had come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem those who were under the law."

⁴ These are the good tidings, this is the Law of Faith, *i.e.* the law to be believed for salvation, which the apostle plainly teaches. Rom. 1.16, "The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes;" and, verse 17, "For in this, the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith." In this last text, clouded with a great variety of interpretations, I think there is a transposition of words to be admitted, and I would read the whole verse thus: "For in this is revealed the righteousness of God by faith unto faith; as it is written, But the just shall live by faith." The key to this construction and reading of the words in the former part of the verse, is the testimony adduced by the apostle in the latter part of it, from Hab. 2.4, where the original text appears to me to determine the version of that testimony as offered here. The sense is the righteousness which is had by faith, namely, the righteousness of Christ, the only righteousness in which a sinner can stand before God is in the gospel revealed to faith, *i.e.* to be believed. See a like phrase in 1Tim. 4.3, which is translated in this manner, [*who believe and know the truth*].

⁵ "How shall I give you up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver you, Israel? How shall I make you as Admah? How shall I set you as Zeboim? My heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." Hosea 11.8.

⁶ Mercy requires an object in misery.

towards man, woefully seduced and overthrown by Satan!” “Oh,” these said to God,¹ “It is a royal thing to relieve the distressed; and the greater anyone is, the more placable and gentle he ought to be.” But *Justice* replied, “If I am offended, I must be satisfied and have my right; and therefore I require that man, who has lost himself by his disobedience, should, as a remedy, set obedience against it, and so satisfy the judgment of God.” Therefore the wisdom of God became an umpire, and devised a way to reconcile them, concluding that before reconciliation could be made, two things must be effected: (1.) A satisfaction of God’s justice. (2.) A reparation of man’s nature. These two things must be effected by a middle and common person, who had both zeal towards God, so that he might be satisfied; and also compassion towards man, so he might be repaired. Such a person, having man’s guilt and punishment transferred to him, might satisfy the justice of God; and having a fulness of God’s Spirit and holiness in himself, he might sanctify and repair the nature of man.² And this could be none other but Jesus Christ, one of the Three Persons of the blessed Trinity.

42 THE MARROW OF

Therefore, by his Father’s ordination, his own voluntary offering, and the Holy Spirit’s sanctification, he was fitted for the business. In consequence, there was a special covenant or mutual agreement made between God and Christ, as expressed in Isa. 53.10: if Christ would make himself a sacrifice for sin, then he would “see his seed, he would prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord would prosper by him.” So too in Psalm 89.19, the mercies of this covenant between God and Christ are set forth under the type of God’s covenant with David: “You spoke in a vision to your holy One, and said, I have laid help upon One who is mighty:” or, as the Chaldee expounds it, “One mighty in the law.” It is as if God had said, concerning his elect, I know that these will break, and never be able to satisfy me; but you are a mighty and substantial person, able to pay me. Therefore I will look for my debt from you.³ As Pareus⁴ well observes, God said to Christ, as it were, “I require all of what they owe me from your hands.” Then Christ said, “Behold, I come to do your will! In the volume of the book it is written of me, ‘I delight to do your will, O my God! Indeed, your law is in my heart,’” Psalm 40.7-8. Thus Christ assented. And from everlasting he struck hands with God ⁵ to take man’s nature on himself; and to take man’s name for himself; and to enter in his stead in obeying his Father; and to do all for man that God would require; and to yield in man’s flesh the price of the satisfaction of the just judgment of God; and in the same flesh, to suffer the punishment that man deserved. And so he undertook this under the penalty that man was to have undergone.⁶ Thus justice was satisfied,

¹ That is, Favour and Compassion said to God.

² As Man lay in ruins by the fall, guilty and unclean, there stood in the way of his salvation, designed by mercy, 1. The justice of God, which could not admit the guilty creature; and, 2. The holiness of God, which could not admit the unclean and unholy creature to communion with him. Therefore, in the contrivance of his salvation, it was necessary that provision be made to satisfy God’s justice, by payment of the double debt mentioned above; namely, the debt of punishment and the debt of perfect obedience. It was also necessary that provision be made for the sanctification of the sinner, repairing the lost image of God in him. And man being as unable to sanctify himself so as to satisfy justice (a truth which proud nature cannot digest), it was necessary that the Saviour not only obey and suffer in his stead, but also have the fulness of the Spirit of holiness in him to communicate to the sinner, that his nature might be repaired through sanctification of the Spirit. Thus the groundwork of man’s salvation was laid in the eternal counsel; the sanctification of the sinner, according to our author, was as necessary to his salvation as the satisfaction of justice; for indeed the necessity of the former, as well as the latter, arises from the nature of God, and is therefore an absolute necessity.

³ That is, the debt which the elect owe to me. Thus the covenant was made between the Father and the Son for the elect, that he should obey for them, and die for them. [*This is known as the Redemptive Covenant*]

⁴ David Pareus (1548-1622) – German Protestant theologian and reformer.

⁵ That is, they struck a bargain, agreed on it, and in effect, shook hands to seal the covenant.

⁶ The Son of God consented to put himself in man’s place in obeying his Father, and to do all for man that his Father would require, so that satisfaction would be made: further, he consented in man’s nature, to satisfy and suffer the

and also mercy by the Lord Jesus Christ. And so God took Christ's single bond, for which Christ is not only called the "surety of the covenant for us," Heb. 7.22, but the covenant itself, Isa. 49.8.

MODERN DIVINITY. 43

And God laid all upon him, so that he might be sure of its satisfaction, protesting that he would not deal with us, nor so much as expect any payment from us — such was his grace. And thus our Lord Jesus Christ entered into the same Covenant of Works that Adam did, to deliver believers from it.¹ He was content to be under all that commanding, revenging authority, which that covenant had over them, to free them from its penalty. In that respect, Adam is said to be a type of Christ, as you have it in Rom. 5.14, "who was the type of him that was to come." To this purpose, the titles which the apostle gives these two, Christ and Adam, are exceedingly observable: he calls Adam the "first man," and Christ our Lord the "second man," 1Cor. 15.47. He spoke of them as if there had never been any more men in the world besides these two — thereby making them head and root of all mankind, having as it were, the rest of the sons of men included in them. The first man is called the "earthly man;" the second man, Christ, is called the "Lord from heaven," 1Cor. 15.47. The earthly man had all the sons of men born into the world included in him; and so, in conformity to them, he is called the "first man:"² the second Man, Christ, is called the "Lord from heaven," who had all the elect included in him, who are said to be the "first born," and to have their "names written in heaven," Heb. 12.23. Therefore they are appositely called "heavenly men;" so that these two men, in God's account, stood

44 THE MARROW OF

for all the rest.³ And thus you see that the Lord, willing to show mercy to the fallen creature, and with that, to maintain the authority of his law, took such a course as might best manifest his clemency and severity. Christ entered into covenant and became surety for man; and so he became liable for man's engagements: for he that answers as a surety must pay the same sum of money that the debtor owes.

Thus I have endeavoured to show you how we are to conceive of God's eternal purpose in sending Jesus Christ to help and deliver fallen mankind.

deserved punishment, so that the same nature that sinned might satisfy for it; and still further, he undertook to bear the very same penalty that lay upon man by virtue of the Covenant of Works, to undergo it — thus making himself a proper surety for them; as the author observes, he must pay the sum of money that the debtor owes. I take this to be the author's meaning, but the expression, "he undertook this under the penalty," etc., is harsh and unguarded.

¹ Our Lord Jesus Christ became surety for the elect in the second covenant, Heb. 7.22; and by virtue of that suretyship whereby he put himself in the place of the principal debtors, he came under the same Covenant of Works that Adam did; in so far as fulfilling that covenant in their stead, this was the very condition required of him, as the second Adam in the second covenant. Gal. 4.4, 5, "God sent forth his Son; made under the law, to redeem those who were under the law." Thus Christ put his neck under the yoke of the law as a Covenant of Works, to redeem those who were under it as such. Hence he is said to be the "end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes," Rom. 10.4; namely, the end for consummation, or for perfectly fulfilling it by his obedience and death, which presupposes his coming under it. And thus the law as a Covenant of Works was magnified and made honourable; and it clearly appears how "by faith we establish the law," Rom. 3.31. How then is the second covenant a Covenant of Grace? In respect to Christ, it was most properly and strictly a Covenant of Works, in that he made a proper, real, and full satisfaction in behalf of the elect; but in respect to them, it is purely a covenant of richest grace, in as much as God accepted the satisfaction from a surety, which he might have demanded from them; he provided the surety himself, and he gives all to them freely for his sake.

² And so, in relation to them, he is called the "first man."

³ Thus Adam represented all mankind in the first covenant, and Christ represented all the elect in the second covenant. — See the first note in the Preface — [*Memoirs of Halyburton*].

SECTION II. — OF THE PROMISE.

Sect. 1. — The Promise made to Adam.

Ant. I beseech you, sir, proceed also to the second thing; and first tell us when the Lord began to make a promise to help and deliver fallen mankind.

Evan. It was the same day that man sinned,¹ which I suppose was the very same day he was created.² For Adam,

MODERN DIVINITY. 45

having become the child of wrath by his sin, and being subject to the curse both in body and soul, and seeing that nothing was due him but the wrath and vengeance of God, he was “afraid, and sought to hide himself from the presence of God,” Gen. 3.10. Thereupon the Lord promised Christ to him, saying to the serpent, “I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed;” he (that is to say, the seed of the woman, for so the Hebrew text reads) “shall break your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” This *promise* of Christ, the woman’s seed (ver. 15), was the gospel; and it was the only comfort of Adam, Abel, Enoch, Noah, and the rest of the godly fathers, until the time of Abraham.³

¹ Our author positively asserts this here, and afterwards he confirms it. And there is plain evidence for it from the Holy Scriptures, which determines the time of our Lord’s calling our guilty first parents before him, at which time he gave them the promise. Gen. 3.8, “And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day;” (*Heb.* “At the wind of that day,” as Junius and Tremellius, Piscator and Picherellus, read it), which, as soon as it began to blow, might convince them that their aprons of fig-leaves were not fit covers for their nakedness.

² Our author is far from being singular in this opinion. The learned Gataker [[Thomas Gataker \(1574-1654\) English clergyman and theologian who served at the Westminster Assembly in 1642](#)] (apud Pol. Synop. Crit. in Gen. 3.23) admits it as the common opinion, though he himself is of another mind, “That man fell and was cast out of paradise the same day in which he was created.” And he tells us (*Ibid.* in Psalm 49.13) that “Broughton most confidently asserts that Adam did not stand in his integrity so much as one day; and he says out of Maimonides [[Moshe ben Maimon c. 1135-1204 – renowned Jewish scholar](#)], that this is held by all the Jews, and also by the Greek fathers.” If I am not mistaken, this opinion is now less received than formerly, not a little owing to the cavils of the Deists who, to weaken the credit of the inspired history, allege it to be incredible that the events recorded in Gen. 1.24-26, and 2.7, 18, to the end of the third chapter, could all be crowded into one day (see Nichol’s *Conference with a Theist*). The reasons to support it, taken from the learned Sharp [[John Sharp \(c. 1572-1648\) professor of Divinity in Edinburgh](#)], one of the six ministers banished in the year 1606. (*Curs. Theol. Loc. de Peccato.*) 1. “Because of the devil’s envy who, it is likely, could not long endure to see man in a happy state. 2. If man had stood more days, the blessing of marriage would have taken place, Adam would have known his wife, and begotten a child without original sin. 3. The Sabbath was not so much appointed for meditating on the works of creation, as on the work of redemption. 4. It appears from the words of the serpent, and of the woman, that she had not yet tasted any fruit. 5. When the Holy Ghost speaks of the sixth day, Gen. 1, and of the day of the fall, it is with the emphatic (compare Gen. 1. ult. and 3.8.) 6. He fell so soon, that the work of redemption might be more illustrious, since man could not stand one day without the Mediator’s help.” How the Sabbath was broken by Adam’s sin, though committed the day before, may be learned from the Larger Catechism, on the fourth commandment, which teaches that “The Sabbath is to be sanctified — and to that end we are to prepare our hearts — that we may be more fit for the duties of that day;” and that “the sins forbidden in the fourth commandment, are all omissions of the duties required,” etc.

³ In this promise was revealed, 1. That Man’s restoration to the favour of God, and his salvation, were not to be effected by man himself and his own works, but by another. For our first parents, standing condemned for breaking the Covenant of Works, are not sent back to it, to assess mending the matter which they had marred before; but a new covenant is purposed — a Saviour promised as their only hope. 2. That this Saviour was to be incarnate, to become man, “the seed of the woman.” 3. That he needed to suffer; his heel — namely his humanity — was to be bruised to death. 4. That by his death he would make a full conquest over the devil, and destroy his works, who had now overcome and destroyed mankind; and so he would recover the captives out of his hand: “he shall bruise your head, namely: while you bruise his heel.” This encounter was on the cross: there, Christ treading on the serpent, his heel was bruised, but he bruised its head. 5. That he could not be held by death, but Satan’s power would be broken irrecoverably: the Saviour being only bruised in the heel, but the serpent in the head. 6. That the saving interest in him and his salvation, is by faith alone, believing the promise with particular application to one’s self, and so receiving him, in as much as these things are revealed by way of a simple promise.

Nom. Let me ask you, sir, what ground do you have to think that Adam fell the same day he was created?

Evan. My ground for this opinion is Psalm 49.12; Mr. Ainsworth¹ makes the 13th verse to be this text, and reads it thus, “But man in honour does not lodge a night; he is likened to beasts that are silenced.”² That may be taken, he says, both for the first man Adam, who did not continue in his dignity, and for all his children.

Ant. But, sir, do you think that Adam and those others understood that promised seed to mean Christ?

Evan. Who can doubt that the Lord had acquainted Adam with Christ, between the time of his sinning and the time of his sacrificing, even though both were on one day?

Ant. But did Adam offer a sacrifice?

MODERN DIVINITY. 47

Evan. Can you have any question that the bodies of those beasts, whose skins went for a covering for his body, were immediately before offered in sacrifice for his soul? Surely these skins could be none other but those of beasts that were slain and offered in sacrifice; for before Adam fell, beasts were not subject to mortality or slaying. And God’s clothing of Adam and his wife with skins signified that their sin and shame were covered with Christ’s righteousness. And without question, the Lord had taught him that his sacrifice signified his acknowledgment of his sin, and that he looked for the Seed of the woman, promised to be slain in the evening of the world, thereby to appease the wrath of God for his offence. Undoubtedly Adam acquainted his sons, Cain and Abel with this when he taught them also, to offer sacrifice. [Gen 4.4](#)

Ant. But how does it appear that this sacrificing was the very same day that he sinned?

Evan. It is said in John 7.30, concerning Christ, “That they sought to take him, yet no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come;” but after that when the time of his suffering

¹ Henry Ainsworth (1571-1622?) – Nonconformist theologian, Hebrew scholar, and a leader of the English Separatist colony in Amsterdam. At first a Puritan, Ainsworth joined the Separatists who broke entirely with the Church of England. Driven abroad in the persecution of 1593, he settled in Amsterdam (*Ency. Brit.*).

² “From this text the Hebrew doctors, also in Bereshit Rabba, gather that the glory of the first man did not night with him [*i.e. stay the night*], and that in the beginning of the Sabbath his splendour was taken away from him, and he was driven out of Eden.”— (Cartwright apud Pol. Synops. Crit. in Loc.) The learned Leigh (in his Crit. Sacr. in voc. *Lun*) citing this text, says, “Adam did not lodge one night in honour, for so are the words, if they are properly translated.” He repeats the same in his annotations on the book of Psalms, and points his reader to Ainsworth, whose version evidently favours this opinion, and he is faithfully cited here by our author, though without the marks of composition — “lodge a night,” there being no such marks in my copy of Ainsworth’s version or annotations, printed at London, 1639. However the word *lun* may signify to abide or continue; it is certain the proper and primary signification of it is *tonight* (at, in, or with). I must be allowed the use of this word to express the true import of the original one.” Thus we have it rendered, Gen. 28.11, “tarried all night.” — Judges 19.9, 10, 13, “Tarry all night — tarry that night — lodged all night.” And since this is the proper and primary signification of the word, it is not to be receded from without necessity, which I cannot discover here. The text seems to me to stand thus, word for word, the propriety of the tenses also observed: “Yet Adam in honour could not night [*stay the night*]; he became like as the beasts, they were alike.” Compare the Septuagint, and the vulgar Latin; with which, according to Pool (in Synop. Crit.) the Ethiopic, Syriac, and Arabic agree, though unhappy in not observing the difference between this and the last verse of the Psalm. Nothing can be more agreeable to the scope and context. Worldly men boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, Psa 49.6, as if their houses should continue forever, verse 11; and yet Adam, as happy as he was in paradise, did not continue one night in his honour; it quickly left him; indeed, he died, and in that respect he became like the beasts; compare Psa 49.14, “Like sheep they are laid in the grave, death shall feed on them.” And after showing that the worldly man shall die, notwithstanding his worldly wealth and honour, verse 19, this suitable memorial for Adam’s sons is repeated with a very small variation, verses 20, 21 [*Douay-Rheims*], “Adam was in honour, but could not understand; he became,” etc.

was at hand, he himself said, John 12.23, “The hour has come.” This day is expressly set down by the Evangelist Mark to be the sixth day, and ninth hour of that day, Mark 15.34, 42 when “Christ, through the eternal Spirit, offered up himself without spot to God.” [Heb 9.14](#) Now, if you compare this with Exo. 12.6, you will find that the paschal lamb, a most lively type of Christ, was offered the very same day and hour, even the sixth day, and ninth hour of that day, which was at three o’clock in the afternoon. And the Scripture testifies that Adam was created the very same sixth day; and this gives us ground to think that he sinned the same day. And do not the previously declared Scriptures afford us warrant to believe that it was the very same hour of that day, Gen. 1.26, when Christ entered mystically and typically upon the work of redemption, in being offered as a sacrifice for Adam’s sin? ¹

48 THE MARROW OF

And surely we may suppose that the covenant (as you heard) being broken between God and Adam, justice would not have allowed one hour’s respite before it had proceeded to execution, to the destruction both of Adam and the whole creation, had not Christ, at that very time, stood as the ram (or rather the lamb) in the bush, and stepped in to perform the work of the covenant. And I conceive that this is why Saint² John calls him the “Lamb slain” from the beginning of the world,³ Rev. 13.8. For as the first state of creation was confirmed by the covenant which God made with man, and all creatures were to be upheld by means of observing the law and condition of that covenant; so that covenant being broken by man, the world should have come to ruin, had it not been, as it were, created anew, and upheld by the Covenant of Grace in Christ.

Ant. Then, sir, you think that Adam was saved?

Evan. The Hebrew doctors hold that Adam was a repentant sinner, and they say that he was by wisdom (that is to say, by faith in Christ) brought out of his fall; yes, and the Church of God holds, for necessary reasons, that he was saved by the death of Christ; yes, says Mr. Vaughan, it is certain that he believed the promise concerning Christ, in whose commemoration he offered continual sacrifice; and in the assurance of it, he named his wife Hevah [[Eve](#)], that is to say,

MODERN DIVINITY. 49

¹ That the promise was given the same day that Adam sinned, was evinced before: and from the history in Gen. 3, and the nature of the thing itself, one may reasonably conclude, that the sacrifices were annexed to the promise. And since the hour of Christ’s death was all along, the time of the evening sacrifice, it is very natural to reckon that it was also the hour of the first sacrifice; even as the place on which the temple stood was at first designed by an extraordinary sacrifice on that spot, 1Chron. 21.18-28 and 22.1. “At three o’clock in the afternoon, Christ yielded up the Ghost (Mark 15.34) the very time when Adam had received the promise of this passion for his redemption.”— Lightfoot on Acts 2.1.

² This word might well have been spared here; notwithstanding that we so read in the title of the book of the Revelation in our English Bibles; and in like manner, in the titles of other books in the New Testament, St. (*i.e.* Saint) Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, etc., it is evident that there is not such a word to be found in the titles of these books in the original Greek; and the Dutch translators have justly discarded it out of their translations. If it is to be retained, because John, Matthew, Mark, Luke, etc., were without controversy, saints, then why not on the same ground have Saint Moses, Saint Aaron (expressly called “the Saint of the Lord,” Psalm 106.16.) etc.? No reason can be given for the difference made in this point, except that it pleased Antichrist to canonize these New Testament saints, but not the Old Testament ones. Canonizing is an act or sentence of the Pope, decreeing religious worship and honours to such departed men or women as he sees fit to confer the honour of saintship. These honours are seven, and the first of them is, “That they are enrolled in the catalogue of saints, and must be accounted and called saints by all.”— Bellarmin Disp. tom. 1. Col. 1496.

³ The benefits of this (namely: of Christ’s redemption) “were communicated to the elect from the beginning of the world in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices in which he was revealed and signified to be the Seed of the woman who would bruise the serpent’s head, and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world.” — *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 8, art. 6.

life,¹ and he called his son Seth, *settled* or *persuaded* in Christ.

Ant. Well, now I am persuaded that Adam did understand that this *seed of the woman* meant Christ.

Evan. Assure yourself that not only Adam, but all the rest of the godly fathers so understood it, as manifested in the *Targum*, or Chaldee Bible, which is the ancient translation of Jerusalem. It has it thus: “Between your son and her son;” adding further, by way of comment, “So long, O serpent, as the woman’s children keep the law, they kill you! And when they cease to do so, you sting them in the heel, and have power to hurt them much; but whereas for their harm there is a sure remedy, for you there is none; for in the last days they shall crush you all to pieces, by means of Christ their king.” And this is what supported and upheld their faith until the time of Abraham.

Sect. 2 — The Promise renewed to Abraham.

Ant. What followed then?

Evan. Why, then the promise was turned into a covenant with Abraham and his seed, and often repeated, so that in his seed all nations would be blessed,² Gen. 12.3; 18.18; and 22.18. This promise and covenant was the very voice itself of the gospel, being a true testimony of Jesus Christ.

50 THE MARROW OF

The apostle Paul bears witness to this, saying “the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles through faith, preached the Gospel to Abraham beforehand,” Gal. 3.8, saying, “In you, all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.” And to better confirm Abraham’s faith in this promise of Christ, it is said in Gen. 14.19, that Melchisedec came forth and met him, and blessed him. Now, the apostle says in Heb. 7.1-3, and 6.20, “This Melchisedec was a priest of the most high God, and king of righteousness, and king of peace, without father and without mother; and so he was like the Son of God, who is a priest forever, in the order of Melchisedec;” and both king of righteousness and king of peace, Jer. 23.6; Isa. 9.6; indeed, he is without father as touching his manhood, and without mother as touching his godhead. By this we are given to understand that it was the purpose of God that Melchisedec should, in these particulars, resemble the person and office of Jesus Christ, the Son of God; and by God’s own appointment, he was a type of Christ to Abraham, to ratify and confirm the promise made to him and to his seed in respect to the eternal covenant;³ namely, that he and his believing seed would be blessed

¹ So the Septuagint expounds it. Others, an *enlivener*, not doubting that Adam, in giving her this name, had the promised life-giving Seed, our Lord Jesus Christ, particularly in view, among the “all living “she was to be mother of.

² The ancient promise given to Adam was the first gospel, the Covenant of Grace. For man, by his fall, “having made himself incapable of life by the Covenant of Works, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the Covenant of Grace,” Gen. 3.15. *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 7, art. 3. When that promise or covenant was renewed, in which the persons it respected were not expressly designed, Abraham and his seed were expressly designed in it; and so it became a covenant with Abraham and his seed. And the promise, still being the same as to its substance, was often repeated, and in the repetition it was more fully and clearly opened. So Jesus Christ, revealed to Adam only as the seed of the woman, was thereafter revealed to Abraham as Abraham’s own seed; and thus it was believed and embraced unto salvation in the various revelations of it. “God sought Adam again, called upon him, rebuked his sin, convicted him of it; and in the end, he made a most joyful promise to him, namely: that the seed of the woman would break down the serpent’s head; that is, he should destroy the works of the devil; this promise, as it was repeated and made more clear from time to time, so it was embraced with joy, and may constantly (*i.e.* most steadfastly) be received by all the faithful from Adam to Noah, and from Noah to Abraham, from Abraham to David, and so forth to the incarnation of Christ Jesus.” *Old Confess.*, art. 4.

³ That passed between the Father and the Son from everlasting.

in Christ, as Melchisedec had blessed him.¹ Now, let me tell you more: some have thought it most probable, and indeed have said that if we search out this truth without partiality, we will find that this Melchisedec, who appeared to Abraham, was none other than the Son of God, manifested by a special dispensation and privilege to Abraham in the flesh, who is therefore said to have “seen his day and rejoiced.”² John 8.56. Moreover, in Gen. 15.17 we read that the Lord again confirmed this covenant with Abraham; for when Abraham had divided the beasts, God came between the parts like a smoking furnace and a burning lamp,

MODERN DIVINITY. 51

which,³ as some have thought, primarily typified the torment and rending of Christ; and the furnace and fiery lamp typified the wrath of God which ran between, yet did not consume the rent and torn nature. And the blood of circumcision typified the blood of Christ;⁴ and the resolved sacrificing of Isaac on Mount Moriah, by God’s appointment, prefigured and foreshowed that, by offering up Christ — the promised seed — in the very same place, all nations would be saved. Now this covenant, thus made and confirmed with Abraham, was renewed with Isaac, Gen. 26.4, and made known to Jacob by Jesus Christ himself. For that man who wrestled with Jacob was none other than the man Christ Jesus; for he himself said that Jacob would be called *Israel*, a wrestler and prevailer with God; and Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, because he had “seen God face to face,” Gen. 32.28, 30. And Jacob left it by his last will to his children in these words, “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh comes,” Gen. 49.10; that is to say, kings will come from Judah one after another, and many in number, till at last the Lord Jesus comes, who is King of kings and Lord of lords; or as the Targum of Jerusalem and Onkelos translate it, until Christ the Anointed comes.

Nom. But, sir, are you sure that this promised seed was meant of Christ?

Evan. The apostle puts that out of doubt, Gal. 3.16, saying, “Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his seed.”⁵ He does not say — and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to your seed, which is Christ.”⁶ And no doubt these godly patriarchs so understood it.

Ant. But, sir, the great promise that was made to them, as I conceive it, and which they seemed to have the most regard for, was the land of Canaan.

52 THE MARROW OF

¹ Melchisedec was a type to Abraham, to confirm him in the faith, so that he and his believing seed would be as really blessed in Christ as he was blessed by Melchisedec.

² This seems to me to be a more than groundless opinion, being inconsistent with the Scripture account of Melchisedec in Gen. 14.18; Heb. 7.1-4; nevertheless, it lacks no patrons among the learned; declaring this is no just ground to fix it on our author, especially after his speaking so plainly a little before of Christ and Melchisedec as two different persons [*e.g., Joseph was a type of Christ, being in the pit and raised again to save his people; but no one would claim he was the pre-incarnate Christ*]. The text (John 8.56) alleged by the patrons of that opinion, does nothing for their purpose: “for all (we mean the faithful fathers under the law) saw (namely: by faith) the joyful day of Christ Jesus, and rejoiced.” *Old Confess.*, art. 4.

³ Namely, the passing of the furnace and burning lamp between the pieces.

⁴ Heb. 9.22, “And by the law almost all things are purged with blood: and without the shedding of blood there is no remission,” Compare Gen. 17.14, “The uncircumcised man-child shall be cut off from his people: he has broken my covenant.”

⁵ Namely, the promises of the everlasting inheritance, typified by the land of Canaan: see these promises in Gen. 12.7, and 13.15.

⁶ That is, mystical Christ, Christ and the Church, the head and the members; yet so as the dignity of the head is still reserved — he is to be understood here *primarily*, which is sufficient for our author’s purposes; and his members *secondarily* only.

Evan. There is no doubt that these godly patriarchs saw their heavenly inheritance (by Christ) through the promise of the land of Canaan, as the apostle testifies about Abraham, Heb. 11.9, 10, saying, “He sojourned in a strange country, and looked for a city having foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” “By this it is evident,” says Calvin (*Instit.* p. 204) “that the height and eminence of Abraham’s faith was looking for an everlasting life in heaven.” He gives a similar testimony of Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, “All these died in the faith,” ¹ Heb. 11.13 — implying that they did not expect to receive the fruit of the promise till after death. And therefore, in all their travails, they had before their eyes the blessedness of the life to come. This caused old Jacob to say at his death, “Lord, I have waited for your salvation,” Gen. 49.18. The Chaldee paraphrase expounds this phrase thus, “Our father Jacob did not say, I expect the salvation of Gideon, son of Joash, which is a temporal salvation, nor the salvation of Samson, son of Manoah, which is a transitory salvation, but the salvation of Christ, the Son of David, who shall come, and bring unto himself the sons of Israel, whose salvation my soul desires.” And so you see that this covenant, made with Abraham in Christ, was the comfort and support of these and the rest of the godly fathers, until their departure out of Egypt.

Ant. And what followed then?

Evan. Why, then Christ Jesus was most clearly manifested to them in the Passover lamb; for as that lamb was to be without spot or blemish, Exo. 12.5, even so was Christ, 1Pet. 1.19. And as that lamb was taken up the tenth day of the first new moon in March, even so, on the very same day of the same month, Christ came to Jerusalem to suffer his passion. And as that lamb was killed on the fourteenth day at evening, just then, on the same day and at the same hour, Christ gave up the ghost; and as the blood of that lamb was to be sprinkled on the Israelites’ doors, Exo. 12.7, even so the blood of Christ is sprinkled on believers’ hearts by faith, 1Pet. 1.2. And their deliverance out of Egypt was a figure

MODERN DIVINITY. 53

of their redemption by Christ,² their passing through the Red Sea was a type of baptism,³ when Christ was to come in the flesh; and their manna in the wilderness, and water out of the rock, resembled the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper; and hence it is that the apostle says, 1Cor. 10.2-4, “They all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ.” And when they had come to Mount Sinai, the Lord delivered the Ten Commandments to them.

Sect. 3. — The Law, as the Covenant of Works, added to the Promise.

Ant. But were the Ten Commandments, as they were delivered to them on Mount Sinai, the Covenant of Works or not?

¹ These three, together with Abraham, are meant here by the apostle, and not those mentioned in the first seven verses of the chapter, if it is considered that he spoke of them last, ver. 9. 11. The promise of Canaan was given to none before them; and they were the persons who had the opportunity to return to the country from which they came, v. 15.

² That is, the deliverance of the Israelites out of Egypt was a figure of the redemption of believers by Christ.

³ Not that it prefigured or represented baptism as a proper and prophetic type of it, though some orthodox divines seem to be of that mind; but as the author expresses himself, in the case of the manna and the water out of the rock, that it resembled baptism, being a like figure (or type) to it, as the apostle Peter determines, concerning Noah’s ark with the waters of the deluge, 1Pet. 3.21, even as the printer’s types of the letters are impressed on the paper, both signifying one and the same word. For the ancient church is expressly said to have been “baptized in the sea,” 1Cor. 10.1, 2, and as the rock with the waters flowing from it did not signify the Lord’s Supper, but the thing signified by that New Testament Sacrament (namely, Christ, ver. 4), so their baptism in the sea did not signify our baptism itself, but the thing represented by it. And thus it was a type or figure answering to and resembling the baptism of the New Testament-church; the one being an extraordinary sacrament of the Old Testament, and the other an ordinary sacrament of the New, both representing the same thing.

Evan. They were delivered to them as the Covenant of Works.¹

54 THE MARROW OF

Nom. But, by your favour, sir, you know that these people were the posterity of Abraham, and therefore were under that Covenant of Grace which God made with their father. Therefore I do not think they were delivered to them as the Covenant of Works; for you know the Lord never delivers the Covenant of Works to any who are under the Covenant of Grace.

Evan. Indeed it is true, the Lord did manifest so much love to the body of this nation, that all the natural seed of Abraham were externally, and by profession, under the Covenant of Grace made with their father Abraham — though it is to be feared that many of them were still under the Covenant of Works made with their father Adam.²

Nom. But sir, you know that in the preface to the Ten Commandments, the Lord calls himself by the name of their God in general; therefore it would seem they were all the people of God.³

MODERN DIVINITY. 55

Evan. That is not to the purpose;⁴ for many wicked and ungodly men, being in the visible church and under the external covenant,

¹ As to this point, there are different sentiments among orthodox divines; though all of them agree that the way of salvation was the same under the Old and New Testament, and that the Sinai covenant, whatever it was, carried no prejudice to the promise made to Abraham, and the way of salvation revealed in it only served to lead men to Jesus Christ. Our author is far from being singular in this decision of this question. I adduce only the testimonies of three late learned writers. "That God made such a covenant (namely: the Covenant of Works) with our first parents, is confirmed by several parts of Scripture," Hos. 6.7; Gal. 4.24, — Willison's *Sacr. Cat.* p. 3. The words of the text last quoted are these: "For these are the two covenants, the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage." Hence it appears that in the judgment of this author, the covenant from Mount Sinai was the Covenant of Works; otherwise there is no shadow of reason from this text for what it is adduced to prove. The Rev. Messrs. Flint and M'Claren, in their elaborate and seasonable treatises against Professor Simpson's doctrine (for which I have no doubt their names will be in honour with posterity) speak to the same purpose. The former having adduced the fore-cited text, Gal. 4.24, says, *Jam duo foedera*, etc., that is, "Now here two covenants are mentioned, the first a legal one entered into with Adam, rendered ineffectual by sin, and now again promulgated." [Exam. Doctr. Joh. Simp. p. 125.] And afterwards, speaking of the Law of Works, he adds, *Atque hoc est illud foedus*, etc., that is, "And this is that covenant promulgated on Mount Sinai, which is called one of the covenants," Gal. 4.24. *Ibid.* p. 131. The words of the latter, speaking of the Covenant of Works, are these, "Indeed, it is expressly called a covenant," Hos. 6. and Gal. 4. And Mr. Gillespie proves strongly that Gal. 4. is understood of the Covenant of Works and grace. See his *Ark of the Testament, parti*, chap. 5. p. 180. *The New Scheme Examined*, p. 176. The delivering of the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai as the Covenant of Works, necessarily includes in it delivering them as a perfect rule of righteousness; because that covenant always contained such a rule in it, the Israelites greatly lacked the true knowledge of it at that time, as our author afterwards teaches.

² The strength of the objection in the preceding paragraph lies here, namely, that at this rate, the same persons, at one and the same time, were under both the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace, which is absurd. *Ans.* The unbelieving Israelites were under the Covenant of Grace made with their father Abraham externally and by profession in respect to their visible church state; but under the Covenant of Works made with their father Adam internally and really, in respect to the state of their souls before the Lord. There is no absurdity in this; for to this day many in the visible church are in these different respects, under both covenants. Further, as to the believers among them, they were internally and really, as well as externally, under the Covenant of Grace; and only externally were they under the Covenant of Works; and that was not as a covenant co-ordinate with, but subordinate and subservient to, the Covenant of Grace: and in this there is no more inconsistency than in the former.

³ As delivered from the Covenant of Works, by virtue of the Covenant of Grace.

⁴ That will not, indeed, prove they were all the people of God in the sense given before, for the reason adduced here by our author.

Nonetheless, the preface to the Ten Commandments deserves particular notice in the matter of the Sinai transaction: Exo. 20.2, "I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage." Hence it is evident to me, that the Covenant of Grace was delivered to the Israelites on Mount Sinai. For the Son of God, the messenger of the Covenant of Grace, spoke these words to a select people, the natural seed of Abraham, typical of his whole spiritual seed. He avouches himself to be their God; namely, in virtue of the promise or covenant made with

Abraham, Gen. 17.7, “I will establish my covenant — to be a God to you and to your seed after you:” and their God, who brought them out of the land of Egypt according to the promise made to Abraham at the most solemn renewal of the covenant with him. — Gen. 15.14, “Afterwards they shall come out with great possessions.” And he first declares himself to be their God, and then he requires obedience according to the manner of the covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17.1; “I am the Almighty God (*i.e.*, in the language of the covenant. The Almighty God TO YOU, to make YOU forever blest through the promised SEED); walk before me, and be perfect.”

But I cannot deny that the Covenant of Works was also, for special ends, repeated and delivered to the Israelites on Mount Sinai, **1.** Because of the apostle’s testimony, Gal. 4.24, “These are the two covenants; the one from Mount Sinai, which gives birth to bondage.” For the children of this Sinai covenant, which the apostle treats here, are excluded from the eternal inheritance, as Ishmael was excluded from Canaan, the type of that inheritance, ver. 30, “Cast out the bond-woman and her son; for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman;” but this could never be said of the children of the Covenant of Grace under any dispensation, though both the law and the covenant from Sinai itself, and its children, were under a sentence of exclusion even before the coming of Christ, to be executed on them respectively in due time. **2.** The nature of the Covenant of Works is most expressly brought in, propounded, and explained in the New Testament, from the Mosaic dispensation — Its commands from Exo. 20, by our blessed Saviour in Mat. 19.17-19, “If you would enter into life, keep the commandments.” He asks him, “Which?” Jesus said, “You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery,” etc. Its promise in Rom. 10.5, “Moses describes the righteousness which is of the law, that the man who does these things shall live by them.” For its commands and promise together, see Luke 10.25-28. Its terrible sanction in Gal. 3.10: For it is written (Deu. 27.26) “Cursed is everyone that does not continue to do all things which are written in the book of the law.” **3.** To this may be added the opposition between the law and grace, so frequently inculcated in the New Testament, especially in Paul’s epistles. See one text for all: Gal. 3.12, “And the law is not of faith, but the man that does them shall live in them.” **4.** The law from Mount Sinai was a covenant, Gal. 4.24, “These are the two covenants, the one from the Mount Sinai;” and such a covenant that it had a semblance of disannulling the Covenant of Grace; Gal. 3.17, “The covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law which came 430 years after, cannot disannul;” indeed, such that in its nature, it bore a method of obtaining the inheritance, that is so far different from that of the promise, that it was inconsistent with it. “For if the inheritance is by the law, then it is no more by promise,” Gal. 3.18. Therefore the covenant of the law from Mount Sinai could not be the Covenant of Grace, unless one would make this last covenant not only a covenant that seems to destroy itself, but really inconsistent. Rather, it was the Covenant of Works which indeed had such a semblance, and in its own nature bore such a method as noted before; nonetheless, as Ainsworth says, “The Covenant of the Law now given, could not disannul the Covenant of Grace,” Gal. 3.17. *Annot. on Exo. 19.1.*

Therefore I conceive that the two covenants have both been delivered on Mount Sinai to the Israelites. *First*, The Covenant of Grace made with Abraham, contained in the preface, repeated and promulgated there to Israel, to be believed and embraced by faith, that they might be saved; to this was annexed the Ten Commandments, given by the Mediator Christ, the head of the covenant, as a rule of life to his covenant people. *Secondly*, the Covenant of Works made with Adam, contained in the same Ten Commandments, delivered with thunderings and lightnings, the meaning of which was afterwards clarified by Moses, describing the righteousness of the law and its sanction, repeated and promulgated to the Israelites there as the original perfect rule of righteousness, which was to be obeyed; and yet if they were no more bound by this to seek righteousness by the law than the young man was bound by our Saviour’s saying to him in Mat. 19.17, 18, “If you would enter into life, keep the commandments — You shall not murder,” etc., then the latter was a repetition of the former.

Thus there is no confounding of the two covenants of Grace and Works; rather, the latter was added to the former as subservient to it, to turn their eyes towards the promise, or the Covenant of Grace: “God gave it to Abraham by promise. What purpose therefore does the Law serve? It was added, because of transgressions, till the Seed would come,” Gal. 3.18, 19. So this subservient covenant was added to the promise given to Abraham; and we have found that promise in the preface to the Ten Commandments. The subservient covenant, according to the apostle, was then added to it, put or set to it, as the word properly signifies. So it was not part of the Covenant of Grace, which was entire to the fathers before the time that was set to it; and yet, to the New Testament church, it is *after* that is taken away from it: for the apostle says, “It was added till the seed would come.” Hence it appears that the Covenant of Grace was, both in itself and in God’s intention, the principal part of the Sinai transaction: nevertheless, the Covenant of Works was the most conspicuous part of it, and it lay most open to the view of the people.

According to this account of the Sinai transaction, the Ten Commandments, delivered there, must come under a twofold notion or consideration; namely, as the Law of Christ, and as the Law of Works: and this is not strange, if it is considered that they were written twice on tablets of stone by the Lord himself, — the first tablets, “the work of God” (Exo. 32.16), which were broken in pieces (ver. 19), were called the “tablets of the covenant” in Deu. 9.11, 15, — the second tablets, the work of Moses (Exo. 34.1) who was the typical Mediator, were deposited at first (it would seem) in the tabernacle mentioned in Exo. 33.7; and afterward, at the rearing of the tabernacle with all its furnishings, they were laid up in the ark within the tabernacle (Exo. 25.16). Whether or not that is intimated by the double accentuation of the Decalogue, let the learned determine; but to the ocular inspection, it is evident that the preface to the Ten

56 THE MARROW OF

are called the chosen of God and the people of God, even though they are not so. In like manner, many of these Israelites were called the people of God, even though indeed they were not so.

MODERN DIVINITY. 57

Nom. But, sir, was the same Covenant of Works made with them that was made with Adam?

Evan. For the general substance of the duty, the law delivered on Mount Sinai, and formerly engraven on man's heart, was one and the same law; so that at Mount Sinai, the Lord delivered nothing new — only it came more gently to Adam before his fall; but after his fall it came with thunder.

Nom. Yes sir, but as you said yourself, the Ten Commandments, as they were written in Adam's heart, were but the *matter* of the Covenant of Works, and not the covenant itself, till the form was annexed to them — that is to say, till God and man were agreed on it. Now, we do not find that God and these people agreed upon any such terms at Mount Sinai.

Evan. Indeed;¹ do you say so? Do you not remember that the Lord consented and agreed,

58 THE MARROW OF

when he said in Lev. 18.5, "You shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, which if a man does, he shall live in them;" and in Deu. 27.26, when he said, "Cursed is he that does not confirm all the words of this law, to do them?" And do you not remember that the people consented and agreed when they said, Exo. 19.8, "All that the Lord has spoken, we will do?" And does not the apostle Paul give evidence that these words were the form of the Covenant of Works, when he says in Rom. 10.5, "Moses describes that righteousness which is of the law, that the man who does these things shall live in them;" and when he says in Gal. 3.10, "For it is written, Cursed is everyone that does not continue to do all things written in the book of the law?"² And in Deu. 4.13, Moses expressly calls it a covenant saying, "And he declared his

Commandments, in Exo. 20.2 and Deu. 5.6, stands in the original both as part of a sentence joined to the first commandments, and also as an entire sentence, separated from them, and enclosed by itself.

On the whole, one may compare this with the first promulgation of the Covenant of Grace by the messenger of the covenant in paradise, Gen. 3.15; and with the flaming sword placed there by the same hand, "turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life."

¹ Here there is a large addition in the 9th edition of this book, London, 1699. It well deserves a place, and reads as follows:

"I do not say God made the Covenant of Works with them, that they might obtain life and salvation by it; no, the law had become weak through the flesh, as to any such purpose, Rom. 8.3. But he repeated, or gave a new edition of the law, and that was as a Covenant of Works for their humbling and conviction; and his ministers so preach the law to unconverted sinners still, that those who desire to be under the law may hear what the law says,' Gal. 4.21. And as to what you say about their not agreeing to this covenant, I ask you to note that the Covenant of Works was made with Adam, not for himself only, but as he was a public person representing all his posterity, and that covenant was made with the whole nature of man in him, as appears by Adam's sin and curse coming upon all, Rom. 5.12, etc.. Gal. 3.10. Hence all men are born under that covenant, whether they agree to it or not; though, indeed, there is by nature such a proneness in all men to desire to be under that covenant, and to work for life, that if natural men's consent were asked, they would readily (though ignorantly) take it upon themselves to do all that the Lord requires; for do you not remember," etc.

² It is beyond question that the conditional promise in Lev. 18.5 (which Exo. 19.8 agrees with), and the dreadful threatening in Deu. 27.26, were both given to the Israelites, as well as the Ten Commandments; and according to the apostle (Rom. 10.5; Gal. 3.10), they were the form of the Covenant of Works; this is as evident as the repeating of the words, and expounding them so, can make it. How then, one can reject that the Covenant of Works was given to the Israelites, I cannot see. Mark the *Westminster Confession* under the heading of the Covenant of Works, chap. 7, art. 2: "The first covenant made with man was a Covenant of Works, in which life was promised to Adam, and in him to his posterity, on condition of perfect and personal obedience." And this account of the being and nature of that covenant is proved there from these very texts, among others: Rom. 10.5; Gal. 3.10.

covenant to you, which he commanded you to perform, even the Ten Commandments; and he wrote them on tablets of stone.” Now, this was not the Covenant of Grace; for speaking of this covenant afterwards in Deu. 5.3, Moses says, “God did not make this covenant with your fathers, but with you;” and by “fathers” may be meant (says Mr. Ainsworth) all the patriarchs back to Adam who had the promise of the covenant of Christ.¹ Therefore, if it had been the Covenant of Grace, he would have said, God *did* make this covenant with them, rather than he did *not*.²

MODERN DIVINITY. 59

Nom. And do any of our godly and modern writers agree with you on this point?

Evan. Yes, indeed. Polonus says, “The Covenant of Works is that in which God promises everlasting life to a man who in all respects performs perfect obedience to the Law of Works, adding to it threatenings of eternal death if he does not perform perfect obedience to it. God made this covenant in the beginning with the first man Adam, while he was in the first estate of integrity. God repeated and made the same covenant again by Moses with the people of Israel.” And Dr. Preston,³ on the New Covenant (p. 317) says, “The Covenant of Works runs in these terms, ‘Do this and you shall live, and I will be your God.’ This was the covenant which was made with Adam, and the covenant that is expressed by Moses in the Moral Law.” And Mr. Pemble (*Vind. Fid.* p. 152) says,

“By the Covenant of Works, we understand what we call in one word ‘the law,’ namely, that means of bringing man to salvation, which is by perfect obedience to the will of God. There are also two respective administrations of it: the *First* is with Adam before his fall, when immortality and happiness were promised to man, and confirmed by an external symbol of the tree of life, on condition that he continued obedient to God in that particular commandment of not eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, as well as in all other things. The *Second* administration of this covenant was renewing it with the Israelites at Mount Sinai. There, after the light of nature began to grow darker, and corruption had in time worn out the characters of religion and virtue that were first graven in man’s heart,⁴ God revived the law by a compendious and full declaration of all the duties required of man towards God and his neighbour, as expressed in the Decalogue. According to the tenor of this law, God entered into covenant with the Israelites,

60 THE MARROW OF

promising to be their God in bestowing on them all the blessings of life and happiness, on condition that they would be his people, obeying all things that he had commanded. They accepted this condition, promising absolute obedience, Exo. 19.8, ‘All things which the Lord

¹ “But the covenant of the law [he adds] came after Gen. 3.17, as the apostle observes: — They had a greater benefit than their fathers; for though the law could not give them life, yet it was a schoolmaster to Christ, *i.e.*, to bring them to Christ.” Gal. 3.21-24. Ainsworth on Deu. 5.3.

² The transaction at Sinai or Horeb (for they are but one mountain) was a mixed dispensation; there was the promise or Covenant of Grace, and also the Law; the one was a covenant to be *believed*, and the other a covenant to be *done*; and thus the apostle states the difference between these two in Gal. 3.12, “And the law is not of faith, but the man that does them shall live in them.” As to the former, namely: the covenant to be *believed*, it was given to their fathers as well as to them. Of the latter, *namely*, the covenant to be *done*, Moses speaks expressly in Deu. 4.12, 13, “The Lord spoke to you out of the midst of the fire, and he declared his covenant to you, which he commanded you to PERFORM (or DO) even the Ten Commandments.” And in Deu. 5.3, he tells the people no less expressly that, “the Lord did not make this covenant with our fathers.”

³ John Preston succeeded John Donne at Lincoln’s Inn Chapel. He became Master of Emmanuel College, 1622-1628.

⁴ That is, had *worn them off*, in the same measure and degree as the light of nature was darkened; but neither the one nor the other was ever fully done. Rom. 2.14, 15: *For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, ¹⁵ who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them.*

has said, we will do;’ and also submitting themselves to punishment in case they disobeyed, saying, ‘Amen’ to the curse of the law, ‘Cursed is everyone that does not confirm all the words of the law: and all the people shall say, Amen.’” [Deu 27.26](#)

And Mr. Walker, on the Covenant (p. 128) says, that “the first part of the covenant which God made with Israel at Horeb, was nothing but a renewing of the old Covenant of Works¹ which God made with Adam in paradise.” And it is generally laid down by our divines that we are delivered from the Law by Christ, as it is a covenant.²

Nom. But, sir, were the children of Israel better able at this time to perform the condition of the Covenant of Works, than either Adam or any of the old patriarchs were, that God should renew it with them now, rather than before?

Evan. No, indeed. God did not renew it with them now and not before, because they were better able to keep it, but because they had greater need to be made acquainted with what the Covenant of Works is, than those before. For though it is true that the Ten Commandments — which at first were perfectly written in Adam’s heart — were greatly obliterated³ by his fall, yet some impressions and relics of it still remaine.⁴ And Adam himself was very sensible of his fall, and the rest of the fathers were helped by tradition.⁵ And, Cameron says,

MODERN DIVINITY. 61

“God spoke to the patriarchs from heaven, yes, and he spoke to them by his angels,”⁶ but by this time, sin had almost obliterated and defaced the impressions of the law written in their hearts.⁷ They were so corrupted by being in Egypt so long, that the instructions and ordinances of their fathers were almost worn out of mind. And their fall in Adam was almost forgotten, as the apostle testifies in Rom. 5.13-14, saying, “Before the time of the law, sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law.” Indeed, in that long course of time between Adam and Moses, men had forgotten what sin was. So, although God had made a promise of blessing to Abraham and to all his seed who would plead an interest in it,⁸ these people at this time were proud and secure, and heedless of their estate. Though “sin was in them, and death reigned over them,” yet being without a law to evidence this sin and death to their consciences,⁹ they did not impute it to themselves; they would not admit it or charge themselves with it. And so, as a

¹ “In this I differ from this learned author as to this point, and for what reasons, may be seen in the note on p. 55.

² But not as it is a rule of life, which is the other member of that distinction.

³ Both in the heart of Adam himself, and of his descendants in the first ages of the world.

⁴ Both with him and them.

⁵ The doctrine of the fall, with whatever other doctrine was necessary to salvation, was handed down from Adam; the fathers communicated it to their children and children’s children. There were only eleven patriarchs before the flood; 1. Adam, 2. Seth, 3. Enos, 4. Cainan, 5. Mahalaleel, 6. Jared, 7. Enoch, 8. Methuselah, 9. Lamech, 10. Noah, 11. Shem. Adam having lived 930 years, Gen. 5.5 was known to Lamech, Noah’s father, with whom he lived 66 years, and much longer with the rest of the fathers before him; so that Lamech, and those before him, might have the doctrine from Adam’s own mouth. Methuselah lived with Adam 243 years, and with Shem 98 years before the deluge. See Gen. 5. And what Shem, who lived 502 years after the deluge, Gen. 11.10-11, had learned from Methuselah, he had occasion to teach Arphaxad, Salah, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, Abraham, Isaac, Gen. 21.5, and Jacob, to whose 51st year he (i.e., Shem) reached; compare Gen. 11.10, 21.5, 25.26. [Vid. Bail. Op. Hist. Chron. p. 2, 3.] Thus one may perceive how the nature of the law and Covenant of Works given to Adam, might be far better known to them, than to the Israelites after their long bondage in Egypt.

⁶ That is, and besides all this, God spoke to the patriarchs immediately and by angels. But we find neither of these during the time of the bondage in Egypt, until the angel of the Lord appeared to Moses in the bush, and ordered him to go and bring the people out of Egypt, Exo. 3.

⁷ The remaining impressions of the law on the hearts of the Israelites.

⁸ By faith; believing, embracing, and appropriating it to themselves, Heb. 11.13; Jer. 3.4.

⁹ Because the remaining impressions of the law on their hearts were so weak, they were not sufficient for the purpose.

consequence, they found no need to plead the promise made to Abraham.¹ Therefore, Rom. 5.20, “the law entered,” that Adam’s offence and their own actual transgression might abound. So that now, the Lord saw it was necessary that there should be a new edition and publication of the Covenant of Works — to sooner compel the elect unbelievers to come to Christ, the promised seed — and that the grace of God in Christ might appear more exceedingly glorious to the elect believers. So that you see the Lord’s intention in this was that, by looking at this covenant,

62 THE MARROW OF

they might be reminded what their duty of old was, when they were in Adam’s loins; yes, and what their duty still was, if they would stand to that covenant and go the old and natural way to work. Yes, and hereby they were also to see what their present infirmity was in not doing their duty.² So that, seeing it was impossible to obtain life by that way of works first appointed in paradise, they might be humbled, and more heedfully mind the promise made to their father Abraham, and thus hasten to lay hold on the Messiah, or promised Seed.

Nom. Then sir, it seems that the Lord did not renew the Covenant of Works with them, to the intent that they would obtain eternal life by yielding obedience to it?

Evan. No, indeed; God never made the Covenant of Works with any man since the fall, either with the expectation that he would fulfil it,³ or to give him life by it; for God never appoints anything to an end to which it is utterly unsuitable and improper. Now the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, has become weak and unprofitable for the purpose of salvation;⁴ and therefore God has never appointed it to man, since the fall, to that end. And besides, it is manifest that the purpose of God in the covenant made with Abraham, was to give life and salvation by *grace and promise*. And therefore, his purpose in renewing the Covenant of Works was not, nor could it be, to give life and salvation by *working*. For then there would have been contradictions in the covenants, and instability in God who made them. Therefore let no man imagine that God published the Covenant of Works on Mount Sinai, as though he had been mutable, and so changed his determination in that covenant made with Abraham; nor let any man suppose that God now, in the process of time, has found a better way for man’s salvation than he knew before. For just as the Covenant of Grace made with Abraham would have been needless if the Covenant of Works made with Adam had given him and his believing seed life, so once the Covenant of Grace was made, it was needless to renew the Covenant of Works after, to the end that righteousness of life could be had by observing it.

MODERN DIVINITY. 63

This will still more evidently appear if we consider that the apostle, speaking of the Covenant of Works as it was given on Mount Sinai, says, “It was added because of transgressions,” Gal. 3.19. It was not set up as a solid rule of righteousness as it was given to Adam in paradise, but it was added or put to that purpose;⁵ it was not set up as a thing in large by itself.

¹ By faith proposing it as their only defence, and opposing it to the demands of the law or Covenant of Works, as their only plea.

² How far they came short of, and could not reach the obedience they owed to God, according to the perfection of the holy law.

³ Nor before the fall either, properly speaking; but the expression is agreeable to Scripture style, Isa. 5.4, “Why then, when I expected that it should bring forth grapes, did it bring forth wild grapes?”

⁴ Rom. 8.3, “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh; God sending his own Son,” etc.

⁵ It was not set up by itself as an entire rule of righteousness, to which alone those who desired righteousness and salvation were to look, as was the case of upright Adam, “For no man, since the fall, can attain to righteousness and life by the Moral Law,” *Larg. Cat.* ques. 94. But it was added to the Covenant of Grace, that by looking at it, men might see what kind of righteousness it is by which they can be justified in the sight of God; and that by means of it,

Nom. Then, sir, it would seem that the Covenant of Works was added to the Covenant of Grace, to make it more complete.

Evan. No! You are not to understand the apostle as saying it was added as an ingredient, as a part of the Covenant of Grace, as if that covenant had been incomplete without the Covenant of Works. For then the same covenant would have consisted of contradictory materials, and so it would have defeated itself. For the apostle says, “If it is by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace: but if it is of works, then it is no more of grace; otherwise work is no more work,” Rom. 11.6. But it was added by way of *subserviency* and *attendance*, to better advance and make effectual the Covenant of Grace. So that, although the same covenant that was made with Adam was *renewed* on Mount Sinai, yet I still say that it was not for the same purpose. For this is what God aimed at in making the Covenant of Works with man in his innocency: to have that which was his due from man.¹ But God made it with the Israelites for no other end than that man, being thereby convinced of his weakness, might flee to Christ. So that it was renewed only to help forward and introduce another and a better covenant² — and so to be a manuduction³ to Christ — that is, to uncover sin, to waken the conscience, and to convince them of their own impotency, and so to drive them out of themselves to Christ.

64 THE MARROW OF

Know then, I beseech you, that all this while there was no other way of life given, either in whole or part, than the Covenant of Grace. All this while God only pursued the design of his own grace. And therefore, there was no inconsistency either in God’s will or in his acts — only such was his mercy, that he subordinated the Covenant of Works, and made it subservient to the Covenant of Grace, and did so to tend to evangelical purposes.

Nom. Yet, sir, I think it is somewhat strange that the Lord would set them upon doing the law, and promise them life for doing so, yet never intend it.

Evan. Though he did so, he neither required from them what was unjust, nor did he dissemble with them in the promise. For the Lord may justly require perfect obedience at all men’s hands, by virtue of that covenant which was made with them in Adam. And if any man could yield perfect obedience to the law, both in doing and suffering it, he would have eternal life. For we may not deny (says Calvin) that the reward of eternal salvation belongs to the upright obedience of the law.⁴ God knew well enough that the Israelites were never able to yield such obedience, yet he saw fit to propound eternal life to them on these terms, so he might speak to them in their own inclination, as indeed was fitting. For they swelled with a mad assurance in themselves, saying, “All that the Lord commands we will do,” and be obedient, Exo. 19.8. Well, said the Lord, if you would do it, why, here is a law to be kept; and if you can fully observe the righteousness of it, you shall be saved. He was purposely sending them to the law to awaken and convince them, to sentence and humble them, and to make them see their own folly in seeking life that way. In short, he did it to make them see the terms under which they stood, so that they might be brought out of themselves, and expect nothing from the law in relation to life, but to expect all from Christ. For how would a man see his need for life by Christ, if he does not first see that he has fallen from the way of life? And how would he understand how far he had strayed from the

finding themselves destitute of that righteousness, they might be moved to embrace the Covenant of Grace in which that righteousness is held forth to be received by faith.

¹ This was the end of the work, namely, of making the Covenant of Works with Adam, but not of repeating it at Sinai; it was also the end or design of the worker, namely of God, who made that covenant with Adam, to have his due from man; and he got it from the Man Christ Jesus.

² Heb 7.22; 8.6.

³ The act of guiding, or a means of guidance; direction, instruction — here, leading man to Christ.

⁴ That is, the perfect obedience of the law; as it is said, Eccl. 7.29, “God made man upright.”

way of life, unless he first finds what that way of life is? Therefore it was necessary for the Lord to deal with them in such a manner as to drive them out of themselves, and from all confidence in the works of the law,

MODERN DIVINITY. 65

so that, by faith in Christ, they might obtain righteousness and life. And in just this way, our Saviour dealt with that young expounder of the law, in Mat. 19.16, who it seems was sick from the same disease: “Good Master,” he says, “what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” He does not, says Calvin, simply ask which way or by what means he should come to eternal life, but what good *he* should do to get it. By this it appears that he was a proud justiciary, one that swelled in his fleshly opinion that he could keep the law, and be saved by it. Therefore he is worthily sent to the law to work himself weary, and to see his need to come to Christ for rest. And thus you see that the Lord added a fiery law to the former promises made to the fathers. He gave this law to stubborn and stiff-necked Israel at Mount Sinai, in thunder and lightning, and with a terrible voice, by which to break and tame them, and make them sigh and long for the promised Redeemer.

Sect. 4. — The Promise and Covenant with Abraham renewed with the Israelites.

Ant. And, sir, did the law produce this effect in them?

Evan. Yes indeed, it did; as it will appear if you consider that although, before publishing this covenant, they were exceedingly proud and confident of their own strength to do all that the Lord would have them do. Yet when the Lord came to deal with them as men under the Covenant of Works — in showing himself a terrible judge, sitting on the throne of justice like a mountain burning with fire, summoning them to come before him by the sound of a trumpet (yet not to touch the mountain without a mediator) Heb. 12.19, 20 — they were not able to endure the voice of his words, nor abide what was commanded, so far that Moses himself feared and quaked — and all of them so feared, and shook, and shivered, that their peacock feathers were now pulled down. This terrible show in which God gave his law on Mount Sinai, says Luther, represented the use of the law. There was a singular holiness in the people of Israel who came out of Egypt; they gloried and said, “We are the people of God; we will do all that the Lord commands.” Moreover, Moses sanctified them, and bade them to wash their garments, and purify themselves, and prepare themselves against the third day: there was not one of them who was not full of holiness. The third day, Moses brings the people out of their tents to the mountain, in the sight of the Lord, that they might hear his voice. What followed then? Why, when they beheld the horrible sight of the mountain smoking and burning, the black

66 THE MARROW OF

clouds and lightning flashing up and down in this horrible darkness, and heard the sound of the trumpet blowing long, and growing louder and louder, they were afraid. Standing far off, they did not say to Moses as before, “All that the Lord commands we will do;” but instead, “you talk with us, and we will hear; but do not let God talk with us, lest we die.” So that now they saw they were sinners, and had offended God; and therefore they stood in need of a mediator to negotiate peace, and entreat for reconciliation between God and them. And the Lord highly approved of their words, as you may see in Deu. 5.28, where Moses, repeating what they had said, adds further: “The Lord heard the voice of your words when you spoke to me, and the Lord said to me, I have heard the voice of the words of this people, which they have spoken to you; they have well said all that they have spoken,” namely: in desiring a mediator. Therefore, I ask you to notice that they were not commended for saying, “All that the Lord commands we will do.” “So,”

says a godly writer, “they were not praised for anything other than desiring a mediator;”¹ Upon this, the Lord promised Christ to them, even as Moses testifies saying, “The Lord your God shall raise up for you a prophet like me, from among you, even of your brethren. You shall hearken² to him according to all that you desired from the Lord your God in Horeb, in the day of the assembly when you said, Let me hear the voice of the Lord my God no more, nor see this great fire any more, so that I do not die: and the Lord said to me. They have spoken well, I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like you,

MODERN DIVINITY. 67

and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him.”³ And to assure us that Christ was the prophet spoken of here, Jesus himself says to the Jews, John 5.46, “If you had believed Moses, you would have believed me; for he wrote of me.” And the apostle Peter witnesses in Acts 3.22 that this was what he wrote of him; and so does the martyr Stephen in Acts 7.37. Thus you see, when the Lord had humbled them by means of the Covenant of Works made with Adam, and made them sigh for Christ, the promised Seed, he renewed the promise with them, yes, and the Covenant of Grace made with Abraham.⁴

Ant. I beg you, sir, how does it appear that the Lord renewed that covenant with them?

Evan. It plainly appears in this: that by Moses the Lord gave them the Levitical laws, and ordained the tabernacle, the ark, and the mercy-seat, which were all types of Christ. Moreover, Lev. 1.1, “The Lord called to Moses and spoke to him out of the tabernacle,”⁵ and commanded him to write the Levitical laws and tabernacle ordinances; telling him also, Exo. 34.27, “that in the tenor of these words, he had made a covenant with him, and with Israel.”⁶ So Moses wrote those laws, it says in Exo. 24.4, not in tablets of stone,

¹ I see no warrant for restraining the sense of this text to their desiring a mediator. The universal term, “All that they have spoken,” also includes their engaging to receive the law at the mouth of the mediator, which is joined with their desire, ver. 27: “Go near, and hear all that the Lord our God shall say; and speak to us all that the Lord our God shall speak to you, and we will hear and do,” ver. 28. And the Lord said, “They have well said all that they have spoken.” But there is a palpable difference between what they spoke, Exo. 19.8, and what they spoke here, relative to their own practice. The former runs thus: “All that the Lord has spoken we will do;” the latter thus: “And we will hear and do;” the original text bears no more. The one relates to obedience only, the other to faith also, — “We will HEAR,” *i.e.*, believe, Isa. 55.3; John 9.27. Hence the object of faith, that which is to be believed, is called a report, properly a hearing, Isa. 53.1; Rom. 10.16. The former speaks much blind self-confidence; the latter a sense of duty and a willing mind, but with all a sense of duty, and fear of mismanagement.

² Not merely listen, but listen attentively with a resolve to obey (Mat 7.24-26).

³ Deu 18.15-19.

⁴ Making a promise of Christ to them, not only as “the seed of the woman,” but as “the seed of Abraham,” and yet more particularly, as “the seed of Israel; the Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet, from the midst of YOU, of YOUR BRETHREN,” Deu. 18.15. And here it is to be observed that this renewing of the promise and Covenant of Grace with them, was immediately upon the back of giving the law on Mount Sinai; for at that time was their speech which the Lord commended as well spoken: this appears from Exo. 20.18, 19, compared with Deu. 5.23-28, and upon that speech of theirs, that renewal was made, which is clear from Deu. 18.17, 18.

⁵ From the mercy-seat, which was within the tabernacle. The tabernacle was an eminent type of Christ, Heb. 9.11, as the temple was also, John 2.19, 21. So this represented God’s speaking in a Mediator, in Jesus Christ. Here was a change agreeable to the people’s desire on Mount Sinai. God speaks, not from a burning mountain as before, but out of the tabernacle; nor with terrible thunderings as at Sinai, but in a still small voice, intimated to us, and intimated by the extraordinary smallness of one letter in the original word rendered *called*, as the Hebrew doctors account for that irregularity of writing in that word.

⁶ Moses exceedingly feared and quaked, Heb. 22.21, while he stood among the rest of the Israelites at Mount Sinai during the giving of the law, Exo. 19.25, with chap. 20.21. But here he is represented as Israel’s federal head in this covenant, he being the typical mediator; which plainly intimates the Covenant of Grace to have been made with Christ, and with him in all the elect: “I have made a covenant with you and with Israel,” says the text. — See the first note on the preface, in the Larger Catechism, quest. 31.

but in an authentic book,¹ says Ainsworth, called the *Book of the Covenant*. Moses read this book in the audience of the people, Exo. 24.7, and the people consented to it. Then Moses sent young men of the children of Israel — those who were first-born,² and therefore served as priests until the time of the Levites — to offer sacrifices of burnt offerings and peace-offerings to the Lord. He “took the blood and sprinkled it on the people and said, Behold the blood of the covenant which the Lord has made with you concerning these things.” By this they were taught, by virtue of blood, that this covenant between God and them was confirmed; and that Christ, by his shed blood, would satisfy for their sins. For indeed, the Covenant of Grace existed before the coming of Christ, sealed by his blood in types and figures.³

Sect. 5. — The Covenant of Grace, under the Mosaic Dispensation.

Ant. But, sir, was this in every way the same covenant that was made with Abraham?

Evan. Surely I believe that reverend Bullinger spoke very truly when he said that God gave these people no other religion in nature, substance, and matter itself, differing from the laws of their fathers; though in some respects, he added to it many ceremonies and certain ordinances.

MODERN DIVINITY. 69

He did this to keep their minds in expectation of the coming of Christ whom he had promised to them; and to confirm them in looking for him, lest they grow faint. And just as the Lord by these ceremonies, as it were led them by the hand to Christ, so he made them a promise of the land of Canaan, and outward prosperity in it, as a type of heaven and eternal happiness. So that the Lord dealt with them as with children in their infancy and under-age, leading them to heavenly and spiritual things by the help of earthly things, because they were but young and tender,⁴ and did not have that measure and abundance of the Spirit which he has bestowed on his people now under the gospel.

Ant. And, sir, do you think that these Israelites at this time saw Christ and salvation by him in these types and shadows?

Evan. Yes; there is no doubt that Moses and the rest of the believers among the Jews saw Christ in them, “For,” says Tyndale, “though all the sacrifices and ceremonies had a star-light of Christ, some of them had the light of broad day, a little before the sun-rising;” and they expressed him, along with the circumstances and virtue of his death, as plainly as if his passion had been acted on a scaffold — “so much so,” he says, “that I am fully persuaded, and cannot help but believe,

¹ Moses was twice on the Mount with God forty days. During the second forty days he received the order to write, mentioned in Exo. 34.27, as it appears by comparing ver. 27 with 28. This comprehended his writings of the Levitical laws, but not of the Decalogue or Ten Commandments; for God himself wrote these last on tablets of stone, verse 28 compared with verse 1. This peremptory divine order, Moses no doubt obeyed; understanding it of writing in a book, since he was not commanded to write another way. So, in a like case, before he went up into the Mount for the first forty days, he wrote Levitical laws in a book called the Book of the Covenant, Exo. 24.4, 7, “And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. And he took the book of the covenant and read.” Compare verse 18. This writing also comprehended Levitical laws, but not the Ten Commandments. For all the words of the Lord which Moses wrote, were all the words of the Lord which Moses told the people. And what these were, appears from his commission received for that effect: chap. 20.21, 22, “And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near to the thick darkness where God was; and the Lord said to Moses, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel,” etc. So “all the words” were these which follow to the end of the 23d chapter.

² In the original text, {verse 5} they are called emphatically the young men (or ministers, or servants, 1 Sam. 2.13, 15; Esth. 2.2) of the children of Israel, to signify that they were first-born. And so Onkelos reads it, “the first-born of the children of Israel.”

³ The blood of the sacrifices representing the precious blood of Christ.

⁴ The church was in her minority under the law, Gal. 4.1-3.

that God had shown Moses the secrets of Christ, and the very manner of his death, beforehand.” And therefore, I have no doubt that they offered their sacrifices by faith in the Messiah, as the apostle testifies of Abel in Heb. 11.4. I say, there is no question that every spiritual believing Jew, when he brought his sacrifice to be offered, and according to the Lord’s command, laid his hands on it while it was still alive (Lev. 1.4), and acknowledged from his heart that he himself had deserved to die — but by the mercy of God he was saved,¹ and his desert² was laid upon the beast.³ And just as that beast was to die and be offered in sacrifice for him, so he believed that the Messiah would come and die for him, on whom he put his hands — that is, on whom he laid all his iniquities by the hand of faith.⁴

70 THE MARROW OF

So that as Beza says on Job 1, “The sacrifices were holy mysteries to them, in which, as if in a mirror, they saw themselves to their own condemnation before God,⁵ and also beheld the mercy of God in the promised Messiah, who was to be exhibited in time.” “And therefore,” says Calvin in his *Institutes*, p. 239, “the sacrifices and satisfactory offerings were called *Ashemoth*, which properly signifies sin itself, to show that Jesus Christ was to come and perform a perfect expiation by giving his own soul to be an *asham*, that is, a *satisfactory oblation*.”⁶

Therefore, you may assure yourself that just as Christ was always set before the fathers in the Old Testament, to whom they might direct their faith; and just as God never put them in hope of any grace or mercy, nor ever showed himself good to them without Christ;⁷ even so, the godly in the Old Testament knew Christ by whom they enjoyed these promises of God, and they were joined to him.⁸ Indeed, the promise of salvation never stood firm till it came to Christ.⁹ And *there* was their comfort in all their troubles and distresses, as it is said of Moses in Heb. 11.26, 27, “He endured as seeing him who is invisible,¹⁰ esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for he looked to the recompense of reward.”

And so, as Ignatius says, the prophets were Christ’s servants who, foreseeing him in spirit, both waited for him as their master, and looked for him as their Lord and Saviour, saying, “He shall come and save us.”

MODERN DIVINITY. 71

And so says Calvin, *Institut.* p. 207, “As often as the prophets speak of the blessedness of the faithful, the perfect image that they painted of it was such that it might force men’s minds out of

¹ From the death he had deserved by his sin.

² That is, the penalty for his sin under the Law.

³ Typically.

⁴ “The mystical signification of the sacrifices, and especially this rite, some think the apostle means by the doctrine of ‘laying on of hands,’ Heb. 6.2, which typified evangelical faith.” Henry on Lev. 1.4. It is evident that the offerer, by laying his hand on the head of the sacrifice, legally united with it; he laid his sin, or transferred his guilt upon it, in a typical or ceremonial way, Lev. 16.21; the substance and truth of which ceremonial action plainly appears to be faith, or believing on Jesus Christ, which for its own part, is the soul’s assenting to, and acquiescing in, the glorious device of “the Lord’s laying on him the iniquities of us all,” Isa. 53.6.

⁵ That is, they saw themselves, as condemned in themselves by the holy law.

⁶ **2Cor 5:21** He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

⁷ That is, as an absolute God apart from Christ, but always as a God in Christ.

⁸ To Christ, by faith.

⁹ It stood, at first, on man’s own obedience: which ground quickly failed: then it came to Christ, where it stood firm, Gen. 3.15. It (namely, “the seed of the woman”) “shall bruise your head,” namely: the serpent’s head.

¹⁰ “Faith presenting to his view at all times the great angel of the covenant, God the Son, the Redeemer of him and Israel.” *Suppl. Poole’s Annot. on the Text.*

the earth, and of necessity raise them up to consider the felicity of the life to come.” So we may assuredly conclude with Luther, that all the fathers, prophets, and holy kings were righteous, and saved by faith in Christ to come. So indeed, as Calvin says in his *Institutes*, p. 198, they “were all partakers of one salvation with us.”

Ant. But, sir, the Scriptures seem to speak as though they were saved one way, and we another; for you know the prophet Jeremiah makes mention of a twofold covenant. Therefore it is somewhat strange to me that they would partake of the same way of salvation as us.

Evan. Indeed, it is true. The Lord bequeathed to the fathers righteousness, life, and eternal salvation, in and through Christ the Mediator, not yet having come in the flesh, but promised. And to us in the New Testament, he gives and bequeaths these to us in and through Christ, having come already, and having actually purchased them for us. The Covenant of Grace was sealed by his blood in types and figures before the coming of Christ — but at his death in his flesh,¹ it was sealed and ratified by his blood, actually and indeed shed for our sins. The old covenant was temporary and changeable in respect to the outward form and manner of sealing; and therefore the types ceased, and only the substance remains firm. But the seals of the new covenant are unchangeable, being commemorative: they show the Lord’s death until he comes again.² *Their* covenant first and chiefly promises earthly blessings.³ In and under these, it signified and promised all spiritual blessings and salvation; but *our* covenant promises Christ and his blessings in the first place, and after them, earthly blessings.

There were these and some other circumstantial differences in regard to administration between *their* way of salvation, or Covenant of Grace, and *ours*. This moved the author of the Hebrews, Heb. 8.7, 8, to call theirs “old,” and ours “new;” but in regard to their substance, they were one and the same. ⁴

72 THE MARROW OF

For in all covenants this is a certain rule: “If the subject matter, the fruit, and the conditions, are the same, then the covenant is the same.” And in these covenants, Jesus Christ is the subject matter of both; salvation is the fruit of both; and faith is the condition of both.⁵ Therefore I say, though they are called two, yet they are but one. This is confirmed by two faithful witnesses: the one is the apostle Peter who says in Acts 15.11, “We believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they were;” meaning the fathers in the Old Testament; this is evident in the preceding verse. The other is the apostle Paul who says in Gal. 3.6-7, “Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness; know therefore, that

¹ “Christ — being put to death in the flesh,” 1Pet. 3.18.

² 1Cor 11.26.

³ Chiefly; in so far as, in that dispensation of the Covenant of Grace, the promises of earthly blessings were chiefly insisted on; and the promises of spiritual blessings and salvation more sparingly.

⁴ “There are not, therefore, two covenants of grace, differing in substance; but one and the same under various dispensations.” *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 7, art. 6. And their Covenant of Grace, confirmed by the sprinkling of blood, Exo. 24; Heb. 9.19, 20 (which covenant they broke, by their unbelief frustrating the manner in which it was administered to them) was given to them when the Lord had led them out of Egypt, and at Sinai too, as well as the Ten Commandments delivered to them as the Covenant of Works. This is evident from Exo. 20.1-17, compared with Deu. 5.2-22, and Exo. 20.20, 21, compared with chap. 24.3-8. See page 68, note.

⁵ Not in a strict and proper sense, as that, upon the performance of which the right and title to the benefits of the covenant are founded and pleaded; as perfect obedience was the condition of the Covenant of Works. Christ’s fulfilling of the law, by his obedience and death, is the only condition of the Covenant of Grace in that sense. But in a large and improper sense, as that whereby one accepts and embraces the covenant and the proper condition of it, and is savingly interested in Jesus Christ, the head of the covenant. “The grace of God is manifested in the second covenant, in that he freely provides and offers to sinners a Mediator, and life and salvation by him; and requiring faith as the condition to interest them in him,” etc. *Larg. Cat.* quest. 32.

those who are of faith, are the children of Abraham.” By this testimony, says Luther on the Galatians, p. 116, “we may see that the faith of our fathers in the Old Testament, and our faith in the New, is all one in substance.

Ant. But could those who lived so long before Christ, apprehend his righteousness by faith for their justification and salvation?

Evan. Yes, indeed. For as Mr. Forbes, on *Justification*, p. 90, truly says, it is as easy for faith to apprehend the righteousness to come, as it is to apprehend the righteousness that is past. Therefore, as Christ’s birth, obedience, and death, were as effectual to save sinners in the Old Testament as they are now, so all the faithful forefathers from the beginning, partook of the same grace with us, by believing in the same Jesus Christ. And so they were justified by his righteousness, and were saved eternally by faith in him.

MODERN DIVINITY. 73

It was by virtue of the death of Christ that Enoch was translated, so that he should not see death; and Elias was taken up into heaven by virtue of Christ’s resurrection and ascension. So that from the world’s beginning to the end of it, the salvation of sinners is only by Jesus Christ. As it is written, “Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever,” Heb. 13.8.

Ant. Why then, sir, it seems that those who were saved among the Jews, were not saved by the works of the law?

Evan. No indeed. They were neither justified nor saved either by the works of the Moral Law, or by the Ceremonial Law. For, as you heard before, the Moral Law being delivered to them with great terror, and under the most dreadful penalties, they found it impossible in themselves to keep it; and so they were driven to seek the help of a Mediator, even Jesus Christ, of whom Moses was a typical mediator.¹ So that the Moral Law drove them to the Ceremonial Law, which was their gospel and their Christ in a figure. For it is acknowledged and confessed by all men that the ceremonies prefigured Christ, directed us to him, and required faith in him.

Nom. But, sir, I suppose that, although believers among the Jews were not justified and saved by the works of the law, yet was it not a rule of their obedience?

Evan. It is very true, indeed; that the law of the Ten Commandments was a rule for their obedience;² yet not as it came from Mount Sinai;³ but rather as it came from Mount Zion; not as it was the law or Covenant of Works, but as it was the Law of Christ. This will be apparent if you consider that, after the Lord had renewed the Covenant of Grace with them, as you heard before (Exo. 24 at the beginning), the Lord said to Moses, verse 12, “Come up to me into the mount, and there I will give you tablets of stone, and a law that you may teach them.” And after the Lord had thus written them the second time with his own finger, he delivered them to Moses, commanding him to provide an ark to put them into. This was not only for their safe keeping, Deu. 9.10, 10.5, but also to cover the form of the Covenant of Works they were formerly under, so that believers might not perceive it. For the ark was a notable type of Christ;

74 THE MARROW OF

and therefore putting them in the ark showed that they were perfectly fulfilled in him, Christ being “the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes,” Rom. 10.4. This was still more clearly manifest in that the book of the law was placed between the cherubim, and on the

¹ That is a type, he being to them a typical Mediator.

² The obedience of the believing Jews.

³ That is, in the sense of our author, not as the Covenant of Works, but of the twofold notion or consideration under which the Ten Commandments were delivered from Mount Sinai. See page 55, note.

mercy-seat, to assure believers that the law now came to them from the mercy-seat.¹ For there the Lord promised to meet Moses, and to commune with him about all things which he would give him in commandment to Israel, Exo. 25.22.

Ant. But, sir, was the form completely taken away, so that the Ten Commandments were no longer the Covenant of Works?

Evan. Oh no! You are not to understand it that way. For the form of the Covenant of Works,² as well as the matter of it (on God's part),³ came immediately from God himself. And consequently it is eternal, like himself; which is why our Saviour says in Mat. 5.18, "Till heaven and earth pass away, not one jot or one tittle shall in any way pass from the law, till all is fulfilled." So either man himself, or someone else for him, must perform or fulfil the condition of the law, as it is the Covenant of Works — otherwise he still remains under it in a damnable condition. But now Christ has fulfilled it for all believers; and therefore, as I said, the form of the Covenant of Works was covered or taken away as touching the believing Jews; but it was not taken away in itself, nor as touching the unbelieving Jews.

Nom. Was the law then still of use to them, as it was the Covenant of Works?

MODERN DIVINITY. 75

Evan. Yes, indeed.

Ant. I implore you, sir, show what use it was to them.

Evan. I remember Luther says (on the Galatians, p. 171), "There are two sorts of unrighteous persons or unbelievers: the one is to be justified, and the other is not to be justified: it was even so there among the Jews." Now, to those who were to be justified, as you heard, the law was still of use to bring them to Christ: as the apostle says in Gal. 3.24, "The law was our schoolmaster until Christ,⁴ that we might be made righteous by faith." That is to say, the Moral Law⁵ taught and showed them what they should do, and thereby what they did not do. This made them go to the Ceremonial Law;⁶ and by that law they were taught that Christ had done it for them;⁷ and by believing it,⁸ they were made righteous by faith in him. It was of use to the unjustified Jews, to show them what was good, and what was evil; and to act as a bridle for them, to restrain them from evil, and as a motive to move them to good, either for fear of punishment,⁹ or hope of

¹ From an atoned God in Christ, binding them to obedience with the strongest ties, arising from their creation and redemption jointly; but not with the bond of the curse, binding them over to eternal death in case of transgression, as the law or Covenant of Works does with those who are under it, Gal. 3.10. The mercy-seat was the cover of the ark, and both the one and the other types of Christ. Within the ark, under the cover of it, were the tablets of the law laid up. Thus was the throne of grace, which could not have stood on mere mercy, firmly established in Jesus Christ; according to Psalm 89.14, "Justice and judgment are the habitation [*marg.* "establishment"] of your throne." The word properly signifies a base, supporter, stay, or foundation, on which a thing stands firm, Ezra 2.68, and 3.3; Psalm 104.5. "The sense is, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Psalm 89.19, justice satisfied, and judgment fully executed in the person of the Mediator, are the foundation and base which your throne of grace stands upon.

² Namely, the promissory and penal sanction of eternal life and death, in which God's truth was engaged.

³ Man's part was his consenting to the terms set before him by his Creator.

⁴ That Is, to bring us to Christ, as we read it with the supplement.

⁵ As the Covenant of Works; so the author uses that term here, as it is used, *Larg. Cat.* quest. 93, above cited.

⁶ Broken under the sense of guilt, the curse of the law, and their utter inability to help themselves by doing or suffering.

⁷ Christ's satisfying the law for sinners by his obedience and death, being the great lesson taught by the ceremonial law, which was the gospel written in plain characters to those whose eyes were opened.

⁸ Appropriating and applying to themselves by faith Christ's satisfaction held forth and exhibited to them in these divine ordinances.

⁹ Both in time and eternity.

reward in this life. Though it was a forced and constrained obedience, yet was it necessary for the public commonwealth, its quietness being better maintained by it. And though they could neither escape death, nor obtain eternal life by it, for lack of perfect obedience, yet the more obedience they yielded to it, the more they were freed from temporal calamities, and the more they possessed temporal blessings, according to what the Lord promised and threatened in Deuteronomy. 28.

Ant. But, sir, in that passage the Lord seems to speak to his own people, and yet to speak according to the tenor of the Covenant of Works. This has made me think that believers in the Old Testament were partly under the Covenant of Works.

Evan. Do you remember how I told you before, that the Lord manifested so much love to the body of that nation, that the whole posterity of Abraham ¹ was brought under a

76 THE MARROW OF

state-covenant or national church? So for believers' sakes, he enfolded unbelievers in the compact too. Whereupon the Lord was pleased to call them all by the name of his people, and to be called their God, unbelievers as well as believers. Though the Lord spoke there according to the tenor of the Covenant of Works, I see no reason why he might not direct and intend his speech for believers also; yet they remain only under the Covenant of Grace.

Ant. Why, sir, you said that the Lord spoke to them out of the tabernacle, and from the mercy-seat; and doubtless, that was according to the tenor of the Covenant of Grace, and not according to the tenor of the Covenant of Works.

Evan. I ask you to note that after the Lord had pronounced all those blessings and curses, Deu. 28 and in the beginning of the 29th chapter, it is said, "These are the words of the covenant, which the Lord commanded Moses to make with the children of Israel in the land of Moab, besides the covenant which he made with them in Horeb." By this it appears to me that this was not the Covenant of Works which was delivered to them on Mount Sinai.² For the form of that covenant was *eternal* blessings and curses;³ but the form of this covenant was *temporal* blessings and curses.⁴ So that this seems to be the pedagogy of the law, rather than the Covenant of Works; for at that time these people seemed to be carried by temporal promises into the way of obedience, and they were

MODERN DIVINITY. 77

deterred from the ways of disobedience, by temporal threatenings. God dealt with them as if in their infancy and being under-age. And so he leads them on, and allures them, and frightens them by respects such as these, because they had but a small measure of the Spirit.

¹ Which were of that nation, according to Gen. 21.12, "In Isaac shall your seed be called." And chap, 28.13, "I am the Lord God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac; I will give to you the land on which you lie, and to your seed."

² The author does not make the covenant at Horeb distinct from that at Sinai; for he takes Horeb and Sinai for one and the same mountain, according to the Holy Scriptures, Exo. 19.20, compared with Deu. 5.2; and therefore, because the text speaks of this covenant in the land of Moab as another covenant beside that in Horeb, he infers that it was not the same; not the Covenant of Works delivered on Mount Sinai, otherwise called Horeb. And howbeit there are but two covenants containing the only two ways to happiness, the author cannot, on that account, be justly blamed for distinguishing this covenant from them both, unless temporal blessings do make men happy — which blessings, with curses of the same kind, he takes to be the form of this covenant.

³ Deu. 27.26, "Cursed be he that does not confirm all the words of this law, to do them." Compare Gal. 3.10, "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse;" for it is written, "Cursed is every one that does not continue in all things written in the book of the law, to do them."

⁴ See Deu. 28 throughout. Chap. 29.9, "Keep, therefore, the words of this covenant, and do them, that you may prosper in all that you do." And here ends a great section of the law.

Nom. But sir, was not the matter of that covenant and this one, all the same?

Evan. Yes indeed; the Ten Commandments were the matter of both covenants, they differed only in their forms.

Ant. Then, sir, it seems that the promises and threatenings contained in the Old Testament were but temporary and terrestrial, and only concerned the good and evil things of this life.

Evan. This we are to know: that just as the Lord, by his prophets, gave the people in the Old Testament many exhortations to be obedient to his commandments, and many dehortations ¹ from disobedience to it, even so he backed them with many promises and threatenings concerning temporal things — as these and similar Scriptures witness: Isa. 1.10, “Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom; give ear to the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah:” ver. 19, 20, “If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good things of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured with the sword, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken it.” And Jer. 7.3, 9, 20, “Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely by my name? Therefore, thus says the Lord God, behold my anger and my fury shall be poured out upon this place.”

And surely there are two reasons why the Lord did so: *first*, because, as all men are born under the Covenant of Works, they are naturally prone to conceive that the favour of God, and all good things, depend and follow upon their obedience to the law;² and that the wrath of God, and all evil things, depend upon and follow their disobedience to it;³ and they were prone to conceive that man’s chief happiness is to be had and found in terrestrial paradise, even in the good things of this life. So the people of the Old Testament being nearest to Adam’s covenant and paradise, were most prone to such ideas. And *secondly*, because the Covenant of Grace and celestial paradise were but little mentioned in the Old Testament;

78 THE MARROW OF

for the most part,⁴ they had but a glimmering knowledge of them, and so they could not yield obedience freely as sons.⁵ Therefore the Lord saw fit to move them to yield obedience to his laws by their own motives,⁶ and as servants or under age children.⁷

Ant. And were both believers and unbelievers — that is, those who were under the Covenant of Grace, and those who were under the Covenant of Works — equally and alike subject to have the calamities of this life inflicted on them for their disobedience, as well as to have the blessings of this life conferred on them for their obedience?

Evan. Surely the words of the preacher apply here, when he says in Eccl. 9.2, “All things come alike to all; one event happens to the righteous and to the wicked.” For their disobedience, were

¹ Dehortation: dissuasion; an exhortation against a course of action.

² Not a saving interest in the Lord Jesus Christ by faith.

³ Not considering the great sin of unbelief; and that the wrath of God, due to them for disobedience, may be averted by their fleeing to Christ for refuge.

⁴ For the more eminent saints in the Old Testament times are to be excepted, such as David and others.

⁵ Having but a small measure of knowledge of the celestial paradise, the eternal inheritance, and of the Covenant of Grace (the divine disposition containing their right to it) they could not yield obedience freely, in the measure that sons do who have come of age, and know well their own privileges; but only as little children who, in some measure, yield obedience freely, namely, in proportion to the knowledge of these things; but (that measure being very small) they must also be drawn to obedience by motives of a lower kind. And the apostle plainly teaches this in Gal. 4.1-5. Compare *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 20, art 1, “The liberty of Christians is further enlarged, in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God, than believers under the law ordinarily partook of.”

⁶ Promises and threatenings concerning things temporal.

⁷ By fear of punishment and hope of reward.

not Moses and Aaron hindered from entering the land of Canaan, as well as others? Num 20.12. And was not Josiah, for his disobedience to God's command, slain in the valley of Megiddo? 2Chron. 35.21, 22. Therefore be assured that when believers in the Old Testament transgressed God's commandments, God's temporal wrath¹ went out against them, and it was manifest in temporal calamities that befell them, as well as others, Numb. 16.46. Only here was the difference: believers' temporal calamities had no eternal calamities included in them, nor following them;² and unbelievers' temporal blessings had no eternal blessings included in them, and their temporal calamities had eternal calamities included in them, and following them.³

MODERN DIVINITY. 79

Ant. Then sir, it seems that all obedience that any of the Jews yielded to God's commandments, was for fear of temporal punishment, and in hope of temporal reward?

Evan. Surely the Scriptures seem to say that there were three separate sorts of people among the Jews who endeavoured to keep the law of God, and all of them differed in their ends.

The *first* of them were true believers who, according to the measure of their faith, believed in the resurrection of their bodies after death, and eternal life in glory — and it was to be obtained, not by the works of the law, but by faith in the Messiah or promised seed. And because they believed this, they accordingly yielded obedience to the law freely, without fear of punishment or hope of reward. But, alas! The spirit of faith was very weak in most of them, and the spirit of bondage was very strong. Therefore they stood in need of being induced and constrained to obedience by fear of punishment and hope of reward.⁴

The *second* sort were the Sadducees and their sect; and these did not believe that there was any resurrection, Mat. 22.23, nor any life but the life of this world.

80 THE MARROW OF

Yet they endeavoured to keep the law, that God might bless them here, and that it might go well with them in this present life.

The *third* sort — indeed the great number of them in the future ages after Moses — were the Scribes and Pharisees, and their sects. They held and maintained that there was a resurrection to be looked for, and an eternal life after death. Therefore they endeavoured to keep the law, not only to obtain temporal happiness, but also eternal. For it had pleased the Lord to make known

¹ That is, God's fatherly anger, whereby temporal judgments fall on his own people.

² By virtue of the Covenant of Grace which they were under.

³ By virtue of the Covenant of Works which they were under.

⁴ The author does not say of believers under the Old Testament, simply and without any qualification, that they "yield obedience to the law, without fear of punishment or hope of reward," as if he minded to assert that they were not at all moved to their obedience by these; the scope of these words is to teach just the contrary. Compare page 78. But on good grounds he affirms that "*accountable* to their faith, their obedience was yielded freely, without fear of punishment or hope of reward." And thus, the freeness of their obedience always bearing proportion to the measure of their faith, the greater measure of faith any Old Testament saint had attained, his obedience was less influenced by fear of punishment or hope of reward; and the smaller his measure of faith was, his obedience was accordingly more influenced by these; those who had no saving faith at all, were moved to obedience only by fear of punishment or hope of reward; and the meanest saint's faith, once perfected by the beatific vision in heaven, these altogether ceased to be motives for obedience to him, though he does not cease to obey from the strongest and most powerful motives. And thus the apostle John teaches concerning love which flows from faith, 1John 4.18, "Perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment; he that fears is not made perfect in love." The more there is of the one, still less there is of the other. In the meantime, according to our author, the measure of faith in most believers under the Old Testament was very small (and the strongest faith was imperfect); and the servile and childish disposition which moves to obedience from fear of punishment and hope of reward, was very strong in them. Gal. 4.1-5; therefore, as they stood in need of such inducement and constraint, there could not fail to be a great mixture of the influence of fear of punishment and hope of reward in their obedience.

to his people by the ministry of Moses, that the law was not given to retain men in the confidence of their own works, but to drive them out of themselves, and to lead them to Christ the promised seed. Yet after that time, the priests and the Levites — who were the expounders of the law, and whom the Scribes and Pharisees succeeded — so conceived and taught of God's intention in giving the law, as though it had been by their obedience to it, that they would obtain righteousness and eternal life. This opinion was so confidently maintained, and so generally embraced among them, that in their book *Mechilta*,¹ they say and affirm that there is no other covenant than the law. And so, indeed, they conceived that there was no other way to eternal life than by the Covenant of Works.

Ant. Surely, then, it seems they did not understand and consider that the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, not only binds the outward man, but also the inward man, even the soul and spirit; and that it requires all holy thoughts, motions, and dispositions of the heart and soul?

Evan. Oh, no. They neither taught it nor understood it that way spiritually; nor could they be persuaded that the law requires so much at man's hands. For they first laid this down as a certain truth: that God gave the law for man to be justified and saved by his obedience to it; and therefore there must be a power in man to do all that it requires, or else God would never have required it. Whereas they should have first considered what a straight rule the law of God is, and then have brought and laid man's heart against it, they first considered, contrariwise, what a crooked rule man's heart is, and then they sought to make the law like it. So indeed they expounded the law literally, teaching and holding that the righteousness which the law required was but an external righteousness, consisting in the outward observation of the law — as you may see by the testimony of our Saviour in Mat. 5.20.

MODERN DIVINITY. 81

So according to their exposition, it was possible for a man to fulfil the law perfectly, and thus be justified and saved by his obedience to it.

Ant. But, sir, do you think the Scribes and Pharisees, and their sect, yielded perfect obedience to the law according to their own exposition?

Evan. No, indeed; I think very few of them did so, if any at all.

Ant. Why, what hopes could they then have to be justified and saved, when they transgressed any of the commandments?

Evan. Peter Martyr tells us that when they transgressed any of the Ten Commandments,² they had their sacrifices to make satisfaction for it (as they conceived). For they looked at their sacrifices without their significations, and so they had a false faith in them, thinking that the bare work was a sacrifice acceptable to God. In a word, they conceived that the blood of bulls and goats would take away sin; and so what they lacked in fulfilling the Moral Law, they thought to make up in the Ceremonial Law. Thus they separated Christ from their sacrifices, thinking they had discharged their duty very well, when they had sacrificed and offered their offerings — not considering that the imperfection of the typical law which, as the apostle says, “made nothing perfect,” should have led them to find perfection in Christ, Heb. 7.19. But they generally rested in the work done in the Ceremonial Law, as they had done in the Moral Law, even though they themselves were unable to do the one,³ and the other was insufficient to help them. Thus “Israel, which followed the law of righteousness, did not attain to the law of righteousness,

¹ *Mechilta*: (Aramaic, lit. “the Compendium”); a text of exegesis on the Book of Exodus compiled in the era of the Mishnah, during the third century.

² That is, according to their own exposition.

³ To do any work of the Moral Law rightly.

because they did not seek it by faith,” but as it were, by the works of the law. For being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God, Rom. 9.31, and 10.3.

Ant. Then, sir, it seems there were but very few of them ¹ that had a clear sight and knowledge of Christ?

Evan. It is very true indeed; for generally there was such a veil of ignorance over their hearts, or such a veil of blindness over their minds, that it made their spiritual eye-sight so weak and dim, that they were no more able to see Christ —

82 THE MARROW OF

the Sun of righteousness, to the end of the law,² Mal. 4.2 — than the weak eye of man is able to behold the bright sun when it shines in its full strength. Therefore we read in Exo. 34.30, that Moses’ face shined by reason of the Lord’s talking with him, and telling him of the glorious riches of his free grace in Jesus Christ, and giving him the Ten Commandments written in tablets of stone, as the Covenant of Works;³ and these were to drive the people out of confidence in themselves, and their own legal righteousness, to Jesus Christ and his righteousness. But the people were not able to behold his face then. That is to say,⁴ by reason of the weakness and dimness of their spiritual eye-sight, they were not able to see and understand the spiritual sense of the law: namely, that the Lord’s end or intent in giving them the law as a Covenant of Works, and as the apostle calls it, “the ministration of condemnation and death,” 2Cor. 3.7, 9, was to drive them out of themselves to Christ; and that *then* ⁵ it was to be abolished for them, as it was the Covenant of Works, *verse* 13. Therefore Moses put the cloudy veil of shadowing ceremonies over his face, Exodus 34.35, that they might be better able to behold it: that is to say, that they might be better able to see through them, and understand that “Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes,” Romans 10.4. For Moses’ face, says godly Tyndale, is the law rightly understood. And yet, alas! by reason that the priests and Levites in former times, and the Scribes and Pharisees in later times, “were the blind leaders of the blind,” Mat. 15.14, they were generally so addicted to the letter of the law (both moral⁶ and ceremonial) that they did not use it as a pedagogy to Christ, but they terminated their eye in the letter and shadow, and did not see through them to the spiritual substance, which is Jesus Christ, 2Cor. 3.13, especially in the future ages, after Moses.

MODERN DIVINITY. 83

For at the time of Christ’s coming in the flesh, I remember only two — namely, Simeon and Anna — that desired him, or looked for him as a spiritual Saviour to save them from sin and wrath. For though all of them had in their mouths the Messiah, says Calvin, and the blessed state of the kingdom of David, yet they dreamed that this Messiah would be some great monarch that would come in outward pomp and power, and save and deliver them from that bondage which they were in, under the Romans, a bondage of which they were sensible and weary. But

¹ Namely, of the Jews in general.

² That is, having in himself a fulness of righteousness, answering the law to the utmost extent of its demands; as the sun has a fulness of light.

³ Therefore, they are called by the apostle, the “ministration of death, written and engraven on stones,” 2Cor. 3.7. Now, it is evident that the Ten Commandments are not the ministration of death, but the Covenant of Works. And, as such, they were given to Moses to be laid up in the ark, to signify the fulfilling of them by Jesus Christ alone, and the removing of that covenant-form from them, as to believers; and so they served to drive sinners out of themselves to Christ.

⁴ That is, this is the mystery of that typical event.

⁵ When they should be driven out of themselves to Jesus Christ by it.

⁶ As the Covenant of Works.

they were not at all sensible of their spiritual bondage under the law, sin, and wrath — all because their blind guides had turned the whole law into a Covenant of Works, to be done for justification and salvation ¹ — indeed, into such a covenant that they would be able to keep and fulfil it, if not by doing the Moral Law, then by offering sacrifices in the Ceremonial Law. And because of this, our Saviour in his sermon on the mount, took occasion to expound the Moral Law truly and spiritually, removing that false literal gloss which the Scribes and Pharisees had put on it, so men might see how impossible it is for any mere man to fulfil it, and consequently to have justification and salvation by it. At the death of Christ, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom to show, says Tyndale, “that the shadows of Moses’ law would now vanish away at the flourishing light of the gospel” (on Matt, 27.51). And after the death of Christ, his apostles, both by their preaching and writing, laboured to make men understand that all the sacrifices and ceremonies were but types of Christ; and therefore Christ having now come, these types were of no further use — witness that divine and spiritual epistle written to the Hebrews. Yet, notwithstanding, we may say of the Jews today, as the apostle said in his time, “even to this day, the same veil remains unremoved in the reading of Moses.”² May the Lord in mercy remove it in his due time.³

84 THE MARROW OF

¹ And so they completely perverted the great end of the giving of the law to them.

² 2Cor 3.14. or “remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament.”

³ The history of the veil on Moses’ face, is famous in the Old Testament, and the mystery of it in the New. The former, as I gather from the words of the inspired penman, Exo. 34 stands thus briefly. There was a shining glory on the face of Moses in the Mount; but he himself did not know it while God spoke with him there, ver. 29, and that was by reason of the excelling divine *glory*, 2Cor. 3.10; *Gr.* even as the light of a candle is darkened before the shining sun: but when “Moses, having come forth from the excelling glory, was coming down from the Mount, with the tablets in his hand, his face shone so as to send forth rays like horns,” Exo. 34.29, 30, so that he could not help but be conscious of it. “Aaron and all the people perceiving Moses returning to them, went to meet him; but seeing an astonishing glory in his countenance, which they were not able to look at, they were afraid, and retired,” ver. 30, 31. But Moses called to them to return, and he goes into the tabernacle whereupon the multitude not daring to return for all this, Aaron and the princes alone return to him, being now in the tabernacle, ver. 31, the middle part of which, I think, is to be read thus, “And Aaron and all the princes returned to him in the testimony,” *i.e.*, in the tabernacle of the testimony as it is called in chap 38.21; Rev. 15.5. From out of the tabernacle Moses speaks to them, ordering (it would seem) the people to be gathered together to that place, ver. 31, 32. The people being convened at the tabernacle, he preached to them all that he had received from the Lord on the Mount, ver. 32. But in the meantime, none of them saw his face because the tabernacle which he was in, served as a veil to it. Having finished speaking, he puts a veil over his face, and comes out to them, ver. 33. *Marg. Heb.* “And Moses ceased from speaking with them, and put a veil on his face.” Compare ver. 34, “But when Moses went in before the Lord to speak with them, he took the veil off until he came out.”

The mystery of this typical event the apostle treats in 2Cor. 3. The shining glory of Moses’ face did not prefigure or signify the glory of Christ; for “the glory of the Lord Christ,” ver. 18, is evidently opposed to the glory of Moses’ countenance, ver. 7, and the open (or uncovered) face of the former, ver. 18 (as Vatablus seems to me to rightly understand it) to the veiled face of the latter, ver. 13. The glory of the one is beheld as in a mirror, ver. 18, the sight of the face itself being reserved for heaven; but the glory of the face of the other was not to be beheld at all, being veiled. But that glory signified the glory of the law given to the Israelites, as the Covenant of Works, the glory of the ministration of death, ver. 7, agreeable to what the author tells us from Tyndale, namely, that Moses’ face is the law rightly understood. This Mosaic glory, while it was most fresh, was darkened by the excelling glory of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, ver. 18, compared with Exo. 34.29, however, revealing it to sinners makes their hearts tremble; they are not able to bear it. That glorious form of the law must be hidden in Christ the true tabernacle, and from there only must the law come to them, or else they are not able to receive it; though before that revelation is made to them, they are ready to embrace the law under that form, as the people were ready to receive Moses with the tablets in his hands, till they found themselves unable to bear the shining glory of his face. The veil which Moses put on his face, keeping the Israelites from beholding the glory of it, signifies that their minds were blinded, ver. 14, not perceiving the glory of the law given to them as a Covenant of Works. And hence it was “that the children of Israel did not fasten their eyes, Luke 4.20; Acts 3.4, on [Christ] the end of that which is abolished,” 2Cor. 3.13, *Gr.* for had they seen the purpose of that glory, they would have fastened their eyes on him, as a malefactor at the stake would fix his eyes on the face of one bringing a remission. And that is the veil that is upon Moses’ face, and their hearts to this day, ver. 14, 15, which nevertheless, in the Lord’s appointed time, shall be taken away, ver. 16.

Sect. 6 — The natural bias towards the Covenant of Works.

Ant. Well, sir, I had thought that God's covenant with the Jews had been a mixed covenant, and that they had been partly under the Covenant of Works. But now I perceive there was little difference between their Covenant of Grace and ours.

Evan. Truly the opposition between the Jews' Covenant of Grace and ours was chiefly of their own making. They should have been driven to Christ by the law: but they expected life in obedience to it, and this was their great error and mistake.

Ant. And surely, sir, it is no great marvel that they so greatly erred and were mistaken in this point, having the Covenant of Grace made known to them so darkly, when many among us, who have it more clearly manifested, do the same.

Evan. And, truly, it is no marvel, though all men naturally do so: for man naturally apprehends God to be the great Master of heaven, and he is to be God's servant; and therefore he must do his work before he can have his wages; and the more work he does, the better wages he will have. Hence, when Aristotle came to speak of blessedness,

MODERN DIVINITY. 85

and to pitch on the nearest means to that end, he said, "It was operation and working." Also Pythagoras agrees with him, when he says, "It is man's felicity to be like God (how?) by becoming righteous and holy." And let us not marvel that these men so erred, who never heard of Christ, nor of the Covenant of Grace, when those to whom it was made known by the apostles of Christ did likewise. Witness those to whom the apostle Paul wrote his epistles, and especially the Galatians. For even though when he was present with them, his preaching had made known to them the Covenant of Grace, yet after his departure, through the seducement of false teachers, they were soon turned to the Covenant of Works, and sought to be justified either in whole or in part by it — as you may see if you seriously consider that epistle. [Gal 3.1-3](#) Indeed, what does Luther say? It is, he says, the general opinion of men's reason throughout the whole world that righteousness is obtained by the works of the law; and the reason is because the covenant was engendered in the minds of men in the very creation.¹ So that man naturally cannot judge otherwise of the law, than as a Covenant of Works which was given to make us righteous, and to give us life and salvation.

86 THE MARROW OF

This pernicious opinion about the law, that it justifies and makes us righteous before God, says Luther again, "is so deeply rooted in man's reason, and all mankind is so wrapped in it, that they can hardly get out. Indeed, I myself, he says, have now preached the gospel nearly twenty years, and have been exercised in it daily, by reading and writing, so that I may well seem to be rid of this wicked opinion. Yet notwithstanding, now and then I feel this old filth cling to my heart, whereby it comes to pass that I would willingly deal with God in such a way, that I would bring something with myself, for which he would give me his grace." No, it is to be feared that, as you said, many among us who (ordinarily have more means of light than Luther or any before him ever had,² yet notwithstanding) either wholly, or in part, expect justification and acceptance by the works of the law.

¹ This is not to be understood strictly of the very moment of man's creation, in which the natural law was impressed on his heart, but with some latitude, the Covenant of Works being made with man newly created; and so divines call it the covenant of nature. See Dickson's Therap. Sacr., book 1, chap. 5, p. 116.

² This is not to insinuate that Luther had attained but a small measure of the knowledge of the doctrine of justification and acceptance of a sinner before God, in comparison with those of later times; I have no doubt he understood that doctrine as well as any man has done since; and do not doubt that our author was of the same mind about him: but it

Ant. Sir, I am truly persuaded, that there are very many in the city of London who are carried with a blind preposterous zeal for their own good works and well-doings, secretly seeking to become holy, just, and righteous before God by diligently keeping, and carefully walking in all God's commandments;¹ yet no man can persuade them that they are doing so. And truly, sir, I am persuaded that our neighbour and friend, Nomista, is one of them.

Evan. Alas! There are thousands in the world that make a Christ of their works; and here is their undoing, etc. They look for righteousness and acceptance in the precept more than in the promise, in the law more than in the gospel, in working more than in believing; and so they miscarry. Many poor ignorant souls among us, when we bid them to obey and do their duties, can think of nothing but working themselves to life.

MODERN DIVINITY. 87

When they are troubled, they must lick themselves whole again; when wounded, they must run to the salve of duties and a stream of performances, and neglect Christ. Indeed, it is to be feared that there are various persons who are able to distinguish in words between the law and gospel; and in their judgments they hold and maintain that man is justified by faith without the works of the law. Yet in effect and practice, that is to say, in heart and conscience, they do otherwise.² And there is some touch of this in all of us. Otherwise we would not be so up and down in our comforts, and in believing, as we still are; and so cast down with every weakness, as we are.³ But what do you say, neighbour Nomista, do you think you are guilty of these things?

Nom. Truly, sir, I must confess, I begin to be somewhat suspicious of myself that I *am* so. And because I desire your judgment as to my condition, I would entreat you to let me relate it to you.

Evan. With great good will.

Nom. Sir, having been born and brought up in a country where there was very little preaching, the Lord knows I lived a great while in ignorance and blindness. Yet, because I often repeated the Lord's prayer, the apostles' creed, and the Ten Commandments, and sometimes came to divine service (as they call it), and received the communion at Easter, I thought my condition was good. But at last, by means of hearing a zealous and godly minister in this city, not long after my coming here, I was convinced that my present condition was not good. Therefore I went to that minister, and told him what I thought of myself. He told me that I must frequently hear sermons, and keep the Sabbath very strictly, and give up swearing by my faith and pledge, and similar oaths, and beware of lying and all idle words and communication. Indeed he said I must get good books to read, such as Mr. Dodd on the *Commandments*, Mr. Bolton's *Directions for Comfortable Walking with God*, Mr. Brinsley's *True Watch*, and the like. He gave me many similar exhortations and directions, which I liked very much;

88 THE MARROW OF

is to show that *that* great man of God, and others who went before him, found their way out of the midnight darkness of Popery in that point, with less means of light by far than men now have, who notwithstanding cannot keep from it.

¹ By which means they put their own works in the room of Christ, "who of God is made to us righteousness and sanctification," 1Cor. 1.30. According to the Scripture plan of justification and sanctification, a sinner is justified by his blood, Rom. 5.9, sanctified in Christ Jesus, 1Cor. 1.2, through sanctification of the Spirit, 2Thess. 2.13, sanctified by faith, Acts 26.18.

² It is indeed the practice of every unregenerate man, whatever his knowledge or professed principles are; for the contrary practice is the practice of the saints, and of them only, Mat. 5.3, "Blessed are the poor in spirit." — Phil. 3.3, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

³ For these flow from our building so much on something in ourselves, which is always very variable; and so little, on the "grace that is in Christ Jesus," 2Tim. 2.1, which is an immovable foundation.

and therefore I endeavoured to follow them. So I fell to hearing the most godly, zealous, and powerful preachers that were in the city, and wrote their sermons after them. And when God gave me a family, I prayed with them, and instructed them, and repeated sermons to them, and spent the Lord's day in public and private exercises, and gave up my swearing, and lying, and idle talking. And according to his exhortation, in brief, I so reformed myself and my life, that whereas before I had been only careful to perform the duties of the second tablet of the law — that I might gain favour and respect from civil, honest men, and avoid the penalties of man's law or of temporal punishment — now I was also careful to perform the duties required in the first tablet of the law, to gain favour and respect from religious, honest men, and to avoid the penalty of God's law, even eternal torments in hell.

Now, when professors of religion observed this change in me, they came to my house, and gave me the right hand of fellowship, and counted me one of their number. Then I invited godly ministers to my table, and made much about them. And then, along with Micah mentioned in the book of Judges, I was persuaded that the Lord would be merciful to me, because I had gotten a Levite to be my priest, Judges 17.13. In a word, I now yielded such an outward obedience and conformity to both tablets of the law, that all godly ministers, and religious, honest men who knew me, thought very well of me, considering me a very honest man, and a good Christian. Indeed I thought so of myself, especially because I had their approval. And thus I went on bravely a great while, until I read in Mr. Bolton's works, that the outward righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees was famous in those times. For besides forbearing and protesting against gross sins, such as murder, theft, adultery, idolatry, and the like, they were frequent and constant in prayer, fasting, and charitable deeds — so that, without question, many of them were persuaded that their works would purchase heaven and happiness. Whereupon I concluded that, as yet, I had done no more than they had; and along with that, I considered what our Saviour says, "Unless your righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you cannot enter into the kingdom of God," Mat. 5.20. Yes, and I also considered what the apostle says, "He is not a Jew that is one outwardly; but he that is one inwardly, whose praise is not of men, but of God," Rom. 2.28 29.

MODERN DIVINITY. 89

Then I concluded that I was not yet a true Christian; for I said in my heart, I have contented myself with the praise of men, and so I have lost all my labour and pains in performing duties; for they have been no better than outside performances. Therefore, they must all fall down in a moment. I have not served God with all my heart; and therefore I see that I must either go further, or else I will never be happy.

Whereupon I set about keeping the law in good earnest, and laboured to perform duties, not only outwardly, but also inwardly from my heart. I heard, and read, and prayed, and laboured, to bring my heart, and force my soul, to every duty. I called upon the Lord in good earnest, and told him that whatever he would have me do, I would do it with all my heart, if he would only save my soul. Then I also took notice of the inward corruptions of my heart, which I had not formerly done, and I was careful to govern my thoughts, to moderate my passions, and to suppress the motions and risings of lust, to banish pride and speculative wantonness, and all vain and sinful desires of my heart. Then I thought myself not only an *outside* Christian, but also an *inside* Christian, and therefore a true Christian indeed. And so I went on comfortably a good while, till I considered that the law of God requires passive obedience as well as active. Therefore I must be a sufferer as well as a doer, or else I could not be a Christian indeed.

Whereupon I began to be troubled at my impatience under God's correcting hand, and at those inward murmurings and discontentments which I found in my spirit whenever any outward calamity befell me. Then I laboured to bridle my passions, and to submit myself quietly to the will of God in every condition. And then I also, as it were, began to do penance by abstinence,

fasting, and afflicting my soul. I made pitiful lamentations in my prayers, which were sometimes also accompanied with tears, which I was persuaded the Lord took notice of, and would reward me for. And then I was persuaded that I did keep the law, in yielding obedience both actively and passively. And then I was confident that I was a true Christian — until I considered that those Jews of whom the Lord complains in Isa. 58, did as much as I did. And that caused me to fear that all was not right with me even yet.

Whereupon I went to another minister, and told him that though I had done thus and thus, and suffered thus and thus, yet was I persuaded, that I was in no better condition than those Jews.

90 THE MARROW OF

O yes! he said; you are in a better condition than they: for they were hypocrites, and did not serve God with all their hearts as you do. Then I went home contentedly. And so I went on in my usual course of doing and suffering, and thought all was well with me, until I thought to myself that before my conversion, I had been a transgressor from the womb — yes, in the womb — in being guilty of Adam's transgression. So I considered that even if I kept even with God for the present time, and the time to come, yet that would not free me from the guiltiness of what was done before.

Whereupon I was greatly troubled and disquieted in my mind. Then I went to a third minister of God's holy word, and told him how it stood with me, and what I thought of my state and condition. He cheered me up, bidding me to be of good comfort: for though my obedience since my conversion would not satisfy for my former sins, yet at my conversion, having confessed, lamented, deplored, bewailed, and forsaken them, God, according to his rich mercy and gracious promise, had mercifully pardoned and forgiven them. Then I returned home to my house again, and went to God by earnest prayer and supplication, and sought him to give me assurance of the pardon and forgiveness of my guiltiness of Adam's sin, and all my actual transgressions before my conversion. And just as I had endeavoured to be a good servant before, so I would still continue in doing my duty most exactly. So, being assured that the Lord had granted my request, I fell to my business according to my promise. I heard, I read, I prayed, I fasted, I mourned, I sighed, and groaned; and watched over my heart, my tongue, and ways, in all my doings, actions, and dealings, both with God and man. But after a while, growing better acquainted with the spiritualness of the law, and the inward corruptions of my own heart, I perceived that I had deceived myself in thinking that I had kept the law perfectly. For do what I could, I found many imperfections in my obedience; for I had been, and was still subject to sleepiness, drowsiness, and heaviness in prayers and hearing, and in other duties as well. I failed in the manner of their performance, and in the end, I failed in why I performed them, seeking myself in everything I did. My conscience told me I failed in my duty to God in this, and in my duty to my neighbour in that.

And then I was greatly troubled again: for I considered that the law of God requires, and is not satisfied without, an exact and perfect obedience.

MODERN DIVINITY. 91

And then I went to the same minister again, and told him how I had purposed, promised, striven, and endeavoured, as much as possibly I could, to keep the law of God perfectly. And yet by woeful experience I found that I had, and I still transgressed in many ways; therefore I feared hell and damnation. "Oh! but," he said, "do not fear; for the best of Christians have their failings, and no man keeps the law of God perfectly; therefore go on and do as you have done, in striving to keep the law perfectly; and in what you cannot do, God will accept the will for the deed; and in whatever you come short, Christ will help you out." And this satisfied and contented me very much. So I returned home again, and fell to prayer, and told the Lord that now I saw I could not yield perfect obedience to his law, and yet I would not despair, because I believed that what I

could not do Christ had done for me. Then I concluded with certainty that now I was a Christian indeed, though I was not so before. And so have I been persuaded ever since. Thus, sir, you see I have declared to you, both how it has been with me formerly, and how it is with me for the present. Therefore I would entreat you to tell me plainly and truly, what you think of my condition.¹

92 THE MARROW OF

Evan. Why, truly I must tell you, it appears to me by this testimony, that you have gone as far in the way of the Covenant of Works as the apostle Paul did before his conversion. Yet, from what I see, you have not gone the right way to the truth of the gospel; therefore I question whether you have yet truly come to Christ.

Neo. Good sir, let speak a few words. By hearing your discourse concerning the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, I was moved to fear that I was out of the right way. But now, having heard my neighbour Nomista make such an excellent testimony, and yet you question whether he has truly come to Christ or not, it makes me conclude absolutely that I am far from Christ. Surely, if he — upon whom the Lord has bestowed such excellent gifts and graces, and who has lived such a godly life as I am sure he has done — is not right, then woe be to me!

Evan. Truly, for all I know, you may be in Christ before him.

Nom. But, I ask you, sir, to consider that although I am now thoroughly convinced that till recently I continued in the way of the Covenant of Works, yet seeing that at last I have come to see my need of Christ, and have truly believed that what I come short of in fulfilling the law, he will help me with, I think I must truly have come to Christ.

Evan. Truly, I conceive that this gives you no surer evidence of your having truly come to Christ, than some of your strict Papists have. For it is the doctrine of the Church of Rome, that if a man exercises all his power, and does his best to fulfil the law, then God, for Christ's sake, will pardon all his infirmities, and save his soul. Therefore you will see many of your Papists very strict and zealous in their performance of duties, morning and evening — so many *Ave Marias* and so many *Pater Nosters* — yes, and many of them do great deeds of charity, and great works of hospitality; and they do all this on such grounds and for such ends as these. The Papists, says Calvin, cannot abide this saying: “By faith alone.” For they think that their own works are in part a cause of their salvation; and so they make a hotch-potch and mangle-mangle,² that is neither fish nor flesh, as men say.

¹ It is not necessary, for saving this account of Nomista's case from the odious charge of forgery, that the particulars mentioned in it should have been real facts; more than (not to speak of scripture parables) it is necessary to save the whole book from the same imputation, that the speeches contained in it should have passed, at a certain time, in a real discussion of four men, called Evangelista, Nomista, Antinomista, and Neophytus; yet I have no doubt that it is grounded on matters of fact, falling out by some casuist's inadvertency, excess of charity to, or shifting converse with, the afflicted as to their soul exercise, or by means of corrupt principles. And as the former are incidental to good men of sound principles at any time, which calls ministers on such occasions to take heed to the frame of their own spirits, and to greatly exercise of dependence on the Lord, lest they hurt souls instead of doing them good; so the latter is at no time to be thought strange, since there were found, even in the primitive apostolic churches, some who were reputed godly, zealous gospel ministers, especially by those who had little savour of Christ on their own souls, who nevertheless, in their zeal for the law, perverted the gospel of Christ, Gal. 1.6, 7, and 4.17. Whether Nomista was of the opinion that the Covenant of Works was still in force or not, our Lord Jesus Christ taught that it was, Luke 10.25-28; and so does the apostle, Gal. 3.10; and unbelievers will find it so to their everlasting ruin. For, “our Lord Jesus, who now offers to be Mediator for those who believe on him, shall at the last day come armed with flaming fire to judge, condemn, and destroy all those who have not believed God, have not received the offer of grace made in the gospel, nor obeyed its doctrine, but remain in their natural state, under the law or Covenant of Works.” — *Westm. Conf., Practical Use of Saving Knowledge, tit. For convincing a man of Judgment by the Law*, part. 2.

² That is, a hodgepodge — a jumbled and often incongruous mixture of ideas.

Nom. But wait, sir, I beg you! You are mistaken about me. For though I hold that God accepts my doing my best to fulfil the law, yet I do not hold with the Papists that my doings are meritorious; for I believe that God does not accept what I do,

MODERN DIVINITY. 93

either for the work's or for the worker's sake, but only for Christ's sake.

Evan. Yet you still go hand in hand with the Papists. For though they hold that their works are meritorious, yet they say it is by the merit of Christ that they *become* meritorious; or as some of their moderates say, "Our works, sprinkled with the blood of Christ, become meritorious." But you are to know this: that just as the justice of God requires a perfect obedience, so it requires that this perfect obedience be a personal one, namely: it must be the obedience of one person only; the obedience of two must not be put together to make up a perfect obedience.¹ So that if you desire to be justified before God, you must either bring to him a perfect righteousness of your own, and wholly renounce Christ; or else you must bring the perfect righteousness of Christ, and wholly renounce your own.

Ant. But believe me, sir, I would advise him to bring Christ's and wholly renounce his own, as I thank the Lord, I have done.

Evan. You say very well; for, indeed, the Covenant of Grace terminates itself only on Christ and his righteousness. God will allow none to have a hand in the justification and salvation of a sinner, but only Christ. And to say it as the thing is, neighbour Nomista, Christ Jesus will either be a whole Saviour, or no Saviour; he will either save you alone, or he will not save you at all. In Acts 4.12, the apostle Peter says, "For among men there is given no other name under heaven, whereby we must be saved;" and Jesus Christ himself says in John 14.6, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man comes to the Father but by me." So that, as Luther truly says, "besides this way of Christ, there is no way but wandering, no verity but hypocrisy, no life but eternal death." And truly, says another godly writer, "we cannot come to God the Father, nor be reconciled to him, nor have anything to do with him, by any other way or means, but only by Jesus Christ; for we shall nowhere find the favour of God, true innocence, righteousness, satisfaction for sin, help, comfort, life, or salvation, but only in Jesus Christ.

94 THE MARROW OF:

He is the sum and centre of all divine and evangelical truths. And therefore, as there is no knowledge or wisdom so excellent, necessary, or heavenly, as the knowledge of Christ — as the apostle plainly gives us to understand in 1Cor. 2.2, that he was 'determined to know nothing among them, but only Jesus Christ and him crucified' — so there is nothing to be preached to men as the object of their faith, or as the necessary element of their salvation, which does not in some way or other, either meet in Christ, or refer to him." ²

Sect. 7. — The Antinomian Faith rejected.

Ant. O sir, you please me wondrously well in thus attributing all to Christ. Though lately you have not been so evangelical in your teaching as some others in this city — which has caused me to stop hearing you in order to hear them — yet I formerly perceived, and now also perceive, that you surely have more knowledge of the doctrine of free grace than many other ministers in this city. And to tell you the truth, sir, it was by your means that I was first brought to renounce my

¹ For in that case, the obedience both of the one and the other is imperfect, and so it is not conformed to the law; therefore it can in no way be accepted for righteousness; but according to justice proceeding upon it, the soul that has it must die, because it is a sinful soul, Ezek. 18.4.

² Eph. 4.20, 21, "But you have not so learned Christ; if so be that you have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus."

own righteousness, and cling only to the righteousness of Jesus Christ.¹ And thus, after I had been a legalist for a good while, just like my friend Nomista, and heard none but your legal preachers who built me up in works and doings, as they did him, and as is their way — in the end, a familiar acquaintance of mine, who had some knowledge of the doctrine of free grace, commended you as an excellent preacher. At last he prevailed with me to go with him and hear you. I well remember your text that day. It was Titus 3.5, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us.” From this you observed, and plainly proved, that man’s own righteousness had no hand in his justification and salvation.

MODERN DIVINITY. 95

Whereupon you dehorted us from putting any confidence in our own works and doings, and exhorted us by faith to lay hold of the righteousness of Jesus Christ only. At hearing this, it pleased the Lord to so work on me, that I plainly perceived that there was no need at all for my works and doings, nor anything else, but only to believe in Jesus Christ.² And indeed my heart assented to it immediately. So that I went home with abundant peace and joy in believing, and gave thanks to the Lord for having set my soul at liberty from such a sore bondage as I had been under. And I told all my acquaintances what a slavish life I had lived in, being under the law; for if I committed any sin, I was quickly troubled and disquieted in my conscience, and could have no peace till I had made a humble confession of it to God, craved his pardon and forgiveness, and promised to amend my ways. But now I told them, that whatever sins I committed, I was not one bit troubled by them, nor indeed am I troubled to this day; for I truly believe that God, for Christ’s sake, has freely and fully pardoned all my sins, both past, present, and to come. So that I am confident that whatever sin or sins I commit, they shall never be laid to my charge, being very well assured that I am so perfectly clothed with the robe of Christ’s righteousness, that God can see no sin in me at all.

96 THE MARROW OF

Therefore, now I can rejoice evermore in Christ, as the apostle exhorts me, and live merrily, though I am ever so vile or sinful a creature; indeed I pity those who are in the same slavish condition I was in; and I would have them believe as I have believed, so that they may rejoice

¹ What this is in the speaker’s sense, he immediately explains at large. In a word, in his sense, it is to be Antinomian indeed. The sum of his compliment made to Evangelista, or the author, whichever you please, lies here; namely, that he had stopped listening to him, because he did not preach the gospel so purely as some others in the place; yet in his opinion, he understood it better than many others; and (to carry the compliment to the highest pitch) it was by his means he turned downright Antinomian. One would think that whatever was the measure of the author’s pride or humility, self-denial or self-seeking, he had as much common sense as would render this address not very influential with him, or at least it would teach him that publishing it was not the most proper means for commending himself. So that publishing it may rather be imputed to the author’s self-denial than to the lack of it; though I presume the considering reader will neither impute it to the one nor to the other.

² The preacher taught, according to his text, that man’s own righteousness had no hand in his justification and salvation; he dehorted from putting confidence in good works; and exhorted by faith to lay hold on Christ’s righteousness only. And this hearer inferred from this that there was no need at all for good works; as if one should conclude that because it is the eye only that sees, there is therefore no need at all for hand or foot. So the apostle Paul’s doctrine was misconstrued: Rom. 3.8, “Some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come.” Indeed, in the apostles’ days, the doctrine of free grace was actually thus abused to Antinomianism by some “turning the grace of God into lasciviousness,” Jude 4. The apostle was aware of the danger on that side, through the corruption of the hearts of men; Gal. 5.13, “Brethren, you have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh.” Ministers of Christ (who was himself accounted “a friend to publicans and sinners,” etc., Matthew 11.19) and followers of Paul’s doctrine — which in the eyes of carnal men, had a show and semblance of favouring sinful liberty — ought to set the apostles’ example in this matter before them in a special manner; with fear and trembling, keeping a jealous eye on the danger from that part; especially in this day, in which the Lord’s indignation is visibly going out in spiritual strokes, as a despised gospel; knowing that the gospel of Christ is to some “the savour of death unto death,” 2Cor. 2.16, and that “there are those who twist the Scriptures to their own destruction” 2Pet. 2.17.

with me in Christ.¹ And thus, sir, you see I have declared to you my condition; therefore I entreat you to tell me what you think of me.

Evan. There is in this city, at this day, much talk about Antinomians. And though I hope there are but few who justly deserve that title, yet I ask that you let me tell you this: I fear I must say to you in this case, as it was once said to Peter in another case, “Surely you are one of them, for your speech betrays you,” Mat. 26.73. Therefore, to tell you truly, I question whether you have truly believed in Christ, despite all your confidence. Indeed, I am rather moved to question it by reminding you that, as I have heard, “your conduct is not such as becomes the gospel of Christ,” Phil. 1.27.

Ant. Why sir, do you think it is possible for a man to have such peace and joy in Christ as I have had, and I thank the Lord I still have, and not to have truly believed in Christ?

Evan. Yes, indeed, I do think it is possible. For does not our Saviour tell us that those hearers whom he compares to “stony ground — immediately received the word with joy, and yet had no root in themselves,” Mark 4.16, 17, and so indeed they were not true believers? And does not the apostle give us to understand that, just as there is a form of godliness without the power of godliness, 2Tim. 3.5, so there is a form of faith, without the power of faith? Therefore he prays that God would grant to the Thessalonians “the work of faith with power,” 2Thess. 1.11. And the same apostle gives us to understand that “there is a faith that is *not* feigned,” 1Tim. 1.5; so doubtless there is a faith that *is* feigned. Our Saviour says in Mark 4.26-28, “the kingdom of God is like a man who casts seed into the ground, and sleeps and rises night and day, and the seed springs up and grows, he knows not how:

MODERN DIVINITY. 97

first the blade, then the ear, and after that the full corn in the ear;” Surely he gives us to understand by this, that true faith is produced by the secret power of God, little by little; so that sometimes a true believer himself neither knows when nor how it was wrought. So we may perceive that true faith is not ordinarily begun, increased, and finished, all in a moment, as it seems yours was. Rather it grows by degrees, according to what the apostle says in Rom. 1.17, “The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith,” that is, from one degree of faith to another;² from a weak faith to a strong faith, and from faith beginning, to faith increasing towards perfection; or from a faith of adherence to a faith of evidence — but yours was not so. And again, true faith, according to its measure, produces holiness of life;³ but it seems that does not. Therefore, though you have had, and still have, much peace and joy, that is not an infallible sign that your faith is true. For a man may have great raptures, indeed, he may have great joy, as if he were lifted up into the third heaven, and have a great and strong persuasion that his state is good, and yet be a hypocrite for all that. Therefore, I beseech you, in the words of the apostle, “examine yourself, whether you are in the faith; prove yourself: do you not know that Jesus Christ is in you, unless you are a reprobate?” 2Cor. 13.5. — “And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness,” ⁴ Rom. 8.10.

¹ How easy it is to pass from legalism to Antinomianism! Had this poor man, under his trouble and disquiet of conscience, fled to Jesus Christ for purging his conscience from guilt by Christ’s blood, and sanctifying his nature by Christ’s Spirit; and not put his own confessions of sins, prayers for pardon, and promises of amendment, in place of Christ’s atoning blood; and his own blind and faithless resolutions to amend, in place of the sanctifying spirit of Christ; he would have escaped this snare of the devil, Heb. 9.14; Rom. 7.4-6.

² See note page 40.

³ [1Joh 3:10](#) *Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God.*

⁴ This doctrine of our author is far from cherishing presumption, or opening a gap to licentiousness.

Ant. But, sir, if my friend Nomista went wrong in seeking to be justified by the works of the law, then I think I should have gone right in seeking to be justified by faith; yet you speak as if we had both gone wrong.

Evan. I remember Luther says that in his time, if they taught in a sermon that salvation did not consist in our works or life, but in the gift of God, some men took that as an excuse to be slow to good works, and to live a dishonest life. And if they preached of a godly and honest life, others by and by attempted to build ladders to heaven.¹ Moreover, he says that in the year 1525, there were some spirits of fantasy that stirred up the rustic people to sedition, saying that the

98 THE MARROW OF

freedom of the gospel gives liberty to all men from all manner of laws; and there were others who attributed the force of justification to the law. Now, he says, *both* of these offend against the law; the one on the right hand, who would be justified by the law, and the other on the left hand, who would be completely delivered from the law. Now, I suppose this saying of Luther's may be fitly applied to you two; for it appears to me, friend Antinomista, that you have offended on the left hand in not walking according to the matter of the law; and it is evident to me, neighbour Nomista, that you have offended on the right hand in seeking to be justified by your obedience to it.²

Sect. 8. — The evil of Legalism.

Nom. But, sir, if seeking justification by the works of the law is an error, yet it seems that, by Luther's own confession, it is but an error on the right hand.³

Evan. Yet I tell you, it is such an error that, by the apostle Paul's own confession, so far as any man is guilty of it, he makes his services his saviours, and he rejects the grace of God; he makes the death of Christ of no effect, and he perverts the Lord's intention, both in giving the law and in giving the gospel; and he keeps himself under the curse of the law, and makes himself the son of a bondwoman, a servant, yes, and a slave; and he hinders himself in the course of well-doing, Gal. 5.4; 3.19; 1.6, 7; 3.10; 4.25; 5.7, and 2.11. In short, he seeks an impossible thing, and so he loses all his labour.

Nom. Why then, sir, it would seem that all my seeking to please God by my good works, all my strict walking according to the law, and all my honest course of life, has done me hurt rather than good?

MODERN DIVINITY. 99

Evan. The apostle says that "without faith it is impossible to please God," Heb. 11.6; that is, says Calvin (*Instit.* p. 370) "Whatever a man thinks, purposes, or does, before he is reconciled to God by faith in Christ, it is accursed; it is not only of no value to righteousness, but is certainly deserving of damnation." Luther says on Galatians, p. 63, "Whoever seeks to please God with

¹ That is, to scale and get into it by their own good works.

² The offences of these men, taxed here, were both against the law (or covenant) of works; for they must have been against that law which they were under, and not another; and both of them were as yet under the law, or Covenant of Works, as both were unbelievers, which was told to Antinomista on page 97, as it was told to Nomista on page 92; which is why it is manifest that *the matter of the law* does not mean the Law of Christ, but the matter of the Law of Works, that is, the Ten Commandments; this is because they stand in the Covenant of Works, which Antinomista had no regard for in his conduct, though they had all the authority and binding force on him found in that covenant. And as he offended against the matter of it, so did Nomista against the form of it, in seeking to be justified by his obedience; for the Covenant of Works never bound a sinner to seek to be justified by his obedience to it; but on the contrary, it always condemned that as presumption, staking down the guilty under the curse, without remedy, till satisfaction is made by another hand.

³ In other words, if we err, isn't it better to err on the side of righteousness than lawlessness? (*self-justification*)

works going before faith, seeks to please God with sin; which is nothing else but to heap sin upon sin, to mock God, and to provoke him to wrath.” Indeed, says Luther (p. 23), “if you are without Christ, your wisdom is double foolishness; your righteousness is double sin and iniquity.” And, therefore, though you have walked very strictly according to the law, and led an honest life, yet if you have rested and put your confidence in it, and thus come short of Christ, then it has indeed done you hurt rather than good. For, says a godly writer, a virtuous life according to the light of nature, turns a man further from God, if he does not add to it the effectual working of his Spirit. And, says Luther, “for those who have regard only for an honest life, it would be better for them to be adulterers and adulteresses, and to wallow in the mire.”¹ And surely it is for this reason that our Saviour tells the strict Scribes and Pharisees, who sought justification by works, and rejected Christ, that “publicans and harlots would enter the kingdom of God before them,” Mat. 21.31. And it was for this reason that I said, “For all I know, my neighbour Neophytus might be in Christ before you.”

Nom. But how can that be when, as you know, he has confessed that he is ignorant and full of corruption, and comes far short of me in gifts and graces?

Evan. Because, just as the Pharisee had more to do before he could come to Christ than the publican had,² so I conceive you have more to do than he has.

Nom. Why, sir, I ask you, what must I do, or what would you advise me to do? For truly I would be content to be ruled by you.

Evan. Why, what you must do before you can come to Christ, is to undo all that you have ever done already.

100 THE MARROW OF

That is to say, whereas you endeavoured to travel toward heaven by way of the Covenant of Works, and thus have gone the wrong way, you must go all the way back again, before you can tread one step in the right way. And whereas you attempted to build up the ruins of old Adam, and build upon yourself, like a foolish builder, building a tottering house on the sand — you must tear down and utterly demolish that entire building, and not leave a stone upon another, before you can begin to build anew. And whereas you conceived that there is some sufficiency in yourself to help to justify and save yourself, you must conclude in that case, that there is not only an insufficiency in you, but also a non-sufficiency.³ Indeed that sufficiency which seemed to be in you, is to your loss. In plain terms, *you must deny yourself*, as our Saviour says in Mat. 16.24. That is, “you must utterly renounce all that you ever are, and all that you have ever done;” all your knowledge and gifts; all your hearing, reading, praying, fasting, weeping, and mourning; all your wandering in the way of works, and strict walking — all these must fall to the ground in a moment. In short, whatever you have counted gain in the case of your justification, you must now, with the apostle Paul in Philip. 3.7-9, “count as loss for Christ,” and judge it to be “dung, that you may win Christ, and be found in him, not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.”

¹ This comparison is not stated between these two, considered, simply, as to their different manner of life; but in point of pliability to receive conviction, in which the latter has the advantage of the former; which the Scripture more than once takes notice of, Mat. 21.31, quoted in the following sentence, “I would you were cold or hot,” Rev. 3.15. The passage is to be found in his Sermon on the *Hymn of Zacharias*, page 50.

² [Luk 18.10-14.](#)

³ That is, you are not only unable to do enough, but also, that you are not able to do anything. “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves,” 2Cor. 3.5.

SECTION III. — OF THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PROMISE.

Neo. But, sir, what would you advise *me* to do?

Evan. Why, man, what ails you?

Neo. Why, sir, as you have been pleased to hear those two declare their condition to you, so I beseech you to let me to do the same; and then you will perceive how it is with me.

MODERN DIVINITY. 101

Sir, not long ago, it pleased the Lord to visit me with a great fit of sickness; so that, indeed, both in my own judgment, and in the judgment of all that came to visit me, I was sick to death. Whereupon I began to consider where my soul was to go after its departure out of my body. And I thought to myself that there were only two places, heaven and hell; and therefore it must go to one of them. Then my wicked and sinful life, which indeed I had lived, came into my mind. It caused me to conclude that hell was the place provided for it; which caused me to be very fearful, and very sorry that I had lived that way. I desired the Lord to let me live a little longer, and I would not fail to reform my life and amend my ways; the Lord was pleased to grant me my desire. Since that time, even though indeed I have not lived as wickedly as before, yet alas! I have come far short of that godly and religious life which I see other men live, and especially my neighbour Nomista. Yet you seem to think he is not in a *good* condition; therefore I must surely be in a *miserable* condition. Alas! sir, what do you think will become of me?

Sect. 1. — Christ's fulfilling of the Law in the room of the Elect.

Evan. I now perceive that it is time for me to show how God, in the fulness of time, performed what he purposed before all time, and promised in time, concerning the help and delivering of fallen mankind. And touching this point, the Scripture testifies that God “in the fulness of time, sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem those who were under the law,” etc., Gal. 4.4. That is to say, look how mankind is by nature under the law, as it is the Covenant of Works; so Christ was content to be [under the law], as man's surety. So that now, according to that eternal and mutual agreement between God the Father and him, he put himself in the stead and place of all the faithful;¹ Isa. 53.6, “And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.”

Then the law came, as it is the Covenant of Works, and said; “I find him a sinner;² indeed, he is someone who has taken the sins of all men upon himself,¹ Therefore let him die upon the cross.”

¹ That is, all those who have or shall believe, or all the elect, which is one and the same in reality, and in the judgment of our author, it is expressly declared in the first sentence of his preface.

² By imputation and the reckoning of the law; not otherwise, than as a sinner believing in him is righteous before God. (Thus Isaac Ambrose, speaking of justification, says, “This righteousness makes a sinner sinless;” *i.e.*, as to guilt.) This must be owned to be the meaning of this expression, unless one shuts his eyes to the immediately foregoing and following words, — I find him a sinner, said the law; such a one as has taken sin upon him. They are the words of Luther, and he was not the first who spoke so. “He made him who was righteous to be made a sinner, that he might make sinners righteous,” says Chrysostom, on 2Cor. 5. Hom. 11. cit. Owen on *Justification*, p. 39. Famous Protestant divines have also used the expression after him. “When our divines,” says Rutherford, “say, Christ took our place, and we have his condition, — Christ was made us, and made the sinner; it is true only in a legal sense. He [Christ] was *debitor factus*, — a sinner; a debtor by imputation, a debtor by law, by place, by office.” Trial and Triumph of Faith, p. 245, 257. Charnock argues the point thus: “How could he die, if he were not a reputed sinner? Had he not first had a relation to our sin, he could not in justice have undergone our punishment. He must, in the order of justice, be supposed a sinner really, or by imputation. Really, he was not; by imputation he then was,” vol. ii. p. 547. Sermon on 1Cor. 5.7. “Though personally he was no sinner, yet by imputation he was,” says the Contin. of Poole's Annot. on 2Cor. 5.21. “What Illyricus wrote,” says Rivet, “that Christ might most truly be called a sinner, Bellarmine calls blasphemy and cursed impudence. Now Bellarmine himself contends that Christ might attribute our sins to himself; therefore he might also truly call himself a sinner; while in himself innocent, he represented our person. What blasphemy, what impiety is here?” Comment, on Psalm 22.1. The Scripture phrase to this purpose is more forcible; 2Cor. 5.21, “For he

has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” For as it is more to say we are made *righteousness*, than it is to say we are made *righteous* — since the former plainly imports a perfection of righteousness, if I may be allowed the phrase, righteousness not being properly capable of degrees — so it is more to say that Christ was made sin for the elect world, than it is to say he was made a sinner, since the first of these accordingly points at the universality and complete tale of the elect’s sins, from the first to the last of them laid on our spotless Redeemer. Compare Lev. 16.21, 22, “And Aaron shall confess over him (namely: the scape-goat, which the apostle has an eye to here) all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, and all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat. And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities,” Isa. 53.6. ** And the Lord (*marg.*) has made the iniquity of us all to meet on (*Heb. in*) him.” These two texts give the just notion of the true import of that phrase, “He was made sin for us.”

¹ Our Lord Jesus Christ did not die for, nor take upon himself, the sins of all and every individual man; but he died for and took upon himself the sins of all the elect, John 10.15, and 15.13; Acts 20.28; Eph. 5.25; Tit. 2.14; and no other doctrine is taught here by our author touching the extent of the death of Christ. In the preceding paragraph, where was the proper place for giving his judgment on that topic, he purposely declares it. He had before taught that Jesus Christ from eternity became man’s surety in the covenant that passed between him and the Father, p. 22–24. A surety puts himself in the place of those for whom he becomes surety, to pay their debt, Gen. 44.32, 33; Prov. 22.26, 27. And our author tells us that now, when the prefixed time had come for Christ’s fulfilling the eternal covenant, paying the debt he had taken on him, and purchasing man’s redemption by his sufferings, according to the tenor of that covenant which stated the extent of his suretyship, he put himself in the stead and place — he does not say of *all men*, but — of all the *faithful*, or *elect* of God; (see note p. 101). Jesus Christ thus stood in their stead and place, to actually take on the burden. “The Lord laid on him the iniquities of us all;” this Scripture text can bear no other sense in the connection of it here, than what is the genuine sense of it as it stands in the holy Scripture, namely, that the Father laid on Christ the iniquities of all the spiritual Israel of God, of all nations, ranks, and conditions; for no iniquities could be laid on him but theirs in whose stead and place he put himself to receive the burden, according to the eternal and mutual agreement. These iniquities being thus laid on the Mediator, the law came and said, I find him such a one that has taken on himself the sins of all men. This is but an incidental expression on the topic of the extent of Christ’s death, and it is a scriptural one too. 1Tim. 2.6, “Who gave himself a ransom for all,” *i.e.*, for all sorts of men, not for all of every sort. Heb. 2.9, “That he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man,” *i.e.*, for every man of those whom the apostle is treating there, namely, sons brought or to be brought to glory, verse 10; those who are sanctified, Christ’s brethren, verse 11; given to him, verse 13; and the sense of the phrase, as used here by the author, can be no other; for the sins which the law found that he had taken on him, could be no other but the sins that the Lord had laid on him; and the sins the Lord had laid on him were the sins of all the faithful or elect, according to the author; which is why, in the author’s sense, the sins of all men which the law found in Christ, were the sins of all the elect, according to the genuine sense of the Scripture phraseology on that topic. And an incidental expression, in words which the Holy Ghost teaches, and determined in its connection to the orthodox scriptural meaning, can never import any prejudice to his sentiment on that point purposely declared before in its proper place. It is true, the author, when speaking of those in whose stead Christ put himself, does not use the word *alone*; and in the holy Scripture, neither is it used on that subject. And it may be observed that the Spirit of God in the word, does not open the doctrine of election and reprobation, except upon man’s rejecting or embracing the gospel offer; which different events are then seasonably accounted for from the depths of the eternal counsel of God. See Luke 10.17–22; Mat. 22.1–14; Rom. 9.throughout; Eph. 1.3–5. ‘To everything there is a season. The author up to here has been dealing with the parties, to bring them to Christ; and particularly here, he is speaking for the instruction and direction of a convinced and trembling sinner, namely, Neophytus. And, therefore, like a wise and tender man in such a case, he uses a manner of speaking which, being warranted by the word, was fitted to excite the awakening of the ordinary scruples in that case, namely, “It may be I am not elected, — it may be Christ did not die for me;” and this pointed at the duty of all, and the encouragement that all have, to come to Christ. And all this, after he had in his very first words to the reader, sufficiently provided for his using such a manner of expression, without prejudice to the truth. Further, the law adds, “Therefore let him die upon the cross.” Why? For their sins. Why is there no mention made of them being laid upon him? Or for the sins of those in whose stead he is expressly said to have put himself, according to the eternal agreement between the Father and him? Then Christ said, “Lo! I come;” namely: to actually pay the debt for which I have become surety in the eternal compact; whose debt it was, according to our author, is already sufficiently declared. The law then set upon him, and killed him. For whom, according to our author? For these, surely, in whose stead and place he put himself, and so stood. If one considers his account of the effect of all this, one does not find it to be, as Arminians say, “that Christ, by the merit of his death, has so far reconciled God the Father to all mankind, that the Father, by reason of the Son’s merit, both could and would, and did enter and establish a new and gracious covenant with sinful man, liable to condemnation.” (*Examination of Tilenus*, p. 164, art. 2, sect. 2.) “And obtained for all and every man a restoration into a state of grace and salvation; so that none will be condemned, nor are liable to condemnation for original sin, but all are free from the guilt of that sin.” (*Teste Turretin*, loc. 14. ques. 14. th. 5.) Nor does he tell us, that Christ died to “render sin remissible to all persons, and make them savable,” as the Continuator of Poole’s *Annotations on Hebrews*, chapter 2.9, says with other Universalists. By this means, says our author, “the justice of God was fully satisfied, his wrath appeased, and all true believers acquitted.” Compare *Westm. Confess.*,

102 THE MARROW OF

Then Christ said, "Sacrifice and offering you did not desire, but you have prepared me a body;
MODERN DIVINITY. 103

you take no pleasure in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin. Then I said, Behold, I come to do your will, Lord!" Heb. 10.5-7. And so the law proceeding in full scope against him, set upon him,

104 THE MARROW OF

and killed him. And by this means, the justice of God was fully satisfied; his wrath was appeased; and all true believers were acquitted from all their sins, past, present, and to come ¹

MODERN DIVINITY. 105

So that the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, has nothing to say to any true believer,² for indeed they are dead to it, and it is dead to them.

chap. 8. art. 4, 5. "This office (namely: of a surety) the Lord Jesus most willingly undertook; that he might discharge it, he was made under the law, and perfectly fulfilled it, enduring most grievous torments, etc. The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience, and sacrifice of himself — has fully satisfied the justice of his Father; and purchased, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father has given to him. Christ, by his obedience and death, fully discharged the debt of all those that are thus justified," Chap. 11. art. 3. Therefore the author does not here teach a universal redemption or atonement. Of this, more afterward.

¹ Pardon is removing the guilt of sin. Guilt is twofold: 1. The guilt of eternal wrath, by which the sinner is bound over to the eternal revenging wrath of God; and this, by orthodox divines, is called the guilt of sin by way of *eminency*. 2. The guilt of fatherly anger, whereby the sinner is bound over to God's fatherly anger and chastisements for sin. Accordingly, there is a two-fold pardon: the one is the removal of the guilt of eternal wrath, and this is called *legal pardon*; the other is the removal of the guilt of fatherly anger, and this is called *gospel pardon*. As to the latter, the believer is to daily sue for his pardon, since he daily contracts new guilt of that kind; and the author plainly teaches this afterwards in its proper place. As to the former, of which only he speaks here, all the sins of a believer, past, present, and to come, are pardoned together and at once, in the first instance of his believing. That is to say, the guilt of eternal wrath for sin then past and present is actually and formally done away; the obligation to that wrath which he was lying under for these sins is dissolved, and the guilt of eternal wrath for sins then to come is effectually prevented from that moment forever, so that he can never come under that kind of guilt any more. And this pardon, as it relates to these sins, is improperly called a pardon; it is not imputing them, rather than formally remitting them. A formal remission is a dissolution of guilt actually contracted; and so it agrees only to sins already committed. Therefore our author here uses the word *acquitted*, which has a more extensive signification. All pardon of sin is an acquittance, but all acquittance of sin is not a formal pardon of it: "For at the resurrection, believers being raised up in glory, shall be openly acknowledged and acquitted in the day of judgment." *Short. Cat.* But they will not then be formally pardoned. Now, this is the doctrine of the Holy Scriptures, Rom. 4.48, "Even as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord WILL NOT IMPUTE sin." — Chap. 8.1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." That is, not only shall they never be actually damned, *i.e.*, sent to hell, as that phrase is ordinarily taken — for that is the privilege of all the elect, even before they believe, while they are yet under condemnation according to the Scripture — but there is no binding over of those who are in Christ to eternal wrath, no guilt of that kind to them. Compare John 3.18, "He that believes on him is not condemned; but he that does not believe is condemned already." — "The one [namely: justification] equally frees all believers from the revenging wrath of God, and does that perfectly in this life, so that they never fall into condemnation." *Larg. Cat.* quest. 77. "Albeit sin remains, and continually abides in our mortal bodies, yet it is not imputed to us, but is remitted and covered with Christ's justice," [*i.e.*, righteousness.] *Old Confess.*, art. 25. Q. "What then is our only joy in life and death? A. That all our sins, bypast, present, and to come, are buried; and Christ only is made our wisdom, justification, sanctification, and redemption." 1Cor. 1.30. *Craig's Cat.* quest. 43. "The liberty which Christ has purchased for believers, under the gospel consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the Moral Law." *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 20. art. 1. See 11. art. 5; chap. 17. art. 3. "They [the Arminians] utterly deny that no sins of the faithful, however great and grievous they are, are imputed to them, or that all their present and future sins are forgiven them." *Exam. of Tilen.* p. 226, art. 5. sect. 5.

² "Whatever things it says, it says to those who are under it," Rom. 3.19. But believers are not under it, nor under the law of the Covenant of Works, chap. 6.14; therefore it says nothing to them. As such, it said all to Christ in their stead and place; and apart from the Mediator's dishonour, it cannot repeat its demands on them which it made upon him as their surety. Meanwhile the law, as a rule of life to believers, says to them all, in the name and authority of God, the

Nom. But, sir, how could the sufferings of Christ, which in respect to time were but finite, make full satisfaction to the justice of God, which is infinite?

Evan. Though the sufferings of Christ, in respect to time, were but finite, yet in respect to the person that suffered, his sufferings came to be of infinite value. For Christ was God and man in one person; and therefore his sufferings were a sufficient and full ransom for man's soul, being of more value than the death and destruction of all creatures.

Nom. But, sir, you know that the Covenant of Works requires man's own obedience or punishment when it says, "He that does these things shall live in them;" and "Cursed is every one that does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." How then could believers be acquitted from their sins by the death of Christ?

Evan. For the answer, I ask you to consider that, although the Covenant of Works requires a man's own obedience or punishment, yet it nowhere disallows or excludes what is done or suffered by another in his behalf; nor is it repugnant to the justice of God. For in this way there is a satisfaction performed by man, through a sufficient punishment for the disobedience of man, so that the law is satisfied; and the justice of God permits the offending party to be received into favour as a just man, and not as a transgressor of the law. God acknowledges him so, after such satisfaction is made. And though the satisfaction is made by a surety, yet when it is done, the principal is acquitted by the law. For further proof and confirmation of this point, we are to consider that as Jesus Christ, the second Adam, entered into the same covenant that the first Adam did.¹ So whatever the first Adam had undone, was done by Christ. The case stands thus: that just as whatever the first Adam did, or whatever befell him, was reckoned as done by all mankind, and to have befallen all mankind, even so, whatever Christ did, or whatever befell him, is to be reckoned as to have been done by all believers, and to have befallen them. So that just as sin comes from Adam alone to all mankind, as the one in whom all have sinned; so from Jesus Christ alone comes righteousness to all that are in him, as he is the one in whom they all have satisfied the justice of God. For just as being in Adam, and being one with him, all those who are in him and with him, transgressed the commandment of God;

MODERN DIVINITY. 107

even so, in respect to faith, by which believers are ingrafted into Christ, and spiritually made one with him, they all, in him and with him, satisfied the justice of God in his death and sufferings.²

Creator and Redeemer, Mat. 5.48, "Be therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect." Even so, they are under a covenant in which, though no less is required, yet less is accepted, for the sake of Christ their covenant head.

¹ See note, page 55.

² Namely, in the sense of the law; for in the law-reckoning, as to the payment of a debt, and fulfilling a covenant, or any like purposes, the surety and the original debtor, the federal head or representative, and those represented, are but one person. And thus the Scripture determining Adam to be the figure (or type) of Christ, Rom. 5.14, teaches on the one hand, that all mankind sinned in Adam, verse 12, and died in him, 1Cor. 15.22; and on the other hand, that all believers were crucified with Christ, Gal. 2.20, and raised up in him. Eph. 2.6, "The covenant (of works) being made with Adam as a public person — all mankind—sinned in him." *Larg. Cat.* Quest. 22. "The Covenant of Grace was made with Christ as the second Adam," Quest. 31. "He satisfied divine justice, which he did as a public person, the head of his Church," Quest. 52. "that the righteousness of the law," says the apostle, "might be fulfilled in us," Rom. 8.4; so believers satisfied in him, as they sinned in Adam. "The threatening of death. Gen. 2.17, is fulfilled in the elect so that they die, and yet their lives are spared: they die, and yet they live, for they are reckoned in law to have died when Christ their surety died for them." Ferguson on Gal. 2.20. "Although you," says Beza, "have satisfied for the pain of your sins in the person of Jesus Christ," *Beza's Confess.*, point 4, art. 12. "What challenges Satan or conscience can make against the believer — hear an answer; I was condemned, I was judged, I was crucified for sin, when my surety Christ was condemned, judged, and crucified for my sins. — I have paid all, because my surety has paid all," Rutherford's *Trial and Triumph of Faith*, Sermon. 19. p. 258. "As in Christ we satisfied, so likewise in Adam we sinned," Flint. Exam. p. 144. This doctrine, and the doctrine of the formal imputation of Christ's righteousness to believers,

Whoever reckons this way, reckons according to Scripture. For in Rom. 5.12, all are said to have sinned in Adam's sin; in whom all have sinned, says the text, namely, in Adam, as in a public person. All men's acts were included in his, because their persons were included in his person. So likewise in the same chapter it is said that "death passed upon all men;" namely for this: that Adam's sin was reckoned for theirs. Even so, in Rom. 6.10, the apostle speaking of Christ, says, "In that he died, he died to sin; but in that he lives, he lives to God." So likewise, he says in the next verse, "Reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord." And so, as touching the resurrection of Christ, the apostle argues in 1Cor. 15.20, that all believers must and shall arise, because "Christ is risen, and has become the first fruits of those who sleep." Christ, as the first fruits, arises, and that is in the name and stead of all believers — and so they rise in him and with him. For Christ did not rise as a private person, but he arose as a public head of the church; so that in his arising, all believers virtually arose. And as Christ at his resurrection was justified and acquitted from all the sins of all believers, by God his Father, as having now fully satisfied for them, even so all believers were justified and acquitted.¹ Thus you see the obedience of Christ is imputed to believers by God for their righteousness. It puts them into the same estate and condition, touching righteousness unto life before God,² in which they would have been if they had perfectly performed the perfect obedience of the Covenant of Works, "Do this and you shall live."³

stand and fall together. For if believers are reckoned in law to have satisfied in Christ, then his righteousness, which is the result of his satisfaction, must be accounted theirs. But if there is no such law-reckoning, Christ's righteousness cannot be imputed to them other than as to its effects; for the judgment of God is always according to truth, Rom. 2.2. This the Neonomians are aware of, and deny both, reckoning them Antinomian principles as they do many other Protestant doctrines. Hear Mr. Gibbons: "They (namely: the Antinomians) are dangerously mistaken in thinking that a believer is righteous in the sight of God, with the self-same active and passive righteousness with which Christ was righteous, as though believers suffered in Christ, and obeyed in Christ." *Morn. Exer. Method*, sec. 19, p. 423. On the other hand, the Westminster divines teach both as sound and orthodox principles, affirming Christ's righteousness, obedience, and satisfaction are imputed to believers, or reckoned as their righteousness, obedience, and satisfaction. "Justification is an act of God's free grace, in which he pardons all our sins, and accepts us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us." *Short. Cat.* — "Only for the perfect obedience and full satisfaction of Christ imputed to them by God," *Large. Cat.* quest. 70. — "By imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ to them," *Westm. Confess.* chap. 11. art. 1.

¹ Virtually justified in his justification, not actually, even as they virtually arose in his resurrection. That this is the author's meaning is evident from his own words. When speaking of Neophytus, he says expressly, "He was justified meritoriously in the death and resurrection of Christ, yet he was not justified actually till he actually believed in Christ."

² So-called to distinguish it from *inherent* righteousness, which is righteousness from life.

³ This is a weighty point. The plain and native result of what is said is namely, that since Jesus Christ has fully accomplished what was to have been done by man himself for lifem according to the Covenant of Works, and that is what is imputed to believers. Therefore, believers are in the same state, as to righteousness unto life, that they would have been in if man himself had stood the whole time appointed for his trial. And here is the true ground in law of the infallible perseverance of the saints: their time of trial for life is over in their Head, the second Adam — the prize is won! Hence the just, by faith, are entitled to the same benefit which Adam by his perfect obedience would have been entitled to. Compare Rom. 10.5, "The man who does these things shall live," with Hab. 2.4, "The just shall live by his faith;" which is the true reading according to the original. And here, to clarify the following purpose of the believer's freedom from the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, let it be considered that if Adam had been able to stand till the time of his trial had expired, the Covenant of Works would indeed have remained from that time, as his everlasting security for eternal life, like a contract held fulfilled by the one party. But in the same case, it could no longer have remained the rule of his obedience, namely, in the *state of confirmation*. [From Boston's treatise, *Human Nature in its Fourfold State*, doct. 1: "Confirmation in a righteous state is a reward of grace, given upon continuing righteous through the state of trial, and would have been given to Adam if he had stood out the time appointed for probation by the Creator; and accordingly is given to the saints on account of the merits of Christ, who 'was obedient even unto death.'"] The reason is obvious, namely: that still subjecting him to the Covenant of Works, as the rule of his obedience, would have reduced him to the state of trial he was in before, and set him to work anew for what was already his own, by virtue of his supposed fulfilling of that covenant. Nevertheless it is absolutely impossible that the

Sect. 2. — Believers dead to the Law as the Covenant of Works.

Nom. But, sir, are you saying that all believers are dead to the law, and the law is dead to them?

Evan. Believe it. Just as the law is the Covenant of Works, all true believers are dead to it, and it is dead to them;¹ for being incorporated into Christ, what the law or Covenant of Works did to him, it did the same to them. So that when Christ was hung on the cross, all believers, in a way, were hung there with him. And therefore the apostle Paul having said in Gal. 2.19, “through the law I am dead to the law,” adds in the next verse, “I am crucified with Christ.” The apostle brings these words as an argument to prove that he was dead to the law, for the law had crucified him with Christ. On this text, Luther on the Galatians (p. 81) says, “I likewise am crucified and dead to the law, in that I am crucified and dead with Christ.” And again, “believing in Christ, I am also crucified with Christ.”

110 THE MARROW OF

In like manner, the apostle says to the believing Romans, “So you also, my brethren, are dead to the law by the body of Christ,” Rom. 7.4. Now, “the body of Christ” means the passion of Christ on the cross, or which is all the same, the sufferings of Christ in his human nature. Therefore, we may certainly conclude with godly Tyndale on this text, that all those are dead concerning the law, who are crucified with Christ by faith.

Nom. But, Let me ask you, sir, how do you prove that the law is dead to a believer?

Evan. Why, I think the apostle affirms it in Rom. 7.1-6.

Nom. Surely sir, you are mistaken; for I remember the words of the first verse are, “that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives;” and the words of the sixth verse are, “but now we are delivered from the law, that being dead in which we were held,” etc.

Evan. I know right well, that the words are rendered this way in our last translation. But the learned Tyndale renders it thus: “Do you not remember, brethren, that the law has dominion over a man as long as it endures?” And Bishop Hall paraphrases it thus, “Do you not know, brethren, that the Mosaic law has dominion over a man that is subject to it, so long as that law is in force?” So likewise Origen, Ambrose, and Erasmus all agree that by these words, while “he” or “it” lives, we are to understand, “as long as the law remains.” And Peter Martyr is of the opinion that these words, while “he” or “it” lives, are differently referred either to the law, or to the man; for he says, “the man is said to be dead,” verse 4, “and the law is said to be dead,” verse 6. Even so, because the word “he” or “it” mentioned in verse 1, signifies both sexes in the Greek, Chrysostom thinks that the death of both *the law* and *the man* is insinuated. And Theophylact, Erasmus, Bucer, and Calvin, all understand the sixth verse to mean *the law* being dead. And as

creature, in any state whatsoever, must be bound to and owe obedience to the Creator; and still being bound to obedience, of necessity it behooves him to have a rule of that obedience. Since the Covenant of Works could not be it, what remains but that the rule of obedience in the state of confirmation, would have been the law of nature, suited to man’s state of immutability, improperly so-called. And would it be so divested of the form of the Covenant of Works (namely, its promise of eternal life, and its threatening of eternal death), that it is, and will be, in heaven, forever? The application is easy as to the rule of believers’ obedience, always making suitable reserves for the imperfection of their state in respect to inherent righteousness. This imperfection, because it leaves room for promises of fatherly smiles, and threatenings of fatherly chastisements, so it makes them necessary; but these also shall be done away in heaven when their *real* estate shall be perfect, as their *relative* state is now.

¹ Rom. 7.4, “Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law.” — Gal. 2.19, “I through the law am dead to the law.” And this, according to the nature of correlates, concludes the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, to be dead also to believers. Col. 2.14, “Nailing it to his cross.” [The list of charges against us was nailed to the cross, not the Law itself, as if the Law were dead (Mat 5.17). We are dead to its *penalties*, not to its *requirements*. – WHG]

the death of a believer to the law was accomplished by the death of Christ, so also was the law's death to the believer. In his sermon about Christ crucified, Mr. Fox testifies saying, "Here we have two crucifixes on one cross: two of the most excellent potentates that ever were: the Son of God and the law of God, wrestling together about man's salvation. Both are cast down and both are slain on one cross; however, not in the same way. *First*, the Son of God was cast down and took the fall, not for any weakness in himself, but he was content to take it for our victory.

MODERN DIVINITY. 111

By this fall, the law of God, in casting Christ down, was caught in its own trap; and so it was firmly nailed to the cross, hand and foot, as we read in Paul's words," Col. 2.14. And so Luther on the Galatians (p. 184) speaking to the same point, says, "This was an awful combat, where the law, being a creature, gave such an assault to his Creator, in practising his whole tyranny on the Son of God. *Now* therefore, because the law so horribly and cursedly sinned against its God, it is accused and arraigned; and as a thief and accursed murderer of the Son of God, it loses all its rights, and deserves to be condemned. The law, therefore, is bound, dead, and crucified *to me*. It is not only overcome, condemned, and slain *to Christ*, but also *to me*, by believing in him to whom God has freely given this victory."¹

¹ This is cited from Luther on the *Epistle to the Galatians*, according to the English translation, and it is to be found there, fol. 184, p. 1, 2, fol. 185, p. 1, fol. 82, p. 1. His own words from the Latin original, after he had lectured that epistle a second time, as I find them in my copy printed at Frankfort, 1563, are here subjoined. "Hoc profecto mirabile duellum est, ubi lex creatura cum Creatore sic congregitur, et praeter omne jus, omnem tyrannidem suam in Filio Dei exercet. quam in nobis filiis irae exercuit," Luth. Comment, in Gal. 4.5, p. 598. "Ideo lex, tanquam latro et sacrilegus homicida Filii Dei, amittit jus, et meretur damnari," *Ibid.* p. 600. "Ergo lex est mihi surda, ligata, mortua et crucifixa," *Ibid.* cap. ii. 20, p. 280. "Conscientia apprehendens hoc apostoli verbum, Christus a lege nos redemit — sancta quadam superbia insultat legi, dicens — nunc in posterum non solum Christo victa et strangulata es, sed etiam mihi credenti in eum, cui donavit hanc victoriam," Page 600. That great man of God, a third Elias, and a second Paul (if I may venture the expression) though he was no inspired teacher, was endued with a great measure of the spirit of them both, being raised up by God for the extraordinary work of the Reformation of religion from Popery, while all the world wondered after the Beast. The lively savour he had of the truths of the gospel in his own soul, and the fervour of his spirit in delivering them, indeed carried him as far from the modern politeness of expression, as the admiration and affectation of this last are likely to carry us off from the former. What he designed by all this triumph of faith is summed up in a few words, immediately following those last cited: "This, the law (namely: as it is the Covenant of Works) is gone forever as to us, providing we abide in Christ." This he chose to express in such figurative terms that that great gospel truth might be more impressed on his own heart, and the hearts of his scholars, being prompted to it by his experience of the necessity, and with that, the difficulty of applying it by faith to his own case, in his frequent deep soul exercises and conflicts of conscience. "Therefore," he says, "feeling your terrors and threatenings, law! I dip my conscience over head and ears, into the wounds, blood, death, resurrection, and victory of Christ; besides him I will see and hear nothing at all. This faith is our victory, whereby we overcome the terrors of the law, sin, death, and all evils, but not without a great conflict," *Ibid.* p. 597. And speaking on the same subject elsewhere, he has these remarkable words, "It is easy to speak these things, but happy is he that could know them rightly in the conflict of conscience." *Comment*, on Gal. 2.19, p. 259. Now, to turn outward the wrong side of the picture of his discourse, to make it false, horrid, profane, and blasphemous, is hard. At this rate, many Scripture texts must suffer, not to speak of approved human writers. I instance only that of Elias, 1Kings 18.27, "He [Baal] is a god; either he is talking, or he is pursuing, or he is on a journey, or peradventure he sleeps, and must be awaked." Yet I do not compare Luther's commentary to the inspired writing; only where the holy Scripture goes before, one would think he might be allowed to follow. Here is an *irony*, a rhetorical figure, and there is a *prosopopoeia*, or feigning of a person, another rhetorical figure; and the learned and holy man tells us with this, that Paul used it before him on the same subject, representing the law "as a most potent personage, who condemned and killed Christ, whom he (having overcome death) did in like manner conquer, condemn, and kill;" for which he cites Eph. 2 and 4., epistles to the Rom., Cor., Col. p. 599. Now, the law, being the Covenant of Works, and not indeed a person but a most holy law of God, was incapable of real arraignment, sin, theft, or murder: yet one being allowed to speak figuratively of it as such a person, mentioned before; and finding that the Spirit of God teaches that it was crucified, Jesus Christ "nailing it to his cross," Col. 2.14; — what impiety, what blasphemy is there in assigning crimes to it for which it was crucified, crimes of the same nature as its crucifixion — that is, not really and literally so, but figuratively only? And crucifying a person, just as it presupposes his arraignment, accusation, and condemnation, so it implies his binding and death; all of which the decency of the parable requires. And the same decency requiring the rhetorical feigning of crimes as the causes of that crucifixion, they could be no other but these that are assigned. For though Jesus Christ is considered

Now then, although according to the apostle's intimation (Rom. 7 at the beginning) the Covenant of Works, and man by nature, are mutually engaged to each other so long as they both shall live; yet if the husband is free when the wife is dead, then much more when he is dead also.

MODERN DIVINITY. 113

Nom. But, sir, what are we to understand by this double death, or what does this freedom from the law consist in?

Evan. Death is nothing else but a dissolution, or an untying of a compound, or a separation between matter and form. Therefore, when the soul and body of man are separated, we say he is dead; so that by this double death, we are to understand nothing else, but that the bargain or covenant which was made between God and man at the beginning, is dissolved or untied; or that the matter and form of the Covenant of Works is separated as to a believer. So that the law of the Ten Commandments does not promise eternal life to a believer, nor does it threaten him with eternal death on condition of his obedience or disobedience to it:¹ nor does a believer, as a believer, either hope for eternal life,

here, not as a sinner by imputation, but as absolutely without guilt, the sins of all the elect, meantime, were really imputed to him; in reality, this justified the holy law's procedure against him. Moreover, upon the crucifixion, it may be remembered how the apostle proves Christ to have been "made a curse for us;" for he says, it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangs on a tree," Gal. 3.13. If anyone were to refer in a figurative manner to the crucifixion of the law, as the Covenant of Works, as its must be understood, it could import no more by reason of its nature, than an utter abolition of it with respect to believers, which is a great gospel truth. And here one may call to mind these Scripture phrases: Rom. 7.5, "The motions of sins which were by the law;" — chap. 8.2, "The law of sin and death:" — "The Covenant of Works, called the law of sin and death," *Confess.*, p. 382, fig. 3; "The strength of sin is the law," 1Cor. 15.56.

After all, for my part, I would not use some of these expressions of Luther's, nor in my heart dare so much as to condemn them in him, considering the grace which I conceive he had when he uttered these words. And I would say the same about the several expressions of the great Rutherford, and of many eminent ministers, who in their day were signally countenanced by God in their administrations. Hear Luther himself, in his preface to that book, page (*mih!*) 10, "These our thoughts," he says, "on this epistle come forth, not so much against those (namely: the church's enemies) as for the sake of our own (namely: her friends) who will either thank me for my diligence, or will pardon my weakness and rashness." It is a pity that the just expectation of one whose name will be in honour in the church of Christ, as long as the memory of the Reformation from Popery is kept, should be frustrated.

¹ The law of the Ten Commandments given to Adam, as the Covenant of Works, promised eternal life, on condition of obedience, and threatened eternal death in case of disobedience. And this made it the Covenant of Works. Now, this covenant frame of the law of the Ten Commandments being dissolved as to believers, it can no more promise or threaten them at any rate. The Scripture indeed testifies, that "godliness has the promise, not only of the life that now is, but also of the life that is to come," 1Tim. 4.8. There is an infallible connection between godliness and the glorious life in heaven established by promise in the Covenant of Grace. But in the meantime, it is the obedience and satisfaction of Christ, apprehended by faith, and not our own godliness, that is the condition on which that life is promised, and on which a real Christian in his dying hour will venture to plead for a share in that life. It is likewise certain that not only are unbelievers, by virtue of the Covenant of Works which they remain under, liable to eternal death as the just reward of sin. But there is by that covenant a twofold connection established: the one between a *state* of unbelief, unregeneracy, impenitency, and unholiness, and eternal death; the other between *acts* of disobedience and eternal death. The former is absolutely indissoluble, and must eternally remain; so that those who are in that state of sin, while they are in it, must be in a state of death, bound over to the wrath of God by virtue of the threatening of the law. But then it is impossible that believers in Christ can be in that state of sin. So these and similar sentences do indeed bind over unbelievers to eternal death: "He that does not believe shall be damned," Mark 16.16. — "Unless you repent you shall all likewise perish," Luke 13.3. — "If you live after the flesh you shall die," Rom. 8.13. But they do not otherwise concern believers than as they set before them a certain connection of two events, neither of which can ever be found in their case. And yet the serious consideration of them is of great and manifold use to believers — as a serious view of every part of the Covenant of Works is — particularly, to move them to grow up more and more into Christ, and to make their calling and election sure. As to the latter connection, namely: between acts of disobedience and eternal death, it is dissoluble; and in the case of the believer, it is actually dissolved. So that no one has warrant to say to a believer, 'If you sin, you shall die eternally.' Because the threatening of eternal death, as to the

114 THE MARROW OF

or fear eternal death on any such terms.¹ No; we may assure ourselves that “whatever the law says,” on any such terms, it “says to those who are under the law,” Rom. 3.19. But believers “are not under the law, but under grace,” Rom. 6.14. And so they have escaped eternal death and obtained eternal life, only by faith in Jesus Christ;² “for by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses,” Acts 13.39.

MODERN DIVINITY. 115

— “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life,” John 3.16.

And this is that Covenant of Grace which, as I told you, was made with the fathers by way of promise; only darkly so. Now, the fulness of time having come, it was more fully opened and promulgated.

Ant. Well, sir, you have made it evident and plain that Christ has delivered all believers from the law, as it is the Covenant of Works; and therefore they have nothing at all to do with it.

Evan. No, indeed: none of Christ’s are to have anything to do with the Covenant of Works, but Christ only. For although in making the Covenant of Works at first, God was one party, and man was another, yet in making it the second time, God was on both sides: God, simply considered in his essence, was the party opposed to man; and God, the second person, having taken it upon himself to be incarnate, and to work man’s redemption, was on man’s side, and takes part with man, that he may reconcile him to God by bearing man’s sins, and satisfying God’s justice for them. Christ paid God ³ till he said he had enough — till God was fully satisfied, fully contented. Mat. 3.17, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” Yes, God the Father was well pleased and fully satisfied from all eternity, by virtue of that covenant that was made between

believer, having already been satisfied in the satisfaction of Christ, and apprehended and imputed by God to him through faith, it cannot be renewed on him, any more than one debt can be twice charged for payment.

¹ But on having, or lacking, a saving interest in Christ.

² This is a full proof of the whole matter. For how can the law of the Ten Commandments promise eternal life, or threaten eternal death, on condition of obedience or disobedience, to those who have already escaped eternal death, and obtained eternal life by faith in Christ? The words which the Holy Ghost teaches are so far from restraining the notion of eternal life to glorification, and of eternal death to the misery of the damned in hell, that they declare the soul upon its union with Christ to be as really possessed of eternal life as the saints in heaven are; and without that state of union, to be as really under death, and the wrath of God, as the damned in hell are, though not in that measure. (The term “eternal death” is not, as far as I remember, used in Scripture.) And this is agreeable to the nature of things; for as there is no medium between life and death in a subject capable of either, so it is evident that the life communicated to the soul in its union with Christ, the quickening Head, can never be extinguished for the ages of eternity, John 14.19. [[“A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.”](#)] And the sinner’s death under the guilt and power of sin is eternal in its own nature, and can never end except by a work of Almighty power which raises the dead, and calls things that are not, to be as if they were ([Rom 4.17](#)). 1Thess. 1.10, “Jesus which delivered us from the wrath to come.” — 1John 3.14, “We know that we have passed from death to life.” — John 3.36, “He that believes on the Son has everlasting life; and he that does not believe on the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.” — Chap. 5.24, “He that believes, has everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but has passed from death to life.” — Chap. 6.47, “He that believes on me has everlasting life.” — Verse .54, “Whoever eats my flesh, and drinks my blood, has eternal life.” — 1John 5.12, 13, “He that has the Son has life; and he that does not have the Son of God does not have life. These things I have written to you that believe on the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.” — See Rom. 8.1; John 3.16-18, and 17.3.

³ All the demands of the Covenant of Works on the elect world.

them. And thereupon all Christ's people were given to him in their election. Eph. 1.4. "Yours they were," ¹ says Christ, "and you gave them to me," John 17.6.

116 THE MARROW OF

And again, he says, "The Father loves the Son, and has given all things into his hands," John 3.35; that is, he has entrusted him with the economic and actual administration of that power in the Church which originally belonged to himself. Hence it is that Christ also says, "The Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son," John 5.22. So that the entire covenant which believers are to regard for life and salvation, is the free and gracious covenant that is between Christ (or God in Christ) and them.² And in this covenant there is no condition or law to be performed on man's part by himself;³ no, there is nothing more for him to do, than to know and believe that Christ has done all for him.⁴

¹ That he, taking on their nature, might answer the demands of the Covenant of Works for them, Eph. 1.4, "According as he has chosen us in him." We are said to be chosen in Christ, not that Christ is the cause of election, but that electing love, flowing immediately from God to all its objects, the Father in one and the same decree of election, chose the head and the members of the happy body; yet Christ the head first (in the order of nature), and then all those who make up his body, who were thereby given to him to be redeemed and saved by his obedience and death; this being accepted by him, as Elect-Mediator and Head of elect-men, he had full power and furniture for the work conveyed to him. And thus we may conceive that the second covenant had been concluded agreeably to the Scripture account of that mystery. This, the author says, was done *thereupon*, not upon the Father's being well pleased and fully satisfied by virtue of the covenant being made — that is the *effect* of the covenant; whereas this is one of the transactions or parts of the covenant, as all the following words brought to illustrate it plainly indicate — but upon God the Son being on the other side in making the second covenant, which is the principal purpose in this paragraph. The explication of it was interrupted by adding a sentence concerning the execution and effect of the glorious contrivance. In making the second covenant, the second person of the ever blessed Trinity, considered simply as such, is one of the parties. Thereupon, in the decree of election designing, as said, both head and members, he is chosen Mediator and Head of the election, to be their incarnate Redeemer. This headship being accepted, as Mediator and Head of the election, he took it upon himself to be incarnate, and in their nature to satisfy the demands of the Covenant of Works for them, Isa. 42.1; Eph. 1.4; Psalm 40.6; *Westm. Confess.* Chap. 8. art. 1; "It pleased God in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man — the Head and Saviour of his church — unto whom, from all eternity, he gave a people to be his seed, and to be redeemed by him in time," etc. Chap. 3. art. 5; "Those of mankind that are predestinated to life — God has chosen in Christ unto everlasting glory, out of his mere free grace and love." Compare what the author writes on this subject, pp. 41-45.

² That is, the Covenant of Grace only, not the Covenant of Works.

³ Namely, for life and salvation; the same being already performed by Jesus Christ; in the second covenant, having undertaken to satisfy all the demands of the Covenant of Works, he did all that was to be done or wrought for our life and salvation. And if it had not been so, life and salvation would have remained eternally outside our reach; for how is it possible that we should perform, do, or work, until we get life and salvation? What condition or law are we fit to perform while we are dead, and not saved from, but lying under sin, the wrath and curse of God? See the following note.

⁴ Namely, all that was to be done for life and salvation. And neither repentance, nor sincere (imperfect) obedience, believing itself, is of that sort — though all of these are indispensably necessary in subjects capable of them. This expression bears a kind of imitation, usual in conversation, and it is used by our blessed Saviour on this subject. John 6.28, 29, "Then they said to him, What shall we do that we might WORK the works of God? Jesus answered and said to them. This is THE WORK of God: that you believe." The design of it plainly is to confront the natural characteristic in all men, for doing and working for life and salvation, once they begin to lay these things to heart; there is no more for him to do, says the author, but only to know and believe that Christ has done all for him; and therefore the expression is not to be strained beyond its scope. However, this is *true* faith according to the Scripture, whether *all* saving faith is such a knowledge and believing or not; and such knowledge and believing are capable of degrees of certainty, and they may be mixed with doubting without overturning the reality of them. Isaiah 53.11, "By his knowledge my righteous Servant shall justify many." — John 17.3, "This is eternal life, that they might know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent." — Gal. 2.20, "I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." — Rom. 10.9, "If you believe in your heart that God has raised him from the dead, you shall be saved." To believe that God has raised him from the dead is to believe that he has perfected the work, and done all that was to be done for life and salvation to sinners: but is this *enough* to constitute saving faith? Surely it is not; for devils may believe that: therefore, it must be believed with particular application *to oneself*, intimated in the phrase, "believing in *your* heart." And this is what devils and reprobates never attain, even though reprobates may *pretend* to

Therefore, my dear Neophytus, to direct my speech particularly to you (because I see you are heavy-hearted) I beseech you to be persuaded that here you are to work nothing, here you are to do nothing, here you are to render nothing to God, but only to receive the treasure which is Jesus Christ, and to apprehend him in your heart by faith, even though you are ever so great a sinner.¹ And thus you shall obtain forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and eternal happiness —

118 THE MARROW OF

not as an agent but as a patient; not by doing, but by receiving.² Nothing here comes between but faith alone, apprehending Christ in the promise.³ This, then, is perfect righteousness: to hear nothing, to know nothing, to do nothing of the Law of Works, but only to know and believe that Jesus Christ has now gone to the Father — and he sits at his right hand, not as a judge, but he is made to you by God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.⁴ Therefore, as Paul and Silas said to the jailor, I say to you, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved;” that is, be truly persuaded in your heart that Jesus Christ is yours; and that you shall have life and salvation by him; and that whatever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for you.⁵

know and believe that Christ is raised from the dead for them — and so he has done all for them — even as they also may *pretend* to receive and rest on him alone for salvation. But in all this, one who truly believes may still have ground to say with tears, “Lord, I believe! Help my unbelief,” Mark 9.24.

Nevertheless, under this covenant there is much to do; a law to be performed and obeyed, even though it is not *for* life and salvation, but *from* life and salvation received; specifically, it is the law of the Ten Commandments in the full extent of it, as the author at large expressly teaches in its proper place, in this and in the second part.

This is the *good old way* (according to the Scriptures, Acts 16.30, 31; Mat. 11.28, 29; Tit. 2.11, 12) if the famous Mr. John Davidson [1544-1604, Scottish reformer, poet, and pastor] understood the Protestant doctrine, “Q. Then the salvation of man,” he says, “is so fully wrought and perfectly accomplished by Christ in his own person, that nothing is left to be done or wrought by us in our persons, to be any cause of the least part of it? A. That is most certain.” Mr. John Davidson’s *Catechism*, Edin. edit. 1708, p. 15. “So we are perfectly saved by the works which Christ did for us in his own person, and in no way by the good works which he works in us, with and after faith. [*Marg.* Here is the main point and ground of our disagreement with the Papists.] Does there remain, then, anything for us to do after we are perfectly justified in God’s sight by faith in Christ? *Disciple.* Yes, very much; though in no way to merit salvation; but only to witness, by the effects of thankfulness, that we are truly saved.” *Ibid.* p. 46, 48, 49.

¹ See the two foregoing notes. And hear another passage from the same book from which this is taken, namely, the English translation of Luther’s *Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians*, fol. 75: “Good works ought to be done; the example of Christ is to be followed — Well, all these things will I gladly do. What then follows? You shall then be saved, and obtain everlasting life. No, not so. I grant, indeed, that I ought to do good works, to patiently suffer troubles and afflictions, and to shed my blood also if necessary for Christ’s cause; yet I am not justified, nor do I OBTAIN SALVATION THEREBY.”

² This is the style of the same Luther who used to distinguish between active and passive righteousness, *i.e.*, the righteousness of the law, and the righteousness of faith; agreeably to Rom. 4.5: “But to him that does not do works, but believes on him that justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

³ The passage at greater length is this: “The marriage is made up without all pomp and solemnity: that is to say, nothing at all comes between; no law nor work is required here. Here is nothing else but the Father promising, and I receiving; but these things cannot be understood without experience and practice.” Luther, *ubi sup.*, fol. 194.

⁴ 1Cor 1.30. These words also are Luther’s, in his argument on the Epistle to the Galatians, p. 24 of the Latin copy, and fol. 7 of the translation; but what our author reads, “Nothing of the Law of Works,” is in Luther’s own words, “Nothing of the law, or of works;” the sense is the same. What concerns the assurance in the nature of faith, which these words seem to bear, we will meet with shortly.

⁵ In this definition of saving faith, there is the *general* nature or kind of it, namely: a real persuasion, agreeing to all sorts of faith, divine and human, — “Be truly persuaded;” the *more special* nature of it, an appropriating persuasion, or special application to oneself, agreeing to a convinced sinner’s faith or belief of the law’s curse. Gal. 3.10, as well as to [the law itself]. — “Be truly persuaded in your hearts;” thus, Rom. 10.9, “If you believe in your heart that God, etc. you shall be saved:” and, finally, the *most special* nature of it, whereby [faith] is distinguished from all other, namely, an appropriating persuasion of Christ being yours, etc. And as one’s believing in one’s heart, or appropriating

persuasion of the dreadful tidings of the law, imports not only an assent to them as true, but a horror of them as evil; so believing in the heart, or an appropriating persuasion of the glad tidings of the gospel, bears not only an assent to them as true, but a relish of them as good.

The parts of this appropriating persuasion, according to our author, are 1. “That Jesus Christ is yours,” namely: by the deed of gift and grant made to lost mankind, or (in other words) by the authentic gospel offer in the Lord’s own word. This offer is the foundation of faith, and the ground and warrant of the ministerial offer, without which it could avail nothing. That this is the meaning appears from the answer to the question immediately following, touching the warrant to believe. By this offer or deed of gift and grant, Christ is ours before we believe — not that we have a saving interest in him, or are in a state of grace, but that we have a common interest in him, and the common salvation, which fallen angels do not have, Jude 3 — so that it is lawful and warrantable for us, not for them, to take possession of Christ and his salvation. Even as when one presents a piece of gold to a poor man saying, “Take it, it is yours;” the offer makes the piece really his in the sense and to the effect declared before. Nevertheless, while the poor man does not accept or receive it; whether apprehending the offer as too great to be real, or having no liking of the necessary consequents of accepting it, it is not his in possession, nor does he have the benefit of it. But on the contrary, he must starve for it all, and so much the more miserably now that he has slighted the offer and refused the gift. So this act of faith is nothing else but to “believe God,” 1John 5.10; “to believe the Son,” John 3.36; “to believe the report “concerning Christ, Isaiah 53.1; or “to believe the gospel,” Mark 1.15 — not as devils believe it, knowing Christ to be Jesus, a Saviour, but not *their* Saviour — but with an appropriating persuasion, or special application believing him to be our Saviour. Now the inspired penman expressly declares what is this gospel report, record, or testimony of God to be believed by all: “This is the record, that God has given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son.” 1John 5.11. The giving mentioned here is not giving in possession in greater or lesser measure, but giving by way of grant, whereupon one may take possession. And the party to whom it is given, is not the elect only, but lost mankind. For this record is the gospel, the foundation of faith and warrant to all, to believe in the Son of God, and lay hold on eternal life in him. But that God has given eternal life to the elect, can be no such foundation or warrant: for that a gift is made to certain select men, can never be a foundation or warrant for all men to accept and take it. The great sin of unbelief lies in not believing this record or testimony, and so making God a liar: “He that does not believe God, has made him a liar, because he does not believe the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record,” etc. 1John 5.10, 11. On the other hand, “He that has received his testimony, has set to it his seal that God is true,” John 3.33. But the great sin of unbelief does not lie in not believing that God has given eternal life to the elect; for the most desperate unbelievers, such as Judas and Spira, believe that, and the belief of it adds to their anguish and torment of spirit. Yet they do not set their seal to it that God is true; but on the contrary, they make God a liar, in not believing that God has given eternal life by way of grant to lost mankind, and to themselves in particular — so that they, as well as others, are warranted and welcome to take possession of it, and so they are fleeing in the face of God’s record and testimony in the gospel, Isaiah 9.6; John 3.16; Acts 4.12; Pro 5.8.4; Rev. 22.17. In believing this, not in believing the former, lies the difficulty in the agonies of conscience. Nevertheless, till one surmounts this in greater or lesser measure, one can never believe on Christ, never receive and rest upon him, for salvation. The truth is, receiving Christ necessarily presupposes this giving of him. There may indeed be a giving where there is no receiving, for a gift may be refused; and there may be a taking where there is no giving, which is a presumptuous action without warrant; but there can be no place for receiving Christ where there is not a giving of him before. “In the matter of faith (says Rollock, Lect. 10.on 2Thess. p. 126) there are two things: first there is a giver, and next there is a receiver. God gives, and the soul receives.” The Scripture is express to this purpose: “A man can receive nothing, unless it is given to him from heaven,” John 3.27.

2. “And that you shall have life and salvation by him;” namely, a life of holiness, as well as of happiness, — salvation from sin as well as from wrath, — not in heaven only, but begun here and completed hereafter. We have had sufficient evidence already that this is the author’s notion of life and salvation agreeable to the Scripture, , and will find more in our progress. Therefore this persuasion of faith is inconsistent with an unwillingness to part with sin, a bent or purpose of heart to continue in sin, even as receiving and resting on Christ for salvation is [inconsistent with these]. One finds it expressed almost in so many words: Acts 15.11, “We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved.” It is fitly placed after the former, for it cannot go before it, but follows upon it. The former is a believing of God, or believing the Son: this is a believing on the Son, and so it is the same as receiving Christ, as that receiving is explained; John 1.12, “But as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God, even to those who *believe on* his name.” It also evidently bears the soul’s resting on Christ for salvation; for it is not possible to conceive a soul resting on Christ for salvation, without a persuasion that it shall have life and salvation by him; namely, a persuasion which is of the same measure and degree as resting is. And thus it appears that there can be no saving faith without this persuasion in greater or lesser measure. But with that, it is to be remembered that the same is to be said about this persuasion in all points, as to what concerns the habit, actings, exercise, strength, weakness, and intermitting of the exercise of saving faith.

3. “That whatever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for you.” — “I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me,” Gal. 2.20. This comes in the last place; and I think none will question that

whoever believes in the manner explained before, may and ought to believe this, and in this order. And it is believed, if not explicitly, yet virtually, by all those who receive and rest on Christ for salvation.

From what is said, it appears that this definition of faith is the same substance and matter, though said in different words, as that of the Shorter Catechism, which defines it by “receiving and resting upon Christ alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.” Though the offer to us is mentioned last, it is evident that it is to be believed first.

Object. But the author’s definition makes assurance to be the essence of faith?

Ans. Be it so; however, he does not use the word *assurance* or *assured* in his definition; nor will anything contained in it amount to the idea now commonly affixed to that word, or to what is now in our days commonly understood by assurance. And (1.) He does not here teach that assurance of faith by which believers are certainly assured that they are in the state of grace, which is founded upon the evidence of grace, of which kind of assurance the *Westminster Confession* expressly treats, chap. 18, art. 1-3; but an assurance which is in faith, in the direct acts of it, founded upon the word allenarly [*in a singular manner*], Mark 16.15, 16; John 3.16; and this is nothing else but a fiducial appropriating persuasion. (2.) He does not determine this assurance or persuasion to be full, or to exclude doubting; he does not say, be *fully* persuaded, but be *truly* persuaded, which speaks only the reality of the persuasion, and it does not at all concern its degree. And it is manifest, from his distinguishing between faith of adherence, and faith of evidence (p. 99) that according to him, saving faith may be without evidence. And so one may have this assurance or persuasion, and yet not know assuredly that he has it, but needs marks to discover it by; for though a man cannot help but be conscious of an act of his own soul as to the substance of the act, yet he may be in the dark as to the specific nature of it; nothing is more ordinary among serious Christians than this. And thus, as a real saint is conscious of his own heart’s moving in affection towards God, yet sometimes he does not assuredly know it to be the true love of God in him, but fears it to be a hypocritical flash of affection; so he may be conscious of his persuasion, and yet doubt if it is the true persuasion of faith, and not that of the hypocrite.

This notion of assurance, or persuasion in faith, is so agreeable to the nature of the thing called *believing*, and to the style of the holy Scripture, that sometimes where the original text reads *faith* or *believing*, we read *assurance*, according to the genuine sense of the original phrase; Acts 17.31, “Of which he has given assurance;” *orig.* “faith,” as is noted in the margin of our Bibles. Deu. 28.66, “You shall have no assurance of your life;” *orig.* “You shall not believe in your life.” This observation shows that to believe — in the style of the holy Scripture, as well as in the common usage of mankind in all other matters — is to be assured or persuaded, namely, according to the measure of one’s believing.

And the doctrine of assurance, or an appropriating persuasion in saving faith, as it is the doctrine of the holy Scripture, Rom. 10.9; Acts 15.11; Gal. 2.20, so it is a Protestant doctrine, taught by Protestant divines against the Papists, and sealed with the blood of martyrs in Popish flames. It is the doctrine of Reformed churches abroad, and the doctrine of the Church of Scotland.

The nature of this work will not allow multiplying testimonies on all these topics. Upon the first, it will suffice to adduce the testimony of Essenius, in his *Compendium Theologian*, the system of divinity taught the students in the College of Edinburgh, by Professor Campbell. “There is, therefore,” he says, “in saving faith, a special application of gospel benefits. This is proved against the Papists (1.) From the profession of believers, Gal. 2.20, ‘I live by that faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.’ — Psalm 23.1, ‘The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want; in cotes of budding grass he makes me to lie down, etc. Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will not fear evil; for you are with me,’ etc. And Job 19.25; Phil. 1.21–23; Rom. 8.33–39, 10.9, 10; 2Cor. 5.1–6, with 2Cor. 4.13, etc.” *Essen. Comp. Theol.* chap. ii. sect. 12. And speaking of the method of faith, he says, it is “4. That according to the promises of the gospel, out of that spiritual desire, the Holy Spirit also bearing witness in us, we acknowledge Christ to be *our* Saviour, and so receive and apply him, every one to *ourselves*, apprehending him again, who first apprehended us, 2Cor. 4.13; Rom. 8.16; John 1.12; 2Tim. 1.12; Gal. 2.20; Phil. 3.12. This is the *formal act* of saving faith. 5. Furthermore, that we acknowledge ourselves to be in communion with Christ, partakers of all and every one of his benefits. This is the latter act of saving faith, yet also a proper and elicit act of saving faith. 7. That we observe all these acts above mentioned, and the sincerity of them in us; and FROM THIS gather that we are true believers brought into the state of grace,” etc. *Ibid.* sect. 21. Observe here the two kinds of assurance distinguished before.

Peter Brulie, burnt at Tournay, *anno* 1545, when he was sent for out of prison to be examined, the friars interrogating him before the magistrate, he answered, — “How it is faith that brings salvation to us; that is, when we trust God’s promises, and believe steadfastly, that for Christ his Son’s sake our sins are forgiven us.” Sleid. Comment, in English book 16, fol. 217.

Mr. Patrick Hamilton, burnt at St. Andrews about the year 1527. “Faith,” he says, “is a sureness; faith is a sure confidence of things which are hoped for, and a certainty of things which are not seen. The faith of Christ is to believe in him, that is, to believe in his word, and to believe that he will help you in all your need, and deliver you from all evil.” Mr. Patrick’s Articles, *Knox’s History*, 4to. p. 9.

For the doctrine of foreign churches on this point, I shall instance only that of the Church of Holland, and the Reformed Church of France; “*Q.* What is a sincere faith? *A.* It is a sure knowledge of God and his promises revealed to

us in the gospel, and a hearty confidence that all my sins are forgiven me for Christ's sake." *Dutch Brief Compend. of Christian Religion*, Vra. 19, bound up with the Dutch Bible.

"*Minister*. Since we have the foundation on which faith is grounded, can we rightly conclude from this what true faith is? *Child*. Yes; namely, a certain and steady knowledge of the love of God towards us, according to which, by his gospel, he declares himself to be our Father and Saviour, by means of Jesus Christ." Catechism of the Reformed Church of France, bound up with the French Bible, *Dimanche* 18. To obviate a common prejudice by which this is taken for an easy effort of fancy and imagination, it will not be amiss to subjoin the question immediately following:

"*M*. Can we have it of ourselves, or does it come from God? *C*. The Scripture teaches us that it is a singular gift of the Holy Spirit, and experience also shows it." *Ibid*.

Then follows the doctrine of the Church of Scotland on this topic.

"Regeneration is wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, working in the hearts of the elect of God an assured faith in the promise of God, revealed to us in his word; by which faith we apprehend Christ Jesus, with the graces and benefits promised in him." *Old Confess.*, art. 3.

"This our faith, and the assurance of it, does not proceed from flesh and blood, that is to say, not from natural powers within us, but it is the inspiration of the Holy Ghost." *Ibid*. art. 12.

For the better understanding of this, take the words of that eminent servant of Christ, Mr. John Davidson, minister of Salt-Preston, alias Preston-Pans (of whom see the fulfilling of the Scripture, p. 361) in his *Catechism*, p. 20, as follows: "And it is certain that both the enlightening of the mind to acknowledge the truth of the promise of salvation to us in Christ, and the sealing up of the certainty of it in our hearts and minds (of which two parts faith consists, as it were), are the works and effects of the Spirit of God; and are neither of nature nor of art."

The *Old Confession* above mentioned is, "The Confession of Faith, professed and believed by the Protestants within the realm of Scotland, published by them in Parliament, and ratified and approved by its estates as wholesome and sound doctrine, grounded on the infallible truth of God," *Knox's Hist.* lib. 3. p. 263. It was ratified at Edinburgh, July 17, 1560, *Ibid*. p. 279. And this is the Confession of our Faith, mentioned and sworn to in the national covenant, framed about twenty years after it.

In the same national covenant, with relation to this particular heading of doctrine, we have the following words: "We detest and refuse the usurped authority of that Roman antichrist — his general and doubtful faith." However clouded the general and doubtful faith of the Papists may be, one may, without much ado, draw these two plain conclusions from these words: 1. That since the Popish faith abjured is a doubtful faith, the Protestant faith, sworn to be maintained, is an assured faith to which the covenant refers, as we heard before from the Old Confession. 2. That since the Popish faith is a general one, the Protestant faith must be an appropriating persuasion, or a faith of special application which, we heard already from Essenius, the Papists deny. As for a belief and persuasion of the mercy of God in Christ, and of Christ's ability and willingness to save all that come to him, as it is altogether general, and has nothing of appropriation or special application in it, so I doubt if the Papists will refuse it. Sure, the Council of Trent which fixed and established the abominations of Popery, affirms that no pious man ought to doubt the mercy of God, the merit of Christ, or the virtue and efficacy of the sacraments." Concil. Trid. cap. 9. I hope none will think the council allows impious men to doubt these; but with this they tell us, "It is not to be affirmed that no man is absolved from sin and justified, except the one who assuredly believes that he himself is absolved and justified." Here they overturn the assurance and appropriation, or special application of saving faith maintained by the Protestants; and they thunder their anathemas against those who hold these in opposition to their general and doubtful faith. "If any say that justifying faith is nothing but a confidence in the mercy of God pardoning sins for Christ's sake, or that it is confidence alone by which they are justified, let him be accursed." *Ibid*. cap. 13, can. 12. "If any say that a man is absolved from sin, and justified by assuredly believing himself to be absolved and justified, let him be accursed." *Ibid*. can. 14.

Moreover, in the national covenant, as it was renewed in the years 1638 and 1639, mention is made of public catechisms in which the true religion is expressed in the Confession of Faith (there) above written (*i.e.*, the national covenant, otherwise called the Confession of Faith) and former Large Confession (namely: the Old Confession) is said to be set down. The doctrine on this topic, contained in these catechisms, is subjoined here.

"*M*. Which is the first point? *C*. To put our whole confidence in God. *M*. How may that be? *C*. When we have assured knowledge that he is almighty, and perfectly good. *M*. And is that sufficient? *C*. No. *M*. What is then further required? *C*. That every one of us be fully assured in his conscience, that he is beloved of God, and that he will be both his Father and Saviour." *Calvin's Cat.* used by the Kirk of Scotland, and approved by the *First Book of Discipline*, quest. 8-12. This is the catechism of the Reformed Church of France, mentioned before. "31. Since we have the foundation on which our faith is built, we may well gather from it what is the right faith? *C*. Yes, truly; that is to say, it is a sure persuasion and steadfast knowledge of God's tender love towards us, according to what he has plainly uttered in his gospel, that he will be both a Father and a Saviour to us through the means of Jesus Christ." *Ibid*, quest. 111.

“*M.* By what means may we attain to him there? *C.* By faith, which God’s Spirit works in our hearts, assuring us of God’s promises made to us in his holy gospel.” The manner to examine children before they be admitted to the supper of the Lord, quest. 16. This is called the Little Catechism, Assembly 1592, sess. 10. “*Q.* What is true faith? *A.* It is not only a knowledge, by which I steadfastly assent to all things which God has revealed to us in his word; but also an assured affiance, kindled in my heart by the Holy Ghost, by which I rest upon God, making sure account, that forgiveness of sins, everlasting righteousness, and life, are bestowed, not only upon others, but also upon me, and that is done freely by the mercy of God, for the merit and desert of Christ alone.” The *Palatine Catechism*, printed by public authority for the use of Scotland. This famous Catechism is used in most of the Reformed Churches and schools; particularly in the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands, and it is bound up with the Dutch Bible. “As for the Church of Scotland, the *Palatine Catechism*,” says Mr. Wodrow, in the dedication to his History, “was adopted by us till we had the happiness to join with the venerable Assembly at Westminster. Then indeed it gave way to the Larger and Shorter Catechisms in the Church: nevertheless it continued to be taught in grammar schools.”

“*Q.* What is faith in Christ? *A.* A sure persuasion that he is the only Saviour of the world, but especially ours who believe in him.” *Craig’s Catechism*, approved by the General Assembly, 1592.

To these may be added the three following testimonies. “*Q.* What is faith? *A.* When I am persuaded that God loves me and all his saints, and freely gives us Christ with all his benefits.” *Summula Catechismi*, still annexed to the rudiments of the Latin tongue, and taught in grammar schools to this day, [1726,] since the Reformation.

“What is your faith? My sure belief that God both may and will save me in the blood of Jesus Christ, because he is almighty, and has promised to do so,” Mr. James *Melvil’s Catechism*, in his Propine of a Pastor to his People, p. 44, published in the year 1598.

“*Q.* What is this faith, that is the only instrument of this strait conjunction between Christ crucified and us? *A.* It is the sure persuasion of the heart, that Christ, by his death and resurrection, has taken away our sins and, clothing us with his own righteousness, has thoroughly restored us to the favour of God.” Mr. John *Davidson’s Catechism*, p. 46.

In the same national covenant, as it was renewed in 1638 and 1639, an agreement and resolution is expressed to labour to recover the purity of the gospel as it was established and professed before the foresaid novations; which in the time of Prelacy, then cast out, had been corrupted by a set of men in Scotland addicted to the faction of Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. In the year 1640, Mr. Robert Bailly, then minister of Kilwinning, afterwards one of the Commissioners from Scotland to the Westminster Assembly, wrote against that faction, proving them guilty of Popery, Arminianism, etc.; and on the topic of Popery, thus represents their doctrine concerning the nature of faith, namely: “Faith is only a bare assent, and requires no application, no personal confidence; and such personal application is mere presumption, and the fiction of a crazy brain.” Hist, *Motuum in Regno Scotiae*, p. 517.

Thus, as declared above, stood the doctrine of the Church of Scotland in this point in her confessions, and in public catechisms, confirmed by renewing the national covenant, when in the year 1643, it was confirmed anew by the first article of the *Solemn League and Covenant*, binding (not to the Reformation, but) to the preservation of the Reformed Religion in the Church of Scotland, in doctrine, etc.; and that was before the *Westminster Confession*, with its *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*, were in existence.

When the *Westminster Confession* was received, anno 1647, and the *Larger* and *Shorter Catechisms*, anno 1648, the General Assembly, in their three acts, respectively approving them, expressly declared them to be contrary in nothing to the received doctrine of this Kirk. And in case they were contrary to any point, they could not be reckoned the judgment of the Church of Scotland in that point, since they were received by her as contrary in nothing to the previous standards of doctrine, to which she stands bound by the aforesaid covenants. But the truth is, *the doctrine is the same in them all*.

“This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong; *growing* in many to the attainment of a full assurance.” *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 14, art. 3. Now, how faith can grow in anyone to a full assurance, if there is no assurance in the nature of it, I cannot comprehend.

“Faith justifies a sinner — only as it is an instrument, by which he receives and applies Christ and his righteousness.” *Larg. Cat. Q.* 73. — “By faith they receive and apply to themselves Christ crucified, and all the benefits of his death.” *Ibid. Q.* 170.

“*Q.* When do we by faith receive and apply to ourselves the body of Christ crucified? *A.* While we are *persuaded* that the death and crucifixion of Christ no less belong to us, than if we ourselves had been crucified for our own sins; now this persuasion is that of true faith.” *Sum. Catech.*

“Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation as he is offered to us in the gospel.” *Short. Cat.*

Now, to perceive the entire harmony between this and the old definitions of faith, compare with it, as to the receiving mentioned in it, the definition cited above from the Old Confession, art. 3: “An assured faith in the promise by which they apprehend Christ,” etc. Mr. John Davidson joins them thus: “*Q.* What is faith? *A.* It is a hearty assurance that our sins are freely forgiven us in Christ. Or in this manner: It is the hearty receiving of Christ offered in the preaching of

MODERN DIVINITY. 119

120 THE MARROW OF

MODERN DIVINITY. 121

122 THE MARROW OF

MODERN DIVINITY. 123

124 THE MARROW OF

MODERN DIVINITY. 125

126 THE MARROW OF

Sect. 3. — The warrant to believe in Christ.

Neo. But, sir, does one such as me have any warrant to believe in Christ?

Evan. I beseech you, consider that God the Father, as he is in his Son Jesus Christ, moved with nothing but his free love to lost mankind, has made a deed of gift and grant to them all, that whoever will believe in his Son, shall not perish, but have eternal life ([Joh 3.15](#)).¹ And

MODERN DIVINITY. 127

the word and sacraments, by the working of the Holy Spirit, for the remission of sins, whereby he becomes one with us, and we become one with him — he our head, and we his members.” Mr. John *Davidson’s Catechism*, p. 24. As to the resting mentioned in the Westminster definition, compare the definition cited above from the *Palatine Catechism*: “A sure confidence by which I rest in God, assuredly concluding that forgiveness is given to me,” etc., quest. 21. See also the *Larger Catechism*, last quest. “By faith we are emboldened to plead with him that he would, and we quietly rely upon him that he will, fulfil our request; and to testify to our desire and assurance of this, we say, *Amen*.” In these words it is manifest that to quietly rely on him that he will, etc. (the same as resting on him for it, etc.) is *assurance* in the sense of the Westminster divines.

¹ Mr. Culverwell’s words, cited here, stand thus at large: “The matter to be believed unto salvation is this: that God the Father, moved by nothing but his free love to lost mankind, has made a deed of gift and grant of his son Christ Jesus to mankind, that whoever of all mankind will receive this gift by a true and lively faith, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” Dr. Gouge, in his preface to this treatise of that author, has these remarkable words concerning him, “No one ever took such pains to so good a purpose, in and about the foundation of faith, as he has done.”

This deed of gift and grant, or the authentic gospel-offer (of which see the preceding note) is expressed in so many words in John 3.16, “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that WHOSOEVER believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Where the gospel comes, this grant is published, and the ministerial offer is made, and there is no exception of any of all mankind in the grant. If there was, no ministerial offer of Christ could be warrantably made to the party excepted, more than to the fallen angels; and without question, the publishing and proclaiming of heaven’s grant to anyone by way of ministerial offer, presupposes the grant to be made to them in the first place; otherwise, it would be of no more value than a crier’s offering of the king’s pardon to one who is not comprehended in it. This is the good old way of revealing to sinners their warrant to believe in Christ; and it does indeed bear the sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ for all, and that Christ crucified is the ordinance of God for salvation to all mankind, in making use of which only they can be saved; but *not* a universal atonement or redemption. “What is your faith? My sure belief that God both *may* and *will* save me, etc. Tell me the promise on which you assuredly lean? ‘Whoever (says God) will believe in the death of my Son Jesus, shall not perish, but get eternal life.’ “Mr. *James Melvil’s Cat. ubi sup.* “He FREELY OFFERS TO SINNERS life and salvation by Jesus Christ, requiring of them faith in him, that they may be saved.” Mark 16.15, 16; John 3.16; *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 7. art. 3. “The visible Church has the privilege of enjoying OFFERS of grace by Christ to all the members of it in the ministry of the gospel, testifying that whoever believes in him shall be saved.” *Larger Catechism*, quest. 63. “This general offer, in substance, is equivalent to a special offer made to every one in particular, as appears by the apostle making use of it in Acts 16.31. The reason for this offer is given in John 3.16.” *Pract. Use of Sav. Knowledge; Westm. Conf.* p. 380. The Synod of Dort may be heard without prejudice on this topic. “It is the promise of the gospel [they say] that whoever believes in Christ crucified should not perish, but have life everlasting; this promise, together with the injunction of repentance and faith, should promiscuously, and without distinction, be declared and published to all men and people to whom God in his good pleasure sends the gospel,” chap. 2, art. 5. But because many, being called by the gospel, do not repent or believe in Christ, but perish in their infidelity, this does not come to pass for lack of, or by any insufficiency of, the sacrifice of Christ offered on the cross, but by their own default,” art. 6.

hence it was, that Jesus Christ himself said to his disciples in Mark 16.15, “Go and preach the gospel to every creature under heaven:”¹ that is, Go and tell every man without exception, that here is good news for him: Christ is dead for him. And if he will take him, and accept his righteousness, he shall have him.²

¹ That is, from this deed of gift and grant it was that the ministerial offer was appointed to be made in the most extensive terms.

² That the reader may have a clearer view of this passage, which is taken from Dr. Preston’s *Treatise of Faith*, I shall transcribe the whole paragraph in which it is found. That eminent divine, speaking of that righteousness by which alone we can be saved, and having shown that it is communicated by gift, says, “But when you hear this righteousness is given, the next question will be, to whom is it given? If it is only given to some, what comfort is this to me? But [which is the ground of all comfort,] it is given to *every* man, — there is not a man excepted; for this we have the sure word of God, which will not fail. When you have the charter of a king well-confirmed, you reckon it a matter of great moment: what is it then when you have the charter of God himself? You will evidently see it in these two places: Mark 16.15, ‘Go and preach the gospel to every creature under heaven;’ What is that? Go and tell every man, without exception, that here is good news for him; Christ is dead for him; and if he will take him, and accept his righteousness, he shall have it; there is no restriction, but go tell every man under heaven. The other text is, Rev. 22.17, ‘Whoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely.’ There is a *quicunque vult*, whoever will come (none excepted) may have life, and it shall cost him nothing. There are many other places of Scripture to prove the generality of the offer; and having a sure word for it, consider it,” p. 7, 8. The words ‘under heaven’ are taken from Col. 1.23. The scope here is the same as that of our author, not to determine the extent of Christ’s death, but to discover the warrant sinners have to believe in Christ, namely, that the offer of Christ is general, the deed of *gift* or *grant* is to every man. This necessarily supposes Christ crucified to be the ordinance of God for salvation, to which lost mankind is allowed access, and not fallen angels for whom there is none provided: even as the city of refuge was the ordinance of God for the safety of the manslayer who had killed any person unawares. Numb. 35.16; and the brazen serpent for the cure of those bitten by a serpent, chap. 21.8. Therefore he does not say, ‘Tell every man Christ died for him;’ but tell every man ‘Christ is dead for him;’ that is, for him to come to him, and believe on him; a Saviour is provided for him; there is a crucified Christ for him, the ordinance of heaven for salvation for lost man, in the use-making of which he may be saved; even as one had said of old, Tell every man that has slain any person unawares, that the city of refuge is prepared for him, namely, to flee to, that he may be safe; and every one bitten by a serpent, that the brazen serpent is set up on a pole for him, namely, to look to that he may be healed. Both these were eminent types of Christ; and upon the latter, the Scripture is full and clear in this very point. Numb. 21.8, ‘And the Lord said to Moses, make a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that EVERY ONE that is bitten, when he looks upon it, shall live.’ — John 3.14-16, ‘And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the son of man be lifted up; that WHOEVER believes on him should not perish but have eternal life.’ ‘For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever,’” etc.

Thus, what (according to Dr. Preston and our author) is to be told every man, is no more than what ministers of the gospel have in commission from their great Master, Mat. 22.4, “Tell those who are bid, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready, come to the marriage.” There is a crucified Saviour, with all saving benefits for them to come to, feed upon, and partake of freely. See also Luke 2.30, 31; Prov. 9.2-4; Isa. 25.6.

To confirm this is the true and designed sense of the phrase in question, compare the following three passages, of the same treatise, giving the import of the same text, Mark 16, “Christ has provided a righteousness and salvation, that is, his work that he has done already. Now, if you will believe, and take him on these terms that he is offered, you shall be saved. This, I say, belongs to all men. This you have expressed in the gospel in many places: ‘If you believe you shall be saved;’ as it is, Mark 16.15-16, ‘Go and preach the gospel to every creature under heaven; he that will believe shall be saved.’” Preston on Faith, p. 32. “You must first have Christ himself, before you can partake of those benefits by him; and that I take to be the meaning of that in Mark 16, ‘Go preach the gospel to every creature under heaven; he that believes and is baptized, shall be saved;’ that is, he that will believe that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, and that he is offered to mankind for a Saviour, and will be baptized; he that will give up himself to him, that will take his mark upon him, shall be saved.” *Ibid.* p. 46. “Go and preach the gospel to every creature; go and tell every man under heaven, that Christ is offered to him, he is freely given to him by God the Father; and there is nothing required of you but that you marry him, nothing but to accept him.” *Ibid.*, p. 75.

Thus, it appears, that universal atonement or redemption is not taught here, nor by our author. But that the candid reader may be satisfied as to his sentiments touching the question, — “for whom Christ died?” let him weigh these two things:

1. Our author puts a man’s being persuaded that Christ died for him in particular, in the definition of saving faith, and that as the last and highest step of it. But Arminians, and other Universalists, might as well put there a man’s being persuaded that he was created, or is preserved by Jesus Christ; since in being persuaded that Christ died for him, he

128 THE MARROW OF

Therefore, says a godly writer, “Because the holy Scripture speaks to all in general, none of us ought to distrust himself, but believe that it belongs particularly to himself.”¹

MODERN DIVINITY. 129

130 THE MARROW OF

To better understand this point, in which lies and consists the whole mystery of our holy faith, let us propose that some good and holy king caused a proclamation to be made throughout his whole kingdom by the sound of a trumpet. It proclaimed that all rebels and banished men may safely return home to their houses, because at the suit and deservedness of some dear friend of theirs, it has pleased the king to pardon them. Certainly, none of these rebels ought to doubt that he will obtain true pardon for his rebellion; and so they return home, and live under the

applies no more to himself than what, according to their principles, is common to all mankind, as in the case of creation and preservation. Hear Grotius on this topic: “Some,” he says, “have here interpreted faith to be persuasion, whereby a man believes that Jesus died for him in particular, and to purchase salvation all manner of ways for him, or (what with them is the same thing) that he is elected; when on the contrary, Paul in many places teaches, ‘that Christ died for all men;’ and such a faith as they talk of, has nothing in it true or profitable.” *Grotius apud Pol. Synop.* Those whom this learned adversary taxes here are Protestant anti-Arminian divines. Those were they who defined faith by such a persuasion, and not the Universalists. On the contrary, he argues against that definition of faith from the doctrine of universal atonement or redemption. He rejects that definition of it, as in his opinion having nothing in it true, namely, according to the principles of those who gave it, namely: that Christ died, not for all and every man in particular, but for the elect only, and as having nothing in it profitable; that being, according to his principles, the common privilege of all mankind.

2. He teaches plainly throughout the book that they were the elect, the chosen, or believers, whom Christ represented, and obeyed, and suffered for. See among others, pages 22, 23, 54, 86. I shall repeat only two passages; the one, page 81: “According to that eternal and mutual agreement “that was between God the Father and him, he put himself in the stead and place of all the faithful.” The other in the first sentence of his own preface: “Jesus Christ, the second Adam, as a common person, entered into covenant with God his Father for all the elect (that is to say, all those that have or shall believe on his name) and kept it for them.” What can be more plain than that: in the judgment of our author, they were the elect whom Jesus Christ, the second Adam, entered into covenant with God for; it was in the elect’s stead that he put himself when he came to actually obey and suffer, and it was for the elect that he kept that covenant, by doing and suffering what was required of him as our Redeemer. As for the description or character he gives of the elect, namely: he understands by *the elect* all that have or shall believe in it; in this, he follows our Lord himself, John 17.20, “I do not pray for these alone, but also for those who shall believe on me;” and in so doing, he is accompanied with orthodox divines. “Thus the sins of all God’s elect, or all true believers” (for such, and only such, he says there Isa. 53.6), meet together on the topic of their common surety, the Lord Christ,” Brinsley’s *Mesites*, p. 64. “The Father is well-satisfied with the undertakings of the Son, who entered as Redeemer and Surety to pay the ransom of believers,” *Pract. Use of Saving Knowl. Westm. Conf.*, tit. 4. “The invisible church is the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head,” *Larg. Cat.* quest. 64. “Christ’s church, only in which stands remission of sins, purchased by Christ’s blood to all those who believe,” *The Confess. of Faith* used in Geneva, approved by the Church of Scotland, sect. 4. sect. ult. But Arminians neither will nor can, consistent with their principles touching election and the falling away of believers, admit that description or character of the elect, otherwise they are widely mistaken by one of their own who tells us that, “On consideration of his [*i.e.*, Christ’s] blood, as shed, he [*i.e.*, God] decreed, that all those who would believe in that Redeemer, and persevere in that faith, would be made partakers of salvation by him, through mercy and grace,” *Exam. of Tilen.* p. 131. “Brought to faith, and persevere in it; this being the condition required in everyone that is to be elected to eternal life,” *Ibid.* p. 139. Behold the Arminian election: “They utterly deny that God destined, by an absolute decree, to give Christ a Mediator only to the elect, and to give faith to them alone,” *Ibid.* p. 149. As for Universalists, not Arminians, “They contend that the decree of the death of Christ went before the decree of election, and that God, in sending Christ, had no respect to some more than others, but destined Christ for a Saviour to all men alike.” This account of their principles is given us by Turretine, loc. 14, q. 14, th. 6. I leave it to the impartial reader to judge the evident contrariety between this and our author’s words repeated above.

¹ Namely, the deed of gift and grant, or the offer of Christ in the word, of which our author is all along speaking. And if there is any man to whom it does not belong particularly, that man has no warrant to believe on Jesus Christ: and whoever pretends to believe on him without believing that the grant or offer belongs to himself particularly, acts but presumptuously, seeing he has no warrant to believe on Christ, whatever others may have.

shadow of that gracious king. Even so, our good King, the Lord of heaven and earth, because of the obedience and deservedness of our good brother Jesus Christ, has pardoned all our sins,¹ and made a proclamation throughout the whole world,²

MODERN DIVINITY. 131

that every one of us may safely return to God in Jesus Christ. Therefore I beseech you, do not doubt it, but “draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith,” Heb. 10.22.³

Neo. Oh, but sir, in this similitude the case is not alike. For when the earthly king sends forth such a proclamation, it may be thought that he indeed intends to pardon all; but it cannot be thought that the King of heaven does so: for do the Scriptures not say that “some men are ordained beforehand to condemnation?” Jude 1.4. And does Christ himself not say that “many are called, but few are chosen?” Mat. 22.14. And therefore, it may be that I am one of those who are ordained to condemnation. Therefore, even though I am called, I will never be chosen, and so I will not be saved.

Evan. I beseech you to consider, that although some men are ordained to condemnation, yet so long as the Lord has concealed their names, and has not set a mark of reprobation on any man in particular, but offers the pardon generally to all,

132 THE MARROW OF

without any respect either to election or reprobation, surely it is great folly for any man to say, ‘It may be that I am not elected; therefore I will not benefit by it; and therefore I will not accept

¹ So far as he has made the deed of gift and grant, or authentic gospel-offer of the pardon of all our sins, as of all other saving benefits in Christ. Such a thing among men is called *the king’s pardon*, though in the mean time, none have the benefit of it except those who come upon its being proclaimed, and accept it; and why may it not be called the King of heaven’s pardon? The holy Scripture warrants this manner of expression. “And this is the record, that God has given us eternal life,” 1John 5.11; without question, the pardon of all our sins is included in this life: “Through this man is preached to you the forgiveness of sins,” Acts 13.38. The preaching of the gospel is the proclaiming of pardon to condemned sinners. But pardon of sin cannot be preached or proclaimed unless it is *granted* in the first place, even as the king’s pardon must be granted before it can be proclaimed to the rebels.

That this is all that is meant by pardon here, and not a formal personal pardon, is evident from the whole strain of the author’s discourse on it. In the proposal of the simile, of which this passage is the application, he tells us that after it has pleased the king (thus) to pardon the rebels, they should not doubt they will obtain pardon; and in the following paragraph he brings in Neophytus objecting that in such a case, an earthly king does indeed intend to pardon all, but the King of heaven does not; which Evangelista grants in his answer. So that, despite this *general* pardon, the formal *personal* pardon remains to be obtained by the sinner: namely, by accepting the pardon offered. And in the foresaid answer, Evangelista expounds the pardon in question of the Lord’s offering pardon generally to all. This, one would think, may well be admitted as the fruit of Christ’s obedience and desert, without supposing a universal atonement or redemption. And to restrain it to any particular set of men under heaven, is to restrain the authentic gospel-offer: as explained before.

² Col. 1.2 3: “The gospel which you have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven.”

³ Have no doubt of the pardon offered, nor of the proclamation, bearing that every one of us may safely return to God in Christ; but upon that, draw near to him in full assurance of faith. That there can be no saving faith, no acceptance with God, where there is any doubting, can hardly enter the head of any sober Christian if he is not under a grievous temptation in his own soul’s case; nor is it in the least insinuated here. Nevertheless, doubting mixed with faith is sin, and it dishonours God; believers have ground to be humbled for it, and ashamed of it before the Lord; and therefore the full assurance of faith is duty. The Papists indeed contend earnestly for doubting, and they know very very well, why they so do; for if doubting is removed, and the assurance of faith in the promise of the gospel takes its place, their market is marred; their gain by indulgences, masses, pilgrimages, etc., is gone; and the fire of purgatory extinguished. But as Protestant divines prove against them, the holy Scripture condemns it. Mat. 14.31, “O you of little faith! why did you doubt?” Luke 12.29, “Neither be of doubtful mind.” 1Tim. 2.8, “Lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.”

it or come in.¹ It should instead move every man to be diligent “to make his calling and election sure,” 2Pet. 1.10, by believing it for fear we may come short of it.² This is according to what the apostle says, “let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left to us of entering into his rest, any of us would seem to come short of it,” Heb. 4.1. Therefore, I beseech you, do not say, ‘It may be that I am not elected, and therefore I will not believe in Christ;’ rather say, ‘I do believe in Christ, and therefore I am sure I am elected.’³ Check your own heart for meddling with God’s secrets, and prying into his hidden counsel, and do not go anymore beyond your bounds, as you have done in this point. For election and reprobation are a secret; and the Scripture tells us “that secret things belong to God, but those things that are revealed belong to us,” Deu. 29.29. Now this is God’s revealed will, for indeed, it is his express command, “That you should believe on the name of his Son,” 1John 3.23; and it is his promise, “That if you believe, you shall not perish, but have everlasting life,” John 3.16. Therefore, having so good a warrant as God’s command, and so great an encouragement as his promise, do your duty;⁴ and by doing it you may put it ⁵ out of question, and be sure that you are also one of God’s elect. I beseech you, say then with a firm faith, The righteousness of Jesus Christ belongs to all that believe; but I believe,⁶ and therefore it belongs to me.

MODERN DIVINITY. 133

Yes, say with Paul, “I live by the faith of the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself for me,” Gal. 2.20. “He saw in me (says Luther on the text) nothing but wickedness going astray, and fleeing from him. Yet this good Lord had mercy on me, and of his mere mercy he loved me; indeed, he so loved me, that he gave himself for me. Who is this *me*? Even I, wretched and damnable sinner, was so dearly beloved by the Son of-God, that he gave himself for me.”

Oh! print this word “me” in your heart, and apply it to your own self, not doubting that you are one of those to whom this “me” belongs.⁷

Neo. But may such a vile and sinful wretch as I am, be persuaded that God commands me to believe, and that he has made a promise to me? ⁸

Evan. Why do you make a question where there is none to be made? “Go,” says Christ, “and preach the gospel to every creature under heaven;” that is, says Christ, —go tell every man without exception, whatever his sins are, whatever his rebellions are, go and tell him these glad tidings: that if he will come in, then I will accept him; his sins shall be forgiven, and he shall be saved. If he will come in and take me, and receive me, then I will be his loving husband, and he shall be my own dear spouse — Let me therefore say to you, in the words of the apostle, “Now

¹ Had the author once dreamt of a universal pardon, other than that God offers the pardon generally to all, all this would have been needless; it would have furnished him with a short answer, namely: That God has pardoned all already.

² By believing the offered pardon, with particular application to himself; without which one can never accept it, but will undoubtedly come short of it.

³ Like that man mentioned Mark 9.24, who at once did and said.

⁴ Believe on the name of Christ.

⁵ Namely, your believing.

⁶ This is what is commonly called the reflex act of faith, which presupposes, and here includes the direct act: namely, a man’s doing his duty in obedience to the command to believe on Christ; by reflecting on this, he may put it out of question that he is a believer, one of God’s elect, and one of those for whom Christ died; which he insists upon in the following words, See the foregoing note. This passage is taken out of Dr. Preston’s *Treatise of Faith*, p. 8.

⁷ “This manner of applying,” says Luther, “is the very true force and power of faith.”

⁸ He had told him that for his warrant to believe on Christ, he had God’s command, 1John 3.23. And for his encouragement, he had God’s promise, John 3.16. This is what motivates the question; the particular application to oneself is a matter of no small difficulty in the experience of many who lay salvation to heart.

then, as an ambassador for Christ, as though God beseeched you by me, I beg you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God; for he has made him to be sin for you, who knew no sin, that you might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2Cor. 5.20, 21.

Neo. But do you say, sir, that if I believe I shall be espoused to Christ?

Evan. Yes, indeed you shall: for faith couples the soul with Christ, even as the spouse is coupled with her husband. By this means, Christ and the soul are made one. For as in corporal marriage, man and wife are made one flesh, even so in this spiritual and mystical marriage, Christ and his spouse are made one spirit. And this marriage, above all others, is most perfect and absolutely accomplished between them. For marriage between man and wife is but a slender figure of this union. Therefore, I beseech you to believe it, and then you will be sure to enjoy it. ¹

134 THE MARROW OF

Neo. But, sir, if David said, "Does it seem to you a light thing to be an *earthly* king's son-in-law, seeing that I am a poor man and lightly esteemed?" 1Sam. 18.23; then surely I have much more cause to say, Does it seem a light thing to be a heavenly King's daughter-in-law, seeing that I am such a poor sinful wretch? Surely, sir, I cannot be persuaded to believe it.

Evan. Alas! man, how much you are mistaken! For you look at God, and at yourself, with the eye of reason; and so you see it as standing in relation to each other according to the tenor of the Covenant of *Works*. Whereas, now being in the state of justification and reconciliation, you are to look at both God and yourself with the eye of faith; and so you are standing in relation to each other according to the tenor of the Covenant of *Grace*. For the apostle says, "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their sins to them," 2Cor. 5.19. It is as if he had said, Because God stands in relation to man according to the tenor of the Covenant of Works, and so is apart from Christ, he could not, without prejudice to his justice, be reconciled to them, nor have any thing to do with them, other than in wrath and indignation. Therefore, with the intent that Justice and Mercy might meet together, and Righteousness and Peace might embrace each other — so that God would stand in relation to man according to the tenor of the Covenant of Grace — he put himself into his Son Jesus Christ, and shrouded himself there, so that he might speak peace to his people, Psalm 85.8-10 — sweetly, says Luther. "Because the nature of God was otherwise higher than we are able to attain, he therefore humbled himself for us, and took our nature upon himself, and so put himself into Christ. Here he looks for us; here

MODERN DIVINITY. 135

he will receive us; and the one that seeks him here, shall find him." ² "This," says God the Father, "is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Mat. 3.17. Whereupon Luther says in another place, "We must not think and persuade ourselves that this voice came from heaven for Christ's own sake, but for our sakes, even as Christ himself says in John 12.30, 'This voice did not come because of me, but for your sakes.' The truth is, Christ had no need for this to be said to him, 'This is my beloved Son.' He knew that from all eternity, and he would still remain so,

¹ Believe the word of promise, the offer of the spiritual marriage, which is Christ's declared consent to be yours. Believe that it is made to you in particular, and that it shall be made out to you — which is to embrace the offer, to receive Christ, as the evangelist teaches, John 1.12; [which was adverted to before]; so shall you indeed be married or espoused to Christ. Thus the holy Scripture proposes this matter in Isa. 4.3, "Hear and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you;" to persuade us of the reality of the covenant between God and the believer of his word, "the Father has made a fourfold gift," etc., *Pract. Use of Sav. Knowl.* tit.; "Warrant to Believe," fig. 7; Compare Isa. 53.1; Heb. 4.1, 2.

² An eminent type of this glorious mystery was that tabernacle so often mentioned in the Old Testament under the name of the tabernacle of the congregation, or rather the tabernacle of meeting, as the original word bears; and the Lord himself seems to give the reason for the name in Exo. 30.36, "In the tabernacle of the congregation, where I will meet with you;" or, "in the tabernacle of *meeting*, where I will be met with by you." — Chap. 33.7, "And it came to pass, that everyone who sought the Lord, went out unto the tabernacle of the congregation," or *meeting*.

even if these words had not been spoken from heaven. Therefore by these words, God the Father in Christ his Son, cheers the hearts of poor sinners, and greatly delights them with singular comfort and heavenly sweetness, assuring them that whoever is married to Christ, and so is in him by faith, is as acceptable to God the Father as Christ himself.¹ This is in accord with what the apostle says, “He has made us acceptable in his beloved,” Eph. 1.6. Therefore, if you would be acceptable to God, and be made his dear child, then cling to his beloved Son Christ by faith, and hang around his neck, yes, and creep into his bosom. And so the love and favour of God shall be as deeply insinuated into you as it is into Christ himself; and so shall God the Father, together with his beloved Son, wholly possess you, and be possessed by you;

136 THE MARROW OF

and so God, and Christ, and you, shall become one entire thing, according to Christ’s prayer, “that they may be one in us, as you and I are one,” John 17.21.²

By this means you may have sufficient ground and warrant to say in the matter of reconciliation with God at any time (whenever you are arguing with yourself how God is to be found, who justifies and saves sinners), I know no other God, nor will I know any other God besides this God, who came down from heaven and clothed himself with my flesh,³ to “whom all power is given, both in heaven and in earth,” who is my judge;

MODERN DIVINITY. 137

“for the Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son,” John 5.22. Thus Christ may do with me whatever he likes, and determine about me according to his own mind. I

¹ The acceptance, love, and favour of God treated here, do not refer to the *real* state of believers, but to their *relative* state, to their justification, reconciliation, and adoption. And so they have no respect to any qualities inherent in them, good or evil, to be increased by the one or diminished by the other. They proceed purely upon the righteousness of Christ which is theirs by virtue of their union with him, and which is imputed to them. This righteousness is the self-same righteousness with which Christ, as Mediator and Surety for elect sinners, pleased the Father. And therefore, says one whom nobody suspects of Antinomianism, “We are as perfectly righteous as Christ the Righteous,” citing 1John 3.7: “He that does righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous,” Isaac Ambrose’s *Media*, chap. 1, sect. 2, p. 4. This I take to be the true meaning of these passages of our author and Isaac Ambrose, expressed in terms stronger than I would desire to use. Where God is concerned, there is a danger in expressing even what is true.

² The original word here rendered “one,” indeed signifies “one thing.” And it is evident from the text that believers are united to God as well as to Christ. “Faith is that grace by which we are united to, and made one with, God and Christ,” says the author of the *Supplement* to Poole’s Annot. on the place. See 1John 4.16; 2Cor. 4.16, compared with Eph. 3.17. Whoever admits that Jesus Christ is one with the Father, must grant this, or else deny believers are united to Christ. This derogates nothing from the prerogative of our Lord Jesus, who is one with the Father; for he is one with him, as the Holy Ghost also is, by the adorable substantial union; but believers are so only by mystical union. Neither does it intrench upon God’s supremacy more than their confessed union with Christ does; who notwithstanding believers’ union with him, remains, along with the Father and Holy Spirit, the only supreme and most high God.

“Whoever, therefore, clings to Christ through faith, abides in the favour of God; he shall also be made beloved and acceptable as Christ is, and shall have fellowship with the Father and the Son.” Luther’s *Chosen Sermons*, “Sermon of the Appearing of Christ,” p. 23. “Here I will abide in the arms of Christ, clinging inseparably about his neck, and creeping into his bosom, whatever the law shall say, and my heart shall feel,” *Ibid. Sermon of the Lost Sheep*, p. 81. “Seeing, therefore that Christ, the beloved Son, being in such great favour with God in all things that he does, is yours, then without doubt you are in the same favour and love of God that Christ himself is in.” And again, “the favour and love of God are insinuated to you as deeply as they are to Christ, so that now God, together with his beloved Son, wholly possesses you, and you have him wholly in return — so that God, Christ, and you become as one certain thing, — that they may be one in us, as you and I are one, John 17.” *Ibid. Sermon of the Appearing of Christ*, p. 25.

³ Luther, from whom this is taken, in the place quoted by our author, confirms it this way: “For he that is a searcher of God’s majesty, shall be overwhelmed by his glory. I know [he adds] by experience, what I say. But these vain spirits, which so deal with God that they exclude the Mediator, do not believe me.” And on Psalm 130, he has these remarkable words, “*Ego saepe, et libenter hoc inculco, ut extra Christum, oculos et anres claudatis, et dicatis nullum vos scire Deum nisi qui fuit in gremio Mariae et suxit ubera ejus:*” that is, “Often and willingly I inculcate this, that you should shut your eyes and your ears, and say that you know no God apart from Christ, none but him that was in the lap of Mary, and suckled her breasts.” He means none out of him. Burroughs on Hos. 3.5. p. 729.

am sure he has said, “he did not come to judge the world, but to save the world,” John 12.47. And therefore I believe that he will save me.¹

Neo. Indeed, sir, if I were so holy and so righteous as some men are, and had such power over my sins and corruptions as some men have, then I could easily believe it, But, alas I am so sinful and so unworthy a wretch, that I dare not presume to believe that Christ will accept me, so as to justify and save me.

Evan. Alas! man. In saying this you seem to contradict and question both the apostle Paul, and our Lord Jesus Christ himself; and that is against your own soul. For though the apostle Paul says that “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” 1Tim. 1.15 and justifies the ungodly, Rom. 4.5, why you seem to hold, and in effect say, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save the righteous, and to justify the godly. And though our Saviour says the healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do; and says that he did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance, Mat. 9.12; why you seem to hold, and in effect say, that the sick do not need a physician, but the healthy; and that he came, not to call sinners, but the righteous to repentance. And indeed, in saying so, you seem to conceive that Christ’s spouse must be purified, washed, and cleansed from all her filthiness, and adorned with a rich robe of righteousness, *before* he will accept her. Whereas he himself said to her in Ezek. 16.4-8, “As for your nativity, in the day that you were born, your navel was not cut, nor were you washed with water to supple you; you were not swaddled at all, nor salted at all. No eye pitied you enough to do any of these things to you; but when I passed by you, and looked at you, behold your time was a time of love. And I spread my skirt over you, and covered your nakedness;

138 THE MARROW OF

yes, and I swore to you, and entered into a covenant with you, and you became mine.” — Hos. 2.19, “And I will marry you to me forever; yes, I will marry you to me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in mercy, and compassion.”

Therefore, I beseech you, revoke your erroneous opinion, and contradict the word of truth no longer; rather, conclude with certainty that it is not the righteous and godly man, but the sinful and ungodly man,² that Christ came to call, justify, and save. So that if you were a righteous and godly man, you would not be capable of being called, justified, or saved by Christ; but being a sinful and ungodly man, I will be bold to say to you, as the people said to blind Bartimeus in Mark 10.49, “Be of good comfort; arise, he calls you,” and he will justify and save you.³ Go to him then, I beseech you. And if he comes and meets you (as is his manner), then do not unadvisedly say with Peter, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, Lord!” Luke 5.8. But say, in plain terms, O come to me; for I am a sinful man, Lord! Yes, go on further and say as Luther bids you, Most gracious Jesus and sweet Christ, I am a miserable, poor sinner, and therefore judge myself unworthy of your grace; yet, having learned from your word that your salvation belongs to such a one as me. I therefore come to you to claim that right which, through your gracious promise, belongs to me.⁴ Assure yourself man, that Jesus Christ requires no portion from his spouse; no, truly, he requires nothing from her but mere poverty: “the rich he sends away empty,” Luke 1.53; but the poor are enriched by him. Indeed, says Luther, “the more

¹ This is the conclusion of that, which one, “by faith clinging to Christ, and hanging about his neck,” has by that means warrant to say, according to our author. Whether or not there is sufficient warrant for it according to the Scripture, let the reader judge: I do not see what shadow of the doctrine of universal atonement, or universal pardon, is in it.

² That is, such as are *really* so, and not, in their own opinion, only *respectively* so.

³ As the people, observing Christ’s call to blind Bartimeus (Mar 10.46) bid him to be of good comfort (or be confident) and arise; intimating that upon his going so to Christ, he would cure him; so one observing the gospel call may with all boldness bid a sinner comply with it confidently; assuring him that thereupon Christ will justify and save him.

⁴ See the note on the *Definition of Faith*, fig. 1.

miserable, sinful, and distressed a man feels and judges himself to be, the more willing Christ is to receive him and relieve him.” So that, he says, in judging yourself unworthy, you thereby become truly worthy; and so indeed, you have a greater occasion to come to him. Therefore, in the words of the apostle, I exhort and beseech you to “come boldly to the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need,” Heb. 4.16.

MODERN DIVINITY. 139

Neo. But, truly, sir, my heart, as it were, trembles within me, to think of coming to Christ in such a bold manner. Surely, sir, if I were to so come to him, it would argue that there is much pride and presumption in me.

Evan. Indeed, if you were encouraged to come to Christ and speak to him this way because of any godliness, righteousness, or worthiness that you conceive are in you — that, I confess, would be proud presumption in you. But to come to Christ by believing that he will accept you, justify and save you freely by his grace, according to his gracious promise, is neither pride nor presumption.¹ For Christ having tendered and offered it to you freely, you may believe it: it is true humility of heart to take what Christ offers you.

Nom. But, by your favour, sir, allow me to say something by the way. I know my neighbour Neophytus perhaps better than you do. Yet I do not intend to charge him with any sin other than by way of supposing this: suppose he has been guilty of committing gross and grievous sins. Will Christ accept him, and justify and save him despite all that?

Evan. Yes, indeed; for there is no limitation of God’s grace in Jesus Christ, except the sin against the Holy Ghost.²

140 THE MARROW OF

Christ “stands at the door and knocks,” Rev. 3.20. And if any murdering Manasseh, or any persecuting and blaspheming Saul, 1Tim. 1.13, or any adulterous Mary Magdalene, “will open to him, he will come in,” and bring comfort with him, “and will sup with him.” “Seek from the one end of the heavens to the other,” says Hooker; “turn all the Bible over, and see if the words of Christ are not true, ‘He that comes to me, I will in no way cast out,’” John 6.37.

Nom. Why, then, sir, it seems you hold that the vilest sinner in the world should not be discouraged from coming to Christ, and believing in him, by reason of his sins.

Evan. Surely, if “Christ came into the world to seek, and call, and save sinners, and to justify the ungodly,” as you have heard — and if the more sinful, miserable, and distressed a man judges himself to be, the more willing Christ is to receive him and relieve him — then I see no reason why the vilest sinner should be discouraged from believing on the name of Jesus Christ by reason of his sins. Indeed, let me say more; the greater any man’s sins are, either in number

¹ It is to believe the offer of the gospel with particular application — to embrace it, and in this to receive Christ. And no man can ever receive and rest on Christ for salvation, without believing in greater or lesser measure, that Christ will accept him unto justification and salvation. Remove that gospel truth, that Christ will accept him, and his faith has no ground left to stand upon. See the note on the Definition of Faith, fig. 1, 2.

² I doubt if the sin against the Holy Ghost can justly be said to be a limitation of God’s grace in Jesus Christ. For in the original authentic gospel-offer is found the proper place for such a limitation (if there was any) that grace is so laid open to all men, without exception, that no man is excluded; but there is free access to it for every man by believing, John 3.15, 16; Rev. 22.17; and this offer is sometimes intimated to these reprobates, who fall into that sin, or else they would not be capable of it. It is true, *that* sin is a bar in the way of the guilty, so as they can never partake of the grace of God in Christ, for it shall never be forgiven, Mat. 12.31; Mark 3.29; and any further ministerial application of the offer to them seems to cease to be lawful or warranted, 1John 5.16. But all this arises from their own wilful, obstinate, despiteful, and malicious rejecting of the offer: and fighting against the Holy Ghost, whose office it is to apply the grace of Christ; and not from any limitation or exclusive clause in the offer, for it still remains true, “Whoever shall believe, shall not perish.”

or nature, the more haste he should make to come to Christ, and to say with David, “For your name’s sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity, for it is great!” Psalm 25.11.

Ant. Surely, sir, if my friend Neophytus rightly considered these things, and he were assuredly persuaded of their truth, I think he would not be so hesitant as he is to come to Christ by believing on his name. For if the greatness of his sins was so far from hindering his coming to Christ, that they should further his coming to him, then I do not know what would hinder him.

Evan. You speak very truly indeed. And therefore I beseech you, neighbour Neophytus, to consider it seriously; and let neither your own accusing conscience, nor Satan the accuser of the brethren, keep you any longer from Christ. For what if they were to accuse you of pride, infidelity, covetousness, lust, anger, envy, and hypocrisy? Yes, what if they were to accuse you of whoredom, theft, drunkenness, and the like? Indeed, do what they can, they can make no worse a man of you than a sinner, or chief of sinners, or an ungodly person — and so consequently, such a one as Christ came to justify and save. So that, indeed, if you rightly consider it, they do you more good than hurt by their accusations.”¹ And therefore, I beseech you, in all such cases or

MODERN DIVINITY. 141

conflicts, take the counsel of Luther, who on the Galatians (p. 20) says, “When your conscience is thoroughly afraid with the remembrance of your past sins — and the devil assails you with great violence, seeking to overwhelm you with heaps, floods, and whole seas of sins to terrify you, and draw you away from Christ — then arm yourself with sentences such as these: Christ the Son of God was given, not for the holy, righteous, worthy, and such as were his friends; but for the wicked sinners, for the unworthy, and for his enemies. Therefore, if the devil says you are a sinner, and must therefore be damned; then answer and say, Because you say I am a sinner, therefore I will be righteous and saved. And if he replies, No, but sinners must be damned; then you answer, and say, No, for I flee to Christ, who has given himself for my sins. And therefore, Satan, in saying that I am a sinner, you give me armour and weapons against yourself, that with your own sword I may cut your throat and tread you under my feet.”² And thus you see it is the counsel of Luther that your sins should drive you to Christ, rather than keep you from him.

Nom. But, sir, suppose he has not yet truly repented for his many and great sins; does he have any warrant to come to Christ by believing, till he has done so?

Evan. I tell you truly, that whatever a man is, or whatever he has done or not done, he has warrant enough to come to Christ by believing, if he can.³ For Christ makes

¹ Which may put you in mind that you are one of that sort which “Christ Jesus came into the world to save,” 1Tim. 1.15; and in pleading for mercy, may furnish you with an argument as David used in Psalm 25.11 [[For Your name’s sake, O LORD, Pardon my iniquity](#)], and the woman of Canaan in Mat. 15.27, “even the dogs eat the crumbs,” etc.

² He adds, in the place quoted, these weighty words, “I do not say this for nothing; for I have often proved by experience, and I daily find what a hard matter it is, to believe (especially in the conflict of conscience) that Christ was given not for the holy, righteous, worthy, and such as were his friends, but for wicked sinners, for the unworthy, and for his enemies.”

³ It is not in vain added, “if he can;” for in this matter there is a great difference between what a sinner *may* do in point of warrant, and what he *will* or *can* do in point of the event. “If we say to a man, the physician is ready to heal you; but before you will be healed, you must have a sense of your sickness: this sense is not required by the physician (for the physician is ready to heal him); but if he is *not* sick, and has a sense of it, he will not come to the physician.” Preston on *Faith*, p. 12. I have no doubt that before a sinner will come to Christ by believing, he must be an awakened, convinced, and sensible sinner; pricked in his heart with a sense of his sin and misery; made to groan under his burden, to despair of relief from the law, himself, or any other creature, and to desire and thirst after Christ and his righteousness; and our author teaches this afterwards on this subject. These things are also required of the sinner in point of duty. And therefore the law must be preached by all those who would preach Christ rightly. But that these or any other things in the sinner are required to warrant him, that he may come to Christ by believing, is what I conceive the Scripture does *not* teach; rather, the general offer of the gospel, mentioned before, warrants every man that he

a *general proclamation*, saying, ^{Isa 55.1} “Ho, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat; yes, come, buy wine and milk without money, and without price.” This, you see, is the condition: “buy wine and milk;” that is, obtain grace and salvation “without money,” that is, without any sufficiency of your own;¹ only “incline your ear and hear, and your souls shall live;” yes, live by hearing that “Christ will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.” ^{Isa 55.3}

Sect. 4. — Evangelical Repentance a consequent of Faith.

Nom. Yet, sir, you see that Christ requires thirsting before a man comes to him. I conceive that this cannot be, without true repentance.²

MODERN DIVINITY. 143

Evan. In the last chapter of Revelations, 22.17, Christ makes the same general proclamation, saying, “Let him who thirsts come;” and as if the Holy Ghost had long ago answered the same objection as yours, it follows with these words, “And whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely” — even without thirsting — if he will; for “he that comes to me, I will in no way cast out,”³ John 6.37. But because it seems that you conceive a man ought to repent before he believes, I ask you to tell me what you conceive repentance is, or what it consists in?

may come. And in practice it will be found that requiring such and such qualifications in sinners to warrant them to believe in Christ, is no great help to them in their way toward him; for because it engages them in a doubtful dispute as to the being, kind, measure, and degree of their qualifications for coming to Christ, the time spent in this might be better used in going forward to Christ for all, by believing. And since no man can ever believe in Christ without knowing that he has a warrant for believing in him — otherwise he can only act presumptuously: to tell sinners that none may come to Christ, or have warrant to believe, except those who have true repentance — he must in a special way entangle distressed consciences, so that they dare not believe until they know that their repentance is true repentance. This must inevitably be the issue in that case, unless they either reject that principle, or venture to believe without seeing their warrant. For even though they hear of Christ and his salvation offered in the gospel, these will be like forbidden fruit to them, which they are not allowed to touch till they are persuaded that they have true repentance. And before they can attain to this, it must be made out to their consciences that their repentance is not *legal* but *evangelical*, having such a character as to distinguish it from the repentance of the Ninevites, Judas, and many reprobates. So that one would think that suggesting this principle is but a bad service done to a soul brought to “the place of the breaking forth of children.” ^{Hos 13.13} Let no man say, arguing at this rate, that one must also know the truth of his faith before he can come to Christ; for faith is not a qualification for coming to Christ, but the coming itself, which will have its saving effects on the sinner whether he knows the truth of his faith or not.

¹ Take them freely, and possess them; which everyone sees is not a proper condition.

² Thomas Watson writes, “I shall not dispute the priority, whether faith or repentance goes first. Doubtless repentance shows itself first in a Christian’s life. Yet I am apt to think that the seeds of faith are first worked in the heart. When a burning taper is brought into a room, the light shows itself first, but the taper preceded the light. In the same way, we see the fruits of repentance first, but the beginnings of faith were there before.” (*Doctrine of Repentance*, 1668)

³ That gospel-offer in Isa. 4.1 is the most solemn one to be found in all the Old Testament; and that one recorded in Rev. 22.17, is the parting offer made to sinners by Jesus Christ at the closing of the canon of the Scripture, and manifestly looks to the former offer; in this I can see no ground to think that the thirsting mentioned in it in any way restricts the offer; or that the thirsty invited there are convinced and sensible sinners, who are thirsting after Christ and his righteousness; this would leave outside the compass of this solemn invitation, not only the far greater part of mankind, but even of the visible church. The context seems decisive in this point; for the thirsting ones invited, are those who are “spending money for what is not bread, and their labour for what does not satisfy,” verses 1, 2; but convinced, sensible sinners who are thirsting after Christ and his righteousness, are not spending their labour and money at that rate; but on the contrary, they are spending them for what is bread and satisfies, namely, for Christ. Therefore, the thirsting mentioned there must be more extensive, and comprehending, yes, and principally aiming at that thirst after happiness and satisfaction, which being natural, is common to all mankind. Men pained with this thirst or hunger are naturally running — for quenching it — to the empty creation, and their fulsome [excessive] lusts; so “spending money for what is not bread, and their labour for what does not satisfy,” their hungry souls find no food, except what is meagre and lean, bad and unwholesome, and cannot satisfy their appetite. Compare Luke 15.16., Adam left all mankind in this wretched case, and Christ finds them there. Whereupon the gospel proclamation is issued,

Nom. Why, I conceive that repentance consists in a man's humbling himself before God, and sorrowing and grieving for offending him by his sins, and in turning from them all, to the Lord.

Evan. And would you have a man do all this truly ¹ before he comes to Christ by believing?

144 THE MARROW OF

Nom. Yes indeed, I think it is very fitting that he should.

Evan. Why, then, I tell you truly, you would have him do what is impossible.²

For, *first* of all, godly humiliation in true penitents proceeds from the love of God their good Father, and so it proceeds from the hatred of that sin which has displeased him; and this cannot occur without faith.³

2dly. Sorrow and grief for displeasing God by sin, necessarily argue for the love of God; and it is impossible for us to ever love God, till by faith we know we are loved by God.⁴

inviting them to come away from the broken cisterns,^{Jer 2.13} and filthy puddles, to the waters of life, even to Jesus Christ, where they may have bread, richness, what is good, and will satisfy their painful thirst, John 4.14, and 6.35.

¹ That is, in such a manner that it will be true evangelical repentance, a gracious humiliation, sorrow and turning, acceptable in the sight of God. This question (grounded on Nomista's pretending that Neophytus had no warrant to believe unless he had truly repented) supposes that there is a kind of repentance, humiliation, sorrow for sin, and turning from it, which goes before faith, but that they are not "in a godly way," as the apostle phrases it, 2Cor. 7.11.

² I do not think it strange to find the author so very peremptory in this point, which is of greater weight than many are aware of. True repentance is a turning to God, coming back to him again; returniug even to the Lord, according to a usual Old Testament phrase found in Hos. 14.1, and rightly so translated in Isa. 19.22. But no man can come to God "but by Christ;" Heb. 7.25, "He is able also to save those to the uttermost who come to God by him." — John 14.6, "No man comes to the Father but by me." We must take Christ in our way to the Father, or else it is impossible for we guilty creatures to reach to him. And no man can come to Christ, except by believing in him, John 6.35. Therefore it is impossible for a man to truly repent before he believes in Christ. "God has exalted Him with his right hand, to be a Prince (*or leader*) and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins," Acts 5.31. One would think this is a sufficient intimation that sinners not only may, but ought to go to him for true repentance; and not stand off from him until they get it to bring along with them — especially since repentance, as well as remission of sin, is a part of that salvation which he as a Saviour is exalted to give, and consequently, for which sinners are to receive and rest on him; and likewise it is that by which he, as a leader, leads sinners back even to God, from whom they were led away in the first Adam, the head of the apostasy. And if one inquires about the way he gives repentance to Israel, the prophet Zechariah showed it before to be by *faith*, Zech. 12.10, "And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn."

³ This the Scripture teaches, determining in general that without faith one can do nothing acceptable in the sight of God, John 15.5, "Without me." *i.e.* separate from me, "you can do nothing." — Heb. 11.6, "Without faith it is impossible to please him:" and particularly with respect to this case, Luke 7.37-47, "And behold a woman in the city, who was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at the table..., stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet. And he turned to the woman, and said to Simon: Her sins which are many are forgiven, for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loves little." — It is an argument gathered from the effects which follow, whereby anything is proved by its ensuing signs." -Calvin. *Instit.* lib. 3. cap. 4. sect. 37.

⁴ There is knowledge in faith, as our divines teach against the Papists, and as the Scripture makes manifest. Isa. 53.11, "By his knowledge shall my righteous Servant justify many." — Heb. 11.3, "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." Now, saving faith being a persuasion that we shall have life and salvation by Christ, or by receiving and resting on him for salvation, includes in it the knowledge of our being beloved of God: the former cannot be without the latter. In the meantime, according to the strength or weakness of that persuasion, the steadiness or unsteadiness of that receiving and resting, so is this knowledge clear or unclear, free of or accompanied with doubts. They are still of the same measure and degree. So that this says no more in effect than that faith in Christ is the spring of true love to God — which, however it is attained by a guilty soul, men will better know if they consider well what it is. The true love of God is not a love to him only for his benefits, and for our own sake, but a love to him for *himself*, for *his own sake*; it is a liking of and complacency in his glorious attributes and perfections, his infinite, eternal and unchangeable being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. If a convinced sinner is devoid of the least measure of persuasion of life and salvation by Christ, and of the love of this God to him; but apprehends (as he cannot miss doing in this case) that he hates him as his enemy, and will prove so at last; this cannot fail to fill his whole soul with slavish fear of God; how then shall this love of God spring up in one's heart, in such a case? For

3dly. No man can turn to God, unless he is first turned by God. And *after* he is turned, he repents. So Ephraim says, “After I was converted, I repented,” ¹ Jer. 31.19. The truth is, a repentant sinner first believes that God will do what he promises, namely, pardon his sin and take away his iniquity, and then he rests in the hope of it. From that, and for it, he leaves sin, and forsakes his old course of life,²

146 THE MARROW OF

because it is displeasing to God; and he does what is pleasing and acceptable to him.³ So that, first of all, God’s favour is apprehended, and remission of sins is believed.⁴ And then, upon that, comes the alteration of his life and conduct.⁵ ,

slavish fear and true love are so opposite the one to the other, that according to the measure in which the one prevails, the other cannot have access. ²Tim. 1.7, “God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind.” ¹John 4.18, “There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; because fear has torment.” But once life and salvation, and remission of sin, is believed by the convinced sinner with [personal] application — and thereby the love of God towards him is known — then, according to the measure of that faith and knowledge, slavish fear of God is expelled, and the heart is kindly drawn to love him, not only for his benefits, but for himself, having a complacency in his glorious perfections. “We love him, because he first loved us,” ¹John 4.19. The love of God to us is the inducement of our love to him: but love utterly unknown to the party that is beloved can never be an inducement to love in return. Now, in consequence of this, the sinner’s bands are loosed, and his heart — which before was still hard as a stone, though broken in pieces by legal terrors — is broken in another manner, softened, and kindly melted in sorrow for displeasing this gracious God.

¹ God first turns a sinner, to bring him to Christ, John 6.44, 45, “No man can come to me, unless the Father who sent me draws him.” And then he comes to God by Christ, John 14.26, “No man comes to the Father but by me.”

² In a right manner, in the manner mentioned immediately after.

³ Faith comes from the word of God; hope comes from faith; and charity springs from them both. Faith believes that word; hope trusts in what is promised by the word; and charity does good to her neighbour. Mr. Patrick Hamilton’s Articles in *Knox’s Hist.* p. 11.

⁴ Not as that they are pardoned already; but that one must so apprehend the favour of God, as to believe that God will pardon his sin, as the author says expressly in the premises from which this conclusion is drawn; or that God pardons his sin in the present time. See note, chap. 3, sect. 6. Now, remission of sin is a part of that salvation which faith receives and rests on Christ for. See the note on the Definition of Faith, fig. 2. As for the phrase the author uses to express this, it is most agreeable to the Scripture phrase, “Remission of sins preached,” Luke 24.47; Acts 13.38.

⁵ Namely, such an alteration as is pleasing and acceptable in the sight of God, which he has described in the preceding sentence. Otherwise, he has already taught us that there are notable alterations of life and conduct which do not proceed from faith; and therefore they are not accepted by God. And we shall hear more of these shortly.

It will not be amiss here to observe how our author, in his account of the relation between faith and repentance, treads in the ancient paths, according to his own manner.

“It ought to be out of the question,” says Calvin, “that repentance not only immediately follows faith, but also springs out of it. As for those who think that repentance goes before faith, rather than flows or springs from it as a fruit out of a tree, they never knew the force of it, and are moved with too weak an argument to think so. Christ and John [they say] in their preachings, first exhort the people to repentance, etc. A man cannot earnestly apply himself to repentance, unless he knows himself to be of God: but no man is truly persuaded that he is of God, except he that has first received his grace. No man shall ever reverently fear God, except he that trusts that God is merciful to him: no man will willingly prepare himself to keep the law, except he that is persuaded that his services please God.” *Instit.* b. 3. chap. 3. sec. 1, 2.

“However soon the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, which God’s elect children receive by true faith, takes possession in the heart of any man, that soon he regenerates and renews that man. So that he begins to hate what before he loved, and begins to love what before he hated; and from this comes that continual battle which is between the flesh and the spirit.” *Old Confess.*, art 13.

“Being in Christ, we must be new creatures — so that we must hate and flee that which before we loved and embraced, and we must love and follow that which before we hated and abhorred. All of which is impossible for those who have no faith, and have but a dead faith.” Mr. John Davidson’s Cat. p. 29.

Nom. But, sir, as I conceive it, the Scripture says that the Lord has appointed repentance to go *before* faith; for is it not said in Mark 1.15, “Repent and believe the gospel?”

Evan. With the intent that you may have a true and satisfactory answer to your objection, I would ask you to consider two things:

First. The word “repent” in the original, signifies a change of our minds from false ways to right, and of our hearts from evil to good.¹ And that son in the gospel said, “He would not go to “work in his father’s vineyard.” Yet afterwards, the text says, “he repented and went,” Mat. 21.29 — that is, he changed his mind and went.

Secondly. In those days when John the Baptist and our Saviour preached, most of their hearers were erroneous in their minds and judgments. For being leavened with the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, which our Saviour told his disciples to take heed and beware against, Matt, 16.6, 12, most of them were of the opinion that the Messiah whom they looked for,

148 THE MARROW OF

would be some great and mighty monarch, who would deliver them from their temporal bondage, as I showed before. And many of them were of the same opinion as the Pharisees. They held that as an outward conformity to the letter of the law was sufficient to gain favour and esteem from men; so it was sufficient for their justification and acceptance before God, and consequently to bring them to heaven and eternal happiness. Therefore, for these ends, they were very diligent in fasting and prayer, Luke 18.12-14; and they were very careful to pay tithes of mint, anise, and cummin — and yet they omitted the weightier matters of the law, such as judgment, mercy, faith, and the love of God, Matt, 23.23; Luke 11.42. And so, as our Saviour told them, Matt, 23.25, “they made the outside of the cup and platter clean, but within they were full of extortion and excess.”

And various of them were of the opinion of the Sadducees, Acts 23.8, who held “that there was no resurrection — no angel or spirit;” and so they had all their hopes and comfort in the things of this life, not believing in any other.

“*Quest.* When I ask you then, What is craved of us after we are joined to Christ by faith, and made truly righteous in him? you shall answer. *A.* We must repent and become new persons, that we may show forth the virtues of him that has called us.” *Ibid.* p. 35.

“What is your repentance? The effect of this faith, working a sorrow for my sins that are by-past, and purpose to amend [my ways] in time to come.” Mr. James Melvil’s Cat. in his Propine, etc. p. 44.

“Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner out of a true sense of his sin, and an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, with grief and hatred of sin, turns from it to God.” Shorter Cat.

“*M.* Then you are saying, That until the time that God has received us to mercy, and regenerated us by his Spirit, we can do nothing but sin — even as an evil tree can bring forth no fruit except that which is evil, Mat. 7.17. *C.* Even so it is.” Calvin’s Cat. quest. 117. “He receives us into his favour, by his bountiful mercy, through the merits of our Saviour Christ, accounting his righteousness to be ours, and for his sake he does not impute our faults to us.” *Ibid.* quest. 118.

“*Quest.* What is the first fruit of this union? (namely of union with Christ by faith.) *A.* A remission of our sins, and imputation of justice. *Q.* Which is the next fruit of our union with him? *A.* Our sanctification and regeneration to the image of God.” Craig’s Cat. q. 24, 25. “*Q.* What is sanctification? *A.* Sanctification is a work of God’s grace, whereby they are renewed in their whole man, after the image of God, having the seeds of repentance unto life, and of all other saving graces, put into their hearts.” Larger Cat. quest. 75.

“We would beware of Mr. Baxter’s order of setting repentance and works of new obedience before justification, which is indeed a new Covenant of Works.” Rutherford’s *Influences of the Life of Grace*, p. 346.

¹ This is taken word for word out of the English Annotations on Mat. 3.2; which are cited for it by our author under the name of the *Last Annotations*, because they were printed in the year 1645, about which time this book also was first published. How the author applies it, will appear shortly.

Now, preaching to these people, our Saviour said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent and believe the gospel.” It is as if he had said, The time set by the prophets for the manifestation of the Messiah has fully come. And his kingdom, which is a spiritual and heavenly kingdom, is at hand. Therefore change your minds from false ways to right, and your hearts from evil to good;¹ and no longer imagine that the Messiah you look for will be someone who will save and deliver you from your temporal enemies. Rather he will save and deliver you from your spiritual enemies — that is, from your sins, from the wrath of God, and from eternal damnation. Therefore no longer put your confidence in your own righteousness, though you walk ever so exactly according to the letter of the law. Rather, believe the glad tidings that are now brought to you; namely, that the Messiah shall save you from sin, wrath, the devil, and hell, and bring you to eternal life and glory. Nor let any of you imagine any longer that there is to be no resurrection of the dead, and so have your hopes set only in this life: but believe these glad tidings that are now brought to you concerning the Messiah:

MODERN DIVINITY. 149

and he shall raise you up at the last day, and give you eternal life. Now, with submission to better judgments, I conceive that if there is any repentance exhorted in the book of God, before faith in Christ — or if any repentance goes before faith in Christ, either in order of nature or of time — it is only a repentance such as this.²

Nom. But, sir, do you think that there is such a repentance in men now-a-days that goes before faith in Christ?

Evan. Yes, indeed, I think there is. For example, when a profane sensual man lives as though —, with the Sadducees — he did not believe in any resurrection of the dead, nor in hell or heaven. He is convinced in his conscience that if he goes on in making a god of his belly, and in minding only earthly things, his end will be damnation. Sometimes such a man changes his mind about these things, and instead of a profane man, he becomes a strict Pharisee, or as some call him, a “legal professor.” But being convinced that all of his own righteousness will avail him nothing in the case of justification, and that it is only the righteousness of Jesus Christ that is available to that end, he changes his mind and — with the apostle — he “desires to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, even the righteousness which is of God through faith,” Philip. 3.9. Now I conceive that a man who does this, changes his mind from false ways to right, and his heart from evil to good; and so, consequently, he does truly repent.³

150 THE MARROW OF

¹ The word rendered *repent* is, “To change one’s mind, and to lay aside false opinions which they had drunk in, whether from the Pharisees concerning the righteousness of works, traditions, worship, etc.; or from the Sadducees concerning the resurrection,” etc. Lucus Brugensis, apud Pol. Synop. Orit. in Mat. 3.2.

² That the reader may further see how little weight there is in the objection raised from Mark 1, 15, I subjoin the words of two learned commentators on the text. “Repent, turn from the wickedness of your ways and believe. There is a repentance that must go before faith, that is, the applicative of the promise of pardoning mercy to the soul; though true evangelical repentance, which is a sorrow for sin, flowing from the sense of the love of God in Christ, is the fruit and effect of faith.” Contin. of Poole’s Annot. on the place. — “Faith or believing, in order for the work of grace, is before repentance, that being the first and mother grace of all others; yet it is here and in other places named the latter: first, because though faith is first wrought, yet repentance is first seen and evidenced,” etc. Lightfoot’s *Harmony*, part 3. p. 164. 4to.

³ That is, his repentance is true in its kind, though not saving. There is a change of his mind and heart in that, upon a conviction, he turns from profanity to strictness of life, and upon further conviction, from a conceit of his own righteousness to a desire for the righteousness of Christ: nevertheless, all this is but selfish, and cannot please God while the man is void of faith, Heb. 11.6.

Nom. But, sir, would you not hold that even though repentance, according to my definition, does not go before faith in Christ, yet it follows after?

Evan. Yes, indeed; I hold that even though it does not go before as an *antecedent* of faith, yet it follows as a *consequent*. [But, it is] when a man believes the love of God toward him in Christ, that he *then* loves God, because God loved him first.¹ [Joh 4.19](#) And it is *that love* which constrains him to humble himself at the Lord's footstool, and to acknowledge himself to be less than the least of all his mercies. Yes, and *then* he will "remember his own evil ways and doings that were not good, and will loathe himself in his own sight for his iniquities and for his abominations," Ezek. 36.31. Yes, and *then* he will also cleanse himself from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God, having regard for all God's commandments,¹ 2Cor. 7.1; Psalm 119.6.

Nom. Well, sir, I am answered.

Sect. 5. — The spiritual Marriage with Jesus Christ.

Neo. And truly, sir, you have so declared and set forth Christ's disposition towards poor sinners, and so answered all my doubts and objections, that I am now truly persuaded that Christ is willing to invite me; and surely I am willing to come to him, and receive him — but, alas! I lack the power to do so.

Evan. But tell me truly, are you resolved to exercise all your power to believe, and so to take Christ? ²

MODERN DIVINITY. 151

Neo. Truly, sir, I think my resolution is much like the resolution of the four lepers who sat at the gate of Samaria. For they said, "If we enter into the city, the famine is in the city, and we shall die there; but if we sit still here, we die also. Now, therefore, let us surrender to the host of the Syrians; if they save us, we will live, and if they kill us, we will but die," 2Kings 7.4. Even so I say in my heart, that if I go back to the Covenant of Works to seek justification by it, I will die there; and if I sit still and do not seek justification in any way, I will die also. Now, therefore, even though I am somewhat fearful, I am resolved to go to Christ — and if I perish, I perish.³

¹ See the note, p. 144.

² His conviction of his lost and undone state was represented before in its proper place. After much disputing whether such a vile and sinful wretch as he had any warrant to come to Christ, he appears in his immediately foregoing speech, to be so far enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, that he is truly persuaded that Christ is willing to entertain him; and to have his heart and will so overcome by divine grace, that he is willing to come to Christ: yet after all, through weakness of judgment, he apprehends himself to lack power to believe; whereas it is by these very means that a soul is persuaded, and enabled too, to believe in Jesus Christ.

Hereupon the author, waving the dispute about his power to believe, wisely asks him if he is resolved to exercise the power he has. For it was evident from the account given of the present condition of his soul, that it had felt "a day of power," Psalm 110.3, and that he was "drawn by the Father, and therefore he could come to Christ," John 6.44. For "effectual calling is the work of God's Spirit whereby, convincing us of our sin and misery, enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ, and renewing our wills, he persuades and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ." Shorter Catechism. — "Savily enlightening their minds, renewing and powerfully determining their wills, so as they are hereby made willing and able." *Larg. Cat.* quest. 67.

³ See the foregoing note. This is the concluding point in this matter. The man being drawn by efficacious grace, he is not without doubts and fears as to the event, yet he is no longer in doubt whether to embrace the offer or not. And the inward motion of his heart, breaking through the remaining doubts and fears after a long struggle, unto Jesus Christ, in the free promise — being indiscernible in itself, but to God and one's own soul, it is agreeable enough to one's way in that case — discovered the expression of a conquered soul: Now am I resolved to go to Christ; now I am determined to believe. This can only present to him who deals with the exercised person, the whole soul going out to Jesus Christ. Hence, the match may justly be declared to be made, as our author does in the words immediately

Evan. Why, now I tell you the match is made. Christ is yours,¹ and you are his. “This day salvation has come to your house,” (*i.e.*, to your soul). For though you do not have that power to become so fixed to Christ, and lay such a firm hold on him as you desire, yet coming with such a resolution to take Christ as you do, you need not worry about the power to do it, because Christ will enable you.² For it is said in John 1.12, “But to as many as received him, he gave power to become the sons of God, even to those who believe on his name.”³ O, I beseech you therefore, no longer stand here disputing; but be peremptory and resolute in your faith, and

152 THE MARROW OF

in casting yourself upon God in Christ for mercy, whatever the outcome may be. Yet let me tell you to your comfort, that with such a resolution, you will never go to hell.⁴ Indeed, I will say more: if any soul wants a place in heaven, such a soul will have it; for God cannot find it in his heart to damn such a person. I might then say to you with as much true confidence as John Careless said to John Bradford in a letter to him,

“Hearken, O heavens, and you O earth give ear, and bear me witness at the great day, that I do here faithfully and truly declare the Lord’s message to his dear servant, and singularly beloved John Bradford, saying, ‘John Bradford, a man so specially beloved of God, I pronounce and testify to you in the word and name of the Lord Jehovah, that all your sins — whatever they are, however many, grievous, or great — are fully and freely pardoned, released, and forgiven you, by the mercy of God in Jesus Christ, the only Lord and sweet Saviour, in whom you undoubtedly believe. As truly as the Lord lives, he will not have you die the death; but he has truly purposed, determined, and decreed, that you shall live with him forever.’”

Neo. O sir, if I have as good warrant to apply this saying to myself as Mr. Bradford had to himself, then I am a happy man!

Evan. I tell you from Christ, and under the hand of the Spirit, that you are accepted, your sins are done away with, and you shall be saved. And if an angel from heaven should tell you otherwise, let him be accursed. [Gal 1.8](#) Therefore you may (without doubt) conclude that you are a happy man. For by marrying Christ, you have become one *with* him, and one *in* him; you “dwell in him, and he in you,” 1John 4.13. He is “your well-beloved, and you are his,” Song 2.16. So that the marriage union between Christ and you is more than a bare notion or apprehension of your mind. For it is a special, spiritual, and real union. It is a union between the nature of Christ, God and man, and you.⁵ It is a knitting and closing, not only of your *apprehension* with a Saviour, but also of your *soul* with a Saviour. From this it must follow that you cannot be condemned, unless Christ is condemned with you; nor can Christ be saved, unless you are saved with him.⁶

following. Thus Job in his distress, expresses his faith: Job 13.15, ““Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.” Compare Acts 11.33, “That with purpose of heart they would cling to the Lord.”

¹ In possession.

² That is, holding back your hand, you need not stand disputing with yourself how you will get power; but with the power given, stretch forth your withered hand, and Christ will strengthen it, and enable you to take a firm hold. John 12.32, “And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to me.” — Isa. 40.29, “He gives power to the faint; and to those who have no might, he increases strength.”

³ The power mentioned here seems rather to denote right or privilege (as the original word is rendered in the margin of our Bibles) than strength or ability.

⁴ See the preceding note.

⁵ That is, a union with the whole Christ, God-Man; 1Cor. 6.17, “He that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit.” — Eph. 5.38, “For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.”

⁶ Jesus Christ and the believer, being one person in the eye of the law, there is no separating them in law, in point of life and death. John 14.19, “Because I live, you shall live also.” I have adventured this once to add one syllable to the

Just as by means of bodily marriage all things become common between man and wife, even so, by means of this spiritual marriage, all things become common between Christ and you. For when Christ has married his spouse to himself, he passes over his entire estate to her, so that whatever Christ is or has, you may boldly claim as your own. “He is made to you, by God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,” 1Cor. 1.30. And surely it is by virtue of this close union, that just as Christ is called “the Lord our righteousness,” Jer. 23.6, even so the church is called, “the Lord our righteousness,” verse 33.16. I tell you that by virtue of this union, you may boldly take upon yourself as your own, Christ’s vigilance, abstinence, travails, prayers, persecutions, and slanders — yes, his tears, his sweat, his blood, and all that he ever did and suffered in the space of three and thirty years, along with his passion, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension — for they are all yours. Just as Christ passes over his entire estate to his spouse, so he requires that she should pass over everything to him. Therefore, now being married to Christ, you must give all that you have of your own to him; and truly you have nothing of your own but sin; and therefore you must give him that. I beseech you, then, say to Christ with bold confidence, I give you, my dear husband, my unbelief, my mistrust, my pride, my arrogance, my ambition, my wrath and anger, my envy, my covetousness, my evil thoughts,

154 THE MARROW OF

affections, and desires. I make one bundle of these and all my other offences, and give them to you.¹ And thus Christ was made “sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,” ² 2Cor. 5.21. “Now then,” says Luther, “let us compare these

text of the author; and so to read “condemned” for “damned.” The words are of the same signification; only, the latter has an idea of horror affixed to it, which the former has not; and which perhaps it had not either in the days of our forefathers, when godly Tyndale used the expression, as our author informs us. And I take this liberty that a like expression of John Careless, in a letter to William Tymes, seems to me to run rather more smoothly by means of the same addition, though I doubt if the word stood so in the original copy. “Christ,” he says, “is made unto us holiness, righteousness, and justification; he has clothed us in all his merits and taken to himself all our sin — so that, if any should now be *condemned* for that same sin, it must be Jesus Christ, who has taken them upon himself.” *The Sufferer’s Mirror*, p. 66. And in the Old Confession of Faith, art. 9, according to the ancient copies, it is said, “The clean, innocent Lamb of God was damned in the presence of an earthly judge, that we should be absolved before the tribunal seat of our God.” But in the copy standing in Knox’s *History*, reprinted at Edinburgh, *anno* 1644, it is read “condemned.”

¹ This gift would indeed be a very unsuitable return, for all the benefits received from Christ by virtue of the spiritual marriage, if he did not deal with us in the way of free grace; like a physician who desires nothing of a poor man full of sores, but that he will employ him in their cure. But this gift, such as it is, as it is all we have of our own to give, so one needs have no doubt that it will be very acceptable, Psalm 4.22, “Cast your burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain you;” not only your burden of duty, suffering, and success, but of sin too, with which you are heavy laden. Mat. 11.28. We are allowed, not only to give him our burden, but to cast it upon him. He knows very well that all these evils mentioned, and many more, are in the heart of the best: yet he says, Prov. 23.26, “My son, give me your heart;” notwithstanding the wretched stuff he knows to be in it. In the language of the Holy Ghost, these things, black as they are, are a gift by divine appointment to be given. Lev. 16.21: speaking of the scape-goat, an eminent type of Christ, he says, “And Aaron shall confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, and all their sins: and he shall give them upon the head of the goat.” Thus the original expresses what we read, “putting them,” etc. [View again p. 69, and note.]

Now, the end for which the sinner is to give these to Christ is twofold: (1.) For removing their guilt. (2.) For mortifying them. And though this is not an easy way of mortification, since the way of believing is not easy, but more difficult than all the Popish austerities — these austerities being more agreeable to nature — yet indeed it is the *short* way to mortification, because it is the *only* way. Without this, the practice of all other directions will be as so many ciphers — without a figure standing at their head — signifying nothing for true Christian mortification. Acts 15.9, “Purifying their hearts by faith.” — Rom. 6.6, “Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him.” Rom. 8.13, “If through the Spirit you mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live.” — Gal. 5.24, “And those who are Christ’s, have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts; namely, nailing them to the cross of Christ by faith.

² Thus, namely by giving our sins to him, not by believers, but by his Father, as the text says, “He [not we] made him to be sin for us.” Nevertheless, the Lord’s laying our iniquities upon Christ is good warrant for every believer to give

things together, and we shall find inestimable treasure. Christ is full of grace, life, and saving health; and the soul is freight-full of all sin, death, and damnation. But let faith come between these two, and it shall come to pass that Christ will be laden with sin, death, and hell; and to the soul will be imputed grace, life, and salvation.

MODERN DIVINITY. 155

Who then is able to value the royalty of this marriage accordingly? Who is able to comprehend the glorious riches of his grace, where this rich and righteous husband, Christ, takes as his wife this poor and wicked harlot, redeeming her from all devils, and garnishing her with all his own jewels? So that you, through the assuredness of your faith in Christ, your husband, are delivered from all sins, made safe from death, guarded from hell, and endowed with the everlasting righteousness, life, and saving health of your husband Christ.” And, therefore, you are now under the Covenant of Grace, and freed from the law, as that is the Covenant of Works; for (as Mr. Ball truly says) a man cannot be under the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace at one and the same time.

Neo. Sir, I do not know quite how to conceive of this freedom from the law, as it is the Covenant of Works. And therefore I beg you to make it as plain to me as you can.

Evan. For the true and clear understanding of this point, you are to consider that when Jesus Christ, the second Adam, on behalf of his chosen, perfectly fulfilled the law as it is the Covenant of Works,¹ divine justice delivered that bond to Christ, who utterly cancelled that hand-writing,² Col. 2.14. So that none of his chosen were to have any more to do with it, nor it with them. And now, by believing in Christ, you have manifested that you were chosen in him “before the foundation of the world,” Eph. 1.4. His fulfilling that covenant, and cancelling that hand-writing, is imputed to you; and so you are acquitted and absolved from all your transgressions against that covenant, either past, present, or to come;³ and so you are justified, as the apostle says, “freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ,” Rom. 3.24.

his sins in particular upon him; the latter being a cordial falling in with, a practical approbation, and taking the benefit of the former.

¹ Namely, by doing perfectly what it demanded to be done, by virtue of its commanding power, and suffering completely what it demanded to be borne, by virtue of its condemning power.

² A bond is a certificate of debt (charges). Sinful man must appear before the Tribunal of God to pay for his sins. But Christ, having paid the price himself, cancelled that debt. The hand-written list of charges was “nailed to the cross.”

³ Although believers in the first moment of their union with Christ by faith, are delivered from the law, as it is the Covenant of Works; and therefore their after-sins, neither are nor can be *formally* transgressions of that covenant — yet they are *interpretatively* so, giving a plain proof of what they would have done against that covenant had they been under it still. And because they could never have been freed from it if the glorious Mediator had not wrought their deliverance by fulfilling it in their place and stead. All their sins whatever, from their birth to their death, after as well as before their union with Christ, were charged upon him as transgressions against that covenant, and those are pardoned them in their justification: even as he who redeems a slave must pay in proportion to the service which it is supposed he would have done his master during life; and the slave is loosed from all obligation to these several pieces of service to that master upon the ransom paid in compensation for all and every one of them. And thus our author says that a believer in his justification is acquitted from all his transgressions against the Covenant of Works, not only past and present, but to come. So that he leaves no ground to question that Christ satisfied for all the sins of believers whatever, whether in their state of regeneracy or unregeneracy. Nor does he make the least insinuation that the sins of believers, after their union with Christ, are not properly transgressions of that law which was (indeed, and to unbelievers still is) in the Covenant of Works. But on the contrary, he expressly teaches that it is the very same law of the Ten Commandments which is the Law of Christ, and which the believer transgresses, that was and is in the Covenant of Works. The revenging wrath of God and eternal death are not threatened against the sins of believers after their union with Christ. And that is for this one reason: that wrath and that death (the eternity of which did not arise from the nature of the thing, but from the infirmity of the sufferer, and therefore could have no place in the Son of God) were not only *threatened* before, but also *executed* upon their surety Jesus Christ, to whom they are united. Therefore it is manifest that there was great need for Christ being made a curse for these sins of *believers*, as well as for those sins *preceding* their union with him.

Sect. 6. — Justification before Faith refuted.

Ant. I beg you, sir, let me ask you something by the way. Was he not justified before this time?

Evan. If he did not believe in Christ before this time, as I conceive he did not, then certainly he was not justified before this time.

Ant. But, sir, you know, as the apostle says, “It is God that justifies; and God is eternal.” As you have shown, Christ may be said to have fulfilled the Covenant of Works from all eternity; and if he is Christ’s now, then he was Christ’s from all eternity. Therefore, as I conceive it, he was justified from all eternity.

Evan. Indeed, God is from all eternity. And in respect to God’s accepting Christ’s undertaking to fulfil the Covenant of Works, he fulfilled it from all eternity. And in respect to God’s electing someone, he was Christ’s from all eternity. Therefore it is true, in respect to God’s *decree*, that the man was justified from all eternity;¹ and he was justified meritoriously in the

MODERN DIVINITY. 157

death and resurrection of Christ.² Yet he was not *actually* justified, till he *actually* believed in Christ. For the apostle says, in Acts 13.39, “By him all that believe are justified.”³ So that in the act of justifying, faith and Christ must have a mutual relation, and must always concur and meet together: faith as the action which apprehends, and Christ as the object which is apprehended. For Christ does not justify without faith, nor does faith justify unless it is in Christ.

Ant. Truly, sir, you have well-satisfied me in this point. And surely I like your conclusion marvellously well, that no faith justifies but that faith whose object is Christ.

158 THE MARROW OF

¹ “The sentence of justification was, as it were, conceived in the mind of God by the decree of justifying. Gal. 3.8, ‘The Scripture foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith.’ Ames. Med. cap. 37. sec. 9, — “In this sense, grace is said to be given us in Christ before the world began.” 2Tim. 1.9. Turret., loc. 16. q. 9. th. 11.— “Sins were pardoned from eternity in the mind of God.” Rutherford’s *Exer. Apolog.* ex. 1. cap. 2. sec. 21. p. 53. The same Rutherford adds, “It is one thing for a man to be justified in Christ, and that from eternity: and another for a man to be justified in Christ in time, according to the gospel-covenant. Faith is [merely] the instrument of eternal and immanent justification and remission of sins.” *Ibid.* p. 55.

² “Justification may be considered as to the execution of it in time; and that again, either as to the purchase of it, which was made by the death of Christ on the cross, concerning which it is said in Rom. 5.9, 10 that, ‘we are justified and reconciled to God by the blood of Christ;’ and that Christ ‘reconciled all things to God by the blood of the cross,’ Col. 1.20. And elsewhere, Christ is said to be ‘raised again for our justification,’ Rom. 4.25. Because, just as in him dying, we died, so in him being raised again and justified, we are justified; that is, we have a certain and undoubted pledge and foundation for our justification. Or as to the application of it,” etc., Turret., ubi sup. “The sentence of justification was pronounced in Christ our head, risen from the dead,” 2Cor. 5.19. Ames, ubi sup. — “We were virtually justified, especially when Christ having finished the purchase of our salvation, was justified, and we in him as our head,” 1Tim. 3.16; 2Cor. 5.19. *Essen. Comp.* cap. 15. sec. 25.

³ “Actual justification is done in time, and it follows faith.” Turret., loc. 16. q. 9. th. 3. — “Justification is done formally when an elect man, effectually called, and so apprehended by Christ, apprehends Christ in return,” Rom. 8.30. *Essen.*, ubi supra. — “The sentence of justification is pronounced virtually from that first relation which arises from faith,” Rom. 8.1. Ames, ubi supra.

On the whole, it is evident that our author keeps the path trodden by orthodox divines on the subject; and though, in order to answer the objections of his adversary, he uses the school terms of being justified in respect to God’s decree, — meritoriously and actually, agreeably to the practice of other sound divines — yet otherwise he “begins and ends his decision of this controversy, by asserting in plain and simple terms, without any distinction at all, that “a man is not justified before he believes, or without faith.” So his answer amounts to just this, “That God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect; Christ, in the fulness of time, died for their sins, and rose again for their justification: nevertheless, they are not justified until the Holy Spirit in due time actually applies Christ to them.” *Westm. Confess.*, cap. 11. art. 4.

Evan. The very truth of it is, even though a man believes that God is merciful and true to his promise, and that he has his elect number from the beginning, and that he himself is one of that number, yet if this faith does not eye Christ, if it is not faith in God as he is in Christ, it will not serve the turn. For God cannot be comfortably thought upon apart from Christ our Mediator; “for if we do not find God in Christ,” says Calvin, *Instit.* p. 155, “salvation cannot be known.” Therefore, Neophytus, I will say to you, as Mr. Bradford said to a gentlewoman in your case, “Thus, if you would be quiet and certain in conscience, then let your faith burst forth through all things, not only what you have within you, but also whatever is in heaven, earth, and hell; and let it never rest until it comes to Christ crucified, and the eternal sweet mercy and goodness of God in Christ.”

Sect. 7. — Believers freed from the commanding and condemning Power of the Covenant of Works.

Neo. But, sir, I am not satisfied concerning the point you touched before. And therefore, I ask you to proceed to show me how far I am delivered from the law, as it is the Covenant of Works.

Evan. Truly, as it is the Covenant of Works, you are wholly and altogether delivered and set free from it. You are dead to it, and it is dead to you. And if it is dead to you, then it can do you neither good nor hurt; and if you are dead to it, you can expect neither good nor hurt from it.¹

¹ Concerning the deliverance from the law which, according to the Scripture, is the privilege of believers purchased for them by Jesus Christ, there are two opinions equally contrary to the word of God, and to one another. The one is of the Legalist, that believers are under the law as the Covenant of Works; the other is of the Antinomian, that believers are not at all under the law, not as a rule of life. Between these extremes — both of them destructive of true holiness and gospel-obedience — our author, with other orthodox divines, holds the middle path: asserting (and in the proper place proving) that believers are under the law as a rule of life, but free from it as the Covenant of Works. To be delivered from the law as the Covenant of Works, is no more than to be delivered from the Covenant of Works. And asserting that believers are delivered from the law as the Covenant of Works necessarily imports that they are under the law in some other respect contra-distinguished from it. And because the author teaches that believers are under the law as the Law of Christ as a rule of life to them, it is reasonable to conclude *that* to be it. He must, under the term “the Covenant of Works,” understand and comprehend the law of the Ten Commandments; because no man, understanding what the Covenant of Works is, can speak of it unless he understands and comprehends that term to mean the Ten Commandments — even as none can speak of a man, knowing the sense of that word, unless under that term he understands and comprehends an organic body as well as a soul. But it is manifest that the law of the Ten Commandments, without the form of the Covenant of Works upon it, is not the thing he understands by that term, “the Covenant of Works.” Nor is the form of the Covenant of Works essential to the Ten Commandments (which is no more the covenant itself, than the soul without the body is the man); so that they cannot be without it. [See p. 6, note.] If it is said that the author, by the Covenant of Works, understands the Moral Law as it is defined, [*Larg. Cat.* q. 92.] it is granted; but then it amounts to no more than that, by the Covenant of Works, he understands the Covenant of Works; for there, the Moral Law is understood to be the Covenant of Works, as has been already evinced.

The doctrine of believers’ freedom from the Covenant of Works, or from the law as that covenant, is of great importance, and is expressly taught. [*Larg. Cat.* q. 97.] “Those who are regenerate, and believe in Christ, are delivered from the Moral Law, as a Covenant of Works,” Rom. 6.14; Rom. 7.4, 6; Gal. 4.4, 5. *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 19. art. 6. — “True believers are not under the law as a Covenant of Works.” To these I subjoin one testimony from the *Prac. Use of Saving Knowledge*, tit. “For Strengthening the Man’s Faith,” etc. Rom. 7.fig. 3, “Even though the apostle himself (brought in here for example’s sake) and all other true believers in Christ, are by nature under the law of sin and death, or under the Covenant of Works (called the law of sin and death, because it binds sin and death upon us, till Christ sets us free), yet the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, or the Covenant of Grace (so-called because it enables and quickens a man to a spiritual life through Christ) sets the apostle and all true believers free from the Covenant of Works, or the law of sin and death.” See more, *ibid.* fig. 4. As also tit. “For convincing a man of Judgment by the Law,” par. 2, and last. And tit. “Evidences of true Faith. And tit. “For the First,” etc. fig. 4.

Now, delivering someone from a covenant is the dissolution of a relation which does not allow for degrees; thus believers who are delivered from the Covenant of Works, must be wholly and altogether set free from it.

This appears also from the believer’s being dead to it, and it being dead to him, which was treated before at large.

There is a twofold death competent [*i.e. effective*] to a believer with respect to the law, as it is the Covenant of Works; and so the law as such is dead with respect to the believer. (1.) The believer is dead to it really, and in point of duty, while he carries himself as one who is dead to it. And this I take to be comprehended in that saying of the apostle. Gal.

Consider, man, I beg you, as I said before, that you are now under *another* covenant; namely, the Covenant of Grace. And you cannot be under two covenants at once,

160 THE MARROW OF

either wholly or partly. Therefore, just as before you believed that you were wholly under the Covenant of *Works* (as Adam left both you and all his posterity after his fall), so also since you believed, you have been wholly under the Covenant of *Grace*. Assure yourself then, that no minister, or preacher of God's word has any warrant to say to you now, "Either do this and that duty which is contained in the law, and avoid this and that sin which is forbidden in the law, and God will justify you and save your soul; or else do not do it, and he will condemn you and damn you." ¹ No, no, you are now set free from both the commanding and the condemning power of the Covenant of Works.² So that I will say to you, as the apostle says to the

2.19, "Through the law I am dead to the law." In the best of the children of God here, there are such remains of the legal disposition and inclination of heart to the way of the Covenant of Works, that as they are never quite free of it in their best duties, so at sometimes their services smell so rank of it, as if they were alive to the law, and still dead to Christ. And sometimes the Lord for their correction, trial, and exercise of faith, allows the ghost of the dead husband, *i.e. the law*, as a Covenant of Works, to come in upon their souls and make demands on them, command, threaten, and frighten them as if they were alive to it, and it to them. And it is one of the hardest pieces of practical religion, to be dead to the law in such cases. This death to the law allows for degrees; it is not alike in all believers, and is perfect in none till the death of the body. But of this kind of death to the law, the question does not proceed here. (2.) The believer is dead to it *relatively*, and in point of privilege; the relation between him and it is dissolved, even as the relation between a husband and wife is dissolved by death; Rom. 7.4, "Wherefore, my brethren you also have become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that you should be married to another." This can allow for no degrees, but it is perfect in all believers; so that they are wholly and altogether set free from it in point of privilege, upon which the question here proceeds; and in this respect they can expect neither good nor hurt from it.

¹ See p. 113, and note. "Believers are not under the law, as a Covenant of Works, to be thereby justified or condemned." *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 19. art. 6.

² From the general conclusion already laid down and proved, this necessarily follows: namely, that believers are wholly and altogether set free from the Covenant of Works, or from the law as it is that covenant. But to consider particulars, for further clarifying this weighty point (1.) The Covenant of Works has no power to justify a sinner in regard to his utter inability to pay the penalty, and to fulfil its condition; this is clear from the apostle's testimony, Rom. 8.3, "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son," etc. (2.) That the believer is not under the condemning power of the law, appears from Gal. 3.13, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." — Rom. 8.1, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus." — Verses 33, 34, "It is God that justifies; who is he that condemns?" (3.) As to its commanding power, are believers are not under that either; for,

1. Its commanding and condemning power, in case of transgression, are inseparable; for by the sentence of that covenant, every breaker of its commands is bound over to death; Gal. 3.10, "Cursed is every one that does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." — "And whatever it says, it says to those who are under it," Rom. 3.19, Therefore, if believers are under its *commanding* power, they must be under its *condemning* power, yes, and actually bound over to death; for without question, they are breakers of its commands, if they are indeed under its commanding power.

2. As to any set of men, if the justifying and condemning power is removed from that law which God gave to Adam as a Covenant of Works, and to all mankind in him, then the covenant form of that law is also done away as to them; so that there is no Covenant of Works in being that has a commanding power over them; but such is the case of believers, that the law can neither justify them, nor condemn them; therefore there is no Covenant of Works in being between God and them, so as to have a commanding power over them; our Lord Jesus "blotted out the hand-writing, took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross," Col. 2.14.

3. Believers are dead to the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, and are "married to another," Rom. 7.4. Therefore they are set free from the commanding power of the first husband, the Covenant of Works.

4. They are not under it; Rom. 6.14, "You are not under the law, but under grace:" how then can it have a commanding power over them?

5. The consideration of the nature of the commands of the Covenant of Works may sufficiently clarify this point. Its commands bind men to perfect obedience under the pain of the curse which, on every slip, is bound upon the

MODERN DIVINITY. 161

believing Hebrews (Heb. 12.18, 22, 24), “You have not come to Mount Sinai which might be touched, and that burned with fire; nor to blackness, and darkness, and tempest; but you have come to Mount Zion, the city of the living God: and to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant.” So that (to speak with holy reverence) God cannot, by virtue of the Covenant of Works, either require any obedience from you, nor punish you for any disobedience — no, by virtue of that covenant, he cannot so much as threaten you, or give you an angry word,

162 THE MARROW OF

or show you an angry look. For indeed he can see no sin in you as a transgression of that covenant. For as the apostle says, “Where there is no law, there is no transgression,” Rom. 4.15.¹ And therefore, though hereafter you transgress through frailty any of the Ten Commandments,² you do not thereby transgress the Covenant of Works. There is no such covenant now between God and you.³

And therefore, though hereafter you hear a voice such as this, “If you would be saved, keep the commandments;” or “Cursed is every one that does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them” — even if you hear the voice of thunder and a fearful noise; even if you see blackness and darkness, and feel a great tempest; that is to say, even if you hear us preachers, according to our commission in Isa. 58.1, “lifting up our voice like a trumpet” in threatening hell and damnation to sinners and transgressors of the law — though these are the words of God, you are not to think they are spoken to you.⁴ No, no; the apostle assures you that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8.1. *Believe it*: God never threatens eternal death after he has given eternal life to a man.⁵

MODERN DIVINITY. 163

transgressor; Gal. 3.10, “Cursed is every one who does not continue in all things,” etc. But Christ has redeemed believers from the curse, verse 13, and the law they are under speaks in softer terms. Psalm 89.31, 32, “If they break my statutes, then will I visit their transgression with the rod,” etc. Moreover, it commands obedience on the ground of the strength to perform it, given to mankind in Adam; this is now gone, and it affords no new strength; for there is no promise of strength for duty belonging to the Covenant of Works: and to say believers under the *Covenant of Works*, receive commands for their duty, and under the *Covenant of Grace*, they receive the promise of strength to perform such works, looks very unlike the beautiful order of the dispensation of grace held forth to us in the word; Rom. 6.14, “you are not under the law, but under grace.”

Lastly. Our Lord Jesus put himself under the commanding power of the Covenant of Works, and gave it perfect obedience, to deliver his people from under it; Gal. 4.4, 5, “God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem those who were under the law.” That they should then put their necks under that yoke again, can only be highly dishonouring “to this crucified Christ, who disarmed the law of its thunders, defaced the obligation of it as a covenant, and as it were, grinded the stones upon which it was wrought to powder.” Charnock, vol. 2. q. 531.

¹ And therefore since there is no Covenant of Works (or Law of Works, as it is called in Rom. 3.27) between God and the believer, it is manifest that there can be no transgressing of it in their case. God requires obedience of believers, and not only threatens them — gives them angry words and looks — but brings heavy judgments on them for their disobedience; but He gives the promise of strength, and only the penalty of fatherly wrath, annexed to the commands requiring obedience of them; and the anger of God against them, purged of the *curse*, evidently reveals that none of these come to them in the channel of the Covenant of Works.

² And though all the sins of believers are not sins of daily *infirmity*, yet they are all sins of *frailty*; Gal. 5.17, “For the flesh lusts against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, so that you cannot do the things that you would;” — Rom. 7.19, “The evil which I would not do, that is what I do.” See chap. 5.15 17, and 6.12.

³ Thus far about the believer’s complete deliverance from the Covenant of Works, or from the law, namely, as it is the Covenant of Works. Now follows the practical use to be made of it by the believer, *I*. In hearing the word.

⁴ Though they are God’s own sayings, found in his written word and spoken by his servants, having commission from him for that effect; yet because they are the language of the *law*, as it is the Covenant of Works, they are directed only to those who are under that covenant, Rom. 3.19, and not to believers, who are not under it.

⁵ And he has given eternal life to believers already, according to the Scripture. See p. 114, note.

No, the truth is, God never speaks to a believer apart from Christ; and in Christ he does not speak a word under the terms of the Covenant of Works.¹ And if the law itself were to presume to come into your conscience and say, “You have transgressed in this and that, and broken me; therefore you owe so much this and so much that to divine justice, which must be satisfied or else I will arrest you;” — then you answer and say, “Law! Let it be known that I am now married to Christ, and so I am under cover. Therefore if you charge me with any debt, you must enter your action against my husband, Christ; for the wife is not sueable at law, but only the husband. The truth is, through him I am dead to you, law! And you are dead to me. Therefore Justice has nothing to do with me, for it judges according to the law.”²

164: THE MARROW OF

And if the law replies and says, “Yes, but good works must be done and the commandments must be kept, if you would obtain salvation;”³ — then

¹ Now follows, **II.** The use of it in conflicts of conscience with the law in its demands, sin in its guilt, Satan in his accusations, and death in its terrors.

² He begins with the conflict with the law; for as the apostle teaches, “the sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law,” 1Cor. 15:56. While the law retains its power over a man, death has its sting, and sin has its strength against him; but once he is dead to the law — wholly and altogether set free from it, as it is the Covenant of Works — then sin has lost its strength, death its sting, and Satan his plea against him. From the commanding and condemning power of which believers are delivered, it cannot reasonably be questioned that the author still speaks of the law as it is the Covenant of Works, and not otherwise. This is because he is still pursuing the practical use of the doctrine about it; and having spoken of it before as acting by commission from God, he treats it here as acting, as it were, of its own proper motion, and not by any such commission. To those who are under the law, the law speaks its demands and terrors as sent from God: but to believers, who are not under it, it cannot so speak, but of itself. Rom. 8:15, “For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear.” See p. 159. note, fig. 4.

Now, in the conflict the believer has with the law or Covenant of Works, the author puts two cases in which the conscience needs to be soundly directed, as cases of the utmost weight.

The *first case* is this: in attempting to exercise its condemning power over him, accusing him of transgression, the law demands from him satisfaction for his sin according to the justice of God; and it threatens to hale him to execution. In this case, the author dares not advise the afflicted to say, with the servant in the parable, Mat. 18:26, “Have patience with me, and I will pay you all;” but he teaches him to devolve his burden wholly upon his surety: he bids him plead that since “he is married to Christ,” whatever action the law may pretend to be sufficient to satisfy justice on account of his sin, it must lie between the law and Christ, the husband; but indeed, there remains no place for such action, because through Jesus Christ’s suffering and satisfying it to the full, he is set free from the law, and owes nothing to justice, nor to the law upon that score. If any man ventures to deal in other terms with the law in this case, his experience will at length sufficiently reveal his mistake. Now it is manifest that this relates to the case of justification.

³ Here is the *second case*, namely, in attempting to exercise its commanding power over the believer, the law requires him to do good works, and to keep the commandments if he would obtain salvation. This comes in natively in the second place. The author could not reasonably rest satisfied with the believer’s being delivered from the curse of the Covenant of Works, from the debt owing to divine justice according to its penal sanction; if he had, he would have left the afflicted still in the lurch in the point of justification and inheriting eternal life: he would have proposed Christ to him only as a *half* saviour, and left as much of the law’s plea behind without an answer, as would have left him incapable of being justified before God, and an heir of eternal life; for the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, being broken, has a twofold demand on the sinner; each of these must be answered before he can be justified. The one is a demand of *satisfaction for sin*, arising from and according to its penal sanction: this demand was made in the preceding case and solidly answered. But there remains yet another, namely, the demand of *perfect obedience*, arising from and according to the settled condition of that covenant; and the afflicted must have the means to answer it also; otherwise he will still sink in the deep mire where there is no standing. For no judge can absolve a man merely on his having paid the penalty of a broken contract to which he was obliged, by and upon fulfilling the condition; so too, no man can be justified before God, nor have a right to life, till this demand of the law is also satisfied in his case. Then, and not till then, is the law’s mouth stopped in point of his justification. Thus Adam, before his fall, was free from the curse; yet he neither was, nor could he be justified and entitled to life, until he had run the course of his obedience prescribed to him by the law as a Covenant of Works. Accordingly, we are taught that “God justifies sinners, not only by imputing the *satisfaction*, but also the *obedience* of Christ to them.” *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 11. art. 1. And that “justification is an act of God’s free grace, in which he not only pardons all our sins, but accepts us as righteous in his sight.” *Short. Cat.*

you answer and say, “I am already saved before you in earnest;¹

Here then is the second demand of the law, namely, the demand of *perfect obedience* respecting the case of justification, no less than the demand of *satisfaction for sin*. And it is proposed in such terms as the Scripture uses to express the self-same thing. Luke 10.28, “Do this, and you shall live.” — Mat. 19.17, “If you would enter into life, keep the commandments.” In both these passages our Lord proposes this demand of the Covenant of Works, for the conviction of the proud legalists with whom he dealt there. And the truth is, that the terms in which this demand stands conceived here, are so very agreeable to the style and language of the Covenant of Works expressed in these texts and elsewhere, that the law — without receding in the least from the propriety of expression — might have addressed innocent Adam in the very same terms. It need change only the word *salvation* to *life*, because he was not yet miserable; thus saying to him, ‘Good works must be done, and the commandments must be kept, if you would obtain [or more accurately, *continue*] life. I see not what impropriety there could have been in this saving, while there was as yet no covenant known in the world except the Covenant of Works. Even innocent Adam was not, by his works, to obtain life, in the way of proper merit; but by virtue of that compact only.

Now, this being the case, one may plainly perceive that in the true answer to it, there can be no place for bringing in any holiness, righteousness, good works, and keeping of the commandments, except Christ’s alone; for nothing else can satisfy this demand of the law. And if a believer were to acknowledge the necessity of his own holiness and good works in this point, and so set about them in order to answer this demand, then he would grossly and abominably pervert the end for which the Lord requires them from him. He would put his own holiness and obedience in place of Christ’s imputed obedience; and so he would fix himself in the mire out of which he could never escape until he abandoned that way and took himself again to what Christ alone has done for satisfying this demand of the law. But excluding our holiness, good-works, and keeping of the commandments from having any part in this matter, does not militate at all against the absolute necessity of holiness in its proper place (without which, in men’s own persons, no man shall see the Lord) is a point too clear among sound Protestant divines, to be insisted on here.

Hence our author could not instruct Neophytus to say in this conflict with the law or Covenant of Works, “It is my sincere resolution, in the strength of grace, to follow peace with all men, and holiness.” Nor would any sound Protestant divine have put such an answer into the mouth of the afflicted in this case; knowing that our evangelical holiness and good works (supposing that we could attain them before justification) would be rejected by the law as filthy rags. For the law acknowledges no holiness, no good works, no keeping of the commandments, except what is perfect in every way; and it will never be satisfied with sincere resolutions to do them in the strength of the grace that is to be given; rather, it requires doing them in perfection, in the strength of grace given already, Gal. 3.10. Therefore our author sends the afflicted to Jesus Christ, the surety for all that is demanded of him by the law or Covenant of Works: and he teaches him in this case, to plead Christ’s works, and keep the commands; and this is the only safe way, which all true Christians will find themselves obliged to take in the long run, in this conflict.

The difficulty raised on this topic is owing to that anti-scriptural principle that, “believers are under the commanding power of the Covenant of Works;” which was overthrown before.

The case itself, and the answer to it at large, is taken from Luther’s *Sermon of the Lost Sheep*, pp. 77, 78, and *Sermon upon the Hymn of Zacharias*, p. 50.

¹ Saved, namely, really saved, though not perfectly — even as a drowning man is saved when his head is gotten above the water, and leaning on his deliverer, he makes towards the shore. In this case, the believer has no more need of the law, or Covenant of Works, than such drowning a man has need of someone who, to save him, would lay a weight on him that would make him sink again beneath the stream. Observe the manner of speaking and reasoning used on this topic. Tit. 3.5, “Not by works of righteousness which we have DONE, but according to his mercy, he SAVED us, by the washing of REGENERATION, and RENEWING of the Holy Ghost.” — Eph. 2.8-10, “For by grace YOU ARE SAVED, through faith, not of WORKS, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.” Here (1.) It is undeniable, especially according to the original words, that the apostle asserts that believers are saved already. (2.) Denying that we are saved by works which we have done, he plainly enough intimates that we are saved by the works which Christ has done. (3.) He argues against salvation by our works on this very ground: that our good works are the fruit following our being saved, and the end for which we are saved. Thus he at once overthrows the doctrine of salvation by our good works, and establishes their necessity as the breathing and other actions of life of a man saved from death. (4.) He shows that inherent holiness is an essential part of salvation, without which it can no more consist than a man without a reasoning soul; for according to the apostle, “We are saved by our being regenerated, renewed, created in Christ Jesus, unto good works.” And so is our justification also, with all the privileges depending on it. In one word, the salvation bestowed on believers comprehends both holiness and happiness. Thus the apostle Peter *disproves* that principle in Acts 15.1, that “Unless you are circumcised in the manner of Moses, you cannot be SAVED;” he does this from his own observation of the contrary, namely, that God purified the hearts of the Gentiles *by faith*, ver. 9, adding for the part of the Jews who were circumcised, ver. 11, “We believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they were;” that is, even as they were

and therefore I have no need of your presence.¹ For in Christ I have all things at once; nor do I need anything more that is necessary ² to salvation. He is my righteousness, my treasure,

saved, namely, by faith without the works of the law. And the apostle Paul, encountering the same error, carries on the dispute in these terms: that a man is not justified by works, Gal. 2 and 3. From this one may conclude that justification no further differs from salvation, in the Scriptural sense, than an essential part differs from the whole.

This is the doctrine of holy Luther on this topic, and of our author after him, here and elsewhere. And the disuse of this manner of speaking, and setting salvation so far from justification, as heaven is from earth, are not without danger, as leaving room for works to obtain salvation

“Those who believe, already have everlasting life, and therefore undoubtedly are justified and holy, without all their own labour.” Luther’s *Chos. Sermons*, Sermon 10, page [mihl] 113. “How has God, then, remedied [my] misery? He has forgiven all my sins, and freed me from the reward of it, and made me righteous, holy, and happy, to live forever, and done that by his free grace alone, by the merits of Jesus Christ, and the working of the Holy Ghost.” Mr. James Melvil’s *Cat. Propine of a Pastor*, [i.e. *Spiritual Propine of a Pastor*, 1598] p. 44. — “Now, being made truly and really partakers of Christ, and his righteousness by faith only, and so being justified, saved, and counted truly righteous, we are to see what God craves from us on our own part, to witness our thankfulness.” Mr. John Davidson’s *Cat.* p. 27. See Palat. *Cat.* q. 86. — “God delivers his elect out of it [i.e., out of the estate of sin and misery] and brings them into an estate of salvation by the second covenant.” *Larg. Cat.* q. 30. And surely one cannot be in a state of salvation if he is not really saved; any more than one can be in a state of health and liberty, who is not really saved from sickness and slavery. “Those whom God predestined to life, and those only, he is pleased in his appointed and accepted time, to effectually call, by his word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation — effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ.” *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 10, art. 1. From this one may easily perceive that a sinner drawn to Jesus Christ is saved; though not yet carried to heaven.

¹ A good reason why a soul united to Jesus Christ, and already saved by him *really*, though not *perfectly*, has no need of the presence of her first husband, the law, or Covenant of Works, is because she has in Christ, her head and present husband, all things necessary to save her perfectly, that is, to make her completely holy and happy. If it were not so, believers might yet despair of attaining it, since Christ shares his office of Saviour with no other; nor is their salvation found in any other, whether in whole or in part. Acts 4.12. But surely believers have all that is necessary to complete their salvation in Jesus Christ, because “by God he was made to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption;” in the compass of which, there is sufficient provision for all the wants of all his people. It is the great ground of their comfort that “it pleased the Father, that in him would dwell all fulness,” Col. 1.19. And it becomes them, with their whole hearts, to approve of the design and the end of that glorious and happy constitution, namely, that “he that glories, glory in the Lord,” 1Cor. 1.31. It is true that fulness is so far from being actually conveyed in the measure of every part into the persons of believers at once, that the stream of conveyance will run through all the ages of eternity, in heaven as well as on earth. Nevertheless, the whole of Christ, with all his fulness, is given to them at once; and therefore, in him as their Head, they have everything necessary for them at once. 1Cor. 3.21, “All things are yours.” — Philip. 4.18, “I have all, and abound.” — 2Cor. 6.10, “As having nothing, yet possessing all things.” — Col. 2.10, “And you are complete in him, who is the Head.”

² But are not personal holiness, and godliness, good works, and perseverance in holy obedience, jostled out at this rate as unnecessary? No, by no means. For Christ is the only fountain of holiness, and the cause of good works in those who are united to him; so that, where there is union with Christ, there is personal holiness, infallibly; there they do good works (if capable of them) and persevere in them. And where there is not union, all pretences to these things are utterly vain. Therefore ministers are directed to prosecute such doctrines, and choose such uses especially, “as may most draw souls to Christ, the fountain of light, holiness, and comfort.” *Directory*, tit. “Of the Preaching of the Word.” — “As we willingly spoil ourselves of all honour and glory of our own creation and redemption, so we spoil ourselves also of our regeneration and sanctification; for of ourselves we are not sufficient to think one good thought; but he who has begun the work in us, is alone the one who continues us in it, to the praise and glory of his undeserved grace. So that we confess the cause of good works to be, not our free will, but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, who dwelling in our hearts by true faith, brings forth those works which God has prepared for us to walk in. ^{Eph 2.10} For this we most boldly affirm, that it is blasphemy to say that Christ abides in the hearts of those in whom there is no spirit of sanctification.” *Old Confess.* art. 12, 13.—” *M.* What is the effect of your faith? *C.* That Jesus Christ his Son came down into this world, and accomplished all things which were necessary for our salvation.” *The Manner to Examine Children*, etc., quest. 3. — “Whether we look to our justification or sanctification, they are wholly wrought and perfected by Christ, in whom we are complete, though in a diverse way.” Mr. John Davidson’s *Cat.* p. 34. The truth is, personal holiness, godliness, and perseverance, are parts of the salvation already bestowed on the believer; and good works begun, are the necessary fruit of it. *See the preceding note, and p. 114, note.* And he has, in Christ his head,

and my work.¹ I confess, law, that I am neither godly nor righteous;² yet this I am sure of: that *he* is godly and

MODERN DIVINITY. 169

righteous *for me*.³ And to tell the truth, law! I am now with him in the bride-chamber, where it makes no difference what I am,⁴ or what I have done; but only what Christ, my sweet husband, is, and has done, and does for me. ⁵ Therefore, law, quit arguing with me; for by faith 'I apprehend him who has apprehended me,' and put me into his bosom. Therefore I will be bold

what infallibly secures the conservation of his personal holiness and godliness: his bringing forth good works still, and perseverance in holy obedience, and bringing the whole to perfection in another life, and so completing the salvation begun. If men will, without warrant from the word, restrict the term salvation to happiness in heaven, then all these, according to the doctrine taught here, are necessary to salvation, as what must go before it by necessity in subjects capable of it; since in a salvation carried on by degrees, what is first conferred on a man by the unalterable order of the covenant, must necessarily go before that which, by the same unalterable order, is conferred on him in the last place. But in the sense of Luther and our author, all these are comprehended in salvation itself. For justifying them, one may observe, so that when their salvation is completed, they are perfected; and the saints in glory work perfectly good works, without interruption, throughout all eternity; for they were the great end God designed to bring about by the means of salvation. To the Scripture texts adduced in the preceding note, add 2Tim. 2.10, "I endure all things, for the elect's sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory," Here is a *spiritual salvation*, plainly distinguished from *eternal glory*. Compare 1Pet. 1.8, 9, "Believing, you rejoice. Receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls." This receiving of salvation in the present time, is but the accomplishment of that promise in part; Acts 16.31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved;" which I have no doubt bears a great deal of salvation, communicated on this side of death, as well as beyond it; Mat. 1.21, "He shall save his people from their sins." Thus, salvation comprehends personal holiness and godliness. And the Scripture holds out good works as things that accompany salvation, Heb. 6.9, and as the fruit of it, Luke 1.71-75, "That we should be saved from our enemies — that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." For it is an everlasting salvation, Isa. 45.17, importing a perseverance in holy obedience to the end.

¹ My righteousness, upon which I am justified, my treasure, out of which all my debt to the law, or Covenant of Works, is paid, and my work, from which my righteousness arises, and which I can, with safety and comfort, oppose to the law-demand of work. "The law of God we confess and acknowledge is most just, most equal, most holy, most perfect, commanding these things which, being wrought in perfection, were able to give life, and able to bring man to eternal felicity. But our nature is so corrupt, so weak, and so imperfect, that we are never able to fulfil the works of the law in perfection — and therefore it behoves us to apprehend Christ Jesus with his justice, *i.e.*, with his righteousness and satisfaction, who is the end and accomplishment of the law." *Old Confess.*, art. 1.5.

² Namely, in the eye of the law, which acknowledges no godliness or righteousness except what is perfect in every way; Rom. 4.5, "Believes on him that justifies the ungodly." And to plead any other sort of godliness or righteousness in the conflict of conscience with the law, is in vain. Gal. 3.10.

³ That is, Christ has perfect purity of nature and life, which is all that the law can demand in point of conformity and obedience to its commandments; he was born holy, and he lived holy in perfection. Now, both these are imputed to believers, not in point of sanctification, but in point of justification; for without the imputation of them both, no flesh could be justified before God; this is because the law demands from every man purity of nature, as well as purity of life, and both of them in perfection; and since we have neither the one nor the other in ourselves, we must have both by imputation, or else we must remain under the condemnation of the law. So, the *Palatine Catechism*. "Q. How are you righteous before God? A. The perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ is imputed and given to me as if I had neither committed any sin, nor had any blot or corruption clinging to me. Q. 60. The use — If Satan still lays it to your charge, even though in Christ Jesus you have satisfied the punishment which your sins deserved, and you have put on his righteousness by faith, yet you cannot deny that your nature is corrupt, so that you are prone to all ill, and you have in you the seed of all vices. Against this temptation this answer is sufficient: that by the goodness of God, not only perfect righteousness, but even the holiness of Christ also, is imputed and given to me," etc. *Ibid.* — "The satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ alone is my righteousness, in the sight of God." *Ibid.*, quest. 61.

⁴ Namely, to the law or Covenant of Works, which has no power over me, for I am now married to another.

⁵ Luther expresses it thus, "[Not] what I am, or what I ought to do, and not to do; but what Christ himself is, ought to do, and does."

to ask Moses with his tablets, and all the lawyers with their books, and all men with their works, to hold their peace and give way. ¹ And so I say to you,

170 THE MARROW OF

O law! Be gone.” And if it will not be gone, then thrust it out by force, says Luther.²

And if sin tries to take hold of you, as David said his sins did to him, Psalm 40.12; then say to it, “Your strength, O sin, is the law,” 1Cor. 15.56, and the law is dead to me. So that, “O sin, your strength is gone; and therefore be sure that you will never be able to prevail against me, or do me any hurt at all.” ³

And if Satan takes you by the throat, and violently drags you before God’s judgment-seat, then call to your husband, Christ, and say, “Lord, I suffer violence. Answer for me, and help me.” And by his help you shall be enabled to plead for yourself in this way: God the Father! I am your Son Christ’s. You gave me to him, and you have given him “all power, both in heaven and in earth, and have committed all judgment to him.” Therefore I will stand to his judgment. He says that he “did not come not to judge the world, but to save it;” therefore he will save me, according

MODERN DIVINITY. 171

to his office. And if the jury ⁴ should ⁵ bring in their verdict that they have found you guilty, then speak to the Judge and say, If anyone must be condemned for my transgressions, it must be Christ, and not I.⁶ for even though I have committed them, yet he has undertaken and bound

¹ Here Moses with his tablets, in the sense of Luther and our author, is no more than the law, as it is the Covenant of Works; in any conflict of his conscience with it, whoever can treat it this way, is strong in faith, and happy. Consider the Scripture, John 5.45, “There is one that accuses you, even Moses in whom you TRUST.” Compare Rom. 2.17, “Behold, you are called a Jew, and rest in the LAW.” ‘Moses’ here does not mean the *person* of Moses, but the *law* of Moses, which the carnal Jews trusted in to be saved and justified by; that is plainly by the law, as it is the Covenant of Works. And in our author’s judgment, the law was given on Mount Sinai as the Covenant of Works. He shows that although Luther, and Calvin too, thus exempt a believer from the law in the case of justification, and as it is the Covenant of Works, yet they do not do so outside the case of justification, as it is the Law of Christ. P. 184-186. And so, at once, he clears them and himself from that odious charge which some might find it in their hearts to fix on them from such expressions.

² Luther’s words are, “Then it is time to send it (the law) away, if it will not give way,” etc. See the preceding note.

³ Here use is to be made of the same former doctrine in the conflict of conscience with sin. Guilt, specifically the guilt of revenging wrath, is the handle by which, in this conflict, sin offers to take hold of the believer as it did of David, Psalm 40.12. In that Psalm, David speaks as a type of Christ on whom the guilt of the elect’s sin was laid. “Now, in respect to that guilt, the strength of sin is the law, or Covenant of Works, with its cursing and condemning power. But for believers, since they are delivered from the law, that strength of sin is gone; they are free from the guilt of sin, and the condemning wrath of God.” *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 20. art. 1. — from “the revenging wrath of God, and that is perfectly in this life.” *Larg. Cat.* quest. 77. From this it necessarily follows that sin, in this attack, can never prevail or really hurt them in this point, since there neither is, nor can there be, any such guilt remaining on them. How sin may otherwise prevail against a believer, and what hurt it may do to him in other respects, the author expressly teaches here and elsewhere. In the manner of expression, he follows famous divines whose names are honoured in the church of Christ. “God says to me, I will forgive you your sin, nor shall your sins hurt you.” Luther, *Chos. Serm.* p. 40.— “Because Jesus Christ has, by one infinite obedience, made satisfaction to the infinite majesty of God, it follows that my iniquities can no more fray or trouble me, my accounts being assuredly razed by the precious blood of Christ.” Beza, *Confess.*, point 4. art. 10. — “Even as the viper that was on Paul’s hand, though the nature of it was to kill quickly, yet when God charmed it, you see it did not hurt him. So it is with sin: though it is in us, and though it hangs on us, yet its venom is taken away; it does not hurt or condemn us. Dr. Preston *On Faith*, p. 51. Hear the language of the Spirit of God, Luke 10.19; “And nothing shall by any means hurt you.” — “Nothing shall hurt their souls, as to the favour of God, and their eternal happiness,” says the author of the *Supplement to Poole’s Annot.* on the Text.

⁴ The Ten Commandments.

⁵ By your own conscience.

⁶ See page 153, note.

himself to answer for them, and he does that by the consent and good-will of God his Father. And indeed, he has fully satisfied [the Father] for them.

And if death creeps up on you, and attempts to devour you, then say, “Your sting, O death! is sin; and Christ my husband has fully vanquished sin, and so he has deprived you of your sting. And therefore I do not fear any hurt that you, O death! can do to me.” And thus you may triumph with the apostle, saying, “Thanks be to God, who has given me the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” 1Cor. 15.56, 57.

Thus I have declared to you how Christ, in the fulness of time, performed what God purposed *before* all time, and promised *in* time, with regard to helping and delivering fallen mankind.

And so I have also done with the “Law of Faith.”

172 THE MARROW OF

CHAPTER III. OF THE LAW OF CHRIST.

Sect. 1. — The nature of the Law of Christ.

Nom. Then sir, I implore you, proceed to speak of the *Law of Christ*; and first, let us hear what the Law of Christ is.

Evan. The Law of Christ in regard to its substance and matter, is the same as the Law of Works, or the Covenant of Works. This matter is scattered through the whole Bible, and summed up in the Decalogue, or Ten Commandments, commonly called the *Moral Law*. It contains things that are agreeable to the mind and will of God, such as piety towards God, charity towards our neighbour, and sobriety towards ourselves. And therefore it was given by God to be a true and eternal rule of righteousness for all men, of all nations, and at all times. So that evangelical grace directs a man to no other obedience than that of which the law of the Ten Commandments is to be the rule.¹

¹ The author teaches here that the matter of the Law of Works, and of the Law of Christ, is one: namely, the Ten Commandments, commonly called the Moral Law. — See p. 28, note. And this law of the Ten Commandments was given by God, and so it is of divine authority, to be a rule of righteousness for men to walk by; it is a true rule agreeable in all things to the divine nature and will; it is an eternal rule, indispensable, to continue forever without interruption for any one moment; and it is for all men, good and bad, saints and sinners, of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, at all times, in all ages; it is from the moment of man’s creation, before the fall and after the fall; thus it is *before* the Covenant of Works, *under* the Covenant of Works, and under the Covenant of *Grace* in its several periods. Thus he asserts this great truth, in terms used by orthodox divines, but with a greater variety of expression than is generally used on this topic, which serves to inculcate it all the more. And speaking of the Ten Commandments, he declares in these words, “That Christ has not delivered believers in any way from them other than as they are the Covenant of Works. The scope of this part of the book is to show that believers ought to receive them as the Law of Christ, whom we believe to be with the Father, and the Holy Ghost — the eternal Jehovah, the Supreme, the most High God; and consequently to receive it as a law having a commanding power and binding force on the believer, from the authority of God and not as a simple passive rule, like a workman’s rule, that has no authority over him to command and bind him to follow its direction. No, our author acknowledges the Ten Commandments to be a law for believers as well as others, again and again commanding, requiring, forbidding, reproofing, and condemning sin — a law to which believers must yield obedience, and fenced with a penalty which transgressing believers are to fear, as being under the law to Christ. These things are so manifest that it is quite beyond my reach to conceive how, from the author’s doctrine on this topic, and especially from the passage we are now upon, it can be inferred that he teaches that the believer is not under the law as a rule of life; or how it can be affirmed that he does not acknowledge the law’s commanding power and binding force upon the believer, but makes it a simple passive rule to him — unless the meaning that the author teaches is, “That the believer is not under the Covenant of Works as a rule of life;” or “That the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, is not a rule of life to the believer; and that he does not acknowledge the commanding power, and binding force of the Covenant of Works on the believer;” or “That obedience is not commanded of him on pain of the curse, and bound upon him with the cords of the threat of eternal death in hell.” For otherwise, it is evident that he teaches the law of the Ten Commandments is a rule of life to a believer, and has a

Nom. Yet, sir, I conceive, that even though (as you say) the Law of Christ in regard to its substance and matter is the same as the Law of Works, yet their *forms* differ.

Evan. True, indeed, for (as you have heard) the Law of Works speaks this way, “Do this and you shall live; and if you do not do it, then you shall die the death.” But the Law of Christ speaks in this way, Ezek. 16.6, “And when I passed by you, and saw you polluted in your own blood, I said to you when you were in your blood, live.” — John 11.26, “And whoever lives and believes in me, shall never die.”¹ —

174 THE MARROW OF

Eph. 5.1, 2, “Therefore be followers of God, as dear children: and walk in love, as Christ has loved us.” And “if you love me, keep my commandments,” John 14.15. And “if they break my statutes and do not keep my commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with a rod, and their iniquity with stripes; nevertheless I will not utterly take away from him my lovingkindness, nor allow my faithfulness to fail,” Psalm 89.31-33. Thus you see that both these laws agree in saying, “Do this.” But here is the difference: the one says, “Do this and live;” and the other says, “Live, and do this;” the one says, “Do this *for* life;” the other says, Do this *from* life: the one says, “If you do not do it, you shall die;” the other says, “If you do not do it, I will chastise you with the rod.”² The one is to be delivered by God as he is Creator apart from Christ, only to those who are apart from Christ; the other is to be delivered by God, as he is a Redeemer in Christ, only to those who are in Christ.³ Which is why, neighbour Neophytus, seeing that you are now in Christ,

commanding and binding power over him. Now, if these are errors, the author is undoubtedly guilty; and if his sentiments on these topics were proposed in those terms, as the thing itself requires, no wrong would be done him in this. But it appears from what is already said, that these are gospel-truths: and the contrary doctrines all issue out of the womb of that dangerous position, “That the believer is not set free from both the commanding and condemning power of the Covenant of Works,” — which was mentioned before. See p. 22, note, and p. 26, note.

¹ These texts are adduced to show that those to whom the law of the Ten Commandments is given, as the Law of Christ, are those who have already received life, even life that shall never end; and that is God’s free gift, before they were capable of doing good works; therefore they need not work *for* life, but *from* life. “The preface to the Ten Commandments teaches us that God is the Lord, and our God, and REDEEMER, and therefore we are bound to keep all his commandments.” Luke 1.74, “That we being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve him without fear.” — 1Pet. 1.15, “As he that has called you is holy, so you be holy; because it is written, Be holy for I am holy. Because you know that you were not redeemed with corruptible things — but with the precious blood of Christ.” *Short. Cat.* with the Scriptures at large.

² See pages 113, 114, notes. The author treats this penalty of the Law of Christ afterwards.

³ To direct the believer how to receive the law of the Ten Commandments with application to himself, he assigns this difference between the Law of Works and the Law of Christ. The one, namely, the Law of Works, is the law of the Ten Commandments; but it is supposed to be delivered by God as he is Creator, apart from Christ; and so God standing in relation to man only as Creator and not as Redeemer; the other — namely, the Law of Christ — is the same law of the Ten Commandments; but it is supposed to be delivered by God, not only as he is Creator, but also Redeemer in Christ. Although the notion of Creator does not imply that of Redeemer, yet Redeemer implies Creator; as God is Redeemer, he is sovereign Lord Creator, otherwise we are still in our sins. For no one of inferior dignity could remove our offence or guilt. But the word of truth secures this foundation of believers’ safety and comfort; Isa. 44.6, 24, “Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, I am the First, and I am the Last, and besides me there is no God. Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, and He that formed you from the’ womb, I am the Lord that makes all things, that stretches forth the heavens alone, that spreads abroad the earth by myself.” — Chap. 54.5, “Your Maker is your Husband.”

Now, the law of the Ten Commandments is given in the former way [as Creator], only to unbelievers, or those who are apart from Christ; it is given in the latter way [as Redeemer] to believers, or those who are in Christ. And to prove whether this is a vain distinction or not, one need only consult the conscience when thoroughly awakened, whether it is all the same, to receive the law of the ten commandments in the thunders from Mount Sinai, or in the still small voice out of the tabernacle; that is, from an absolute God, or from a God in Christ.

beware that you do not receive the Ten Commandments at the hands of God apart from Christ, nor yet at the hands of Moses, but only at the hands of Christ; and so you shall be sure to receive them as the Law of Christ.”¹

Nom. But, sir, may not God apart from Christ deliver the Ten Commandments, as the Law of Christ?

Evan. O no! for God apart from Christ stands in relation to man according to the tenor of the law as it is the Covenant of Works; and therefore, he can speak to man on no other terms than the terms of that covenant.²

Sect. 2. — The law of the Ten Commandments a rule of life to believers.

Nom. But, sir, why may not believers among the Gentiles receive the Ten Commandments as a rule of life, at the hands of Moses, as well as the believers among the Jews did?

Evan. For the answer to this, I ask you to consider that the Ten Commandments were the substance of the law of nature³ engraven in the heart of man in innocency; they were the express idea or representation of God’s own image — even a beam of his own holiness. They were to have been a rule of life both to Adam and his posterity, even though they had never been the Covenant of Works.⁴ But having become the covenant of *words*, they were to have been a

It is true, unbelievers are not under the law as the Law of Christ, and that is their misery: even as it is the misery of slaves that the commands of the master of the family, though the matter of the commands is the same for them and the children, yet they are not fatherly commands to them, as they are to the children; but they are purely masterly. And they are not hereby freed from any duty within the compass of the perfect law of the Ten Commandments; for these commands are the matter of the Law of Works, as well as the matter of the law of Christ. Nor are they thereby exempted from Christ’s authority and jurisdiction, since the Law of Works is his law, as he is the Sovereign Lord Creator with the Father and the Holy Ghost: indeed, and even as Mediator, he rules in the midst of his enemies, and he rules over them, with a rod of iron. (Psa 2.9; Rev 2.27, 12.5, 19.15).

¹ Receiving the Ten Commandments at the hands of Christ is opposed here (1.) To receiving them at the hands of God apart from Christ. (2.) To receiving them at the hands of Moses, namely, as our Lawgiver. The first is receiving them immediately from God, without a Mediator; and so it is receiving them as the Law of Works. The second is receiving them from Christ, the true Mediator, yet immediately by the intervention of a typical one; and so it is receiving them as a Law of Moses, the typical Mediator, who delivered them from the ark or tabernacle. It is to this, and not to delivering them from Mount Sinai, that the author looks at here, as evident from his own words, page 181. The former manner of receiving them is not agreeable to the state of real believers, since they never were, nor are, given in that manner to believers in Christ, but only to unbelievers — whether under the Old or New Testament. The latter is not agreeable to the state of New Testament believers, since the true Mediator has come, and is sealed by the Father as the great Prophet to whom Moses must give way, Mat. 17.5; Acts 3.22. See Turretin, loc. 11. q. 24, th. 15. However, not receiving Moses as the lawgiver of the Christian church, carries no prejudice to the honour of that faithful servant; nor to receiving his writings as the word of God — for they are of divine inspiration; indeed, the fundamental divine revelation.

² This plainly concludes that to receive the law of the Ten Commandments from God, as Creator apart from Christ, is to receive them as the law (or covenant) of works; unless men fancy that after God has made two covenants, the one of works, the other of grace, he will still deal with them neither in the one way, nor the other.

³ Calling the Ten Commandments but the substance of the law of nature, he plainly intimates that they were not the whole of that law, but that the law of nature had a penal sanction. Compare his speaking of the same Ten Commandments still as the substance of the Law of Works, and of the Law of Christ, pages 170, 171. Indeed, he is not of the opinion that a penal sanction is inseparable from the law of nature. That would put the glorified saints and confirmed angels in heaven (to say nothing more) under a penal sanction too; for without question, they are, and will remain forever, under the law of nature. The truth is, the law of nature is suited both to the nature of God, and to the nature of the creature; and there is no place for a penal sanction, where there is no possibility of transgression.

⁴ The Ten Commandments being the substance of the law of nature, a representation of God’s image, and a beam of his holiness, it is forever unalterably to be a necessary rule of life to mankind, in all possible states, conditions, and

rule of life to them, as a Covenant of *Works*.¹ And then, being as it were, razed out of man's heart by his fall, they were made known to Adam and the rest of the believing fathers, by visions and revelations.

MODERN DIVINITY. 177

And so they were a rule of life to him ² — but not as the Covenant of Works, as they had been before his fall. They continued to be a rule until the time of Moses. And as they were delivered by Moses to the believing Jews from the ark, and so as from Christ, they were a rule of life to them until the time of Christ's coming in the flesh.³ Since Christ's coming in the flesh, they have been and continue to be a rule of life both to believing Jews and believing Gentiles, to the end of the world — not as they were delivered by Moses, but as they were delivered by Christ. For when Christ the Son comes and speaks himself, then Moses the servant must keep silence. Moses himself foretold this, saying in Acts 3.22, "The Lord your God shall raise up a prophet for you from your brethren, like me. You shall listen to him in all things which he says to you."⁴

178 THE MARROW OF

And therefore, when the disciples seemed to desire to hear Moses and Elias ⁵ speak on Mount Tabor, they were quickly taken away; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear him," Mat. 17.4, 5. It is as if the Lord had said, You are not to hear either Moses or Elias now, but my "well-beloved Son;" and therefore I say to you.

circumstances; nothing but the utter destruction of human nature, and its ceasing to be, could divest them of that office, since God is unchanging in his image and holiness. Hence, being a rule of life to Adam and his posterity, they had no dependence on their becoming the Covenant of Works; but they would have been that rule, even if there had never been any such covenant: indeed, whatever covenant was introduced, whether of works or grace, whatever form might be put upon them, it was still necessary that they remain the rule of life; no covenant, no form whatever, could ever prejudice their royal dignity. Now, it is not a hard question to determine whether this state of the matter, of their being the Covenant of Works — which was merely accessory to them, and might never have been at all — is the firmer foundation upon which to build their being a rule of life.

¹ And would have been so always, to them all, till they had perfectly fulfilled that covenant, had believers not been divested of that form through Jesus Christ, their surety. They remain a rule of life to them, but not under the form of the Covenant of Works; but to *unbelievers*, they are and will still be a rule of life under that form.

² And to *them*. One will not think it strange to hear that the Ten Commandments were as it were, razed out of man's heart by the fall, if one considers the spirituality and vast extent of them; and that they were engraved on the heart of man in their perfection, in his creation!; and with that, they indicate the ruin brought on man by the fall. Hereby he indeed lost the very knowledge of the law of nature, if the Ten Commandments are to be reckoned (as certainly they are) the substance and matter of that law — although he did not lose it totally; some remains of it were left with him. Concerning these, the apostle speaks in Rom. 1.19, 20; and 2.14, 15. And our author teaches expressly that the law is partly known by nature; that is, in its corrupt state. See page 181. And here he does not simply say that the Ten Commandments were razed, though in another case (page 44) he speaks in that manner, where yet it is evident that he does not quite mean a razing; but he says, "They were, as it were, razed." But what are these remains compared with that body of natural laws, fairly written, and deeply engraven, on the heart of innocent Adam? If they were not, as it were, razed, then what need is there to write a new copy in the hearts of the elect, according to the promise of the new covenant? "I will put my laws into their hearts, and I will write them in their minds," Heb. 10.16, and 8.10; Jer. 31.33. What need was there to write them in the book of the Lord, the Bible, in which they were made known again to us, as they were to Adam and the believing fathers that the author speaks of, by visions and revelations? The latter were as necessary to them as the former are to us for that end, since these supplied them in the lack of the Scriptures. As for those who neither had these visions and revelations given to them, nor the doctrine taught by them communicated to them by others, it is manifest that they could have no more knowledge of those laws, than was to be found among the ruins of mankind in the fall.

³ As to delivering the Ten Commandments from the ark or the tabernacle, see the sense of it, and the Scripture ground for it, on page 74, note, and page 83, note.

⁴ See page 175, note.

⁵ The former, is the giver of the law, and the latter is the restorer of it.

Hear HIM.¹ It is said in Heb. 1.2, “That in these last days God has spoken to us by his Son.” And the apostle says, “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; and whatever you do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” The wife must be subject to the husband as to Christ;² the child must yield obedience to his parents as to Christ; and the believing servant must do his master’s business, as Christ’s business. For the apostle says, “You serve the Lord Christ,” Col. 3.16-24. Indeed, he says to the Galatians, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the Law of Christ,” Gal. 6.2.

Ant. Sir, I like it very well that you say Christ should be a Christian’s teacher, and not Moses. Yet I question whether the Ten Commandments may be called the *Law of Christ*; for where can you find them repeated either by our Saviour or his apostles in the whole New Testament?

Evan. Though we do not find them repeated in the way they are set down in Exodus and Deuteronomy, yet so long as we find that Christ and his apostles required and commanded those things commanded in it, and reprove and condemn those things forbidden in it, and do so both by their lives and doctrines, it is sufficient to prove that they are the Law of Christ.³

MODERN DIVINITY. 179

Ant. I think indeed they have done so touching some of the commandments, but not touching all.

Evan. Because you say so, I entreat you to consider the following:

1st, The true knowledge of God is required in John 3.19; and the lack of it is condemned in 2Thess. 1.8; and the true love of God is required in Mat. 22.37; and the lack of it is reproved in John 5.42; and the true fear of God is required in 1Pet. 2.17; Heb. 12.28; and the lack of it is condemned in Rom. 3.18; and true trusting in God is required, and trusting in the creature is forbidden in 2Cor. 1.9; 1Tim. 6.17. Are these not the substance of the first commandment?

And consider, 2^{dly}, The “hearing and reading of God’s word” is commanded in John 5.39; Rev. 1.3; and “prayer” is required in Rom. 12.12; 1Thess. 5.17; and “singing of psalms” is required in Col. 3.16; James 5.13; and “idolatry” is forbidden in 1Cor. 10.14; 1John 5.21. Are these not the substance of the second commandment?

And consider, 3^{dly}, That “worshipping God in vain” is condemned in Mat. 15.9; and “using vain repetitions in prayer” is forbidden in Mat. 6.7; and “hearing the word only, and not doing” is forbidden in James 1.22; “worshipping God in spirit and truth” is commanded in John 4.24; and “praying with the spirit and with understanding also,” and “singing with the spirit” and “with understanding also,” is commended in 1Cor. 14.15; and also “taking heed to what we hear” is commanded in Mark 4.24. Are these not the substance of the third commandment?

¹ “These words establish Christ as the only doctor and teacher of his church; the only one whom he had entrusted to deliver his truths and will to his people; the only one to whom Christians are to hearken,” Sup. to Poole’s *Annot.* on Mat. 17.5.

² “Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands as to the Lord,” Eph. 5.22.

³ Whether or not this is sufficient to prove them to be the Law of Christ, having a divine, authoritative, binding power on men’s consciences, notwithstanding the term “doctrines” used here by the author, one may judge from these texts: Mat. 7.28, 29, “The people were astonished at his doctrine, for he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” — John 7.16, “My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me.” — Heb. 1.1-3, “God, who at sundry times, and in diverse manners, spoke in time past to the fathers, by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by his Son, whom he has appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person,” etc. — Mat. 27.18-20, “All power is given to me in heaven and earth: go therefore, and teach all nations to observe all things whatever I have commanded you.” The original word in the Old Testament, rendered *law*, properly signifies a doctrine. Hence, Mat. 15.9, “Teaching for doctrines the commandments of men,” i.e., the laws and commands of men for the laws and commands of God. Compare verses 4-6.

Consider, *4thly*, Christ's rising from the dead the first day of the week, in Mark 16.2, 9; the disciples assembling, and Christ's appearing to them, on two separate first days of the week, in John 20.19, 26; and the disciples coming together and breaking bread, and preaching afterwards on that day, in Acts 20.7; 1Cor. 16.2; and John's being in the Spirit on the Lord's day, Rev. 1.10; I say, consider whether these things do not prove that the first day of the week is to be kept as the Christian Sabbath.

180 THE MARROW OF

Consider, *5thly*, The apostle saying, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right; honour "Your father and your mother, which is the first commandment with promise," Eph. 6.1, 2, and all these other exhortations given by him and by the apostle Peter, both to inferiors and superiors, to do their duty to each other, Eph. 5.22, 25; Eph. 6.4, 5, 9; Col. 3.18-22; Tit. 3.1; 1Pet. 3.1; 1Pet. 2.18. I say, consider whether all these places prove that the duties of the fifth commandment are required in the New Testament.

Here you see are five of the Ten Commandments; and as for the other five, the apostle reckons them up altogether, saying, "You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness, you shall not covet," Rom. 13.9. Now, judge whether the Ten Commandments are not repeated in the New Testament; and consequently whether they are not the Law of Christ, and whether a believer is not under the law to Christ, or "in the law through Christ," as the apostle phrases it in 1Cor. 9.21.

Sect. 3. — Antinomian objections answered.

Ant. Yet, sir, as I remember, both Luther and Calvin speak as though a believer were so completely freed from the law by Christ, that he need not have his conscience troubled at all about yielding obedience to it.

Evan. I know right well that Luther on the Galatians, p. 59, says, "The conscience has nothing to do with the law or works;" and that Calvin, in his *Instit.* p. 403, says, "The conscience of the faithful, when the affiance of their justification before God is to be sought, must raise and advance themselves above the law, and forget the whole righteousness of the law, and lay aside all thinking about works." Now, for the true understanding of these two worthy servants of Christ, two things are to be considered and concluded. *First*, That when they speak thus of the law, it is evident they mean only in the case of justification. *Secondly*, That when the conscience deals with the law in the case of justification, it has to deal with it only as it is the Covenant of Works; for as the law is the Law of Christ, it neither justifies nor condemns." ¹

¹ That is, the law of the Ten Commandments — commonly called the Moral Law, as it is the Law of Christ — neither justifies nor condemns men in the sight of God. How can it do either the one or the other as such, since to be under it, as it is the Law of Christ, is the peculiar privilege of believers, already justified by grace and set beyond the reach of condemnation according to the apostle in Rom. 8.1, "There is, therefore, now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." But to say that this makes the Law of Christ despicable, is to forget the sovereign authority of God in him, his matchless love in dying for sinners, the endearing relation in which he stands to his people, and on the one hand, the enjoyment of actual communion and fellowship with God, and the many precious tokens of his love to be conferred on them in the way of close-walking with God; and on the other hand, the lack of that communion and fellowship, and the many fearful tokens of his anger against them for their sins. (See sec. 11.) All these belong to the Law of Christ, and they will never be despicable in the eyes of any gracious soul; though I doubt if ever hell and damnation were more despised in the eyes of others, than they are at this day in which believers and unbelievers are set so much on a level with respect to these awful things.

As to the point of condemnation, it is evident from Scripture, that no law can condemn those "who are in Christ Jesus," Rom. 8.1, 33, 34. And the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, condemns all those who are not in Christ, but under the law. Gal. 3.10; Rom. 3.19. And particularly, it condemns every unbeliever, whose condemnation will be fearfully aggravated by his rejection of the gospel offer; this rejected offer will be a witness against him in the judgment; in respect to which our Lord says, John 12.48, "The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day." Compare chap. 15.22, "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have had sin; but now they

MODERN DIVINITY. 181

So if you understand the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, according to their meaning, then it is most true what they say; for why should a man let the law come into his conscience? That is, why should a man's conscience be troubled about doing the law to be justified by it, considering that it is an impossible thing? No, what need does a man have to trouble his conscience about doing the law to be justified by it, when he knows he is already justified another way? Indeed, what need does a man have to trouble his conscience about doing that law which is dead to him,

182 THE MARROW OF

and he to it? Does a woman have any need to trouble her conscience about doing her duty to her husband when he is dead, indeed, when she herself is also dead? Or, does a debtor have any need to trouble his conscience about paying that debt which is already fully discharged by his surety? Will any man be afraid of that obligation which is made void, the seal torn off, the writing defaced, indeed, not only cancelled and crossed, but torn in pieces? ¹ I remember the apostle says in Heb. 10.1, 2, that if the sacrifices which were offered in the Old Testament "could have made those who come to it perfect, and purged the worshippers, then they would have had no more conscience about sin;" that is, their conscience would not have accused them of being guilty of sins. Now, the "blood of Christ" has "purged the conscience" of a believer from all his sins, chap. 9.14, as they are transgressions against the Covenant of Works; and therefore, why does his conscience need to be troubled about that covenant?

MODERN" DIVINITY. 183

have no cloak for their sin." Therefore the law, which unbelievers still remain under as a Covenant of Works, will condemn them with a double condemnation. John 3.18, "He that does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." And hence it appears that there is as little need of, as there is warrant for, a condemning gospel. The holy Scripture states it as the difference between the law and the gospel — the former is the ministration of condemnation and death, and the latter is the ministration of righteousness and life. 2Cor. 3.6-9. Compare John 12.47, "If any man hears my words, and does not believe, I do not judge him, for I did not come to judge the world, but to save the world."

As to the point of justification; no man is, nor can be justified by the law. It is true, the Neonomians or Baxterians, to wind a righteousness of our own into the case of justification, turn the gospel into a law, properly so-called; and tell us that the gospel justifies as a law, and roundly admit what is the necessary consequent of that doctrine: namely, that faith justifies, as it is our evangelical righteousness, or our keeping the gospel law. It runs thus: He that believes shall not perish. (Gibbon's Ser. Morn. Ex. Meth. p. 418—421.) But the holy Scripture teaches, that we are justified by grace, and by no law or deed (or work of a law, properly so-called) call it the Law of Christ, or the gospel law, or whatever law one pleases; and thereby faith itself, considered as a deed or work of a law, is excluded from the justification of a sinner, and has its place in it only as an instrument. Gal. 3.11, "That no man is justified by a law in the sight of God, is evident." — Chap. 5.4, "Whoever of you is justified by a law, you have fallen from grace." — Rom. 3.28, "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without deeds of a law." Gal. 2.16, "Knowing that a man is not justified by works of a law." I read a law, deeds, and works simply, because so the original words used in these texts undeniably signify.

To this agrees the *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 11. art. 1, "These whom God effectually calls, he also freely justifies, not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; not by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them as their righteousness; but," etc. *Larg. Cat.* quest. 73. — "Faith justifies a sinner in the sight of God, not as if the grace of faith, or any act of it were imputed to him for his justification; but only as it is an instrument by which he receives and applies Christ and his righteousness. *West. Confess.*, chap. 19. art. 6. — "Although true believers are not under the law, as a Covenant of Works, to be justified or condemned by it, yet it is of great use to them, as well as to others, in that as a rule of life, informing them of the will of God and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly." From this last passage of the Confession, two important points plainly offer themselves. (1.) That the law is a rule of life to believers, directing and binding them to duty, though they are neither justified nor condemned by it. (2.) That neither justifying nor condemning belongs to the law as a rule of life simply, but as a Covenant of Works. And these are the very points taught here by our author.

¹ Col. 2.14, "Blotting out the hand-writing, nailing it to his cross."

But now, I ask you to observe and take note, that although Luther and Calvin thus exempt a believer from the law in the case of justification, as it is the law or Covenant of Works, yet they do not exempt a believer outside the case of justification, as it is the Law of Christ.

For thus says Luther on the Galatians, p. 182, “Outside the matter of justification, we should, with Paul in Rom. 7.12, 14, think reverently of the law, commend it highly, call it holy, righteous, just, good, spiritual, and divine. Yes, outside the case of justification, we should make a god of it.”¹ And in another place, he says on the Galatians, p. 5, “There is a civil righteousness, and a ceremonial righteousness; yes, and besides these, there is another righteousness, which is the righteousness of the law, or of the Ten Commandments which Moses teaches; this we also teach in the doctrine of faith.” And in another place, having shown that believers, through Christ, are far above the law, he adds, “However, I will not deny that Moses shows them their duties in which respect they are to be admonished and urged. Therefore such doctrines and admonitions ought to be among Christians, as it is certain there was among the apostles, by which every man may be admonished about his estate and office.”

And Calvin, having said, as I told you before, that “Christians, in the case of justification, must raise and advance themselves above the law,” he adds, “Nor can any man thereby gather that the law is superfluous to the faithful whom, notwithstanding, it does not cease to teach, exhort, and prick forward to goodness, although it has no place in their conscience before God’s judgment-seat.”

Ant. But, sir, if I do not forget, Musculus says, “That the law is utterly abrogated.”

Evan. Indeed, Musculus, speaking of the Ten Commandments, says, If they are weak, if they are the letter, if they work transgression, anger, curse, and death: and if Christ, by the law of the Spirit of life, delivered those who believed in him from the law of the letter, which was weak to justify, and strong to condemn, and from the curse, being made a curse for us, then surely they are abrogated. Now this is most certain, that the Ten Commandments in no way work transgression, anger, curse, and death, except as they are the Covenant of Works.²

184: THE MARROW OF

¹ That is, raise our esteem of it to the highest pitch, and give it illimitable obedience, Compare this with what is cited from the same Luther concerning the law, page 113.

² According to the holy Scripture, it is certain that the law of the Ten Commandments has an irritating effect, whereby the commandments increase sin; and have a condemning and killing effect, so that they work curse, death, and wrath, called anger (it would seem) in the language of our forefathers, when Musculus’ *Commonplaces of Christian Religion* was translated into English (1563). And it is no less certain, that Jesus Christ has delivered believers from the law as it has these effects, Rom. 14.1 5, “For if those who are of the law are heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect, because the law works wrath.” — Chap. 7.5, 6, “For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins which were by the law, worked in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law that we should serve in newness of spirit,” etc. — Chap. 8.2, “For the law of the spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, has made me free from the law of sin and death.” — Gal. 3.13, “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” If then the Ten Commandments have these effects, not only as they are the Covenant of Works, but as they are the Law of Christ, or a rule of life, then believers are altogether delivered from them, which is absurd and abominable doctrine. Therefore it evidently follows that the Ten Commandments have these effects, only as they are the Covenant of Works. The truth is, to a gracious soul the strongest possible temptation to Antinomianism, or casting off the Ten Commandments for good and all, would be to labour to persuade him, that they have these effects, not only as they are the Covenant of Works, but as they are the Law of Christ. So that, take them how he may, he will find they not only have a cursing, condemning, and killing power, but also an irritating effect, increasing sin in him. Nevertheless, a Christian man, in doing against them (which is the reverend Musculus’ phrase, cited by the author on the following page) may be a transgression; for a man may transgress the law, even though the motions of his sins are not *by* the law. And how such a man’s sinning is more outrageous than an ungodly man’s sinning, will convincingly appear if one measures the outrageousness of sinning by the obligations to duty lying on the sinner, and not by his personal hazard. This is a measure more becoming a slave than a son.

Nor has Christ delivered believers from them, other than as they are the Covenant of Works. And therefore we may assuredly conclude that they are not otherwise abrogated than as they are the Covenant of Works.¹

MODERN DIVINITY. 185

Nor did Musculus intend otherwise; for he says in the words following, that it must not be understood that the points of the substance of Moses' covenant are utterly brought to nothing;² God forbid. For a Christian man is not at liberty to do those things that are ungodly and wicked. And if doing those things that the law forbids does not displease Christ; and if they are not much different,³ indeed contrary — if they are not *repugnant* to the righteousness which we received from him — then let it be lawful for a Christian man to do them; or else not.⁴ But a Christian man acting against those things commanded in the Decalogue, sins more outrageously than someone who would so do, that is under the law.⁵ That is how far off he is from being free from those things that are commanded there.

186 THE MARROW OF

¹ Thus our author has proved, that the law of the Ten Commandments is a rule of life to believers; and has vindicated Luther and Calvin from the opposite Antinomian error, as he does Musculus also, in the words which follow: and that is from their express declarations, in their own words. Here is the conclusion of the whole matter: to show the judgment of other orthodox Protestant divines on this topic, against the Antinomians, it will not be amiss to adduce a passage out of a system of divinity commonly put into the hands of students not very many years ago, I am sure. "It is one thing (says Turretin, disputing against the Antinomians) to be under the law as a covenant; and another thing to be under the law as a rule of life. In the former sense, Paul says, 'That we are not under the law, but under grace,' Rom. 6.14, as to its covenant relation, curse, and rigour; but in the latter sense we always remain bound to it, though for a different end. For in the first covenant, man was to do this to the end that he might live; but in the other, he is bound to perform the same thing, not that he may live, but *because* he lives." Turretin, loc. 11. quest. 24. thes. 7. View again, *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 19. art. 6, the words of which are cited page 166. note 7. Our author's conclusion agrees with this, namely: That believers are in no way, nor otherwise delivered from the law of the Ten Commandments, than as they are the Covenant of Works, Now, how can those who oppose Antinomianism on this topic, contradict the author on it except by asserting, "That believers are not delivered from the law, as it is the Covenant of Works, but that they are still under the power of the Covenant of Works?" These are principles as opposite to the received doctrine of orthodox Protestant divines, and to the Confession of Faith, as they are to the doctrine of our author.

² That is, that the particular precepts of the law of the Ten Commandments, called by Musculus "the substance of the law-covenant," are disannulled, and are no more to be regarded.

³ That is, very unsuitable.

⁴ That is, if they are (as certainly they are) displeasing to Christ — most unsuitable, contrary, and repugnant to the righteousness which the believer has received from Christ — then they are by no means to be done.

⁵ These are still the words of Musculus, adduced by the author to show that that famous divine was no Antinomian; and if they will not serve to clear him, but he must still be on that side, I apprehend orthodox Protestants will be sorry for their loss of that great man. But though it is observed that he speaks of doing against the things commanded in the law, but not against the law itself, there is no hazard: for it is evident that by the law, Musculus understands the Covenant of Works, or in his style, Moses's covenant. And since he was not of the opinion that believers are under the Covenant of Works, nor under the commanding power of that covenant, he could not say that they sinned against it. However, he still looks at the Ten Commandments, the substance of that covenant, to also be the Law of Christ, binding the Christian man to obedience. From his saying that "a Christian doing against these things, sins more outrageously than one who is under the law," it indeed, follows that a Christian's sin is more displeasing to God, and deserves a heavier curse in itself; yet in the meantime, the Law of Christ has no curse annexed to transgressions of it. For sin's deserving a curse does not arise from the threatening, but from its contrariety to the precept; and consequently, to a curse is threatened because sin deserves it. And the sins of believers in themselves deserve a heavier curse than the sins of others. Yet the Law of Christ does not have a curse annexed to transgressions of it, because the heavy curse, deserved by the sins of believers, was already laid on Christ to whom they are united. He bore it *for* them, and bore it *away* from them, so that they cannot be threatened with it over again, after their union with him.

Sect. 4. — The necessity of marks and signs of grace.

Therefore, friend Antinomista, if either you or anyone else, under a pretence of being in Christ, exempt yourselves from being under the law of the Ten Commandments, as they are the Law of Christ, I tell you truly, it is a sharp sign that you are not yet in Christ. For if you were, then Christ would be in you; and if Christ were in you, then he would govern you, and you would be subject to him. I am sure the prophet Isaiah tells us that the same Lord who is our Saviour, “is also our King and Lawgiver,” Isa. 33.22. And truly, he will not be *Jesus a Saviour* to any but those to whom he is *Christ a Lord*; for the very truth is, wherever he is Jesus a Saviour, he is also Christ a Lord; and therefore, I beseech you, examine yourself whether he is so to you or not.

Ant. Why then, sir, it seems that you stand on marks and signs?

Evan. Yes indeed. I stand so much on marks and signs, that I say to you in the words of the apostle John, 1John 3.10, “In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil; whoever does not practice righteousness, is not of God.” For Luther says, “He that is truly baptized, has become a new man, and has a new nature, and is endowed with new dispositions; and loves, lives, speaks, and does far otherwise than he was used to, or could do before.” For, says godly Tyndale, “God works with his word, and in his word: and brings faith into the hearts of his elect, and looses the heart from sin, and knits it to God, and gives a man power to do what was impossible for him to do before, and turns him into a new nature.”¹ And therefore, says Luther in another place, “Works are to be extolled and commended in this: that they are fruits and signs of faith. And therefore, the one who has no regard for how he leads his life, so that he may shut the mouths of all blamers and accusers, and clear himself before all,

MODERN DIVINITY. 187

and testify that he has lived, spoken, and done well, is not yet a Christian. How then, says Tyndale again, “dare any man think that God’s favour is on him, and God’s Spirit is within him, when he does not feel the working of his Spirit, nor is disposed to any good thing?”²

Ant. But, by your favour, sir, I am persuaded that many a man deceives his own soul by these marks and signs.

Evan. Indeed, I must confess with Mr. Bolton and Mr. Dyke, that in these times of Christianity, a reprobate may make a glorious profession of the gospel, and he may perform all the duties and exercises of religion, and do so in his outward appearance with as great a spirit and zeal as a true believer. Indeed, he may partake of some measure of inward illumination, and have a shadow of true regeneration; for there is no grace that is effectually wrought in the faithful, a resemblance of which may not be found in the unregenerate. And therefore, I say, if any man rests on the sign, without having the thing signified by the sign³ —that is, if he rests on his graces (or rather his gifts) and duties, and draws his assurance from them, as they are in him and come from him, without any reference to Jesus Christ as their root and fountain — then they are deceitful marks and signs.⁴ But if he looks at them with reference to Jesus Christ, then they are not deceitful, but

¹ That is, makes him a new man.

² Namely, habitually.

³ Namely, Christ in the heart.

⁴ Because all true grace and acceptable duty flow from Jesus Christ, dwelling in one’s heart by his Spirit; and whatever does not come that way is but a show and semblance of these things, Rom. 8.9, “If any man does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” — John 15.5, “Without me you can do nothing,” — Chap. 1.16, “And of his fulness we have all received, and grace for grace.” — Gal. 2.20, “I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me.” — “The cause of good works we confess to be, not our freewill, but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus who, dwelling in our hearts by true faith, brings forth such works as God has prepared for us to walk in.” *Old Confess.*, art. 13 — “So good works follow as effects of Christ in us possessed by faith.” Mr. John Davidson’s *Cat.* p. 30.

true evidences and demonstrations of faith in Christ. And a man does this when he looks at his outward actions as flowing from the inward actions of his mind; and he looks at the inward actions of his mind as flowing from the habits of grace within him; and he looks at the habits of grace within him as flowing from his justification; and he looks at his justification as flowing from his faith; and he looks at his faith as given by and embracing Jesus Christ. Thus I say, if he does not rest till he comes to Christ, then his marks and signs are not deceitful, but true.¹

¹ Here is a chain serving to lead a child of God to assurance, that he is in the state of grace in which duties and graces, running back to their true spring, so shine after the trial of them, that one may conclude assurance from them, as the author phrases it. And here it is to be observed that these words, “outward actions— actions of the mind — habits of grace — justification — faith — embracing Christ,” in the progress of their trial, are to be taken in their general notion, agreeing both to what is true and what is false in each particular — as faith feigned and unfeigned, justification real and imaginary, grace common and saving, etc. For the special nature of these is still supposed to be undetermined as to the person under trial, until he come to the end of his trial. This is evident from the nature of the thing; and it is evident from the author’s words too, in the sentence immediately preceding, where he says, “If he pitches [*i.e., depends or rests*] upon his graces, or rather *gifts*,” he makes this correction because the former word is ordinarily restricted to *saving* grace, and the latter (*gifts*) not so. Hence it appears that the author was far from imagining that a man must have the assurance he speaks of, *before* he can conclude it from his graces or duties.

There are five links in this chain. The *first* is *outward actions*, or works that are materially good, flowing from the inward actions of the mind: otherwise they are but pieces of gross dissimulation, as was the respect and honour given Christ by the Herodians and others, when they asked him if it was lawful to give tribute to Caesar. Mat. 22.16-18. The *second* is these *actions of the mind*, flowing from the habits of grace within the man; otherwise they are but fair flowers which, “because they have no root, wither away,” Mat. 13.6; they like the Israelites in their seeking, returning, inquiring after, and remembering God only when he slew them, Psalm 78.34-37. The *third* is those *habits of grace* within the man flowing from his justification; otherwise they are but the habits of common grace, or of mere moral virtues to be found in hypocritical professors and sober heathens. The *fourth* is the man’s *justification*, flowing from his faith; otherwise it is but the imaginary justification of Pharisees, Papists, and legalists who justify themselves. Luke 16.15. The *fifth* is his *faith* given by Christ, and embracing Christ: otherwise it is but feigned faith which never knits the soul to Christ, but leaves the man in the case of the fruitless branch which is to be “taken away,” John 15.2.

This chain is not of our author’s framing, but is a Scriptural one. 1Tim. 1.5, “Now (1.) the end of the commandment is charity (2.) out of a pure heart (3.) and of a good conscience (4.) and of faith (5.) unfeigned.” — “In which the apostle teaches that obedience to the law must flow from love, and love from a pure heart, and a pure heart from a good conscience, and a good conscience from unfeigned faith; thus he makes the only right channel of good works.” *Westm. Conf., Practical Use of Saving Knowledge; tit.*, “The third thing requisite to evidence true faith is that obedience to the law runs in the right channel; that is, through faith in Christ.”

If one examines himself by this infallible rule, he cannot safely take his obedience as a mark or evidence of his being in the state of grace, until he runs it up to his faith, embracing Christ. But then finding that his faith made him a good conscience, and his good conscience a pure heart, and his pure heart produced love, from which his obedience flowed; in that case, his obedience is a true mark that his faith is unfeigned. From this he may assuredly conclude that he is in the state of grace. Our author’s method being a copy of this, the objections against it must affect both.

Let us suppose two men put themselves on a trial of their state according to this method, and settle on some external duties of theirs, or some graces which they seem to discern in themselves as to the substance of it — though as yet they do not know the specific nature of it, namely, whether they are true or false.

The one finds that his external duties did not proceed from the inward actions of his mind; or if they did, yet these actions of his mind did not proceed from habits of grace in him; or if they did proceed from these, yet these did not flow from his justification, or (which is the same thing) they did not follow upon the purging of his conscience; or if they did, yet his justification or good conscience, such as they are, did not proceed from his faith; or if they did proceed from it, yet his faith did not embrace Christ, and consequently it was not of the special operation of God, nor was it given to him by Christ in him, by his Spirit. In all or any of these cases, it is plain that the external duties, or the [so-called] graces, which he settled on, cannot be true marks from which he may conclude he is in a state of grace.

The other finds that his external duties did indeed flow from the inward actions of his mind, and these flowed from habits of grace in him, and these again flowed from his justification or good conscience, and that was from his faith, and his faith embraced Christ. Here two things are observable: (1.) That neither the duties nor the graces settled on, could be sure marks to him before he came to the last point, in regard to the flaw that possibly might still be found in the immediate or mediate springs [*i.e. source or motivations*] of them. And therefore the looking, mentioned by the author, is indeed a progressive knowledge and discovery; but it is still unclear and uncertain till one comes to the end, and the whole evidence is put together. This is how it is in searching out some abstruse point by observing the dependence and connection that things have one with another. Therefore our author by no means supposes that I

Ant. But, sir, if an unbeliever may have a resemblance of every grace that is wrought in a believer, then it must be a hard matter to find out the difference. Therefore I think it is best for a man not to trouble himself at all about marks and signs.

Evan. Let me deal plainly with you, in telling you that although we cannot say everyone that has a *form* of godliness also has the *power* of godliness, yet we may truly say, that he who does *not* have the form of godliness, does not have the power of godliness. For though all is not gold that glitters, yet all gold does glitter. And therefore, I tell you truly, if you have no regard for making the Law of Christ your rule, by endeavouring to do what is required in the Ten Commandments and avoid what is forbidden there, it is a very evil sign. And, therefore, I ask you to consider it.

Sect. 5. — Antinomian objections answered.

Ant. But, sir, you know the Lord has promised to write his law in a believer's heart, and to give him his Spirit to lead him into all truth. And therefore he has no need of the law written with paper and ink to be a rule of life to him; nor does he have any need to endeavour to be obedient to it, as you say.

Evan. Indeed, says Luther, the matter would fare even as you say, *if* we were perfectly and altogether inward and spiritual men. But we cannot be this in any way before the last day, at the rising again of the dead. ¹ For so long as we are clothed with this mortal flesh, we only begin and proceed onwards in our course towards perfection, which will be consummated in the life to come. And for this reason the apostle in Rom. 8.23 calls this the "first fruits of the Spirit," which we enjoy in this life, the truth and fulness of which we shall receive in the life to come. And therefore, he says in another place, it is necessary to preach in such a way to those who have received the doctrine of faith, that they might be stirred up to go on in the good life which they have embraced;² and that they do not allow themselves to be overcome by the assaults of the raging flesh. For we will not so presume of the doctrine of faith, as if faith being had, every man might do what he wished. No, we must earnestly endeavour, so that we may be without

blame. And when we cannot attain it, we must flee to prayer, and say before God and man, "Forgive us our trespasses." And, says Calvin, *Instit.* p. 162, one proper use and end of the law

must know certainly that I am in Christ and justified, and that my faith is given to me by Christ, before these duties or graces can be true marks or evidences to me. (2.) That the man perceiving his embracing of Christ, as to the substance of the action, is assured of the saving nature of it (namely, that it is a faith uniting him to Christ, and given to him by Christ in him) by the train of effects he sees have followed it, according to the established order in the Covenant of Grace: 1Tim. 1.5, From these effects of his faith embracing Christ, what might have deceived him, was all along gradually removed in the progress. Thus he is indeed sent back to the fruits of his faith for true marks and evidences of it; but he is sent back to them as standing clear now in his *regress*, though they were not so in his *progress*. And at this rate, he is not left to run in a circle, but he has a comfortable end of his self-examination, being assured by his duties and graces, which are the fruits of his faith, that his faith is unfeigned, and that he himself is in the state of grace. About placing faith before the habits of grace, see p. 210 note.

¹ We would have no need for the law written outside us, if — as we are spiritual in part, in respect to the sanctification begun in us — we were perfectly and altogether spiritual, both in body and soul. But that is not to be expected till the resurrection; that is when what is now "sown a natural body, is raised a spiritual body," 1Cor. 15.44; being re-united to the spirit or soul "made perfect at death;" Heb. 12.23 — therefore, from the moment of death, it no longer needs the law written outside it.

² And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, (Heb 10:24)

concerning the faithful,¹ in whose hearts the Spirit of God lives and reigns, is this: namely, although they have the law written and engraven in their hearts by the finger of God, yet the ² law is a very good means for them, daily, to better and more assuredly learn what the will of the Lord is. And let none of us exempt himself from this need; for no man has yet attained so great a wisdom, that he has no need to be instructed by the law daily. And Christ differs from us in this: that the Father has poured out on *him* the infinite abundance of his Spirit;^{Joh 3:34} but whatever we receive, it is received by measure, so that we need one after another.

Now mind, I beg you, that if believers have the Spirit only in measure, and know only in part, then they have the “law written in their hearts” only in *measure* and in *part*,³ 1Cor. 13.9. And if they have the law written in their hearts only in *measure* and in *part*, then they do not have a perfect rule within them; and if they do not have a perfect rule within them, then they need to have a rule without them. And therefore, doubtless, the strongest believer among us needs to hearken to the advice of Tyndale who says, “Seek the word of God in all things, and without the word of God do nothing.” And another godly and evangelical writer says, “My brethren, let us do the will of God with our whole endeavour, as it becomes good children; and as near as we can, beware that we do not sin.”

Ant. Well, sir, I cannot tell what to say to that, but I think that when a man is perfectly justified by faith, it is needless for him to endeavour to keep the law, and to do good works.⁴

192 THE MARROW OF

Evan. I remember Luther says that in his time there were some that reasoned this way: “If faith,” they say, “accomplishes all things, and if faith only and alone is sufficient for righteousness, then to what end are we commanded to do good deeds? We may go play then, and not work at all.” He answers them, saying, “Not so, you ungodly! Not so.” And there were others that said, “If the law does not justify, then it is in vain, and of no effect.” “Yet it is not therefore true,” Luther says. “For these conclusions are similarly worth nothing: money does not justify or make a man righteous, it is therefore is unprofitable; the eyes do not justify, therefore they must be plucked out; the hands do not make a man righteous, therefore they must be cut off. So this conclusion is also nothing: that if the law does not justify, it is therefore unprofitable. We do not destroy and condemn the law, because we say it does not justify; rather we say with Paul in 1Tim. 1.8, ‘The law is good, if a man uses it rightly.’ This is a faithful saying, that those ‘who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works; these things are good and profitable to men,’” Tit. 3.8.

Sect. 6. — Holiness and good works attained to only by faith.

Neo. Truly sir, for my own part, I greatly marvel that my friend Antinomista should be so confident of his faith in Christ, and yet have so little regard for holiness of life, and keeping Christ’s commandments, as it seems he has. For I give the Lord thanks that now, in some small measure, I believe that I am freely and fully justified and acquitted from all my sins by Christ,

¹ That is, respecting believers.

² Written.

³ They do not have the law written completely and perfectly in their hearts.

⁴ This Antinomian principle, That it is needless for a man, perfectly justified by faith, to endeavour to keep the law and do good works, is a glaring evidence that legality is so engrained in man’s corrupt nature, that until a man truly comes to Christ by faith, the legal disposition will still be reigning in him, let him turn himself into whatever shape, or be of whatever principles he will in religion. Even though he runs into Antinomianism, he will carry along with him his legal spirit, which will always be a slavish and unholy spirit. He is constrained, as the author observes, to do all that he does for fear of punishment, and hope of reward; and once it is fixed in his mind that these have ceased in his case, he stands still like a clock when the weights that made her go are removed, or like a slave when he is in no hazard of the whip — there can be no greater evidence of loathsome legality than this.

and therefore I have no need either to avoid evil for fear of punishment, or to do good for hope of reward. And yet I think that I find my heart is more willing and desirous to do what the Lord commands, and to avoid what he forbids, than it ever was before I believed this way.¹ Surely sir, I perceive that faith in Christ is not a hinderance to holiness of life, as I once thought it was.

MODERN DIVINITY. 193

194 THE MARROW OF

Evan. Neighbour Neophytus, if our friend Antinomista contents himself with mere gospel knowledge, in a notionary way, and has run to fetch notions from Christ, and yet is not fetched by the power of Christ, then let us pity him and pray for him. And in the meantime, I beg you to

¹ It is not the scope or design of Neophytus here, to show what the essence of faith consists of, nor to give a definition to it. But suppose it was so, his definition falls considerably short of some given by famous orthodox Protestant divines, yes, and churches too. See the note on the definition of faith. I repeat here Mr. John Davidson's definition only: "Faith is a hearty assurance that our sins are freely forgiven us in Christ." From this, one may clearly see that at one time it was not reckoned an absurdity that one's justification was made the object of one's belief. For understanding this ancient Protestant doctrine, grown almost quite out of ken with unlearned readers, I will adduce a passage out of Wendeline's *Christ. Theol.* lib. 1. cap. 24, p. 542, 543. He presents the Popish objection this way: "Justifying faith must go before justification; but the faith of special mercy does not go before justification; if it did, it would be false. For at that rate, a man would believe that his sins are forgiven, which as yet are *not* forgiven, since they are not forgiven except by justification. Therefore the faith of special mercy is not justifying faith." In answer to this, he denies the second of these propositions, with its proofs, and concludes in these words: "Justifying faith, therefore, has for its special object, forgiveness of sins, future, present, and past." He explains it this way, "By the faith of special mercy, because it goes *before* justification, a man does not believe that his sins are forgiven already, before the act of believing." This, by the by, is the Antinomian faith, justifying only declaratively. What follows is the true doctrine of faith: "But he shall have forgiveness of sins: in the very act of justification, he believes that his sins are forgiven him, and so he receives forgiveness; *after* justification, he believes the past application," namely: forgiveness; that is, that his sins are now already forgiven him.

But the design of Neophytus is to make a profession of his faith, and by an argument drawn from Christian experience, to refute the Antinomian pretended faith whereby a sinner, at first brush, believes his sins are already forgiven him, before the act of believing; and thereafter he has no regard to holiness of life. This is plain evidence that this persuasion is not of God. And in opposition to it, this profession is made, consisting of three parts:

(1.) He professes that he believes himself to be justified and acquitted from all his sins; and this is the belief of the past application, *after* justification, which we heard before from Wendeline. For we have already found Neophytus brought to faith in Christ, and the match between Christ and him is declared to be made, though his faith was accompanied with fears, p. 150. And now he finds his faith grown up in some small measure to the height which Antinomista pretended his faith to be at, namely, believing himself to be already justified. But with this he intimates that his faith had not come to this pitch all of a sudden, as Antinomista's had done, p. 94-97; rather it was some time after he believed, before he *thus* believed. And now, indeed, his believing thus, only in some small measure, was his sin, and it argued for the weakness of his faith. But such a man's believing in any measure, great or small, that he was justified and acquitted from all his sins, must be commended and approved unless we would bring back the Popish doctrine of doubting.

(2.) He professes that therefore — since he was justified, and believed himself to be so — he had no need to avoid evil for fear of punishment, nor to do good for hope of reward. Antinomista, pretending to this likewise, had cast off all care of keeping the law or of doing good works, having no other principle of obedience within him. This does not at all look to punishments and rewards, improperly so-called; that is, to fatherly chastisements and favours, which the author treats expressly afterwards. But it is plainly meant of rewards and punishments taken in a proper sense, as flowing from the justice of God, remunerative and vindictive, and proceeding upon our works, good and evil; and particularly it is meant of heaven and hell. This is the sense in which that phrase is commonly used by divines; and that it is to be taken so here is evident from its being inferred from his justification, which indeed leaves no place for fear of punishment and hope of reward in the *latter* sense: but not so in the *former* sense. And it appears Nomista understood it thus, as it will afterwards appear, p. 200.

(3.) He professes. That he was so far from being less inclined to duty, that he believed himself to be fully justified, and that the fear of punishment and hope of reward were ceased in his case; that, on the contrary, he found as his faith grew, that his love to and readiness for a holy life grew: he was more willing, and more desirous to do the Lord's commandments than he had been before his faith was advanced to that pitch. And in this, I conceive, the experience of the saints will not contradict him. Thus he gives a plain testimony against the Antinomian faith.

know that true faith in Christ ¹ is so far from being a hinderance to holiness of life and good works, that it is the only way to further it. For only by faith in Christ is a man enabled to exercise all Christian graces rightly, and to perform all Christian duties rightly, which before he could not do. For example, before a man believes God's love to him in Christ,² he may have a kind of love to God as he is his Creator and Preserver, the one who gives him many good things for this present life. Yet if God opens his eyes to see what condition his soul is in — that is, if God lets him see the relation that exists between God and him according to the tenor of the Covenant of *Works* — then he will conceive of God as an angry Judge, armed with justice against him; and he will conceive that God must be pacified by the works of the law, to which he finds his nature opposite and contrary. Therefore he hates both God and his law, and he secretly wishes and desires there were neither God nor law. And even if God were now to give him ever so many temporal blessings, he could not love him; for what malefactor could love that judge or his law, from whom he expected the sentence of condemnation, even though he lets him feast at his table with ever so many delicacies? “But when the kindness and love of God his Saviour appeared, not

MODERN DIVINITY. 195

by works of righteousness he has done, but according to his mercy, he saved him,” Titus 3.4, 5. That is, when by the eye of faith, he sees himself standing in relation to God according to the tenor of the Covenant of *Grace*,³ then he conceives of God as a most merciful and loving Father to him in Christ; he conceives that God has freely pardoned and forgiven him all his sins, and completely released him from the Covenant of Works.⁴ And by this means, “the love of God is shed abroad in his heart, through the Holy Ghost which is given to him,” Rom. 5.5; and then “he loves God because God first loved him,” 1John 4.19. For as a man sees and feels by faith the love and favour of God towards him in Christ his Son, so in return he loves both God and his law; and indeed it is impossible for any man to love God, till by faith he knows that he is beloved of God.⁵

Secondly, Though *before* a man believes God's love to him in Christ, he may have a great measure of legal humiliation, compunction, sorrow, and grief, and may be brought down, as it were, to the very gate of hell, and feel the very flashing of hell-fire in his conscience for his sins, yet it is not because he has offended God by it — rather, it is because he has thereby offended *himself*: that is, because he has brought himself into the danger of eternal death and condemnation by it.⁶ But once he believes the love of God to him in Christ, in pardoning his iniquity and passing by his transgressions,⁷ then he sorrows and grieves for offending *God* by sin. He reasons like this with himself: “And is it so indeed? Has the Lord given his own Son to death for you, who have been such a vile sinful wretch? And has Christ borne all your sins? And was he wounded for your transgressions?” Oh then is the working of his inner being, the stirring of his affections, the melting and relenting of his repenting heart!

196 THE MARROW OF

¹ Namely, the faith of special mercy, or a faith of particular application, without which, in greater or lesser measure, it is not saving faith.

² See page 144, note.

³ His soul resting on Christ, whom he has received for salvation.

⁴ Thus he conceives of God according to the measure of his faith, or of his soul's resting on Christ, which allows for various degrees.

⁵ See page 144, note.

⁶ A man's believing God's love toward him is woven into the very nature of saving faith, as has already been shown. Therefore, whatever humiliation, compunction, sorrow, and grief for sin goes before it, they must be but legal, being before faith, “without which it is impossible to please God,” Heb. 11.6.

⁷ The belief of which, in some measure, is included in the nature of faith. — See Dote on the definition of faith, and p. 192, note.

“Then he remembers his own evil ways, and his doings that were not good, and he loathes himself in his own eyes for all his abominations;” Ezek. 36.31; and looking upon Christ, “whom he has pierced, he mourns bitterly for him, as one mourns for his only son,” Zech. 12.10. Thus, when faith has bathed a man’s heart in the blood of Christ, it is so mollified that it quickly dissolves into tears of godly sorrow; so that if Christ but turns and looks at him, oh then, with Peter, he goes out and weeps bitterly!^{Luk 22.61-62} And this is true gospel-mourning; and this is right evangelical repenting.¹

Thirdly, Though before a man truly believes in Christ, he may so reform his life and amend his ways, that as touching “the righteousness which is of the law,”^{Rom 10.5} he may be blameless, as it was with the apostle Paul, Philip. 3.6. Yet, being under the Covenant of Works, all the obedience that he yields to the law, all his quitting of sin, and his performance of duties, all his avoiding what the law forbids, and all his doing what the law commands, is begotten by the Law of *Works*; it is of Hagar the bond-woman, by the force of self-love. And so, indeed, these are the fruit and works of a bond-servant who is moved and constrained to do all that he does, for fear of punishment and hope of reward.² “

MODERN DIVINITY. 197

For,” says Luther, on the Galatians, p. 218, “the law given on Mount Sinai, which the Arabians call *Agar*, begets none but servants.” And so indeed, all that such a man does is but hypocrisy; for he pretends serving God; whereas, indeed, he intends to serve himself. And how can he do otherwise? For while he lacks faith, he lacks all things. He is an empty vine, and therefore he must bring forth fruit for himself, Hosea 10.1. Till a man is served himself, he will not serve the Lord Christ.³ No, while he lacks faith, he lacks the love of Christ, and therefore he does not live to Christ but to himself, because he loves himself. And hence, surely, we may conceive of it as Dr. Preston does: “All that a man does, not out of love, is out of hypocrisy. Wherever love is not, there is nothing but hypocrisy in such a man’s heart.”

¹ This is the springing up of the “seeds of repentance put into the heart in sanctification,” *Larg. Cat.* q. 75; a work of sanctifying grace, acceptable to God; the curse being taken off the sinner, and his person accepted in the Beloved, and like the mourning and repenting of that woman in Luke 7.47, “who, having forgiven her much, loved much.” There is an inseparable connection between this repentance and pardon of sin, so that it is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it. *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 15. art. 3. — See also p. 146, note.

² This can have no reference at all to the motives of a believer’s obedience, unless believers, as well as unbelievers, are to be reckoned under the Covenant of Works; for it is manifest that the author speaks here of only those who are under that covenant. But on the contrary, if a man is under the Covenant of Works, called the law, in the style of the Holy Ghost, then he is not a believer, but an unbeliever, Rom. 6.14, “Sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law, but under grace.” This reasoning proceeds on this principle: That those who are under the Covenant of Works, and only they, are under the dominion or reigning power of sin. And if men, being under the Covenant of Works, are under the dominion of sin, then it is evident that they are not believers, but bond-servants, evident that the love of God does not dwell in them, but corrupt self-love reigns in them. And therefore, they are constrained to the good they do, by fear of punishment and hope of reward, agreeable to the threatening and promise of the broken Covenant of Works which they are under. That their obedience conform to their state and condition, is but servile; no better than it is here described to be, having only the letter, but not the spirit of true obedience, which, before any man can attain to it, he must be set free from the Covenant of Works, as the apostle teaches; Rom. 7.6, “But now, we are delivered from the *law*, that being dead to what we were held in, we should *serve in newness of spirit*, and not in the *oldness of the letter*.” and finally, that as is the condition and the obedience of those under the Covenant of Works, so shall their end be, Gal. 4.30, “Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman.”

³ That is, till the empty vine is filled with the Spirit from Jesus Christ, it will never bring forth fruit to him. Till a man once eats by faith, he will never work rightly. The conscience must be purged from dead works, otherwise one is not in a fit state “to serve the living God,” Heb. 9.14. The Covenant of Works says to the sinner, who is yet without strength, “Work, and then you shall be filled;” but the Covenant of Grace says to him, “Be filled, and then you must work.” And until the yoke of the Covenant of Works is taken off a man’s jaws, and food is given to him, he will never take on and bear the yoke of Christ acceptably.

But when a man, through the “hearing of faith, receives the Spirit of Christ,” Gal. 3.2, that Spirit, according to the measure of faith,^{Rom 12.3} writes the lively law of love in his heart (as Tyndale sweetly says), whereby he is enabled to work freely and of his own accord, without the co-action or compulsion of the law.¹

¹ The words *co-action* and *compulsion* signify one and the same thing, namely: forcing; so that to work without the co-action or compulsion of the law, is to work without being forced to it by the law.

One would think it so very plain and obvious, that the way how the law forces men to work, is by the terror of the dreadful punishment which it threatens in case of not working. It only darkens the matter to say that the co-action or compulsion of the law consists in its commanding and binding power or force. This must be meant of the commanding and binding power of the Covenant of Works, or of the law, as it is the Covenant of Works. For it cannot mean (as these words seem to bear) that power which the law of the Ten Commandments, as a rule of life, has over men to bind them to obedience. I think, the impartial reader is by this time convinced that the author does not deny that believers are still under this law; for to call it co-action or compulsion is contrary to the common understanding and usage of these words in society. At this rate, one would have to say that the glorified saints and angels (to ascend no higher), as creatures of God, under the commanding and binding power of the eternal rule of righteousness, are also compelled and forced to their obedience; and that when we pray, “Your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven,” we would be praying to be enabled to obey the will of God, as the angels do in heaven, by co-action and compulsion in the height of it. For surely the angels have the sense of the commanding and binding power of the eternal rule of righteousness on them, in a degree far beyond what any believer on earth has. Therefore that exposition of the co-action or compulsion of the law, which puts believers under the law’s coercion or compulsion, amounts to just what we met with before: namely, that believers are under the commanding power (at least) of the Covenant of Works, having obedience bound upon them with the cords of hell, or under the pain of the curse. Accordingly, the compulsion of the law is more plainly described to be its binding power and moral force, which it derives from the awful authority of the sovereign Lawgiver commanding obedience to his law, and threatening disobedience with wrath, or with death, or hell. And so our author is blamed for not subjecting believers to this compulsion of the law.

In the preceding paragraph he had shown that the obedience of unbelievers to the law of the Ten Commandments is produced by the influence on them of the law (or covenant) of works, forcing or constraining them to it by the fear of the punishment which it threatens. Thus, they work by the co-action or compulsion of the law, or Covenant of Works, being destitute of the love of God. Here he affirms that once a man is brought to Christ, having the sanctifying Spirit of Christ dwelling in him, and being endowed with faith that purifies the heart, and with love that is strong as death, he is enabled to work freely, and of his own accord, without that co-action or compulsion.

This is the doctrine of the holy Scripture. Psalm 51.12, “Uphold me with your free spirit.” Compare Gal. 5.18, “But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.” So Psalm 110.3, “Your people shall be willing in the day of your power.” Compare 1Pet. 5.2, “Not by constraint but willingly.” And believers are declared to be “not under the law,” Rom. 6.14. — “To be made free from the law of death. Not to have received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption,” Chap. 8.2, 15. How then can they still be under the co-active and compulsive power of the law, frightening and forcing them to obedience by its threatenings of the second death, or eternal wrath?

And it is evident that this is the received doctrine of orthodox divines, which might be attested by a cloud of witnesses if the nature of this work permitted. “Not to be under the law,” says Luther, “is to do good things, and abstain from wicked things, not through compulsion of the law, but by free love, and with pleasure.” *Chos. Ser.* 20.p. 232.

“The second part (*i.e.*, of Christian liberty) is,” says Calvin, “that consciences obey the law, not as compelled by the necessity of the law, but being free from the yoke of the law itself, they obey the will of God of their own accord.” *Instit.* book 3.chap. 19, sec. 4.

“We would distinguish between the law considered as a law, and the law considered as a covenant. A law necessarily implies no more than (1.) To direct. (2.) To command, enforcing that obedience by authority. A covenant further necessarily implies promises made upon some condition, or threatenings added if such a condition is not performed. The first two are essential to the law; the last two, as to believers, are made void through Christ. In this sense it is said that by him we are freed from the law as a covenant; so that believers’ lives do not depend on the promises annexed to the law, nor are they in danger by the threatenings adjoined to it.” Durham on the Commands, p. 4.

“What a new creature does, in observance of the law, is from natural freedom, choice, and judgment, and not by the force of any threatenings annexed to it.” Charnock, vol. ii. p. 59.

See *Westminster Confession*, chap. 20, art. 1, of which afterwards.

And that text in 1Tim. 1.9, “The law is not made for a righteous man,” is generally understood thus by divines, critics, and commentators: the law threatening, compelling, and condemning, is not made for a righteous man, because he is pushed forward to duty of his own accord, and he is no longer led by the spirit of bondage, and fear of punishment.” Turret., loc. 2, q. 24, th. 8. — “By *the law* is to be understood the *Moral Law*, as it is armed in stings and terrors, to restrain rebellious sinners. By the righteous man is meant one in whom a principle of divine grace is planted, and

For that love with which Christ, or God in Christ, has loved him, and which he apprehends by faith, will constrain him to do so, according to those words of the apostle in 2Cor. 5.14, “The love of Christ constrains us.” That is, it will make him do so, whether he wills it or not;

MODERN DIVINITY. 199

he cannot help but choose to do it.¹ I tell you truly, according to the love of Christ shed abroad in the heart of any man, it is such a strong impulsion, that it carries him on to serve and please the Lord in all things, according to the saying of an evangelical man:²

200 THE MARROW OF

“The will and affection of a believer, according to the measure of faith and the spirit received, sweetly quickens and bends to choose, affect, and delight in whatever is good and acceptable to God, or to a good man — the Spirit freely and cheerfully moves and inclines him to keep the law, without fear of hell or hope of heaven.”³ For a Christian man, says sweet Tyndale, works only because it is the will of his Father; for after he is overcome with love and kindness, he seeks to do the will of God, which is indeed a Christian man’s nature. And what he does, he does freely after the example of Christ. As a natural son, ask him why he does such a thing. ‘Why,’ he says, ‘it is the will of my Father, and I do it so that I may please him.’ For, indeed, love desires no wages; it is wages enough to itself; it has sweetness enough in itself; it desires no addition; it pays its own wages. And therefore it is the true child-like obedience, begotten by faith, of Sarah the free-woman, by the force of God’s love. And so it is indeed the only true and sincere obedience. For, as Dr. Preston says, “To do a thing in love, is to do it in sincerity; and indeed, there is no other definition of sincerity; that is the best way to know it by.”

Sect. 7. — Slavish fear and servile hope are not the springs of true obedience.

Nom. But sir, I ask you: would you not have believers avoid evil for fear of hell, and do good for hope of heaven?

who, from the knowledge and love of God, chooses the things that are pleasing to him. As the law has annexed so many severe threatenings to the transgressors of it, it is evident that it is directed to the wicked, who will only be compelled by fear from an outrageous breaking of it.” Continuation of Poole’s *Annotations* on the Text. “The law is not for him, as a master to command him, to constrain him as a bondman.” Lodovic de Dieu. “The law does not compel, press on, frighten, lie heavy upon, and punish a righteous man.” Strigelius. — “It does not lie on him as a heavy burden, compelling a man against his will, violently pressing him on, and pushing him forwards; it does not *draw* him to obedience; but *leads* him, being willing.” Scultetus — “For of his own accord he does right.” Castalio, apud Pol. Synop. in Loc.

¹ It is a metonymy from the effect, that is, love makes me do it in that manner, as a man that is compelled; that is the meaning of it. So it has the same effect that compulsion has, though there is nothing more different from compulsion than love.” Dr. Preston, *ibid.* p. 29.

² If one considers that the drift and scope of this whole discourse, from p. 192, is to reveal the naughtiness of Antinomista’s faith, observed by Neophytus, one may perceive that by quoting Towne (the Antinomian) on that topic, the author gives no more ground to suspect himself of Antinomianism — though he calls him an evangelical man — than a Protestant gives in point of Popery, by quoting Cardinal Bellarmine against a Papist, though with that he calls him a Catholic. And the epithet given to Towne, is so far from being a high commendation that, really, it is none at all; for, though both these epithets, the latter as well as the former, are in themselves honourable, yet in these cases, a man speaking in the language of his adversary, they are not at all so. Evangelista could not help but remember that Antinomista had told him roundly, “That he had not been so evangelical as some others in the city, which caused him to leave hearing him, to hear them,” *i.e.*, those evangelical men. And why might he not give him a sound note from one of those evangelical men, even under that character, so acceptable to him, without ranking himself with them?

³ See p. 197, note, and the following one.

Evan. No, indeed, I would not have any believer do either one or the other; for so far as they do so, their obedience is but slavish.¹ And therefore, though when

¹ As for what concerns the hope of heaven, the author purposely explains that matter (p. 205) that he would not have any believer to avoid evil or do good for fear of hell. The meaning of this is plainly this: you being a believer in Christ ought not to avoid evil and do good, for fear you will be condemned and cast into hell. So far as a believer does so, the author justly reckons his obedience accordingly slavish. This is the common understanding and sense of such a phrase, such as when we say, The slave works for fear of the whip. Some men abstain from stealing, robbing, and the like, for fear of the gallows; they avoid evil, not from love of virtue, but for fear of punishment, as the heathen poet says of his pretender to virtue,

Oderunt peccare boni virtutis amore,
Tu nihil admittes in te formidine poenae.
HORAT. Epist. 16.

Which may be thus translated:

Hatred of vice, in generous souls,
From love of virtue flows,
While nothing vicious minds controls
But servile fear of blows.

This is quite another thing than to say that a believer in doing good, or avoiding evil, ought not to regard threatenings, nor be influenced by the threatening of death. For though believers should never fear that they will be condemned and cast into hell, yet they both may and ought to awfully regard the threatenings of the holy law: and *how* they ought to regard them, one may learn from the *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 19. art. 6, in these words, “The threatenings of it [*i.e.*, of the law] serve to show what even their sins deserve; and what afflictions they may expect in this life for them, although freed from the curse of it threatened in the law.” Thus they are to regard them, not as denunciations of their doom in case of sinning, but as a mirror in which to behold the fearful demerit of their sin; the unspeakable love of God in freeing them from bearing it, his fatherly displeasure against his own for their sin, and the tokens of his anger to be expected by them in that case. So will they be influenced to avoid evil and do good, being filled thereby with hatred and horror of sin, thankfulness to God, and fear of the displeasure and frowns of their Father — though not with a fear that he will condemn them, and destroy them in hell; this mirror represents no such thing.

Such a fear in a believer is groundless. For (1.) He is not under the threatening of hell, or liable to the curse. See p. 113, 114, notes. If he were, he must that moment he sins, fall under the curse. For since the curse is the sentence of the law, passing on the sinner according to the threatening, adjudging, and binding over to the punishment threatened. If the law say to a man before he sins, “In the day you eat of it, you shall surely die,” it says to him in the moment he sins, “Cursed is everyone that does not continue in all things written in the law, to do them.” And because believers sin in everything they do — their very believing and repenting always being attended with sinful imperfections — it is not possible, at this rate, that they can be out from under the curse even one moment; but it must be continually wreathed about their necks. It is vain to distinguish between gross sins and lesser sins in this case; for as every sin, even the least, deserves God’s wrath and curse, [*Short. Cat.*] so against whomever the curse takes place (and by virtue of God’s truth, it takes place against all those who are threatened with hell or eternal death) they are cursed for all sins, smaller or greater: “Cursed is everyone that does not continue in all things.” Though there is still a difference made between greater and lesser sins in respect to the degree of punishment, yet there is none in respect to the kind. But now believers are set free from the curse. Gal. 3.13.

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us.” (2.) By the redemption of Christ already applied to the believer, and by the oath of God, he is perfectly secured from the return of the curse upon him,” Gal. 3.13, [see before] compared with Isa. 53. and 54.9, “For this is as the waters of Noah to me: for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be angry with you, nor rebuke you.” Therefore the believer is perfectly secured from being made liable any more to hell or eternal death. For a man, being under the curse is “so made liable to the pains of hell forever.” *Short. Cat.* (3.) He is justified by faith, and so adjudged to live eternally in heaven. This is unalterable, “for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance,” Rom. 11.29. And a man can never stand adjudged to eternal life, and to eternal death, at one and the same time. (4.) One great difference between believers and unbelievers lies here, that the latter are bound over to hell and wrath, and the former are not: John 3.18, “He that believes is not condemned: but he that does not believe, is condemned already;” not that he is in hell already, but bound over to it. Now, a believer is still a believer from the first moment of his believing; therefore it remains true concerning him, from that moment forever, that he is not condemned or bound over to hell and wrath. He is expressly secured against it for all time to come, from that moment. John 5.24, “He shall not come into condemnation.” And the apostle cuts off all evasion by distinctions of condemnation here, while he tells us in express terms, “There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus,” Rom. 8.1. (5.) The believer’s union with Christ is never dissolved. Hosea 2.19, “I will betroth you to me forever:” and being in Christ he is set beyond the reach of condemnation, Rom. 8.1. Indeed, being in Christ, he is perfectly righteous

MODERN DIVINITY. 201

they were first awakened and convinced of their misery, and set one foot forward to go on in the way of life, as with the

202 THE MARROW OF

Prodigal, they would be hired servants. Yet when, by the eye of faith, they see the mercy and indulgence of their heavenly Father in Christ,

MODERN DIVINITY. 203

running to meet them and embrace them; I would have them, as with the Prodigal, talk no more of being hired servants, Luke 15.17. I would have them so wrestle against doubting, and so exercise their faith, as to believe that by Christ, they are “delivered from the hands of their enemies,” — the law, sin, wrath, death, the devil, and hell — “that they may serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of their lives,” Luke 1.74, 75. And I would

forever; for he is never again stripped of the white raiment of Christ’s imputed righteousness; while the union remains, it cannot be lost: but to be perfectly righteous, and yet liable to condemnation before a just Judge, are inconsistent.

Nor is such a fear in a believer acceptable to God; for (1.) It is not from the Spirit of God, but from one’s own spirit, or worse; Rom. 8.15, “You have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;” namely, to fear of death or hell. Heb. 2.15, “Who through fear of death were all their life-time subject to bondage.” (2.) It was the design of sending Christ, that believers in him might serve God without that fear, Luke 1.74. That “we, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear.” Compare 1Cor. 15.26, “The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” And for this very cause Jesus Christ came, “That through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and deliver those who, through fear of death, were all their life,” namely, before their deliverance by Christ, “subject to bondage,” Heb. 2.14, 15.

(3.) Though fear is indeed consistent with faith, yet it is contrary to it; Mat. 8.26, “Why are you fearful, you of little faith!” And contrary to love too; 1John 4.18, “Perfect love casts out fear, because fear has torment.” — 2Tim. 1.7, “God has not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, of love, and of a sound mind.”

(4.) As it is not agreeable to the character of a father, who is not a revenging judge to his own family, to threaten to kill his children though he threatens to chastise them: so such a fear is no more agreeable to the spirit of adoption, nor becoming to the state of sonship to God, than for a child to fear that his father is such a one as to kill him. Therefore, “the spirit of bondage to fear” is opposed to “the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father,” Rom. 8.15.

“Adoption is an act of the free grace of God, whereby all those who are justified are received into the number of his children, have his name put upon them, the Spirit of his Son given to them (receive the spirit of adoption, *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 12) are under his fatherly care and dispensation, admitted to all the liberties and privileges of the sons of God, made heirs of all the promises, and fellow-heirs with Christ in glory.” *Larg. Cat.* q. 74.

“The LIBERTY which Christ has purchased for believers under the gospel, consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the Moral Law, as also in their free access to God, and yielding obedience to him, not out of slavish fear, but a child-like love and willing mind. All of these were common also to believers under the law.” *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 20, art. 1. By the guilt of sin here, must be understood obligation to eternal wrath. See p. 87, note 4.

“The end of Christian liberty is that, being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might ‘serve the Lord without fear.’” *Ibid.* art. 3.

“The one [namely: justification] equally frees all believers from the revenging wrath of God, and that is perfectly in this life, so that they never fall into condemnation.” *Larg. Cat.* q. 77.

“Though a soul is justified and freed from the guilt of eternal punishment; and so the spirit is no more to be afraid and disquieted for eternal wrath and hell.” Rutherford’s *Trial and Triumph*, etc. Ser. 19, p. 261.

“The believer has no conscience of sins; that is, in conscience he is not to fear everlasting condemnation; that is most true.” *Ibid.* p. 266.

See more to this purpose, p. 108, note; 113, note; 197, note.

have them so believe God's love toward them in Christ, that thereby they may be constrained to obedience.¹

Nom. But, sir, you know that our Saviour says, "Fear him that is able to destroy both soul and body in hell," Mat. 10.28. And the apostle says, "We shall receive from the Lord the reward of the inheritance," Col. 3.24.

204 THE MARROW OF

And is it not said, that "Moses looked for the recompense of reward"? Heb. 11.26.

Evan. Surely the intent of our blessed Saviour in that first Scripture, is to teach all believers that when God commands one thing, and man another, they should obey God and not man,^{Act 5.29} rather than intending to exhort them to avoid evil for fear of hell.² And as for those other Scriptures you alleged, if you mean *reward*, and the means to obtain that reward, in the *Scriptural* sense, then that is another matter. But I thought you meant it in our common sense, and not in the Scriptural sense.

MODERN DIVINITY. 205

Nom. Why sir, I ask you, what difference is there between reward, and the means to obtain the reward, in our common sense, and in the Scriptural sense?

Evan. Why, in our *common* sense, reward is what is conceived to come from God, or to be given by God. This is imagining heaven under carnal notions, beholding it as a place where there is freedom from all misery, and fulness of all pleasures and happiness, and it is to be obtained by our own works and doings.³ But reward in the *Scriptural* sense, is not so much what comes from

¹ And it is no marvel that one would have them do so, since that is what all the children of God with one mouth daily pray for, saying, "your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

² There is a great difference between a believer's avoiding evil for fear of hell, and his avoiding it from the fear of God, "as able to destroy both soul and body in hell." The former respects the event as to his eternal state, the latter does not. To this purpose, the variation of the phrase in the text is observable — "do not fear those who kill the body:" this notes the event as to *temporal* death by the hands of men, which our Lord would have his people come to terms with; but with respect to *eternal* death, he says, do not fear the one who destroys, but "who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Moreover, the former is a slavish fear of God as a revenging judge; the believer avoiding sin for fear he will be damned: the latter is a reverential fear of God as of a Father with whom there is awful dominion and power. The former carries in it a doubtfulness and uncertainty as to the event, plainly contrary to the remedy prescribed in this same case: Prov. 29.25, "The fear of man brings a snare; but whoever puts his trust in the Lord shall be safe." The latter is consistent with the most full assurance of one's being put beyond all hazard of hell, Heb. 12.28, 29, "Therefore receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear. For our God is a consuming fire." A believer, by fixing his eyes on God who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell, may be so filled with the reverential fear of God, his dreadful power and wrath against sin, as to be fenced against the slavish fear of the most cruel tyrants, tempting him to sin; though in the meantime he most firmly believes that he is past that gulf, and can never fall into it, nor be bound over to it. For so he has a lively representation of the just deserving of sin, even of that sin in particular to which he is tempted; and so he must tremble at the thought of it, as an evil greater than death. As when a child sees his father lashing his slaves, he cannot help but tremble and fear to offend him, so when a believer turns his eyes on the miseries of the damned, he must raise in himself an awful apprehension of the severity of his Father against sin, even his own; and cause him to say in his heart, "My flesh trembles for fear of you; and I am afraid of your judgments," Psalm 119.120. Thus also he has a view of the frightful danger he has escaped; looking back to it must make one's heart shiver, and conceive a horror of sin; as in the case of a pardoned criminal looking back to a dreadful precipice from which he was to have been thrown headlong, if a pardon had not seasonably prevented his ruin; Eph. 2.3, "We were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

³ Thus, to avoid evil and do good for hope of heaven, is to do so in hope of obtaining heaven by our own works. And certainly "that hope shall be cut off, and be a spider's web," Job 8.14; for a sinner shall never obtain heaven except in the way of free grace; "But if it is of works, then it is no more grace," Rom. 11.6. But our author nowhere denies that a believer may be animated to obedience by eyeing the reward already obtained for him by the works of Christ. So indeed the apostle exhorts believers to run their Christian race, "looking to Jesus, who for the joy that was set before him," (to be obtained by his own works, in the way of most proper merits) "endured the cross," Heb. 12.1, 2.

God, or is given by God, as what lies *in God* — the full fruition of God himself in Christ. God says to Abraham, “I am your shield, and your exceeding great reward,” Gen. 15.1; and “Whom do I have in heaven but you?” says David; “and there is none on earth that I desire besides you,” Psalm 73.25; and “I shall be satisfied when I awake with your likeness,” ¹ Psalm 17.15. And the means to obtain this reward is not by *doing*, but by *believing* — by “drawing near with a true heart, in the full assurance of faith,” Heb. 10.22; and so indeed, it is given freely.² And therefore you are not to conceive of that reward which the Scripture speaks of, as if it was the wages of a servant, but as the inheritance of sons.³

206 THE MARROW OF

And when the Scripture seems to induce believers to obedience by promising this reward, you are to conceive that the Lord speaks to believers as a father does to his young son: Do this or that, and then I will love you. Whereas we know that the father loves the son first, and so does God. And therefore this is the voice of believers: “We love him, because he first loved us,” 1John 4.19. The Lord pays them, or at least he gives them a sure earnest of their wages, before he asks them to work.⁴ And therefore the contest of a believer (according to the measure of his faith) is not, what will God give me? But, what will I give God? “What will I render to the Lord for all his goodness? For your lovingkindness is before my eyes, and I have walked in your truth,” Psalm 116.12, and 26.3.

Nom. Then, sir, it seems that holiness of life, and good works, are not the cause of eternal happiness, but only the way there?

Evan. Do you not remember that our Lord Jesus himself says, “I am the way, the truth, and the life”? John 14.6. And does not the apostle say to the believing Colossians, “As you have received Jesus Christ the Lord, so walk in him”? Col. 2.6. That is, as you have received him by faith, so go on in your faith, and by his power walk in his commandments. So that good works, as I conceive it, may be called a believer’s walking in the way of eternal happiness, rather than the way itself. But however it is conceived, we may assuredly conclude this: that the sum and substance both of the way, and of walking in the way, consists in receiving Jesus Christ by faith,

MODERN DIVINITY. 207

“Papists,” says Dr. Preston, “tell of escaping damnation, and of getting into heaven. But Scripture gives other motives [namely: to good works]. You are in Christ, and Christ is yours. Consider what he has done for you, what you have by him, what you had been without him, and thus stir yourself up to do for him what he requires.” — Abridg. of his *Works*, p. 394.

¹ “Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.” *Short. Cat.* — “Believers shall be made perfectly blessed in full enjoying of God to all eternity.” *Ibid.*

² Rom. 4.16, “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end that the promise [namely: promise of the inheritance, verses 13, 14,] might be sure to all the seed.” Otherwise it is not given freely; for “to him that works, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt,” verse 4. 18

³ The apostle’s decision in this case seems to be pretty clear: Rom. 6.23, “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life:” he would not have us look at it as the wages of a servant too. The joining together of both these notions of the reward was, it seems, the doctrine of the Pharisees; Mark 10.17, “Good Master, what shall I do, that I may inherit eternal life?” And how unacceptable it was to our blessed Saviour, may be learned from his answer to that question. “The Papists confess that life is merited by Christ, and it is made ours by the right of inheritance: so far we go with them. Yes, touching works, they hold many things in common with us; (1.) That no works of themselves can merit everlasting life. (2.) That works done before conversion, can merit nothing at God’s hand. (3.) “That there is no merit at God’s hand without his mercy — no exact merit as there often is among men. The point about which we dissent is that to the merit of Christ and the free promise, they would join the merit of works as done by those who are adopted children.” — Bayne on Eph. 2.8.

⁴ Namely, in the way of the Covenant of Grace.

and in yielding obedience to his law, according to the measure of that receiving.”¹

Sect. 8. — The efficacy of faith for holiness of heart and life.

Neo. Sir, I am persuaded, that through my neighbour Nomista’s asking you these questions, you have been interrupted in your discourse, in showing how faith enables a man to exercise his Christian graces, and perform his Christian duties rightly. Therefore I ask you to go on.

Evan. What more should I say? For the time would fail me to tell you that any man’s true peace of conscience is according to the measure of his faith. For the apostle says, “being justified by faith, we have peace with God,” Rom. 5.1.

208 THE MARROW OF

Indeed, the prophet Isaiah says, “You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is fixed on you, because he trusts in you,” Isa. 26.3. Here there is a sure and true grounded peace: “Therefore it is of faith,” says the apostle, “that it might be by grace, and that the promise might be sure to all the seed,” Rom. 4.16. And a man’s true humility of spirit is according to his believing that he is “justified freely by God’s grace, through that redemption that is in Jesus Christ,”² Rom. 3.24. So that, even though he is endowed with excellent gifts and graces, and even though he performs ever so many duties, he denies himself in them all. He does not use them as ladders by which to ascend into heaven. Rather, he desires to “be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ,” Philip. 3.9. He does not think that he is one step nearer to heaven for all his works and performances. And if he hears any man praise him for his gifts and graces, he will not conceive that he has obtained them by his own industry and taking pains, as some men have proudly thought; nor will he speak out, as some have done, saying; These gifts and graces have cost me something — I have taken great pains to obtain them. Rather he says, “By the grace of God I am what I am; and not I, but the grace of God that was with me,” 1Cor. 15.10. And if he beholds an ignorant man, or someone living wickedly, he will not call him “Carnal wretch!” or “Profane fellow!” or say as some do, “Stand by yourself! Do not come near me, for I am holier than you,” Isa. 65.5. Rather, he pities such a man, and prays for him; and in his heart he says concerning himself, “Who makes you different? And what do you have that you did not receive?” 1Cor. 4.7.

¹ Our author, remembering Nomista’s bias towards good works, as separated from Christ, reminds him that Christ is the way; and that the soul’s motion heavenward is in Christ; that is, once a man is united to Christ by faith, he moves heavenward, making progress in believing, and does so by influences derived from Jesus Christ, walking in his holy commandments. The Scripture acknowledges no other holiness of life, or good works. And concerning the necessity of these, the author moves no debate. But as to the propriety of his expression, since good works are keeping the commandments in the way in which we are to go, he conceives these works may, with greater propriety, be called *walking* in the way, rather than the way itself. It is certain that the Scripture speaks of “walking in Christ,” Col. 2.6, “walking in his commandments,” 2Chron. 17.4, and “walking in good works,” Eph. 2.10; and as these terms signify one and the same thing, they are all metaphorical. But one would think calling good works the *way to be walked in*, is further removed from the propriety of expression, than calling them *walking in the way*. But the author waives this as a matter of phraseology, or only a manner of speaking; he tells us that assuredly the sum and substance, both of the way to eternal happiness, and of walking in the way to it, consists in receiving Jesus Christ by faith, and in yielding obedience to his law according to the measure of that receiving. In this is comprehended Christ and holiness, faith and obedience — which are inseparable. And no narrower is the compass of the way and walking mentioned in Isa. 35.8, 9, “It shall be called the way of holiness — the redeemed shall walk there.” — “The way of holiness, or the holy way (according to an usual Hebraism) as it is generally understood by interpreters, is the way leading to heaven, says Piscator; namely, it is by Christ, faith, and the doctrine of a holy life.” Fererius apud Pol. Synop. in loc. And now that our author, though he conceives good works are not so properly called *the way*, as *the walking*, yet he does not say that in no sense they may be called *the way*, but expressly asserts they are the soul’s walking in the way of eternal happiness. He cannot justly be charged here (more than any where else in his book) with teaching that holiness is not necessary to salvation, unless one would first say that, though the way itself to eternal happiness is necessary to salvation, yet walking in the way is not necessary to it; this would be Antinomian with a witness.

² And not for any thing wrought in himself, or done by himself. p. 192. note.

And thus I might go on and show you how, according to any man's faith, is his true joy in God, and his true thankfulness to God, and his patience in all troubles and afflictions, and his contentedness in any condition, and his willingness to suffer, and his cheerfulness in suffering, and his contentedness to part with any earthly thing. Indeed, according to any man's faith, is his ability to pray rightly, Rom. 10.14, to receive the sacrament with profit and comfort, and to do any duty either to God or man in a right manner, and to a right end, Heb. 4.2. Indeed, according to the measure of any man's faith, is his love to Christ,

MODERN DIVINITY. 209

and so his love to man for Christ's sake — and consequently, his readiness and willingness to forgive an injury, and yes, to forgive an enemy, and do good to those who hate him. The more faith any man has, the less love he has for the world or the things that are in the world. ^{1Joh 2.15} To conclude, the greater any man's faith is, the more fit, and the more willing, he is to die.

Neo. Well, sir, now I perceive that faith is a most excellent grace, and happy is that man who has a great measure of it.

Evan. The truth is, faith is the chief grace that Christians are to be exhorted to get and exercise.¹ Therefore, when the people asked our Lord Christ, "what they should do to work the works of God," he answered and said, "This is the work of God: that you *believe* on him whom he has sent," John 6.29. He was speaking as if there were no other duty required at all, but only believing; for indeed, to say it as it is, believing includes all other duties in it, and they all spring from it. Therefore says one, "Preach faith, and you preach all." — "When I bid a man to believe," says learned Rollock, "I bid him to do all good things;" for as Dr. Preston says, "Truth of belief will bring forth truth of holiness; if a man believes, works of sanctification will follow; for faith draws after it inherent righteousness and sanctification. Therefore," he says, "if a man will go about this great work to change his life, to get victory over any sin so that it may not have dominion over him, to have his conscience purged from dead works and be made a partaker of the divine nature, then let him not go about it as a moral man." That is, he is not to consider what commandments there are, what rectitude the law requires, and how to bring his heart to it; but "let him go about it as a *Christian*; that is, let him believe the promise of pardon in the blood of Christ; and in the very act of believing the promise, he will be able to cleanse his heart from dead works." ²

Neo. But I ask you, sir, from where does faith get its power and virtue to do all this?

Evan. From our Lord Jesus Christ; for faith ingrafts a man who is by nature a wild olive branch, into Christ as into the natural olive tree; it fetches sap from the root, who is Christ,

210 THE MARROW OF

and thereby faith makes the tree bring forth fruit in its kind. Indeed, faith fetches a supernatural efficacy from the death and life of Christ. By virtue of this, it metamorphoses ³ the heart of a believer, and creates and infuses into him new principles of action.⁴

¹ More accurately, "faith is the chief grace that *unbelievers* are to be exhorted to get, and *Christians* to exercise." Faith is not a consumable that Christians must "get" repeatedly, as if they could be a Christian without it; it is the gift of God (Eph 2.8) which justifies us (Gal 2.16). The smallest amount can move mountains (Mat 17.20). Yet the seed of justifying faith must grow (2Thes 1.3), and become a sanctifying and fruitful faith that we exercise, share, strengthen, and continue in by God's grace (Jas 2.22; Phm 1.6; Luk 22.32; Act 14.22; 16.5; Rom 4.20; 2Cor 10.15; Col 1.23; 2.7).

² The sum of it is that no considerations, no endeavours whatever, will truly sanctify a man, without faith. However, such considerations and endeavours are necessary to promote and advance the sanctification of the soul by faith.

³ That is, *transforms* or *changes*. Rom. 12.2, "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind."

⁴ Namely, *instrumentally*. It cannot be denied that our author places faith before the new principles of actions in this passage, and before the habits of grace. And yet it will not follow that, in his opinion, there can be no gracious change

So that faith drains the treasure of all those graces that Christ has stored up in him, and draws them out for the use of a believer. It acts as a spigot that waters all the herbs of the garden. Indeed, faith applies the blood of Christ to a believer's heart. And the blood of Christ has in it, not only a power to wash us from the guilt of sin, but to cleanse and likewise purge us from the power and stain of sin. Therefore, says godly Hooker, "If you would have *grace*, you must first of all get *faith*, and that will bring all the rest. Let faith go to Christ, and there is meekness, patience, humility, and wisdom — and faith will fetch them all to the soul. Therefore (he says) you must not look for sanctification till you come to Christ in vocation."¹

in the soul before faith. What he does indeed teach in this matter, is warranted by the plain testimony of the apostle, Eph. 1.13, "After you believed, you were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise." And what this sealing is, at least as to the chief part of it, may be learned from John 1.16, "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace." For just as sealing is the impression of the image of the seal on the wax, so that the wax thereby receives point for point from the seal, so believers being sealed with the Spirit of Christ, receive grace for grace in Christ, whereby they are made like him, and bear his image. And as it is warranted by the word, so it is agreeable to the old Protestant doctrine, that we are regenerate by faith. This is the title of the 3d chap, of the 3d book of Calvin's *Instit.* and it is taught in the *Old Confess.*, art. 3, in these words: "Regeneration is wrought by the power of the Holy Ghost, working in the hearts of the elect of God an assured faith;" and art. 13, in these words: "So soon as the Spirit of the Lord Jesus (which God's elect children receive by true faith) takes possession in the heart of any man, so soon he regenerates and renews the same man."

Nevertheless, I am not of the mind that, either in truth, or in the judgment of our reformers, or of our author, the first act of faith is an act of an unregenerate, that is to say, a *dead* soul. But to understand this matter rightly, I conceive one must distinguish between regeneration taken strictly, and taken largely; and between new powers and new habits or principles of action. Regeneration, strictly so-called, is the quickening of the dead soul, by the Spirit of Christ passively received; and it goes before faith, according to John 1.12, 13, "But to as many as received him, he gave power to become the sons of God, even to those who believe on his name; who were born not of blood, but of God." This is called by Amesius, the first regeneration, *Medul.* lib. 1, cap. 29, sect. 6; see cap. 26, sect. 19. And it belongs to, or it is the same as effectual calling; in the description of this in the Shorter Catechism, one finds a *renewing* mentioned, whereby sinners are enabled to embrace Jesus Christ; and on the same subject, the Larger Catechism says, "They, although in themselves dead in sin, are hereby made able to answer his call." Regeneration taken in a larger sense, and presupposing the former [i.e., *enabling regeneration*], is the same as sanctification, wrought in the soul by the Spirit of Christ, actively received by faith, and so it follows faith. Acts 26.18, "Among those who are sanctified by faith, that is, in Me." The subjects of this "are the redeemed, called, and justified." *Essen. Com.* cap. 16, sect. 3. And accordingly, in the description of it in the *Shorter Catechism*, mention is made of a second renewing, namely, "Whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die to sin, and live to righteousness." And thus I conceive regeneration to be taken in the above passages of the Old Confession. This is confirmed by the following testimonies: "Being in Christ, we must be new creatures, not in substance, but in the qualities and disposition of our minds, and in the change of the actions of our lives, all of which is impossible for those who have no faith." Mr. John Davidson's *Catechism*, page 29. — "So good works follow as effects of Christ in us, possessed by faith, who begins to work in us regeneration and a renewing of the whole parts and powers of the soul and body. This begun sanctification and holiness, he never ceases to accomplish. *Ibid.* p. 30. — "The effect [namely: of justification] inherent in us, as in a subject, is that new quality which is called inherent righteousness or regeneration." *Grounds of Christian Religion*, by the renowned Beza and Faius, 1586, chap. 29, sect. 11. — "that new quality, then called inherent righteousness and regeneration, testified by good works, is a necessary effect of true faith." *Ibid.* chap. 31, sect. 13.

Now in regeneration taken in the former sense, new powers are put into the soul, whereby the sinner, who was dead in sin, is able to discern Christ in his glory, and to embrace him by faith. But it is in regeneration taken in the latter sense, that new habits of grace, or immediate principles of actions are given; namely, upon the soul's uniting with Christ by faith. So Essenius, having defined regeneration to be putting spiritual life in a man who is spiritually dead, [compare chap. 14, sect. 11.] afterwards says, "As by regeneration new powers were put into the man, so by sanctification are given new spiritual habits." Theological Virtues, *ibid.* cap. 16, sect. 5. And as the Scriptures are express, in that men are "sanctified by faith," Acts 26.18, so is the *Larger Catechism* in that it is in sanctification they are "renewed in the whole man, having the seeds of repentance unto life, and of all other saving graces, put into their hearts," quest. 75.

¹ That is, until you are called and have faithfully responded to Christ – until he is your life (Gal 2.20).

Nom. Truly, sir, I now plainly see that I have been deceived, and have gone a wrong way to work. For I truly thought that holiness of life must go before faith, and be the ground of it, and produce and bring forth faith; whereas now I plainly see that faith must go before, and so produce and bring forth holiness of life.

212 THE MARROW OF

Evan. I remember a man, who was much enlightened in the knowledge of the gospel,¹ who says, “There may be many who think that as a man chooses to serve a prince, so men choose to serve God. So likewise they think that as those who best serve, obtain the most favour from their lord; and as those who have lost something, think that the more they humble themselves, the sooner they will recover it — even so, they think this is the case between God and them. Whereas, God says it is not so, but clean contrary to it. For he himself says, ‘you have not chosen me, but I have chosen you,’ John 15.16. And it is not that we repent and humble ourselves, and do good works, for which he gives us his grace; but we repent and humble ourselves, do good works, and become holy, because he gives us his grace.” The good thief on the cross was not illuminated because he confessed Christ; but he confessed Christ, because he was illuminated. For Luther says on Galatians, p. 124, “The tree must be first, and then the fruit; for the apples do not make the tree, but the tree makes the apples. So faith first makes the person, which afterwards brings forth works. Therefore to do the law without faith, is to make the apples of wood and earth without the tree; this is not to make apples, but mere fantasies.” Therefore, neighbour Nomista, let me entreat you that, whereas before you reformed your life so that you might believe, why, now believe so that you may reform your life. Do not work any longer to get an interest in Christ, but believe your interest in Christ, so that you may work.² And then you will not make the

MODERN DIVINITY. 213

change of your life the ground of your faith, as you have done. As Mr. Calverwell says, many who are asked what caused them to believe, will answer, “Because they have truly repented, and changed their course of life.”³

Ant. Sir, what do you think of a preacher who, in my hearing, said he dared not exhort or persuade sinners to believe their sins were pardoned, before he saw their lives reformed, for fear they would take more liberty to sin?

Evan. Why, what should I say, but that I think that preacher was ignorant of the mystery of faith.¹ For faith is of the nature of sovereign waters, which wash off the corruption of the ulcer,

¹ This man, Bernardine Ochine, an infamous apostate, was at first a monk; but as our author says, being much enlightened in the knowledge of the gospel, he not only made profession of the Protestant Religion, but together with the renowned Peter Martyr, was esteemed a most famous preacher of the gospel, throughout Italy. Being in danger on account of religion, he left Italy by Martyr’s advice; and being greatly assisted by the Duchess of Ferrara in his escape, he went first to Geneva, and then to Zurich, and was admitted a minister in that city. But revealing himself there (as Simon Magus did, after he had joined himself to the church of Samaria) he was banished; and is justly reckoned among the forerunners of the execrable Socinus. See Hoornbeck, appar. ad. contr. Soc. page 47. Hence one may plainly see how there are sermons of his which might safely and to good purpose be quoted. And as for the character given him by the author here, if one is in hazard of reckoning it an applause, one must remember that is no greater than what the apostle gives to those guilty of the sin against the Holy Ghost, Heb. 6.6, “Those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift,” etc., which I have no doubt but our author had his eye upon, in giving this man this character very pertinently.

² That is, by believing, get a saving interest in Christ; whereas before, you have set yourself, as it were, to work it. See the note on the *Definition of Faith*.

³ “Which [he adds] if it does not proceed from faith, and is not so much as a sound *proof* of faith, much less can it be any *cause* to draw them to believe.” — “The only firm ground of saving faith is God’s truth, revealed in his word; as is plainly taught,” Rom. 10.17. *Ibid.* p. 20, 21.

cool the inflammation, and stop the spread of the infection — and so by degrees, it heals it. Nor did he know that faith is of the nature of cordials, which so comfort the heart and ease it, that they also expel the noxious humours, and strengthen the nature against them.²

214- THE MARROW OF

Ant. And I am acquainted with a professor [of Christ], though God knows ³ he is a very weak one, who says, If he were to believe before his life is reformed, then he might believe and yet walk on in his sins. I ask you, sir, what would you say to such a man?

Evan. Why, I could say with Dr. Preston, let him believe truly, and do this, if he can — but it is impossible. Let him believe, and the other will follow. Truth of belief will produce truth of holiness. For if he ponders it well, who can fear a fleshly licentiousness, where the believing soul is united and married to Christ? ⁴ The law, as it is the Covenant of Works, and Christ, are set in opposition, as are two husbands married to one wife successively, Rom. 7.4.⁵ While the law was alive in the conscience, all its fruits were deadly, ver. 5. But Christ, taking the same spouse to himself, and the law being dead, he makes her fruitful to God by his quickening Spirit, ver. 6; and so he raises up seed for the former husband; for *materially* these are the works of the law, even though they are produced by the Spirit of Christ in the gospel.⁶

Ant. And yet, sir, I am truly persuaded that there are many in this city, both preachers and professors, who are of the very same opinion as these two.

Evan. The truth is, many preachers stand on the praise of some moral virtue, and inveigh against some vice of the times, more than upon pressing men *to believe*. But, says a learned writer, “It will be our condemnation if we love darkness rather than light, and still desire to be groping in the twilight of morality, in the precepts of moral men, than to walk in the true light of

¹ This censure, as it natively follows upon the overthrowing of that doctrine, namely: “That holiness of life must go before faith, and so be the ground of it, and produce and bring it forth;” so it is founded on these two ancient Protestant principles: (1.) That the belief of the remission of sin is comprehended in saving, justifying faith; of which see p. 192. note, and the note on the *Definition of Faith*. (2.) That true repentance, and acceptable reformation of life, necessarily flow from, but do not go before saving faith; of which we see p. 144. note, and 146. note. Hence it necessarily follows, that remission of sin must be believed, before there can be any acceptable reformation of life; and that the preacher’s fear was groundless, reformation of life being so caused by the faith of remission of sin, that it is inseparable from it: as our author teaches in the following passages. Calvin’s censure in this case is fully as severe: “As for them [he says] that think that repentance rather goes before faith, than flows or springs forth from it, as a fruit out of a tree, they never knew the force of it.” *Instit.* book 3. chap. 3. sect. 1. — “Yet when we refer the beginning of repentance to faith, we do not dream a certain mean space of time, in which it brings it out: but we mean to show that a man cannot earnestly apply himself to repentance unless he knows himself to be of God.” *Ibid.* sect. 2.

² Even so, faith not only justifies a sinner, but sanctifies him in heart and life.

³ I think this expression might very well have been spared here.

⁴ “**Q.** Does not this doctrine [namely: of justification by faith without works] make men secure and profane? **A.** No, for it can only be those who are ingrafted into Christ by faith that will bring forth fruits of thankfulness.” Palat. Cat. q. 64.

⁵ **Rom 7:4-6** Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another-- to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God. ⁵ For when we were in the flesh, the sinful passions which were aroused by the law were at work in our members to bear fruit to death. ⁶ But now we have been delivered from the law, having died to what we were held by, so that we should serve in the newness of the Spirit and not *in* the oldness of the letter.

⁶ A woman married to a second husband, after the death of the first, does the same work for subsistence in that second family, which was required of her by the first husband; yet she does not do it to nor under the dead husband, but to and under the living one. In the same way, the good works of believers are materially, and only *materially*, the works of the law, as a covenant (the first husband), which is now dead to the believer. It is in this sense only that the law is treated here. To make the good works of believers *formally* the works of the law, as a covenant and husband, is to contradict the apostle in Rom. 7.4-6, to “make them deadly fruits, dishonourable to Christ, the second husband, and unacceptable to God.”

divinity, which is the doctrine of Jesus Christ. And I pity the preposterous care and unhappy travail of many who are well-affected, who study the practice of this and that virtue,

MODERN DIVINITY. 215

neglecting this cardinal and radical virtue — as if a man were to water a tree's entire surface, but not the root. They would gladly shine in patience, meekness, and zeal, and yet not be careful to establish and root themselves in faith, which would maintain all the rest. And therefore their entire labour has been in vain and to no purpose."

Nom. Indeed, sir, what you have just said, I have found true by my own experience. for I have ¹ laboured and endeavoured to get victory over corruptions, such as overcoming my dulness, and performing duties with cheerfulness, and all in vain.

Evan. And no wonder. For to pray, to meditate, to keep a Sabbath cheerfully, to have your conversation in heaven, is as impossible for you to do, as for iron to swim, or for stones to ascend upwards. Yet nothing is impossible to faith: it can naturalize these things for you; it can make a mole of the earth, and a soul of heaven. This is why, even though you have tried all the moral decisions of purposing, promising, resolving, vowing, fasting, vigilance, and self-revenge, if you will get to Christ, and with the finger of faith touch but the hem of his garment,^{Mat 14.36} you will feel virtue come from him for curing all your diseases. Therefore I beseech you to come out of yourself to Jesus Christ, and apprehend him by faith as, blessed be God, you see your neighbour Neophytus has done. And then you will find the same loathing of sin, and love for the Law of Christ, as he now does. Indeed, then you will find your corruptions dying and decaying daily, more and more, as I am confident he will.

Neo. Yes, but sir, will I not have the power to completely overcome *all* my corruptions, and to yield *perfect* obedience to the Law of Christ, as the Lord knows I much desire?

Evan. If you could believe perfectly, then it would be according to your desire. As Luther says, on the Galatians, p. 173, "If we could perfectly apprehend Christ, then we would be free from sin." But alas! While we are here, we know but in part, and so we believe but in part, and so we receive Christ but in part, 1Cor. 13.9; consequently, we are holy but in part. Witness James the Just, including himself, when he says, "In many things we all sin," James 3.2. Witness John the faithful and loving disciple, when he says, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," 1John 1.8.

216 THE MARROW OF

Yes, and witness Luther when he says, on the Galatians, p. 144, "A Christian man has a body, in whose members, as Paul says, 'sin dwells and wars,' Rom. 7.23. And although he does not fall into outward and gross sins, such as murder, adultery, theft, and the like, yet he is not free from impatience and murmuring against God. Indeed (he says) I feel in myself covetousness, lust, anger, pride, and arrogance; also the fear of death, heaviness, hatred, murmurings, impatience."

So you must not look to be completely without sin while you remain in this life. Yet this I dare promise you: that as you grow from faith to faith,^{Rom 1.17} so you shall grow from strength to strength in all other graces.^{Psa 84.3} "Therefore," says Hooker, "strengthen this grace of faith, and you will strengthen all; nourish this, and you will nourish all." So that if you can attain to a great measure of faith, you will be sure to attain to a great measure of holiness. According to Dr. Preston, "He that has the strongest faith, he that believes to the greatest degree the promise of

¹ In that manner.

pardon and remission of sins, I dare boldly say, he has the holiest heart, and the holiest life. And therefore, I beseech you, labour to grow strong in the faith of the gospel;" on Philip. 1.27.¹

Sect. 9 — Use of means for strengthening of faith.

Neo. O sir, I desire it with all my heart; and therefore, I beg you, tell me what you would have me do, that I may grow stronger.

Evan. Why, surely the best advice and counsel that I can give you, is to exercise that faith which you have, and wrestle against doubts, and be earnest with God in prayer for the increase of your faith. "Because," says Luther, "this gift is in the hands of God alone, who bestows when, and to whom he pleases, you must resort to him by prayer, and say with the apostles, 'Lord, increase our faith,'" Luke 17.5. And you must also be diligent in hearing the word preached; for just as "faith comes by hearing," Rom. 10.17, so it is increased by hearing. And you must also read the word, and meditate on the free and gracious promises of God. For the promise is the immortal seed by which the Spirit of Christ begets and increases faith in the hearts of all his people. And lastly, you must frequent the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and receive it as often as you conveniently can.

Ant. But by your favour, sir, if faith is the gift of God, and he gives it when, and to whom he pleases, then I conceive that a man's using such means will not procure any greater measure of it than God is pleased to give.

MODERN DIVINITY. 217

Evan. I confess, it is not the *means* that either begets or increases faith; but it is the Spirit of God in the *use* of means that does it. So that, just as the means will not do it without the Spirit, neither will the Spirit do it without the means, where the means may be had. Therefore, I beg you, do not hinder him from using the means.

Neo. Sir, for my own part, let Antinomian say what he will, I am resolved, by the assistance of God, to be careful and diligent in the use of these means which you have now prescribed — so that by increasing my faith, I may be better enabled to be subject to the will of the Lord, and walk in such a way that I may please him.

Sect. 10. — The distinction of the Law of Works, and Law of Christ, applied to six paradoxes.

But since previously, Antinomian endeavoured to persuade me to believe various points which then I could not see to be true, and therefore could not assent to them, I think now I begin to see some show of truth in them. Therefore, sir, if you would please allow me, I will tell you what points they are, with the intent that I may have your judgment and direction in them.

Evan. Do so, I implore you.

Neo. 1. Why, first of all, he has endeavoured to persuade me that a believer is not under the law, but is altogether delivered from it.

2. That a believer does not commit sin.

3. That the Lord can see no sin in a believer.

4. That the Lord is not angry with a believer for his sins.

5. That the Lord does not chastise a believer for his sins.

¹ **Phi 1:27** Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.

6. *Lastly*, That a believer has no cause either to confess his sins, or to crave pardon at the hands of God for them, nor yet to fast, mourn, or humble himself before the Lord for them.

Evan. These points which you have now mentioned have caused many needless and fruitless disputes. And that is because men have either not understood what they said, or have not declared what they affirmed. For in one sense, all of them may be truly affirmed; and in another sense all of them may be truly denied. If we would clearly understand the truth of them, we must distinguish between the law, as it is the *Law of Works*, and as it is the *Law of Christ*.¹

218 THE MARROW OF

MODERN DIVINITY. 219

Now, as it is *the Law of Works*, it may be truly said, that a believer is not under the law, but is delivered from it,² according to what the apostle says in Rom. 6.14, “You are not under the law, but under grace;” and in Rom. 7.6, “But now we are delivered from the law.” And if believers are not under the law, but are delivered from the law, as it is a Law of Works, then even though they sin, they do not transgress the Law of Works; for “where there is no law, there is no

¹ The Antinomian sense of all these positions is, no doubt, erroneous and detestable, and it is opposed and disproved by our author. The positions themselves are paradoxes bearing a precious gospel truth, which he maintains against the legalist; but I doubt it is too much to call them all Antinomian paradoxes. But to call them simply, and by the lump, Antinomian errors, is shocking: one might as well say it is a Popish or Lutheran error, “That the bread in the sacrament is Christ’s body;” and that it is a Socinian, Arminian, or Baxterian error, “That a sinner is justified by faith;” for the first four of the paradoxes are as directly scriptural as these are; though the Antinomian sense of the former is anti-scriptural, as is the Popish, Lutheran, Socinian, Arminian, and Baxterian sense of the latter, respectively. At this rate, one might subvert the very foundations of Christianity, as might easily be instructed, if there were sufficient cause to exemplify it here. How few doctrines of the Bible there are that have not been wrested to an erroneous sense by some corrupt men or other! Yet their corrupt glosses will not warrant condemning the scriptural positions themselves as erroneous.

The first four of these paradoxes are found in the following texts of Scripture:

1st. Rom. 6.14, “You are not under the law, but under grace.” — Chap. 7.6, “Now we are delivered from the law.”

2d. 1John 3.6, “Whoever abides in him does not sin.” — Verse 9, “Whoever is born of God, does not commit sin, and he cannot sin.”

3d. Numb, 23.21, “He has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor has he seen perverseness in Israel.” — Song 4.7, “you are all fair, my love, there is no spot in you.”

4th. Isa. 54.9, “So have I sworn, that I would not be angry with you nor rebuke you.”

The case stands thus: these paradoxes must be sensed, one way or another, as agreeable to the analogy of faith, and so be defended by all who own the divine authority of the holy Scripture. And as an orthodox divine would not condemn the two propositions mentioned above, brought in to illustrate this matter, but clarify it by giving a sound sense of them, and rejecting the unsound sense — such as, it is true that the bread is Christ’s body sacramentally; it is false that it is his body by transubstantiation, or consubstantiation; it is true that sinners are justified by faith as an instrument, apprehending and applying Christ’s righteousness; it is false that they are justified by it as a work, fulfilling the pretended new proper gospel law. So our author gives a safe and sound sense of these scriptural paradoxes, and rejects the unsound sense put on them by Antinomians; and he does this by applying to them the distinction of the law, as it is the Law of Works, *i.e.*, the Covenant of Works, and as it is the Law of Christ, *i.e.*, a rule of life to believers, in the hand of a Mediator. Now, if this distinction is not admitted here — neither in these nor in equivalent terms, but the Law of Christ, and Law of Works must be reckoned one and the same thing — then believers in Christ, whom none but Antinomians will deny are under the law, as it is the Law of Christ, or a rule of life, are evidently still staked down under the covenant works; because, in the sense of the holy Scripture, as well as in the sense of our author, the Law of Works is the Covenant of Works. And since it is plain from the holy Scripture, and from the *Westminster Confession*, that believers are not under the law as a Covenant of Works — a way which, by this distinction, our author had blocked up — by rejecting it and confounding the Law of Works and Law of Christ, a way is opened for Antinomians to cast off the law for good and all.

The last two of these paradoxes are consequently scriptural, as necessarily following upon the former, being understood in the same sense as they are, and as our author explains them.

² “True believers are not under the law as a Covenant of Works.” *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 19, sect. 6. — “The Law of Works,” says our author, “is as much as to say, the Covenant of Works.”

transgression,” Rom. 4.15. And therefore, says the apostle John, “Whoever abides in him does not sin,” 1John 3.6. That is, as I conceive it, whoever abides in Christ by faith, does not sin against the Law of Works.¹ And if a believer does not sin against the Law of Works, then God can see no sin in a believer, as a transgression of that law.² And therefore it is said in Numb. 23.21, “He has not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor has he seen perverseness in Israel;” and again it is said in Jer. 50.20, “At that time the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and for the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found;” and in Song 4.7, Christ says concerning his spouse, “Behold you are all fair, my love, and there is no spot in you.” And if God can see no sin in a believer, then assuredly God is not angry, nor does he chastise a believer for his sins as a transgression of that law;³ hence the Lord says, concerning his own people that were believers,

220 THE MARROW OF

Isa. 27.4, “Anger is not in me.” And again in Isa. 54.9, the Lord speaks comfortingly to his spouse, the Church, saying, “Just as I have sworn that the waters of Noah shall no longer cover the earth, so I have sworn that I will no longer be angry with you, nor rebuke you.” Now, if the Lord is not angry with a believer, and does not chastise him for his sins — as they are any transgression of the Law of Works — then a believer has no need to confess his sins to God, nor crave God’s pardon for them, nor fast, mourn, or humble himself for them, as conceiving them to be any transgression of the law, as it is the Law of Works.⁴ Thus you see that if you consider the law *in this sense*, then all those points follow, just as you say our friend Antinomista endeavoured to persuade you.

But if you consider the law, as it is *the Law of Christ*, then they do not follow, but do quite to the contrary. For as the law is the Law of Christ, it may truly be said that a believer is under the law

¹ “As the world is altogether set upon sin, and can do nothing but sin, so those who are born of God do not sin; not that their sins of themselves are not deadly, but because their persons are so lively in Christ, that the deadliness of sin cannot prevail against them.” Mr. John Davidson’s *Cat.* p. 32. What he means by *the deadliness of sin*, appears from these words a little after: “However, the condemnation of sin is removed from the faithful altogether,” etc. The penalty which the Law of Works threatens, says our author to Neophytus (page 222) is “condemnation and eternal death; and you have no cause at all to fear this.”

² Mr. James Melvil to the same purpose expresses it thus: —

But God into his daughter dear sees none iniquity,
Nor in his chosen Israel will spy enormity:
Not looking in her [heart], which is with [sins] replete
But ever into Christ her face, whom pleasant is and sweet.

Morning Vision, dedicated to James VI. p. 85.

³ Such anger is revenging wrath, and such chastisement is proper punishment inflicted for satisfying offended justice; in which sense it is said in Isa. 53.5, “The chastisement of our peace was upon him,” namely, on Jesus Christ; and therefore it cannot be on believers themselves.

⁴ Our author does not indeed refute here the *Antinomian* error, that the believer ought not to mourn for his sins; he does that effectually in the next paragraph. But here he refutes the *legalist*, who needs to have the believer still under the law, as it is the Covenant of Works — and therefore to confess and mourn, etc. for his sins, as still committed against the Covenant of Works. But it is evident as the light, that believers are not under the Covenant of Works, or in other words, under the law, as that covenant; and once that principle is fixed, the whole chain of consequences, which our author has made here, necessarily follow from it. It is strange that nothing can be allowed in believers to mourn for sin, unless they mourn for it as *unbelievers*, as persons under the Covenant of Works, who doubtless are under the curse and condemnation for their sin. Gal. 3.10. But “as our obedience now is not the performance, so our sinning is not the violation of the condition of the old covenant. Believers’ sins now, though transgressions of the law, are not counted violations of the conditions of the Covenant of Works, under which they are not.” Brown on *Justification*, chap. 15. p. 224. — We would agree with Antinomian, “if the sense of sin is the unbeliever’s feeling of, and judging himself cast out of God’s sight and condemned; yet I am *in Christ*, and ‘it is God that justifies me; who then shall condemn?’ Rom. 8.33, 34; s. This is indeed the “hasty” sense of unbelief described in Psalm 31.22, and John 2.4. Hence let those be rebuked who do not say that Christ in his gospel has taken away this sense of sin.” Rutherford on the *Covenant*, p. 222.

and not delivered from it, according to what the apostle says in 1Cor. 9.21: “Not being outside the law to God, but under the law to Christ.” And according to that same apostle, Rom. 3.31, “Do we then void the law through faith? God forbid! Indeed (by faith) we establish the law.” And if a believer is under the law, and not delivered from it, as it is the Law of Christ, then if he sins,

MODERN DIVINITY. 221

he thereby transgresses the Law of Christ. And hence I conceive of it as the apostle John says, concerning both himself and other believers, 1John 1.8, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us;” and so says the apostle James, chap. 3.2, “In many things we all offend.” And if a believer transgresses the Law of Christ, then doubtless he sees it. For it is said in Prov. 5.21, “that the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he ponders all his goings;” and in Heb. 4.13 it is said, “All things are naked and open to the eyes of him with whom we have to deal .” And if the Lord sees the sins that a believer commits against the law, as it is the Law of Christ, then doubtless he is angry with him. For it is said, Psalm 106.39-40, that because the people “went whoring after their own inventions, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against his people, so that he abhorred his own inheritance;” and in Deu. 1.37, Moses says concerning himself, “The Lord was angry with me.” And if the Lord is angry with a believer for transgressing the Law of Christ, then assuredly, if necessary, he will chastise him for it. For it is said in Psalm 89.30-32, concerning the seed and children of Jesus Christ, “If they forsake my law, and do not walk in my judgments, then I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes.” And in 1Cor. 11.30 it is said concerning believers, “For this reason,” namely, the unworthy receiving of the sacrament, “many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.” And if the Lord is angry with believers, and chastises them for their sins, as they are a transgression of the Law of Christ, then a believer has cause to confess his sins to the Lord, and to crave pardon for them, yes and to fast, and mourn, and humble himself for them, conceiving them to be a transgression of the Law of Christ.¹

Sect. 11. — The use of that distinction in practice.

And now, my loving neighbour Neophytus, I ask you to seriously consider these things, and learn to distinguish rightly between the law, as it is the Law of Works, and the law, as it is the Law of Christ, and to do that in both effect and practice — I mean, in heart and conscience.

Neo. Sir, it is the unfeigned desire of my heart to do so. And therefore, I implore you, give me some direction in this.²

222 THE MARROW OF

Evan. Surely the best direction I can give you is to labour to truly know, and to firmly believe, that you are not now under the law, as it is the Law of Works; and that you are now under the law, as it is the Law of Christ. And therefore you must neither hope for what the Law of Works promises, in case of your most exacting obedience; nor fear what it threatens, in case of your most imperfect and defective obedience. And yet you may both hope for what the Law of Christ promises, in case of your obedience, and you are to fear what it threatens, in case of your disobedience.

Neo. But, sir, what are these promises and threatenings? And first, I ask you to tell me what the Law of Works promises.

¹ Thus our author has solidly refuted in this paragraph the Antinomian sense of all six positions mentioned above.

² Namely, how to improve these points of doctrine in my practice. There lies the great difficulty — and according to the unbelief or faith of the ascendant, the soul will carry itself in practice: confessing, begging pardon, fasting, mourning, and humbling itself, either as a condemned malefactor, or as an offending child.

Evan. The Law of Works, which as I told you, is the same as the Covenant of Works, promises justification and eternal life to all who yield perfect obedience to it. And this you are not to hope for, because of your obedience. And indeed, to say it as it is, being dead to the Law of Works, you can yield no obedience to it at all. For how can a dead wife yield any obedience to her husband? And if you can yield no obedience to it at all, then what hope can you have of any reward for your obedience? No, let me tell you more: Jesus Christ, the Son of God, has purchased both justification and eternal life by his perfect obedience to the Law of Works, and he has freely given it to you, as it is written in Acts 13.39, “By him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses:” and “Truly, truly,” says our Saviour, “he that believes in me has everlasting life.” John 6.47.

Neo. I ask you, sir, what does the Law of Works threaten in case of a man’s disobedience to it?

Evan. Why, the penalty which the Law of Works threatens in that case, is condemnation and eternal death. You have no cause to fear this at all in case of your most defective obedience; for no man has any cause to fear the penalty of that law which he does not live under. Surely a man that lives under the laws of England, has no cause to fear the penalties of the laws of Spain or of France. In the same way, now that you live under the Law of Christ, you have no cause to fear the penalties of the Law of Works.¹

MODERN DIVINITY. 223

No, the Law of Works is dead to you; therefore you have no more cause to fear its threats, than a living wife has to fear the threats of her dead husband,² or a dead wife has to fear the threats of a dead husband. Let me say still more: Jesus Christ, by his condemnation and death on the cross, has delivered you and set you free from condemnation and eternal death. As it is written in Rom. 8.1, “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” And, Christ himself says, John 11.26, “Whoever lives, and believes in me, shall never die.”

Thus you see your freedom and liberty from the law, as it is the Law of Works. And so that you may be better able to “stand fast in this liberty with which Christ has made you free,”^{Gal 5.1} beware of conceiving that the Lord now stands in any relation to you, or will any way deal with you, as a man under that law. So if the Lord is pleased to bestow on you a great measure of faith by which you will be enabled to yield an exact and perfect obedience to the mind and will of God,³ then beware of conceiving that the Lord looks at it as obedience to the Law of Works; or that he will in any measure reward you for it according to the promises of that law. And if at any time after this, because of the weakness of your faith, and the strength of temptation, you are drawn aside, and prevailed upon to swerve from the mind and will of the Lord, then beware of conceiving that the Lord sees it as any transgression of the Law of Works. For if you *cannot* transgress that law, then it is *impossible* for the Lord to see what is not possible. And if the Lord can see no sin in you as a transgression of the Law of Works, then it is impossible that he would either be angry with you, or correct you for any sin, as it is a transgression of that law.

224 THE MARROW OF

¹ See pages 113, note and 117, note, “The law, as it condemns and curses, is a mere passive and a naked bystander to the believer; it has no activity, nor can it act in that power on anyone in Christ; just as the law of Spain is merely passive in condemning a free-born man dwelling in Scotland.” Rutherford’s *Spirit. Antichrist*, p. 87. — “The law being fully satisfied by Christ, it neither condemns, nor can it condemn, to eternal sufferings; for that is removed from the law to all those who are in Christ.” *Ibid.*

² For according to the Scripture, the believer is dead to the law, and the law is dead to the believer; namely, as it is the law of the Covenant of Works. See page 109, note, and pages 110, 111.

³ Exact and perfect, comparatively, not absolutely. See pages 215, 231.

No, to speak with holy reverence, as I said before, the Lord cannot, by virtue of the Covenant of Works, either require any obedience from you, or give you an angry look or any angry word, much less threaten and afflict you for any disobedience to that covenant.¹ Therefore, whenever your conscience tells you that you have broken any of the Ten Commandments, do not conceive that the Lord looks at you as an angry Judge, armed with justice against you; much less should you fear that he will execute his justice on you according to the penalty of that covenant. He will not un-justify you, or deprive you of your heavenly inheritance, or give you a portion in hell fire. No, assure yourself that your God in Christ will never un-son you, or un-spouse you. Nor yet, as touching your justification and eternal salvation, will he ever love you one bit less, even though you commit however many or great sins. For this is a certain truth: that just as no good either in you or done by you, moved him to justify you and give you eternal life, so no evil in you or done by you can move him to take it away from you, once given.²

MODERN DIVINITY. 225

And therefore, believe it while you live, that just as the Lord first loved you freely, so hereafter he will “heal your backslidings, and still love you freely,” Hos. 14.4. Yes, “he will love you to the end,” John 13.1. Although the Lord expresses the fruits of his anger towards you in chastising and afflicting you, do not imagine that your afflictions are penal, proceeding from hatred and

¹ See page 162, note.

² The author speaks expressly of the love of God, touching believers’ justification and eternal salvation, which, according to the Scripture, he reckons to be given to them already. And he asserts that, as no good in them or done by them, moved God to love them so as to justify them, and give them eternal life, so no evil in them or done by them, will lessen that love, as to their justification and eternal salvation. That is, as he himself explains it, none of this will move God to take eternal life (which includes justification) away from them, once given. This is a most firm truth. However more and greater the sins of a believer are, he may lay to his account the more and greater effects of God’s fatherly indignation against him; and the corruption of human nature makes adding such a clause in such a case very necessary. What our author advances here, is evident from the holy Scripture. Psa 89.30-34, “If his children forsake my law, and do not walk in my judgments, if they break my statutes, and do not keep my commandments, then I will visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes: nevertheless, I not utterly take from him my lovingkindness will; nor will I allow my faithfulness to fail; I will not break my covenant, nor alter the thing that has gone out of my lips.” And to deny it, is in effect to affirm that God loves believers because of their justification and eternal salvation, and for their holiness; this is contrary to Titus 3.5, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us.” — Rom. 6.23, “The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Saying that his love towards them changes according to the variations of their frame and walk, is contrary to Rom. 11.29, “The gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” But while the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints stands — namely: that true believers cannot fall away either totally or finally, either from relative grace or from inherent grace — our author’s doctrine on this point must stand also. And the sins of believers, however great or many they are, can never be of that kind which is inconsistent with a state of grace, nor of another kind than that of infirmities. See p. 168, note. However low grace is brought in the soul of a believer at any time, through the prevalence of temptation, he can never altogether lose his inherent holiness, nor can he at any time “live after the flesh.” For according to the Scripture, that is not the spot of God’s children; but he who lives this way neither is, nor ever was, one of them. Rom. 6.2, 14, “How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer in it? Sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under the law but under grace.” — Chap. 8.1, “Those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk after the flesh, but after the Spirit.” See verse 4; 1John 3.9, “Whoever is born of God does not commit sin — for his seed remains in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

“God foresaw what infirmities you would have, before he gave Christ this commision; and Christ foresaw them before his acceptance of the charge. If their prescience could not stop God in his gift, nor cool Christ in his acceptance, why should it now? While they continue, the love of God toward you is not hindered by them.” Charnock, vol. ii. p. 749.

“Observe a twofold distinction: **1st.** Between God’s love in itself, and the manifestation of it to us — His love is itself perpetual and one, without change, increase, or lessening; but the *manifestation* of this love is variable, according to our more or less careful exercise of piety. **2d.** Between God’s love to our *persons*, and God’s love to our *qualities and actions*. This is a distinction which God well knows how to make. Parents, I am sure, are well skilled in putting this difference between the vices and the persons of their children; *those* they hate, and *these* they love. The case is alike between God and the elect; his love toward their persons is from everlasting the same. Nor does their sinfulness lessen it; nor does their sanctity increase it; because in loving their persons, God never considered them other than as most perfectly holy and unblameable in Christ,” Pemble’s *Works*, p. 23.

vindictive justice as payments and satisfaction for sins, and thus as the beginning of eternal torments in hell. For as you have heard, being freed from the Law of Works, and consequently from sinning against it, you must likewise be freed from all wrath, anger, miseries, calamities, afflictions, yes, and from death itself, as ¹ fruits and effects of any transgression against that covenant.

226 THE MARROW OF

Therefore you are never to confess your sins to the Lord, as though you conceived them to have been committed against the Law of Works, thus making you liable to God's everlasting wrath and hell-fire. Nor must you crave pardon and forgiveness for them, so that you may thereby escape that penalty; nor should you fast, weep, mourn, or humble yourself out of any belief that you will thereby satisfy the justice of God, appease his wrath in whole or part, and thus escape his everlasting vengeance. For if you are not under the Law of Works, and if the Lord sees no sin in you as a transgression of that law, and he is neither angry with you, nor afflicting you for any sin as a transgression of that law, then consequently you have no need either to confess your sins, or crave pardon for them, or fast, or weep, or mourn, or humble yourself for your sins, conceiving them to be a transgression of the Law of Works.²

Neo. Well, sir, you have fully satisfied me in this point; and therefore, I ask you to proceed to show that reward which the Law of Christ promises, which you said I might hope for in case of my obedience to it.

Evan. Why, the reward which I conceive the Law of Christ promises to believers, and which they may hope for according to their obedience to it,³ is to comfortably enjoy sweet communion with God and Christ, even in this life, and a freedom from afflictions, both spiritual and corporeal, to the extent that they are fruits and effects of sin, as a transgression of the Law of Christ.⁴ For you know that so long as a child yields obedience to his father's commands and does nothing displeasing to him, if the father loves his child, he will conduct himself lovingly and kindly towards him, and allow him to be familiar with him, and will not whip or scourge him for his disobedience. Even so, if you unfeignedly desire and endeavour to be obedient to the will and mind of your Father in Christ — in doing what he commands, and avoiding what he forbids, both in your general and particular calling; and to the end that you may please him — then accordingly, as you do so, your Father will smile upon you when you draw near to him in prayer, or in any other of his ordinances.

MODERN DIVINITY, 227

And he will manifest his sweet presence and loving favour towards you, and exempt you from all outward calamities except in trials of your faith and patience or the like. As it was written in 2Chron. 15.2, "The Lord is with you while you are with him; and if you seek him, he will be found by you." And so the apostle James says in James 4.8, "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you." And "Oh," says the Lord, "that my people had listened to me, and Israel had walked in my ways! He would have fed them with the finest wheat, and I would have satisfied you with honey out of the rock," Psalm 81.13, 16. This may suffice to show you what you may hope for, according to your obedience to the Law of Christ.

¹ They are.

² See page 220, note.

³ Though not for *their* obedience, but for *Christ's* obedience. [Christ's obedience enables it, but their own obedience is rewarded with communion with God (1Joh 1.6). See p. 174 above, and pp. 227-228 below.]

⁴ I read the last word of this sentence, *Christ*, not *works* [as originally printed], judging it plain that the latter is a press error. See the last clause of Neophytus' speech above, and the reason here immediately following, with the first paragraph on page 228.

Neo. Then, sir, I implore you to proceed to show the penalty which the Law of Christ threatens, and which I am to fear if I transgress that law.

Evan. The penalty which the Law of Christ threatens if you transgress the Law of Christ, and which you are to fear, is the lack of near and sweet communion with God in Christ in this life, and being liable to all temporal afflictions as fruits and effects of transgressing that law.¹

228 THE MARROW OF

Therefore, whenever you transgress any of the Ten Commandments, you are to know that you have thereby transgressed the Law of Christ, and the Lord sees it and is angry with it, with a *fatherly* anger. If necessary, he will chastise you, 1Pet. 1.6, either with temporal or spiritual afflictions, or both. And your heavenly Father will do this in love to you, either to bring your sins to remembrance, as he did the sins of Joseph's brethren, Gen. 42.21; and as the widow of Zarephath confesses concerning herself, 1Kings 17.18; or else "to purge or take away your sins," according to what the Lord says in Isa. 27.9, "By this, therefore, the iniquity of Jacob shall be purged, and this is all the fruit of taking away his sin." "For indeed," says Mr. Culverwell, "afflictions, through God's blessing, are made special means to purge out that sinful corruption which is still in the nature of believers. Therefore in Scripture, they are most aptly compared to medicines, for so they are indeed to all God's children: they are most sovereign medicines to cure all their spiritual diseases. And indeed all of us have great need of it.

MODERN DIVINITY. 229

¹ An awful penalty, if rightly understood, as comprehending all manner of strokes and afflictions on the outward and inner man, called by our author "temporal and spiritual afflictions on the outward man;" not to speak of the reproach, disgrace, and contempt, successful labour and toil, poverty, misery, want, and the like, which the believer is liable to for his disobedience, as well as others. His sins lay him open to the whole train of maladies, pains, torments, sores, diseases, and plagues, incident to sinful flesh, by which he may become a burden to himself and others. And these may be inflicted on him, not only by the hand of God, but by the hand of the devil; as appears in the case of Job. Indeed, the Lord may, in virtue of this penalty annexed to his law, pursue the controversy with the offending believer, even to death; so that his natural life may go because of his transgression, 1Cor. 11.30, 32. To this may be added the marks of God's indignation against his sin, set upon his relations: witness the disorders, mischiefs, and strokes on David's family, for his sin in the matter of Uriah, more bitter than death, 2Sam. 12.10-14; chap. 13, and 15. In the inner man, by virtue of the same penalty, he is liable for his transgression, to be deprived of the comfort, sense, exercise, and some measure of his graces; deprived of his sense of God's love, his peace, joy, actual communion with God, and access to him in duties; he is to be brought under desertion, the hiding of God's face, withdrawing the light of the Lord's countenance; and left to walk in darkness, to go mourning without the sun, and to cry and shout while the Lord shuts out his prayer; to be thrown into agonies of conscience, pierced with the arrows of the Almighty in his spirit, compassed about and distracted with the terrors of God, seized with the fearful apprehensions of God's revenging wrath against him, and thereby brought to the brink of absolute despair. Besides all this, he is liable to the buffetings of Satan, and horrid temptations; and for the punishment of one sin, he is allowed to fall into another. And all these may, by virtue of the penalty annexed to the law in the hand of Christ, converge in the case of the offending believer, together and at once. Thus, even though God nowhere threatens to cast believers in Christ into hell, yet he both threatens and often executes casting a hell into them, for their provocations.

Only the revenging wrath and curse of God are not part of the penalty to believers in Christ, according to the truth and our author. But the sober-minded reader will easily judge for himself whether or not this penalty, as it is without these, leaves the most holy and awful law of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ, most base and despicable.

"The one, namely: *justification*, equally frees all believers from the revenging wrath of God, and that is perfectly in this life." *Larger Cat.* q. 77. — "They can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his countenance restored to them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance." *Westm. Confess.*, chap. 11. art. 5. — "They may fall into grievous sins, and for a time continue in them, whereby they incur God's displeasure, and grieve his holy Spirit; they may come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded; they may hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves." lb. chap. 17. art. 3. — "The threatenings of it serve to show what their sins deserve; and what afflictions in this life they may expect for them, though freed from the curse of it threatened in the law." lb. chap. 19. art. 6. See p. 200, note.

For as Luther, on the Galatians, p. 66, truly says, “We are not yet perfectly righteous; for while we remain in this life, sin still dwells in the flesh, and God purges this remnant of sin.” — “Therefore,” says Luther in another place,¹ “When God has remitted sins, and received a man into the bosom of grace, then he lays on him all kind of afflictions, and scourges and renews him from day to day.” And to the same purpose, Tyndale says truly, “If we look at the flesh, and into the law, there is no man so perfect that is not found to be a sinner, no man so pure, that has no need to be purged. And thus the Lord chastises believers to heal their nature by purging out the corruption that remains in it.”

And therefore, whenever you hereafter feel the Lord’s chastening hand upon you, let it move you to take the prophet Jeremiah’s counsel, which is to “search and try your ways, and turn to the Lord,” Lam. 3.40. Confess your sins to him, saying with the prodigal, Luke 15.21, “Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in your sight, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son;” beg pardon and forgiveness at his hands, as you are taught in the fifth petition of the Lord’s prayer, Mat. 6.12. Yet do not crave pardon and forgiveness at the hands of the Lord, as a malefactor does at the hands of a judge — as someone who fears condemnation and death, as though you had sinned against the Law of Works, and therefore feared hell and damnation. Rather, beg pardon and forgiveness as a child does at the hands of his loving father, feeling the fruits of his fatherly anger in his chastising hand on you, and fearing the continuance and augmentation of it if your sin is not both pardoned and subdued.² Therefore also beseech your loving Father to subdue your iniquities according to his promise, Micah 7.19.³ And if you find that the Lord has not heard your prayers by feeling your iniquities subdued,⁴ then join to your prayers, fasting and weeping, if you can; so that you may be more seriously humbled before the Lord, and more fervent in prayer. And this explanation, I hope, may be sufficient to show you what the penalty is which the Law of Christ threatens.

230 -THE MARROW OF

Neo. O, but, sir, I would think myself a happy man if I could be so obedient to the Law of Christ, that he might have no need to inflict this penalty on me.

Evan. You say very well. Yet while you carry about this body of sin with you, doing the best you can, the Lord will now and then need to give you some fatherly corrections. Yet, let me tell you this: the more perfect your obedience, the fewer lashes you will have. “For the Lord does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men,” Lam. 3.33. And therefore, according to my former exhortation, and your own resolution, be careful to exercise your faith, and use all means to increase it, so that it may become effectual,⁵ working by love, 1Thess. 1.3; Gal. 5.6. For according to the measure of your faith, will be your true love to Christ and his commandments. And according to your love for them, will be your delight in them, and your aptness and readiness to do them. Hence Christ himself says in John 14.15, “If you love me, keep my commandments.” And “this is the love of God,” says that loving disciple, “that we keep his commandments, and his commandments, are not grievous,” 1John 5.3. No, the truth is, if you have this love in your hearts, it will grieve you that you cannot keep them as you would. Oh, if this love abounds in your heart, it will cause you to say with godly Joseph, if you are tempted as

¹ *Chos. Sermons*, “Serm. Of the Kingdom of God,” page 120.

² Mat. 6.9, 12, “Pray in this manner therefore: Our Father which art in heaven; forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.”

³ Micah 7:19 [He will again have compassion on us, And will subdue our iniquities. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.](#)

⁴ The subduing of sin is the mark of God’s hearing prayer for the pardon of it; if one does not feel his iniquity subdued, he cannot find that God has heard his prayers for pardon.

⁵ To producing holy obedience, according to the measure and degree of it.

he was, “How can I do this great wickedness, and so sin against God?”^{Gen 39.9} How can I do what I know will displease so gracious a Father, and so merciful a Saviour? No, I *will not* do it; no, I *cannot* do it. No, you will rather say with the Psalmist, “I delight to do your will, my God! Yes, your law is within my heart,” Psalm 40.8.

Indeed, let me tell you more: if this love of God in Christ is truly, and in any good measure, rooted in your heart, then even though the chastising hand of the Lord is not upon you, even though the Lord in no way expresses any anger towards you, yet if you but consider the Lord’s ways towards you, and your ways towards him, you will mourn with a gospel-mourning, reasoning with yourself in this way: Was I not under the Law of Works by nature, and so, for every transgression against any of the Ten Commandments, was I not made liable to everlasting damnation? And am I now, through the free mercy and love of God in Christ,

MODERN DIVINITY. 231

brought under the Law of Christ, and thus subject to no other penalty for my transgressions than fatherly and loving chastisements, which tend to purge that sinful corruption that is in me? Oh what a loving Father this is! Oh what a gracious Saviour this is! Oh, what a wretched man I am,^{Rom 7.24} to transgress the laws of such a good God, as he has been to me! Oh, even the due consideration of this will, as it were, melt your heart, and cause your eyes to drip with the tears of godly sorrow! Yes, the due consideration of these things will cause you to “loathe yourself in your own sight for your transgressions,” Ezek. 36.31. Yes, not only to loathe yourself for them, but also to abandon them, saying with Ephraim, “What have I to do any more with idols?” Hos. 14.8. And to “cast them away as a menstruous cloth, saying to them, Get away from here!” Isa. 30.22. And truly you will desire nothing more than to so live that you might never sin against the Lord any more. And this is that “goodness of God which,” as the apostle says, “leads to repentance;” yes, this is that goodness of God which will lead you to a free obedience. So that if you will but apply the goodness of God in Christ to your soul, in any good measure, you will accordingly yield obedience to the Law of Christ — not only without respect to what the Law of Works either promises or threatens; but also without respect to what the Law of Christ either promises or threatens. You will do what the Lord commands, only because he commands it, and to the end that you may please him; and you will forbear when he forbids, only because he forbids it, to the end that you may not displease him.”¹

¹ The author here does nothing other than exhort the believer to yield free obedience, without respect to what either the Law of Works, or the Law of Christ, promises or threatens — other than exhort him to that perfect obedience which, in the beginning of this answer, he told him is not attainable in this life. And the truth is, neither the one nor the other is the design of these words. But he had exhorted him before to use all means to increase his faith; and for his encouragement, he tells him here that if, by faith, he applied the goodness of God in Christ to his own soul, in any good measure, then he would yield obedience accountably, without respect to what either the Law of Works, or the Law of Christ promises or threatens, and only because God commands or forbids it. The freeness of obedience is of very different degrees; and believers’ obedience is never absolutely free till it is absolutely perfect in heaven. But the freeness of their obedience will always be in proportion to the measure of their faith, which is never perfect in this life; thus the more faith, the more freeness of obedience; and the less faith, the less of that freeness. See page 79, note.

“The believer obeys with an angel-like obedience; then the Spirit seems to exhaust all the commanding awesomeness of the law, and supplies the law’s imperious power, with the strength and power of love.” Rutherford’s *Spirit. Antichrist*, p. 318. “The more of the Spirit — because the Spirit is essentially free (Psa 51.12; 2Cor. 3.17) — the more freeness; and the more freeness, the more renewed the will in obedience; and the more renewed the will, the less constraint, because freeness exhausts constraint.” *Ibid*.

“When Christ’s blood is seen by faith to quiet justice, then the conscience becomes quiet also, and will not allow the heart to entertain the love of sin, but sets the man at work to fear God for his mercy, and obey all his commandments out of love to God, for his free gift of justification bestowed on him by grace; for ‘this is the end of the law’ indeed, this is whereby it obtains from a man more obedience than any other way.” *Pract. Use of Sav. Knowledge, tit.* “The Third Thing Requisite,” etc. fig. 7.

And this obedience is like that obedience which our Saviour exhorts his disciples to in Mat. 10.8, saying, “Freely you have received, freely give.” This is to “serve the Lord without fear” of any penalty, which either the Law of Works or the Law of Christ threatens, “in holiness and righteousness all the days of your life,” as Zacharias said,¹ Luke 1.74, 75. This is to “pass the time of your sojourning here in fear” of offending the Lord by sinning against him, as the apostle Peter exhorts in 1Peter 1.17. Yes, and this is to “serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear:” as the author of Hebrews exhorts, Heb. 12.28.

MARROW OF DIVINITY. 233

Thus, my dear friend Neophytus, I have endeavoured, according to your desire, to give you my judgment and direction in these points.

Neo. And truly, sir, you have done it very effectually; may the Lord enable me to practise according to your direction!

Sect. 12. — That distinction a mean between Legalism and Antinomianism.

Nom. Sir, your answer to his question also answered me, and gave me full satisfaction in various points about which my friend Antinomista and I have had many a wrangling fit. For I used to affirm tooth and nail (as men use to say) that believers are under the law, and are not delivered from it; and that they sin, and God sees it, and is angry with them, and afflicts them for it. And therefore they ought to humble themselves, and mourn for their sins, and confess them, and crave pardon for them. Yet truly, I must confess that I did not understand what I said, nor what I affirmed; and the reason was because I did not know the difference between the law, as it is the Law of Works, and as it is the Law of Christ.

Ant. And believe me, sir, I used to affirm, as earnestly as he, that believers are delivered from the law, and therefore do not sin; and therefore God can see no sin in them; and therefore he is not angry with them, nor does he afflict them for their sin. Therefore they have no need to humble themselves, mourn or confess their sins, or beg pardon for them. Believing this to be true, I could not conceive how the contrary could also be true. But now I plainly see that by means of your distinguishing between the law, as it is the Law of Works, and the law, as it is the Law of Christ, there is truth in both. Therefore, friend Nomista, whenever you or any other man affirms hereafter that believers are under the law and sin; and God sees it, and is angry with them, and chastises them for it; and that they ought to humble themselves, mourn, weep, and confess their sins, and beg pardon for them — if you mean it only as they are under the Law of Christ, then I will agree with you, and never contradict you again.

Promises and threatenings are not, by this doctrine, annexed to the holy law in vain, even with respect to believers; for the law of God is, in his infinite wisdom, suited to the state of the creature to whom it is given. And therefore — even though the believer’s eternal happiness is unalterably secured from the moment of his union with Christ by faith — yet, since sin still dwells in him while he is in this world, the promises of fatherly smiles, and threatenings of fatherly chastisements, are still necessary. But it is evident that this necessity is entirely founded on the believer’s imperfection; as in the case of a child under age. And, therefore, although his being influenced to obedience by the promises and threatenings of the Law of Christ is not indeed slavish, it is plainly childish, not agreeing with the state of a perfect man, of one that has come to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. And in the state of perfection, he will yield such free obedience as the angels in heaven yield, without being moved to it by any promises or threatenings at all. And the nearer he comes in his progress to that state of perfection, the more his obedience will be of that nature. So by the doctrine advanced here, the author no more disowns the necessity of promises to influence and encourage the believer’s obedience, nor say that he should not regard the promises and threatenings, than one would say that a lame man has no need of, and should disregard the crutches provided for him. He only says that the stronger his limbs grow, the less need he will have of them, and he will lean all the less on them.

¹ See the preceding note.

Nom. And truly, friend Antinomista, if you or any other man affirms hereafter that believers are delivered from the law, and do not sin, and God sees no sin in them, nor is angry with them, nor afflicts them for their sins, and that they have no need to humble themselves, mourn, confess, or crave pardon for their sins — if you mean it only as they are not under the Law of Works, I will agree with you, and never contradict you again.

234 THE MARROW OF

Evan. I rejoice to hear you speak these words to each other: and truly, now I hope that you two will come back from both your extremes, and meet my neighbour Neophytus in the golden mean — having, as the apostle says, “the same love, being of one accord, and of one mind.”

Nom. Sir, for my own part, I thank the Lord that now I plainly see that I have exceedingly erred in seeking to be justified, “as it were, by the works of the law.”¹ Yet I could never be persuaded of it before today; and indeed I would not have been persuaded now, if you had not so plainly and fully handled this threefold law. Truly, sir, I now unfeignedly desire to renounce myself, and all that I have ever done, and by faith adhere only to Jesus Christ; for now I see that he is all in all. [Eph 1.23](#) Oh, that the Lord would enable me so to do! And I beseech you, sir, pray for me.

Ant. And truly, sir, I must confess, that I have erred as much on the other hand; for I have been so far from seeking to be justified by the works of the law, that I have regarded neither law nor works. But now that I see my error, I purpose to reform it, God willing.

Evan. The Lord grant that you may.

Sect. 13. — How to attain to assurance.

But how are you doing, neighbour Neophytus; for I think you look very heavy-laden.

Neo. Truly, sir, I was thinking of that place in Scripture where the apostle exhorts us “to examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith or not,” [2Cor. 13.5](#). By this, it seems to me that a man may think he is in the faith, when he is not. Therefore, sir, I would gladly hear how I may be sure that I am in the faith.

Evan. I would not have you question it at all, since you have grounded your faith on such a firm foundation that it will never fail you. For the promise of God in Christ is a tried truth, and has never yet failed any man, nor ever will.²

MODERN DIVINITY. 235

¹ This Scripture phrase is aptly used here to intimate how men deceive themselves, thinking they are far from seeking to be justified by the works of the law, because they are convinced they cannot do good works in the perfection which the law requires. Meanwhile, since God is merciful, and Christ has died, they look for the pardon of their sins, and acceptance with God, on the account of their own works, though attended with some imperfections: that is, “as it were, by the works of the law,” [Rom. 9.32](#).

² This answer proceeds on taking Neophytus to speak not of the *grace*, but of the *doctrine* of faith; namely, the foundation of faith, or ground of believing — as if he had desired to know whether the foundation of his faith was the true foundation of faith, or not. This is plain from the two following paragraphs. And upon the supposition that he had grounded his faith on the promise of the gospel, the tried foundation of faith, the author tells him that he would not have him question that, having already handled that question at great length, and answered all his and Nomista’s objections on the topic, [p. 117-119](#), where Neophytus declared himself satisfied. And there is no inconsistency between the author’s advice in this case given to Neophytus, and the advice given in the text last cited to the Corinthians, unreasonably and peevishly demanding a proof of Christ speaking in the apostle. Whether, with several judicious critics and commentators, we understand that text to concern the *doctrine* of faith — as if the apostle tested them whether they retained the true doctrine or not — or the *grace* of faith, which is the common, and I think the true understanding of it, I see nothing here determining our author’s opinion as to the sense of it. But whether he seems here to be against self-examination, especially after he had urged that duty on Antinomista, and answered his objections against it, let the candid reader judge.

Therefore I would have you draw near to Christ in the promise, without questioning whether you are in the faith or not. For there is an assurance which rises from the exercise of faith by a direct act, and that is when a man, by faith, directly lays hold of Christ, and concludes his assurance from there.¹

Neo. Sir, I know that the foundation on which I am to ground my faith remains sure; and I think I have already built on it; yet, because I conceive a man may think he has done so when he has not, I would be glad to know how may I be assured that I have done so? ²

Evan. Well, now I understand what you mean; it seems you do not want a ground for your believing, but for believing that you have believed.³

Neo. Yes, indeed, that is the thing I want.

236 THE MARROW OF

Evan. Why, the next way to find out and know this, is to look back and reflect upon your own heart, and consider what actions have passed through there. For indeed this is the benefit that a reasonable soul has, that it is able to reflect upon itself, to see what it has done. The soul of a beast cannot do this. Consider then, I beg you, that you have been convinced in your spirit that you are a sinful man, and therefore you have feared the Lord's wrath and eternal damnation in hell. And you have been convinced that there is no help for you at all in yourself, by anything that you can do. And you heard it plainly proved that "Jesus Christ alone is an all-sufficient help. And the free and full promise of God in Christ has been made so plain and clear to you, that you had nothing to object to why Christ did not belong to you in particular.⁴ And you have perceived a willingness in Christ to receive you, and to embrace you as his beloved spouse. And thereupon you have consented and resolved to take Christ, and to give yourself to him, whatever happens to you. And I am persuaded you have thereupon felt a secret persuasion in your heart, that God in Christ bears a love for you.⁵ And accordingly your heart has been inflamed towards him in loving him in return, manifesting itself in an unfeigned desire to be obedient and subject to his will in all things, and never to displease him in anything. Now tell me truly, I implore you, whether you have not found these things in yourself, just as I have said?

Neo. Yes, indeed, I hope I have in some measure.

Evan. Then I tell you truly, you have a sure ground to believe that you have believed; and as the apostle John says, "Hereby you may know that you are of the truth, and may assure your heart of it before God," 1John 3.19.

Neo. Surely, sir, I can truly say this, that before now, when I thought about my sins, I conceived of God and Christ as a wrathful judge who would condemn all unrighteous men to eternal death.

¹ See the note on the *Definition of Faith*.

"The assurance of Christ's righteousness is a direct act of faith, apprehending imputed righteousness. The evidence of our justification, which we now speak of, is the reflex light, not by which we are justified, but by which we know that we are justified." Rutherford's *Christ Dying and Drawing*, p. 111. — "We never had a question with Antinomians touching the first assurance of justification, such as is proper to the light of faith. He might have spared all his arguments to prove that we are first assured of our justification by faith, not by good works; for we grant the arguments of the one sort of assurance which is proper to faith; and they prove nothing against another sort of assurance, by its signs and effects, which is also divine." *Ibid.* p. 110.

² A good reason why this assurance in or by the direct act of faith is to be tried by marks and signs. There is certainly a persuasion that "does not come from him that called us;" which obliges men to examine their persuasion, whether it is of the right sort or not.

³ This is called assurance by a reflex act.

⁴ In virtue of the deed of gift and grant. See the note on the *Definition of Faith*, fig. 1.

⁵ See page 144, note.

Therefore, when I thought about the Day of Judgment, and the torments of hell, I even trembled for fear, and as it were, hated God. I laboured to become righteous, so that I might escape his wrath; yet all that I did, I did unwillingly. But since I heard you make it so plain, that a sinner

MODERN DIVINITY. 237

who sees and feels his sins, is to conceive of God as a merciful, loving, and forgiving Father in Christ that has committed all judgment to his Son, who did not come to condemn men but to save them — I think I do not now fear his wrath. Rather I apprehend his love towards me. And upon this love, my heart is inflamed towards him with such love, that I think I would willingly do or suffer anything that I knew would please him. I would rather choose to suffer any misery, than to do anything that I knew would displease him.

Evan. We read in the seventh chapter of Luke's gospel, that when that sinful yet believing woman manifested her faith in Christ by her love for him in "washing his feet with her tears, and wiping them with the hairs of her head," verse 38, he said to Simon the Pharisee, verse 47, "I say to you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven her, for she loved much;" even so I may say to you, Nomista, in the same words concerning our neighbour Neophytus. And to you, Neophytus, I say as Christ said to the woman in verses 48-50, "Your sins are forgiven you, your faith has saved you, go in peace."

Ant. But I ask you, sir, is his reflecting upon himself, to discover a ground for believing that he has believed, in fact turning back from the Covenant of Grace to the Covenant of Works, and from Christ to himself?

Evan. If he were to look at these things *in himself*, and conclude from them that because he had done them, God had accepted him. and justified him, and will save him, and so make *them* the ground of his believing — then indeed, this would be turning back from the Covenant of Grace to the Covenant of Works, and from Christ to himself But if he looks at these things in himself, and concludes from them that, because these things are in his heart, Christ dwells there by faith, and therefore he is accepted by God, and justified, and shall certainly be saved, and thus makes them the *evidence* of his believing, or the *ground* of believing that he has believed — then this is neither turning back from the Covenant of Grace to the Covenant of Works, nor turning from Christ to himself. So these things in his heart, being the daughters of faith and the offspring of Christ, even though they cannot at first produce or bring forth their mother, yet they may nourish her in time of need.

Sect. 14. — Marks and evidences of true faith.

Nom. But I ask you sir, are there not other things besides these, that he says he finds in himself, that a man may look at as evidences of his believing, or as you call them, as grounds to believe that he has believed?

238 THE MARROW OF

Evan. Yes, indeed, there are diverse other effects of faith which, if a man truly has them, he may look at them as evidences that he has truly believed; and I will name three of them:

The FIRST EVIDENCE is when a man truly loves the word of God, and makes a right use of it. And a man does this: **1st**, When he hungers and thirsts after the word, as after the food of his soul, desiring it at all times, even as he desires his "appointed food," ¹ Job 23.12. **2nd**, When he desires and delights to exercise himself in it day and night; that is, constantly, Psalm 1.2. **3rd**, When he receives the word of God as the word of God, and not as the word of man, 1Thess. 2.13 — setting his heart in hearing or reading it, as though in God's presence: and being affected by it

¹ So the Margin reads it.

as if the Lord himself were speaking to him. And he is most affected by that ministry, or that portion of God's word, which shows him his sins, and searches out his most secret corruptions: denying his own reason and affections — yes, denying his own profits and pleasures in *anything* when the Lord requires it of him. **4th**, When he makes the word of God his chief comfort in his afflictions; finding it at that time, to be the main stay and solace of his heart, Psalm 119.49, 50.

The SECOND EVIDENCE is when a man truly loves the children of God, 1John 5.1; that is, all godly and religious persons above all other sorts of men; and that is when he loves them not for any carnal respects, but for the graces of God which he sees in them, 2John 1.2; 3John 1.3. And when he delights in their society and company, and makes them his only companions, Psalm 119.63; and when his well-doing (in his power) extends itself to them, Psalm 16.3. In being pitiful and tender-hearted towards them, and in gladly receiving them, and meeting their needs with a ready mind, Philem. 1.7; 1John 3.17.¹ And when he does not hold the glorious faith of Christ with “partiality,” James 2.1, 2,² but can make himself equal to those of lower rank, Rom. 12.16; and when he loves them at all times, even when they are in adversity, such as poverty, disgrace, sickness, or are otherwise in misery.

MODERN DIVINITY. 239

The THIRD EVIDENCE is, when a man can truly love his enemies, Mat. 6.14. And he does that when he can pray heartily for them, and forgive them their particular trespasses against him; being more grieved that they have sinned against God than for having wronged him; and when he can forbear them, rather than take revenge on them by bringing shame and misery upon them, 1Pet. 3.9; Rom. 12.14; and when he strives to overcome their evil with goodness, being willing to help them, and relieve them in their misery, and do them any good in soul or body; and, lastly, when he can freely and willingly acknowledge his enemy's just praise, as if he were his dearest friend.

Sect. 15. — How to recover lost evidences.

Neo. But, sir, I beg you to let me ask you one more question touching this point; and that is, suppose that hereafter I were to see no outward evidences, and question whether I ever had any true inward evidences, and so whether I ever truly believed or not — what must I do then?

Evan. Indeed it is possible that you may come to such a condition; and therefore you do well to provide for it beforehand. Now then, if it ever pleases the Lord to give you over to such a condition, first, let me warn you to beware of forcing and constraining yourself to yield obedience to God's commandments to the end that you may get evidence of your faith again, or get a ground on which to base your believing that you have believed; and so forcibly hasten your assurance before the time. ³ For although this is not quite turning back to the Covenant of Works (for you will never do that) yet it is to turn aside towards that covenant, as Abraham did. After he had long waited for the promised seed, and even though he was previously justified by

¹ **Phm 1:7** For we have great joy and consolation in your love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed by you, brother. **1Joh 3:17** But whoever has this world's goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his heart from him, how does the love of God abide in him?

² **Jas 2:1** My brethren, do not hold the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, *the Lord of glory*, with partiality. ² For if there should come into your assembly a man with gold rings, in fine apparel, and there should also come in a poor man in filthy clothes, etc.

³ This forcing one's self to yield obedience, which the author warns Christians against when they have lost sight of their evidences, and would gladly recover them, is by pressing to yield obedience without believing, till they have recovered the evidence of their having faith, by their obedience. To advise a Christian to beware of taking this course, in this case, is not to favour laxness, but to guard him against beginning his work at the wrong end, and so labouring in vain. For obeying, indeed, must still spring from believing, since “without faith it is impossible to please God,” Heb. 11.6. And “whatever is not of faith, is sin,” Rom. 14.23. The following advice sets the matter in full light.

believing the free promise, yet to more speedily satisfy his faith, he turned aside to go in to Hagar who was, as you have heard, a type of the Covenant of Works. So that you see, this is not

240 THE MARROW OF

the right way. Rather, the right way for you to get your assurance again, is when all other things fail, *look to Christ*. That is, go to the word and promise, and leave off and cease awhile to reason about the truth of your faith, and set your heart at work to believe, as if you had never done it. Say in your heart, ‘Well, Satan, suppose my faith has not been true up to now, yet now I will begin to endeavour after true faith. And therefore, O Lord, here I throw myself on your mercy afresh, for in you the fatherless find mercy,’ Hos. 14.3. Thus, I say, *hold to the word*; do not depart from it, but stay here, and you will bring forth fruit with patience,¹ Luke 8.15.

Sect. 16. — Marks and signs of union with Christ.

Neo. Well, sir, you have fully satisfied me concerning that point. But as I remember, what follows in the same verse is this, “Do you not know yourselves, that Christ is in you, unless you are reprobates?” 2Cor. 13.5. Therefore, I desire to hear how a man may know that Jesus Christ is in him.

Evan. Why, if Christ is in a man, he lives in him: as the apostle says, “I do not live, but Christ lives in me.” [Gal 2.20](#)

Neo. But how then shall a man know that Christ lives in him?

Evan. Why, in whatever man Christ lives, according to the measure of his faith, Christ executes his THREEFOLD OFFICE in him, namely: his prophetic, priestly, and kingly office.

Neo. I desire to hear more of this threefold office of Christ; and therefore, I ask you, sir, tell me first, how may a man know that Christ executes his PROPHETIC OFFICE in him?

Evan. Why, so far as any man hears and knows that there was a covenant made between God and all mankind in Adam; and that it was an equal covenant,² and that God’s justice must enter³ upon its breach; and that all mankind, for that reason, is liable to eternal death and damnation. So that if God had condemned all mankind, it would only have been the sentence of an equal and just judge, seeking the execution of his justice, rather than man’s ruin and destruction. And thereupon he takes it home, and applies it particularly to himself, Job 5.27. Thus he is convinced that he is a miserable, lost, and helpless man. I say, so far as a man does this,

MODERN DIVINITY. 241

Christ executes his prophetic office in him, in teaching him, and revealing to him, the Covenant of *Works*. And it is executed in him so far as he hears and knows that God made a covenant with Abraham, and all his believing seed in Jesus Christ, offering Christ freely to all those to whom the sound of the gospel comes, and giving him freely to all those who receive him by faith, thus justifying and saving them eternally. And thereupon his heart is opened to receive this truth, not as a man takes an object or a theological point into his head, by which he is only made able to discourse about it; but as a habitual and practical point, receiving it into his “heart by the faith of the gospel,” Philip. 1.27; applying it to himself, and laying his eternal state upon it; thus setting his seal to it that God is true — I say, so far as a man does this, Christ executes his prophetic office in him, in teaching him, and revealing to him, the Covenant of *Grace*. And so far as any

¹ Namely, obedience, whereby you shall recover your evidence.

² See page 12, note.

³ Demanding satisfaction.

man hears and knows, that “this is the will of God, even his sanctification,” 1Thess. 4.3, and thereupon concludes that it is his duty to endeavour after it — I say, so far as a man does this, Christ executes his prophetic office in him, in teaching him, and revealing to him, his law. And this I hope is a sufficient answer to your first question.

Neo. I beg you, sir, in the second place, tell me, how may a man know that Christ executes his PRIESTLY OFFICE in him?

Evan. Why, so far as any man hears and knows that Christ has given himself as the only absolute and perfect sacrifice for the sins of believers, Heb. 9.26, and joined them to himself by faith, and joined himself to them by his Spirit, and so has made them one with himself; and has now “entered into heaven itself, to appear in the presence of God for them,” Heb. 9.24; and based on this, any believer is emboldened to go immediately to¹ God in prayer, as to a father, and to meet him in Christ, and to present him with Christ himself, as a sacrifice without spot or blemish — I say, so far as any man does this, Christ executes his priestly office in him.

Neo. But sir, would you have a believer go immediately to God? How then does Christ make intercession for us at God’s right hand, as the apostle says he does? Rom. 8.34.

Evan. It is true indeed that Christ, as a public person, representing all believers, appears before God his Father; and that he wills according to both his natures:

242 THE MARROW OF

as a man, he desires that God, for his satisfaction’s sake, would grant them whatever “they ask according to his will.” 1Joh 5.14 Yet you must go immediately to God in prayer for all that.²

You must not set your prayers on Christ, and terminate them there, as if he were to take them and present them to his Father; but the very place of presenting your prayers must be God himself in Christ. Nor must you conceive of prayer as though Christ the Son were more willing to grant your request than God the Father — for whatever Christ wills, the Father also wills, being well-pleased with him. Therefore in Christ, I say, and nowhere else, you must expect to have your petitions granted; and as it is in Christ and no place else, so it is for Christ’s sake, and for nothing else. And therefore I beseech you to beware that you not forget Christ when you go to the Father to beg anything you desire, either for yourself or others; especially when you desire to have any pardon for sin. You are not to think that when you join fasting, weeping, and afflicting yourself, to your prayers, that for doing so you will prevail with God to hear you and grant your petitions. No, no, you must meet God in Christ, and present him with his sufferings — your eye, your mind, and all your confidence, must be in this; and be as confident in this as you possibly can. Indeed, expostulate the matter, as it were, with God the Father, and say to him, “Look, here is the person that has well-deserved it; here is the person that wills and desires it; the one in whom you said you are well-pleased; yes, here is the person that paid the debt, and discharged the bond for all my sins. Therefore, O Lord! Now it agrees with your justice to forgive me.” And if you do this, why, then you may be assured that Christ executes his priestly office in you.

Neo. I beg you, sir, in the third place, show me how may a man know that Christ executes his KINGLY OFFICE in him?

Evan. Why, so far as any man hears and knows “that all power is given to Christ, both in heaven and on earth,” Matt, 28.18, both to vanquish and overcome all the lusts and corruptions of believers, and also to write his law in their hearts. Based on this, he takes the opportunity to go to Christ to have both these things done in him. I say, so far as he does this, why, Christ executes his kingly office in him.

¹ That is, even unto.

² But you yourself were not to come near him. No, we must “come to God by Christ,” Heb. 7.25.

Neo. Why then, sir, it seems that the place where Christ executes his kingly office, is in the hearts of believers?

Evan. It is true indeed; for Christ's kingdom is not temporal or secular over the natural lives or civil negotiations of men. But his kingdom is spiritual and heavenly, over the souls of men, to awe and over-rule the hearts, to captivate the affections, to bring into obedience the thoughts, and to subdue and pull down strongholds.^{2Cor 10.4-5} For when our father Adam transgressed, he and we — all of us — forsook God, and chose the devil for our lord and king. So that every mother's child of us is, by nature, under the government of Satan. He rules over us till Christ comes into our hearts and dispossesses him. This is according to the words of Christ himself, Luke 11.21, 22, "When a strong man, armed, keeps his palace, his goods are in peace:" that is, as Calvin says, Satan holds those who are in subjection to him in such bonds and quiet possession, that he rules over them without resistance. But when Christ comes to dwell in any man's heart by faith, then according to the measure of faith, Christ dispossesses Satan, and seats himself in the heart, and roots out and pulls down all that withstands his government there. As a valiant captain, he stands on his guard, and enables the soul to gather together all its forces and powers, to resist and withstand all its enemies and his.

And so the soul sets itself in good earnest against them anytime they offer to return again. Christ especially enables the soul to resist and set itself against the principal enemy, even that which most opposes Christ in his government. So that whatever lust or corruption is in a believer's heart or soul, as most predominant there, Christ enables the believer to take that into his mind, and to have the most revengeful thoughts against it, and to make complaints to Christ against it, and to desire power and strength from him against it — all because it most withstands the government of Christ, and it is the rankest traitor to Christ. So that the believer uses all the means he can to bring it before the judgment-seat of Christ. And there he calls for justice against it, saying, "Lord Jesus Christ, here is a rebel and a traitor that withstands your government in me. Therefore, I beg you, come and execute your kingly office in me, and subdue it: yes, vanquish and overcome it." Whereupon Christ gives the same answer that he gave to the centurion, "Go your way; as you have believed, so it will be done for you," ¹ Mat. 8.13.

244 THE MARROW OF

As Christ thus suppresses all other governors but himself in the heart of a believer, so he razes and defaces all other laws, and writes his own there, according to his promise, Jer. 31.33.² He makes them pliable and willing to do and suffer his will, *because* it is his will. So that the mind and will of Christ, laid down in his word and manifested in his works, is not only the rule of a believer's obedience, but also the reason for it, as I once heard a godly minister say in the pulpit. So that the believer not only does what is Christ's will, but he does it *because* it is Christ's will.

Oh that man that has the Law of Christ written in his heart! According to the measure of it, he reads, he hears, he prays, he receives the sacrament, he keeps the Lord's day holy, he exhorts, he instructs, he confers, and does all the duties that belong to him in his general calling, because he knows it is the mind and will of Christ that he should do so! Indeed, he patiently suffers, and willingly undergoes, afflictions for the cause of Christ, because he knows it is the will of Christ. Indeed, such a man not only yields obedience, and performs the duties of the first tablet of the law by virtue of Christ's command, but of the second tablet also. Oh that husband, parent, master, or magistrate, that has the Law of Christ written in his heart! He does his duty to his

¹ Namely, believed the promise of sanctification, Ezek. 36.27; Micah 7.19, which belief always brings along with it the use of the means that are of divine institution for that end.

² **Jer 31:33** "But this *is* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD: I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

wife, child, servant, or subject, willingly and uprightly, because Christ requires it and commands it. And so that wife, child, servant, or subject, that has the Law of Christ written in his or her heart, do their duties to husband, parent, master, or governor, freely and cheerfully, because their Lord Christ commands it. Now, then, *if you find these things in your heart*, you may conclude that Christ rules and reigns there, as Lord and King.

CHAPTER IV. OF THE HEART'S HAPPINESS, OR SOUL'S REST.

Sect. 1. — No rest for the soul till it comes to God.

Neo. Sir, please let me tell you some part of my mind, and then I will cease to trouble you anymore at this time.

MODERN DIVINITY. 245

The truth is, ever since I can remember, I felt a kind of restless discontentedness in my spirit. For many years, I fed myself with hopes of finding rest and contentment in persons and things here below, scarcely thinking of the state and condition of my soul, or of any condition beyond this life — until, as I told you before, the Lord was pleased to visit me with a fit of sickness. And then I began to think of death, judgment, hell, and heaven, and to take care and seek rest for my soul, as well as for my body. But, alas! I could never find rest for it before this day, because, indeed, I did not seek it by faith, but as it were, by the works of the law — or, in plain terms, because I did not seek it in Christ, but in myself. But now, bless God, I see that Christ is all in all; and therefore, by the grace of God, I am resolved no longer to seek rest and contentment either in any earthly thing — or in my own righteousness — but only in the free love and favour of God, as he is in his Son Jesus Christ. And God willing, there shall be my soul's rest. I beseech you, sir, pray for me that it may be so. And now I am done.

Evan. This point concerning the heart's happiness, or the soul's rest, is a point very necessary for us to know. Indeed, it is a point that I have formerly thought about. And therefore, though circumstances begin to call me away from you, yet since you spoke of it, I will nevertheless proceed on — if you, or any of you, would give me the opportunity, as the Lord enables me.

Ant. With a very good will, sir; for indeed it is a point that I much desire to hear about.

Evan. First then, I would entreat you to consider with me, that when God at first gave man an elementish body,¹ he also infused an immortal soul into him of a spiritual substance. Though he gave man's soul a local being in his body, he gave it a spiritual well-being in himself — so that the soul was in the body by location, and it was at rest in God by union and communication. The soul being in God at the beginning, it was man's true being and his true happiness. Now having fallen from God, in his justice God left man, so that the actual union and communion that the soul of man had with God at the beginning, was broken off. God and man's soul are parted, and the soul is in a restless condition.

246 THE MARROW OF

However, the Lord having seated in man's soul a certain character of himself, the soul is thereby made to re-aspire towards that *summum bonum*, that chief good, which is God himself; and it can find rest nowhere till it comes to God.²

¹ That is an elementary body, made up, as it were, of the four elements as they are called: namely, fire, air, earth, and water.

² The soul of man has a natural desire for happiness: nothing can make it happy except what is commensurate to its desires, or capable of affording it full satisfaction. Nothing less than an infinite good is such a thing: and only God himself is an infinite good, in the enjoyment of which the soul can rest as fully satisfied, desiring no more. Now, since

Nom. But wait, sir, I beg you. How can it be said that man's soul re-aspires towards God the Creator, when it is evident that every man's soul is naturally bent towards the creature, to seek its rest there?

Evan. In an answer to this, I ask you to consider that man's understanding is naturally dark and blind. Therefore he is ignorant of what his own soul desires and strongly aspires to. It knows indeed that the soul wants something, but till it is enlightened, it does not know *what* the soul wants. For indeed, the state of the soul is the same as a new born child. That child, by natural instinct, gapes and cries for nutriment — indeed, for nutriment suitable to its tender condition. And if the nurse, through negligence or ignorance, either gives it no food at all, or food that it is not capable of receiving, the child refuses it, and still cries in strong desire for the breast. Yet in this state, the child does not know by any intellectual power and understanding, what it desires for itself. Even so, man's poor soul cries out to God for its proper nourishment;¹

MODERN DIVINITY. 247

but man's understanding, like a blind, ignorant nurse not knowing what it cries for, offers the heart a creature² instead of its Creator. Thus, because of the blindness of the understanding, together with the corruption of the will, and the disorder of the affections, man's soul is kept by violence³ from its proper centre, which is God himself.

Sect. 2. — How the soul is kept from rest in God.

Oh, how many souls there are in the world who are hindered, if not completely kept from rest in God, because their blind understanding presents to their sensual appetites, varieties of sensual objects!

Is there not many a luxurious⁴ person's soul hindered, if not completely kept from true rest in God, by that beauty which nature has placed in feminine faces,⁵ — especially when Satan secretly suggests to such feminine hearts a desire for artificial⁶ dressing from head to foot; yes, and sometimes painting their faces, like their mother Jezebel? ^{2Kng 9.30}

And is there not many a voluptuous epicure's soul hindered, if not completely kept from rest in God, by beholding the colour, and tasting the sweetness of dainty delicate dishes, his wine red in

by reason of the vast capacity of the soul, nothing but God himself can indeed satisfy its desire for happiness — this being so woven into the very nature of the soul, that nothing but the destruction of the very being of the soul can remove it — it is evident that it is impossible that the soul of man can ever find true rest until it returns to God, and takes up its rest with him. But it must still be in quest of, or desiring, its chief good and happiness, in which it may rest. And in reality, this is God himself only. Though the practical understanding being blinded, it does not know that; the perverse will and affections carry the soul away from him, seeking the desired good and happiness in other things. This is what the author calls the soul's re-aspiring towards the chief good, even God himself; and it is so consistent with the total depravation of man's nature, that it will remain forever in the damned in hell. A chief part of their misery will lie in that this desire will be ever rampant in them, but never in the least satisfied. They will never be freed from this scorching thirst there, nor get a drop of water to cool the tongue.

¹ Man's poor soul, before it is enlightened, naturally cries to God, as the "young ravens cry to him," Job 38.41, not knowing to whom: and the soul cries for him as its proper nourishment, as the new-born infant cries for the breast, not knowing for what. Only it feels a want; it desires a proper supply for filling it up; and it can never get kindly rest till it is supplied accordingly; that is, till it comes to the enjoyment of God. Then it rests, as the infant set to the full breast. Isa. 66.11, "That you may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations."

² That is, a created thing, an earthly substitute for what it spiritually craves from God.

³ Namely, violence done to its natural make and constitution (if I may thus express it) by the blindness, corruption, and disorder that have seized its faculties.

⁴ Here "luxurious" means epicurean: devoted to pleasure or to gratifying the senses (*as in the next paragraph*).

⁵ That is, women's faces.

⁶ Artificial in the sense of unnatural, or contrived — intentionally decorated to draw lustful attention, to lure.

the cup, and his beer of amber colour in the glass? In the Scripture we read of a “certain man who fared deliciously every day,” [Luk 16.19](#) as if there had been only one who was so ill-disposed. But in our times, there are certainly hundreds, both men and women, who not only fare deliciously, but voluptuously, twice every day, if not more.

And is there not many a proud person’s soul hindered, if not completely kept from rest in God, by the harmonious sound of popular praise which, like a loadstone,¹ draws the vain-glorious heart to hunt so much more eagerly for it, to augment the echo of such a vain windy reputation?

And is there not many a covetous person’s soul hindered, if not completely kept from rest in God, by the cry of great abundance, the words of wealth, and the glory of gain?

248 THE MARROW OF

And is there not many a musical mind hindered, if not completely kept from sweet comfort in God, by the harmony of artificial concord played on musical instruments? ²

And how many perfumed fools are there in the world who, by smelling their sweet apparel, and their sweet nosegays, are kept from soul-sweetness in Christ?

And thus Satan, like a cunning fisher, baits his hook with a sensual object to catch men. And having gotten it into their jaws, he draws them up and down in sensual contentments, till he has so drowned them in it, that the peace and rest of their souls in God is almost forgotten. Hence most of man’s life, and for many their *whole* life, is spent in seeking satisfaction for the sensual appetite.

Nom. Indeed, sir, what you have said, we may see truly verified in many men who spend their days about these vanities, and afford no time for religious exercises; not even on the Lord’s day by their good will.

Evan. You speak the truth. Yet let me also tell you that by the power of the natural conscience, a man may be forced to confess that his hopes of happiness are in God alone, and not in these things; yes, and he is forced to forsake profits and pleasures, and all sensual objects, as unable to give his soul any true contentment; and he is forced to fall into performing religious exercises, and to rest *there* — and yet never come *to God* for rest! If we consider this [failure], whether in the rude multitude of sensual livers, or in the more seemingly religious, we may perceive that the religious exercises of men strongly deceive, and strangely delude many men about their heart’s happiness in God.

For the FIRST SORT,³ even though they are those who make their belly their best god, and do not sacrifice except to Bacchus, Apollo, or Venus ⁴ — and even though their conscience accuses them that these things are nothing — yet because they had the name *Christian* put on them at their baptism, and because they often repeat the Lord’s prayer, the apostles’ creed, and the Ten Commandments, and because they may have recently accustomed themselves to go to church to hear a divine service and preaching now and then, and because at various times they have received the sacrament, they can only be persuaded that God is well-pleased with them. A man may as well persuade them that they are not men and women, as to persuade them that they are not in a good spiritual condition.

MODERN DIVINITY. 249

¹ A magnet.

² This is not referring to music itself. David wrote, played, and arranged music for God’s glory (1Kng 10.12; Psa 68.25). Rather, this refers to wanton revelry in music, where God is not its focus or audience (Isa 5.12).

³ Namely, sensual livers, who yet perform religious exercises.

⁴ That is, surrender themselves to drunkenness, music, and lascivious.

And for the SECOND SORT, ¹ who ordinarily have more human wisdom and human learning than the former sort, and seem to be more holy and devout than the former sort of sensual and ignorant people — yet how many there are of this sort, who never pass further than the outward court of bodily performances. They feed and feast themselves like men in a dream. They suppose that they have all things, and yet indeed they have only a bladder-full, or rather a brain-full of wind and worldly conceptions.

Are there not some who give themselves to more special searching, and to seeking knowledge in Scripture-learnedness and clerk-like skill, in this art and that language, till they are able to repeat all the historic places in the Bible; yes, and all those texts of Scripture that they conceive support some private opinion of theirs concerning ceremonies, church-government, or other such circumstantial points of religion; and touching these points, are they not very able to reason and dispute, and put forth such curious questions that are not easily answered?

Are not some of these men ² called sect-makers, and begetters or devisers of new opinions in religion; especially in the matter of worshipping God, as they used to call it, in which they find a beginning, but rarely an end? For this religious knowledge is so variable through the multiplicity of curious wits and contentious spirits, that the life of man may seem too short to take a full view of this variety. For though all sects say they will be guided by the word of truth, and they all seem to bring Scripture to bear, which indeed is one, just as God is one — yet, because of their several constructions and interpretations of Scripture, and the conceits of their own human wisdom, they are many.³

Are there not others of this sort, who are ready to embrace any new way of worship, especially if it comes under the cloak of Scripture-learning, and it has a show of truth founded on the letter of the Bible, and it seems to be more zealous and devout than the former way? Especially if the teacher of that new way can frame a sad and demure countenance, and with feigned grace lift up his head and eyes towards heaven, with some strong groan,

250 THE MARROW OF

in declaring his newly conceived opinion, frequently using the phrase, *the glory of God!* Oh, then these men, by-and-by, are of another opinion! They suppose that God has made known some further truth to them, because in the blindness of their understanding, they are not able to reach any supernatural truth, even though by literal learning, and clerk-like cunning, they dive ever so deep into the Scriptures, and are therefore ready to entertain any form of religious exercises suggested to them.

Is there not a THIRD SORT, much like these men, who are excessive and mutable in their performance of religious exercises? Surely St. Paul perceived that this was the very God of some men in his time, and therefore he would have Timothy instruct others that “bodily exercise profits little,” or as some read it, “nothing at all;” and sets “godliness” in opposition to it, as something other than “bodily exercise,” and he says that it “is profitable,” ⁴ etc.

Do you not think that there are some men in our day, who know no other good than bodily exercise, and can hardly distinguish between that and godliness? Now these bodily exercises are mutable and variable, according to their conceits and opinions. For all sects have their several services, as they call them; yet they are all bodily, and for the most part, *only* bodily. They do

¹ Namely, the more seemingly religious.

² Namely, of those spoken of in the paragraph immediately preceding, whom he begins to distribute here into three classes or sorts; all belonging to the second sort, namely: *the more seemingly religious*.

³ That is, God is one, and His Word is one, therefore the church should be one (Joh 17.22) — but instead, it is many.

⁴ **1Tim 4:8** For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

these to establish rest for their souls, because they lack rest in God. Hence their peace and rest are up and down, according to their working better or worse. So many chapters must be read, and so many sermons must be heard, and so many times a day they must pray, and so many days in the week or year they must fast, etc., or else their souls can have no rest. But do not mistake me, I pray, in imagining that I speak against doing these things, for I do them all myself. But I speak against *resting* in doing them,¹ which I do not desire to do.

And thus you see that men's blind understanding not only presents sensual objects to the sensual appetite, but also rational objects to the rational appetite; so that man's poor soul is not only kept from rest in God by means of *sensuality*, but also by means of *formality*. If Satan cannot keep us from rest in God by feeding our senses with our mother Eve's apple, then he attempts to do it by blinding our eyes, thus hindering us from seeing the paths of the gospel. If he cannot keep us in Egypt by the flesh-pots of sensuality, then he will make us wander in the wilderness of religious and rational formality: so that if he cannot hinder us more grossly, then he attempts to do it more closely.

MODERN DIVINITY. 251

Nom. But sir, I am persuaded that there are many men who are so religiously exercised, and who perform duties such as you have mentioned, and yet do not rest in them but in God.

Evan. Without question there are some Christians who look at such exercises as means ordained by God both to beget and increase faith, and all other graces of his Spirit, in the hearts of his people. Therefore, with the intent that their faith, and love, and other graces may increase, they are careful to wait upon God, in taking all convenient opportunities to exercise themselves in this; and yet they have their soul's rest in God, and not in such exercises.

But, alas! I fear the number of such men is very few in comparison to those who do otherwise. For most men who are religiously exercised in this way, instead conceive that they have offended and displeased God by their former disobedience; and so they must pacify and appease him by their future obedience. Therefore they are careful to exercise themselves in this way of duty, and in that way of worship, and do it all to that end. Indeed, conceiving that they have corrupted, defiled, and polluted themselves by falling into sin, they must also purge, cleanse, and purify themselves by rising out of sin, and walking in new obedience.² And so all the good they do, and all the evil they avoid, is meant to pacify God and to appease their own consciences. If they seek rest for their souls this way, why, it is the way of the Covenant of Works, where they will never be able to reach God. No, it is the way to come to God apart from Christ, whereby they will never be able to come near to him, for he is a "consuming fire."

Nom. But sir, I ask you, would you not have our senses exercised about any of their objects any longer? Would you have us no longer take comfort in the good things of this life?

Evan. I beg you, do not mistake me; I do not speak as though I would have you stoically refuse the lawful use of any of the Lord's good creations, which he is pleased to afford you.

252 THE MARROW OF

Nor do I prohibit you from all comfort in this. But this is what I desire: namely, that you would endeavour to attain such a peace, rest, and contentment in God, as he is in Christ, that the violent cry of your heart may be restrained, and that your appetites may not be so forcible, nor

¹ That is, our rest is found in God alone, and in nothing we do ourselves. To the extent these exercises lead us to rest in and depend on God, they are beneficial; but in themselves they have no value – they are means, and not ends.

² Neglecting to wash by faith in the blood of Christ, the "Fountain was opened for sin, and for uncleanness," Zech. 13.1. — "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin," 1John 1.17. — "How much more shall the blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works?" Heb. 9.14. — "Purifying their hearts by faith," Acts 15.9.

so unruly as they are naturally, but that their unruliness may be brought into a very attractive decorum and order. This is so your sensual appetites may much more easily and contentedly be denied the objects of their desires. Yes, and be contented (if there is occasion) with what is most repugnant to them, such as being content with hunger, cold, nakedness, yes, and with death itself. For such is the wonderful working of the heart's quiet and rest in God, that although a man's senses are still exercised in and upon their proper objects, yet may it truly be said that such a man's life is not sensual.

For indeed his heart takes little contentment in any such exercises, being exercised for the most part in a more transcendent communion with God, as he is in Christ. So that indeed, the man who has this peace and rest in God may be truly said to “use this world as though he did not use it,” ¹Cor 7:31 in that he receives no cordial contentment from any sensual exercise whatsoever. And that is because his heart is withdrawn from them. This withdrawing of the heart is not unaptly pointed at in the spouse's speech in Song 5.2, “I sleep,” she says, “but my heart wakes.” Even so may it be said that such a man is sleeping, looking, hearing, tasting, smelling, eating, drinking, feasting, etc., but his heart is withdrawn from these creaturely things, and is rejoicing in God his Saviour, and his soul is magnifying his Lord — so that in the midst of all these sensual delights, his heart secretly says, “Yes, but my happiness is not here.”

Nom. But, sir, I ask you, why do you call rational and religious exercises a *wilderness*?

Evan. For two reasons; *First*, because just as the children of Israel, when they got out of Egypt, still wandered many years in the wilderness before they came into the land of Canaan, even so, many men wander a long time in rational and religious exercises after they have left a sensual life, before they finally come to rest in God — the land of Canaan was a type of this.¹

MODERN DIVINITY. 253

Secondly, Because men often lose themselves in a wilderness, and can find no way out — but they suppose, after traveling a long time, that they are nearer the place where they want to go, when in truth, they are farther off. This is how it fares with many, indeed with all those who walk in the way of reason:² they lose themselves in the woods and bushes of their works and doings; so that the longer they travel, the farther they are from God, and from true rest in him.

Nom. But, sir, you know that the Lord has endowed us with reasonable souls. Would you not then have us make use of our reason?

Evan. I beg you, do not mistake me. I do not condemn nor despise the use of reason; only I would not have you establish it as ³ the chief good, but keep it subdued. So that, if with Hagar, it attempts to bear rule and lord it over your faith, then in the wisdom of God, and like Sarah, I would have you cast it out from having dominion. In brief, I would have you stronger in desire than curious in speculation, and long more to feel communion with God than be able to dispute about the genus or species of any question — whether human or divine — and press hard to know God by powerful experience. Even though your knowledge is great, and your obedience surpasses many, I would have you truly nullified, annihilated, and made nothing, and become fools in all fleshly wisdom, and glory in nothing except in the Lord.⁴ And I would have you, with

¹ Our author himself had been such a wanderer for a dozen of years. See his *Preface*, and compare that heavy word in Eccl. 10.15, “The labour of the foolish wearies every one of them, because he does not know how to go to the city.”

² Namely, of reason, as the judge and rule in religion. The holy Scripture is the rule, and the Spirit of God speaking in it is the judge; it is the business of our reason to discern what they teach, and to submit to it without reserve.

³ That is, *for*, or *to be*.

⁴ 2Cor. 12.11, “Though I am nothing.”— 1Cor. 3.18, “Let him become a fool, that he may be wise.”— Chap. 1.31, “He that glories, let him glory in the Lord.”

the eye of faith, sweetly behold all things extracted out of one thing; and in one thing to see all.¹ In a word, I would have a most profound silence in you, contemning all curious questions and discourses. I would have you ponder much in your heart, and prate little with your tongue. “Be swift to hear,” but “slow to speak,” and “slow to wrath,” as the apostle James advises you, James 1.19. And by this means, your reason will be subdued and become one with your faith; for when reason is one with faith, then it is subjugated to faith.

254 THE MARROW OF

Then reason will keep its true lists and limits, and you will become ten times more reasonable than you were before. So I hope you now see that the heart’s farewell from the sensual and rational life is not to be considered absolutely, but respectively; it does not consist in leaving either one, but in a right use of both.

Sect. 3. — God in Christ the only true rest for the soul.

Nom. Then, sir, it seems to me that God in Christ, apprehended by faith, is the only true rest for a man’s soul.

Evan. *There* is the true rest indeed; *there* is the rest which David invites his soul to when he says, “Return to your rest, my soul! For the Lord has dealt bountifully with you,” Psalm 116.7. — “For we who have believed,” says the author to the Hebrews, “have entered into his rest,”² Heb. 4.3. — And “Come to me,” says Christ, “all you that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest,”³ Mat. 11.28.

MODERN DIVINITY. 255

Truly, my neighbours and friends, believe it: we will never find happiness for our heart, and true rest for our soul, until we find it here. Though a man may think that if he had this man’s wit and that man’s wealth, this man’s honour and that man’s pleasure, this wife or that husband, these children and those servants, his heart would be satisfied, and his soul would be contented — yet which of us has not, by our own experience, found the contrary? For not long after we obtained

¹ According to that saying of our Lord in Mat. 19.17, “There is none good but one, that is God.”

² “Do enter into rest,” or that rest, namely: “his rest.” He means, that we even now enter into that rest by faith. Compare verse 10.

³ This is one of the most solemn gospel offers to be found in all the New Testament; and our author seems here to point at what I conceive to be the true and genuine sense of it. The words “labour and heavy laden,” do not restrict the invitation and offer to those who are sensible of their sins, and longing to be rid of them — though indeed none but such will really accept — but they denote the restlessness of the sinful soul of man; a qualification (if it is so-called) to be found in all that are apart from Christ, whether they have, or have not, any notable law work on their consciences.

I say *notable*, to distinguish it from that which is common to all men, even to heathens, Rom. 11.15. Our father Adam led his whole family away out of their rest in God; and so he left them with a conscience full of guilt, and a heart full of unsatisfied desires. Hence his children soon find themselves like the horse-leech, having “two daughters, crying. Give, give;” namely, a restless conscience, and a restless heart; and to each of these the poor soul must say, as Naomi said to Ruth, “My daughter, shall I not seek rest for you?” so the blinded soul falls, labouring for rest to them. And it labours in the barren region of the fiery law for a rest to the conscience, and in the empty creation, for a rest to the heart: but, after all, the conscience is still heavy-laden with guilt, whether it has any lively feeling of it or not; and the heart is still under a load of unsatisfied desires; so neither the one nor the other can find rest indeed. This is the natural case of all men. And to souls thus labouring, and laden, Jesus Christ calls here, that they may “come to him, and he will give them rest;” namely, a rest for their consciences, under the covert of his blood; and a rest for their hearts, in the enjoyment of God through him.

This is most agreeable to the Scripture phraseology in Eccl. 10.15, “The labour of the foolish wearies every one of them, because he does not know how to go to the city,” — Hab. 2.13, “The people shall labour in the very fire, and the people shall weary themselves for very vanity.” — Isa. 4.2, “Why do you spend your labour for what does not satisfy?” See page 143, note. The prophet laments over a people more insensible than the ox or the ass, saying, “Ah, sinful nation! a people laden with iniquity,” Isa. 1.3, 4. And the apostle speaks of “silly women laden with sins, led away with diverse lusts, ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth,” 2Tim. 3.6, 7.

the thing we so much desired, and in which we promised ourselves so much happiness, rest, and contentment, we have found nothing but vanity and emptiness in it. Let a man but deal plainly with his own heart, and he will find that notwithstanding having many things, there is always one thing lacking: for indeed a man's soul cannot be satisfied with any creaturely thing, not even with a world of creatures. And the reason is because the desires of a man's soul are infinite, according to that infinite goodness which it once lost in losing God. Yes, and man's soul is a spirit; and therefore it cannot communicate with any corporal thing. So that all creatures, not being that infinite and spiritual fulness which our hearts have lost, and towards which they still aspire; they cannot give it full contentment.

Not only this, but let me say more. However a man may, in the midst of his sensual fulness, be convinced in his conscience that he is at enmity with God, and therefore in danger of God's wrath and eternal damnation — and thereupon be moved to reform his life and amend his ways, and endeavour to seek peace and rest to his soul — yet because this is in the way of works, it is impossible for him to find it. For his conscience will always be accusing him that this good duty which he should have done, has not been done; and this evil that he should have forborne, has been done; and he was remiss in the performance of this duty, and very defective in that duty; and in many such ways, his soul will be disquieted.

256 THE MARROW OF

But once a man comes to believe that all his sins both past, present, and to come, are freely and fully pardoned ¹ and that God in Christ is graciously reconciled to him, the Lord thereupon so reveals his fatherly face to him in Christ, and he so makes known that incredible union between him and the believing soul, that the man's heart becomes quietly contented in God, who is the proper element of its being. For upon this, such peace comes into the soul, flowing from the God of peace, that it fills the emptiness of his soul with true fulness, in the fulness of God — so that now the heart ceases to molest the understanding and the reason, in seeking either a variety of objects, or an augmentation of degrees, in any comprehensible thing. The restless longing of the mind ceases, which before caused disquietude and disorder, both in the variety of mental projects, and in the sensual and beastly exercises of the corporal and external members; it is satisfied and truly quieted. For when a man's heart is at peace in God, and has become truly full in that peace and joy surpassing understanding, then the devil does not have that same hope to prevail against his soul as he had before. He knows right well that it is in vain to bait his hook with profits, pleasures, honour, or any other like good, to catch a soul that is thus at quiet in God; for he has all fulness in God; and what can be added to fulness unless it runs over? Indeed, empty hearts, like empty hogsheads,² are fit to receive any matter which is put into them. But the heart of the believer, being filled with joy and peace in believing, abhors all such base allurements; for it has no room in itself to receive any such seeming contentments. So that, to speak truthfully, there is nothing that truly and unfeignedly roots wickedness out of the heart of man, except the true tranquillity of the mind, or the rest of the soul in God. And to say it as it is, this is such a peace and such a rest to the creature in the Creator, that according to the measure of its establishment by faith, no created comprehensible thing can either add to it, or detract from it — the increase of a kingdom cannot augment it, the great losses and crosses in worldly

¹ Namely, in respect to the guilt of eternal wrath. See page 104, note.

² [A large cask or barrel](#) .

things cannot diminish it; a believer's good works all flow from it, and should not return to it;¹ nor should human frailties molest it.²

MODERN DIVINITY. 257

However, this is most certain: neither sin nor Satan, law nor conscience, hell nor grave, can completely extinguish it; for it is the Lord alone that gives and maintains it. "Whom have I in heaven but you?" says David, "and there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you." Psalm 73.25. It is the pleasant face of God in Christ that puts gladness into his heart. Psalm 4.7. And when that face is hidden, then he is troubled. Psalm 30.7. But, to speak more plainly, though the peace and joy of true believers may be extenuated or diminished, the testimony of their being in nature³ remains so strong, that they would be able to say, even when they feel God withdrawn from them, — "My God! My God! Why have you forsaken me?" Psalm 22.1 —and in the night of God's absence, to remain confident that, though the sorrow is overnight, yet joy will come in the morning, Psalm 30.5; Even more, though the Lord should seem to kill them with unkindness, "yet they will put their trust in him," Job 13.15; knowing that for all this "their Redeemer lives," Job 19.25; so strong is "the joy of their Lord," Nehem. 8.10. These are the people that are kept in perfect peace, because their minds are stayed in the Lord, Isa. 26.3.

Therefore, my dear friends and loving neighbours, I beseech you to take heed of deeming any estate happy, until you find this true peace and rest for your souls in God. Oh, beware, lest any of you content yourselves with a peace of speculation rather than of power! Oh, do not be satisfied with a peace that consists either in the act of oblivion or the neglect of examination! Nor yet in any brain-sick supposition of knowledge, whether theological or divine; and so frame mere rational conclusions to protract time and still the cries of an accusing conscience. Rather, let your hearts bid their last farewell to false felicities with which all of them, more or less, have been detained and kept from their true rest. Oh, be strong in resolution! And bid them all farewell; for what have your souls to do any longer among these gross, thick, and bodily things

258 THE MARROW OF

here below, that you should set your love upon them, or see happiness in them? Your souls are of a higher and purer nature; and therefore their well-being must be sought in something that is higher and purer than they are — they must be sought even in God himself.

It is true that all of us, indeed, are too unclean to touch God in immediate unity. Yet there is a pure counterpart to our natures,⁴ and that pure humanity is immediately knit to the purest Deity; and by that immediate union, you may come to a mediate union — for the Deity and humanity being united [in Christ], make one Saviour, head, and husband of souls. And so you, being married to him, that is, to God in him, you also come to be one with God: he is one by a personal union, and you are one by a mystical union. Clear up your eye then, and fix it on him, as on the fairest of men, the perfection of a spiritual beauty, the treasure of heavenly joy, the true object of most fervent love. Let your spirits look, and long, and seek after this Lord. Let your souls cling to him; let them hang about him, and never leave him, till he is brought into the

¹ Namely, to be any part of the fountain of it for the time to come: as the rivers return to the sea from which they came, making a part of the store for their own fresh supply; no, it is the Lord alone that gives and maintains it, as our author afterwards expresses it.

² For we are never free from these in this life. And true repentance, and gospel-mourning for sin, are so consistent with it, that they flow from it, according to the measure of it. Psalm 65.3, "Iniquities prevail against me; as for our transgressions, you shall purge them away." — Zech. 12.10, "They shall look upon me, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn."

³ That is, the evidence, that they (namely: the peace and joy of believers) are still in being (*in reram natura*) and not quite extinct.

⁴ Namely, the pure and spotless human nature of Christ.

chambers of your souls. Indeed, tell him resolutely that you will not leave him till you hear his voice in your soul, saying, “My well-beloved is mine, and I am his;”^{Song 2.16} yes, and tell him, you are “lovesick.”^{Song 2.5} Let your souls go, as it were, out of your bodies and out of the world, by heavenly contemplations. Treading upon the earth with the bottom of your feet, stretch your souls up to look beyond the world, into that upper world where her treasure is,¹ and where her beloved dwells.

And when any of your souls thus forgets her own people, and her father’s house, Christ her King shall so desire her beauty, Psalm 45.10, 11, and be so much in love with her, that like a loadstone, this love of his shall draw the soul in pure desire to him again; and then, “as the hart pants after the rivers of waters, so will your soul pant after God,” Psalm 42.1.

And then, according to the measure of your faith, your souls shall come to have a real rest in God, and be filled with joy unspeakable and glorious.

Therefore, I beseech you, set your mouths to this fountain *Christ*, and so your souls will be filled with the water of life, with the oil of gladness, and with the new wine of the kingdom of God.

MODERN DIVINITY. 259

From him you shall have weighty joys, sweet embracements, and ravishing consolations. And how can it be otherwise, when your souls really communicate with God, and by faith have a true taste, and by the spirit have a sure earnest, of all heavenly preferments — having, as it were, one foot in heaven while you live on earth? Oh then, what a eucharistic love ² will arise from your thankful hearts, extending itself first towards God, and then towards man for God’s sake! And then your willing obedience to God, and also to man for God’s sake, will be according to the measure of your faith. For obedience being the kindly fruit of love, a loving soul brings forth this fruit as kindly as a good tree brings forth her fruit. For the soul — having tasted Christ in a heavenly communion — so loves him, that to please him is a pleasure and delight to herself. And the more Christ Jesus comes into the soul by his Spirit, the more spiritual he makes her, and turns her will into his will, making her of one heart, mind, and will, with him.

So that I say this in conclusion: that if the everlasting love of God in Jesus Christ is truly made known to your souls, according to the measure of it, you will have no need to frame and force yourselves to love and do good works, for your souls will ever stand bound ³ to love God, and to keep his commandments, and it will be your food and drink to do his will. And truly this love of God will cut down self-love and love of the world — for the sweetness of Christ’s Spirit will turn the sweetness of the flesh into bitterness, and the sweetness of the world into contempt. And if you can behold Christ with open face, you will see and feel unutterable things,^{2Cor 12.4} and be changed from beauty to beauty, from glory to glory,^{2Cor 3.18} by the Spirit of this Lord, and so be happy in this life, in your union with happiness, and happy hereafter in the full fruition of happiness: ⁴ where the Lord Jesus Christ brings us all in his due time. *Amen.*

260 THE MARROW OF

CONCLUSION.

“And now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified,” Acts 20.32.

¹ Your soul’s.

² A love of thanksgiving, bearing thankfulness in its nature.

³ Or constrained by the force of that love.

⁴ That is, of God himself in Christ.

Neo. Well, sir, at this time I will say no more, but that it was a happy hour in which I came to you, and a happy discussion that we have had together. Surely, sir, I never knew Christ before this day. Oh, what cause I have to thank the Lord for my coming here, and my two friends as a means of it! And, sir, for the pains that you have taken with me, I pray the Lord to requite you; and so beseeching you to pray the Lord to increase my faith, and to help my unbelief, I humbly take my leave of you, praying, “the God of love and peace be with you.”

Nom. And truly, sir, in that case I believe I have as much reason to speak as he does; for though I have outstripped him in knowledge, and maybe also in strict walking, yet I now see that my actions were neither from a right principle, nor to a right end; and therefore, I have been in no better a condition than he. Truly, sir, I must confess that I never heard so much of Christ and the Covenant of Grace as I have this day.¹ The Lord make it profitable to me; and I beseech you, sir, pray for me.

Ant. And truly, sir, I am now fully convinced that I have departed from the right way, in that I have not regarded the law and its works as I should; but God willing, I will hereafter (if the Lord prolongs my days) be more careful how I lead my life, seeing that the Ten Commandments are the Law of Christ. And I beseech you, sir, remember me in your prayers. And so, with many thanks to you for your pains, I take my leave of you, beseeching the “grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.” *Amen.*

MODERN DIVINITY. 261

Evan. “Now, the very God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work, to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever. AMEN. Heb. 13.20, 21. “If the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed,” John 8.36. “Stand fast therefore in the liberty with which Christ has made us free. Only do not use your liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but by love, serve one another.” Gal. 5.1, 13 “And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be upon them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.” Gal. 6.16. “I thank you, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and have revealed them to babes,” Mat. 11.25. “I laboured more abundantly than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me,” 1Cor. 15.10. “Do not let the foot of pride come against me.” Psalm 36.11

¹ This is fitly put into the mouth of Nomista here, for the prevailing of legal principles and practices among professors owes much to legal preaching; the success of which is not to be wondered at, since it is rowing with the stream of nature.

THE
MARROW
OF
MODERN DIVINITY.

PART II.

“We know that the law is good, if a man uses it lawfully,” 1Tim, 1.8.

DEDICATION

TO THE RIGHT HON. JOHN WARNER,

LORD MAYOR OF THE MOST RENOWNED CITY OF LONDON.

E. F. wishes a most plentiful increase of spiritual wisdom, and all necessary graces for the discharge of his duty, to the glory of God, and the good of his people.

Right Honourable,

The rod of God’s judgments has now been long upon us,¹ which we have procured by our manifold sins. This is according to what is said concerning Jerusalem in Jer. 4.18, “Your way and your doings have procured these things for you.” And do we have any just ground to hope that, till the cause is taken away, the effect will cease? Can we expect that the Lord will turn away his judgments, till we turn away from our sins? And can we turn away from our sins before we know them? And can we come to know our sins any other way than by the law? Does not one apostle say, that “sin is the transgression of the law?” 1John 3.4. And does not another apostle therefore say, “by the law is the knowledge of sin?” Rom. 3.20. Surely then, a treatise in which it is shown what is required, and what is forbidden, in every commandment of the law — and consequently, what sin is— must be very seasonable for this reason, and at this time. Yet alas! although there are ever so many treatises written, and ever so many sermons preached on this subject, the people either remain wilfully ignorant of their sins, or else, though they know them, they will not forego them. Rather, they choose wilfully to wallow on in the mire of iniquity, so sweet and dear are their sins to them. What then, must they be allowed to go on without restraint? No; God forbid! Those persons whom the law and love of God will not constrain, the execution of justice must restrain. The penalty of the laws of the land, being grounded upon God’s laws, must be inflicted on them by the civil magistrate. For this reason, the king is required “when he sits upon the throne of his kingdom, to write a copy of the law of God in a book,” Deu. 17.18. And for this reason the civil magistrate is called “the keeper of both tablets.” For as Luther says on Galatians, p. 151, “God has ordained magistrates, and other superiors, and appointed laws, bounds, and all civil ordinances, so that if they can do no more, yet at least they may bind the devil’s hands, so that he does not rage in his bond slaves, after his own lusts.” And hence it is that, speaking of the civil magistrate, the apostle says, “If you do what is evil, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain,” Rom. 13.4.

266 DEDICATION.

¹ The Bubonic Plague hit London hard with 30,000 deaths in 1603, 35,000 dead in 1625, 10,000 in 1636, and 69,000 in 1665. There was also a massive fire in 1633, and the Great Fire of 1666 destroyed most of London. This dedication to Part II was published with the book in 1649. Fisher died 1655 (?).

Therefore, Right Honourable, God having called you to wield the sword of authority in the most famous city of this kingdom, and I being a poor inhabitant of it, and the author of the ensuing Dialogue —have through the advice and persuasion of some godly ministers, and through the consideration of the suitableness of the subject to our position — been moved to take the boldness to offer this work to your worthy name and patronage; not that I conceive your Honour is ignorant of your duty, nor yet that I see you neglecting your duty, for your Christian integrity in your position, and your zealous forwardness to reform things that are amiss by punishing of evil doers, to me witnesses the contrary. Rather [I have been moved] to encourage your Honour to continue your godly course in the ways of well-doing, and to advance forward in paths of piety, being more swift in your motion now towards the end of your race — your year I mean, so that your Master, Christ, may have reason to say concerning you, as he once said concerning the church of Thyatira, “I know your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and your patience, and your works; and the last to be more than the first,” Rev. 2.19. Yes, and that it may also be said concerning you, “Well done, you good and faithful servant, you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things, enter into the joy of your Lord,” Mat. 25.21.

And so most humbly begging your Honour that these, my poor labours, may be accepted, and that under your Honour’s name, they may go forth into the world, and praying the Lord of power, and the God of all grace, to multiply his Spirit upon your Honour, with all the blessed fruits of the same, I take my leave, and rest your Honour’s most humble servant to be commanded,

E. F.

THE AUTHOR TO THE WELL-AFFECTED READER.

Good Reader:

I confess that there are so many godly and learned expositions on the Ten Commandments already extant, that it may seem needless to add any more to that number. Nevertheless, I beg you, do not think it is impossible that God, by such a weak instrument as I myself am, may show his power in doing something more in touching this subject, than has yet been done. I confess, I have had good helps from the labours of others, and have made much use of it, especially for subject matter; yet I have not confined my discourse within the compass of what I have found in other books, but from the warrant of the word of God, I have taken the boldness to enlarge it, both as touching the matter and the manner of it, and especially touching the application. In this I have endeavoured to give both believers and unbelievers their distinct proportion, by distinguishing between the Ten Commandments, as they are the Law of Works — having the promise of eternal life, and the threatening of eternal death *annexed* to them, and so applying them to the unbeliever — and as they are the Law of Christ — having the promise of eternal life, and the threatening of eternal death *separated* from them, and so applying them to the believer. I have not denied, but acknowledged, yes, and proved, that the law of the Ten Commandments, truly expounded, is to be a perpetual rule of life to all mankind, and yes, to believers themselves. For though the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to his promise, writes this law in their hearts as their inward rule, yet while they live in this world, it is done only in part — they need the Ten Commandments to be an outward rule for them. For though the Spirit has begotten in them a love for this law, and has wrought in them a willing disposition to yield obedience to it, yet they need the law to be as a mirror to them, in which they may see what the will of God is; and as a rule, to direct them how to actuate their love and willingness. So that, as a precious godly minister of Jesus Christ truly says, the Spirit within, and the law without, “is a lamp unto their feet, and a light unto their path,” Psalm 119.105.

Yet I conceive that expositors on the commandments should not only endeavour to drive their designs to that end, and terminate their endeavours there, as if there were no further use to be made of the law, either in believers or in unbelievers; but that they should aim at a further end — an end beyond this, especially in unbelievers. And that end is to reveal to them how far short they come of doing what the law requires, so that they may not rest in themselves, but hasten out of themselves to Jesus Christ; and so that believers, by beholding their own imperfections, would take the opportunity to humble themselves, and cling more closely to him by faith.

268 THE AUTHOR TO THE READER.

For when, by way of exposition, it is only declared what is required, and what is forbidden in every commandment, with exhortations, motives, and means to do it afterward, it has been observed that various profane, and mere civil honest people, upon hearing or reading it, have concluded that they must alter their course of life, and strive and endeavour to do more than they have done, and better than they have done, or else they will never be saved. And hereupon they have taken up a *form* of godliness, in hearing, reading, and praying, and the like; and so they have become formal professors, and they have rested in this, coming far short of Jesus Christ. Indeed, believers themselves have sometimes taken occasion by it, to conceive that they must do something towards their own justification and salvation.

Therefore I have endeavoured — not by any power of my own, but by the grace of God that is with me — not only to show what is required, and what is forbidden in every commandment, but also to show that it is impossible for any man, whether an unbeliever or a believer, to keep any commandment perfectly, or indeed, or to do any action or duty perfectly. So that by the working

of God's Spirit in their reading it, men may be moved not only to turn from being profane, or mere civil honest men, or formal professors, but that they may be driven from all their own works and performances, to Jesus Christ, and so become Christians indeed; and that those who are Christians indeed, may thereby be moved to prize Jesus Christ more. And if the Lord is pleased to enable me or any other man or woman, to make use of this ensuing Dialogue, then my labour shall not be in vain. But my heart's desire and prayer to God will be that many may receive as much good by the "Marrow" which is contained in this second bone, as they say they received by what is contained in the first — so that God may be glorified, and their souls edified; and then I have my reward. Only let me beg of you, that for whatever good you receive by it, you will beg at the throne of grace for me, that my faith may be increased, and so my love inflamed towards God, and towards man for God's sake. Then I am sure I will keep the law more perfectly than I have yet done. That we may all do this, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all our spirits. Amen.

Yours in the Lord Jesus Christ,

September 21, 1648.

E. F.

PART II.

EVANGELISTA, a Minister of the Gospel.
NOMOLOGISTA, a Prattler of the Law.
NEOPHYTUS, a Young Christian.

INTRODUCTION

Ignorant men confine the meaning of the Ten Commandments

Neo. Sir, here is our neighbour Nomologista, who, as I suppose, is much mistaken touching a point that he and I have had some discussion about. And because I found you so ready and willing to inform and instruct me when I came to you with my neighbours, Nomista and Antinomista, I presumed to entreat him to come along with me to you: assuring both myself and him that we would be welcomed by you, and that you would make it apparent he is deceived.

Evan. You are both very kindly welcome. And justas I was willing to give you the best instruction when you were formerly with me, even so, God willing, I am willing now. Therefore I ask you, let me understand what the point is in which you think he is mistaken.

Neo. Why, sir, this is the thing: he tells me he is persuaded that he goes very near the perfect fulfilling of the law of God; but I cannot be persuaded of it.

Evan. What do you say, neighbour Nomologista; are you so persuaded?

Nom. Yes, indeed sir, I am so persuaded.

I. For whereas, the first commandment is, "I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other God before my face," I am confident I have the only true God for my God, and none other.

II. And whereas, the second commandment is, "You shall not make for yourself any graven image," etc. I tell you truly, I defy all graven images, and count it a great folly in any man either to make them, or worship them.

III. And whereas, the third commandment is, "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain," it is well known that I do not swear, nor can I abide to hear others swear by the name of God.

IV. And whereas, the fourth commandment is, "Remember to keep the Sabbath-day holy," I am sure I very seldom either work or travel on that day; but go to the church both morning and afternoon; and I both read, and hear the word of God read, when I come home.

270 THE MARROW OF

V. And whereas, the fifth commandment is, "Honour your father and mother," etc., I thank God I was very careful to do my duty to my parents when I was a child.

VI. And whereas, the sixth commandment is, "You shall not kill," I thank God that I never yet murdered either man, woman, or child; and I hope I never shall.

VII. And whereas, the seventh commandment is, "You shall not commit adultery," I thank God that I was never given to women, God has up to now kept me from committing that sin, and so I hope he will do while I live.

VIII. And whereas, the eighth commandment is, “You shall not steal,” I do not remember ever taking twelve pence’ worth¹ of any man’s goods in all my life.

IX. And whereas, the ninth commandment is, “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour,” I thank God, I abhor that sin, and was never guilty of it in all my life.

X. And whereas, the tenth commandment is, “You shall not covet,” I thank God, I never coveted anything except what was my own, in all my life.

Evan. Alas! neighbour Nomologista, the commandments of God have a larger extent than it seems you are aware of. For it seems you imagine that the whole Moral Law is confined within the compass of what you have just now repeated; as though no more were required or forbidden than what is expressed in the words of the Ten Commandments; as though God required no more than the bare external or actual performance of a duty; and as though he forbids no more than the bare abstinence and gross acting of sin. The Scribes and Pharisees had the very same concept of the law of God. And therefore it is no marvel that you imagine you keep all the commandments, even as they did.

Nom. Well, sir, if I have been deceived, you may do well to instruct me better.

Evan. I shall endeavour to do it with all my heart, as the Lord is pleased to enable me. And because I begin to fear that it is not your case alone to be ignorant of the larger extent, and the true sense and meaning of the law of God, I also begin to blame myself that I have not taken the opportunity to expound the commandments in my public ministry since I came among you.

MODERN DIVINITY. 271

And therefore, I now resolve, by the help of God, to very speedily set about that work. And I hope I will then make it apparent to you that the Ten Commandments are but an epitome or an abridgment of the law of God, and that the full exposition of it is to be found in the books of the prophets and apostles, called the Old and New Testaments.

The Ten Commandments an epitome of the law of God

Neo. Indeed, sir, I told him we must not get stuck on the wording of the Ten Commandments, nor rest satisfied with their bare literal sense, but labour to find out the full exposition and true spiritual meaning of every one of them, according to other places in Scripture.

Evan. If you told him so, you told him what is most true; for one who would truly understand and expound the commandments, must do it according to these six rules.

Six rules for the right expounding of the Ten Commandments

First, He must consider that every commandment has both a negative and an affirmative part contained in it. That is to say, where any evil is forbidden, the contrary good is commanded; and where any good is commanded, the contrary evil is forbidden; for Ursinus’s Catechism says on page 329, “The lawgiver in an affirmative commandment comprehends the negative; and contrariwise, in a negative he comprehends the affirmative.”

Secondly, He must consider that under one good action that is commanded, or under one evil action that is forbidden, all of the same kind or nature are comprehended — indeed, all occasions and means leading to it are comprehended as well. According to the saying of judicious Virel, “The Lord minding to forbid diverse evils of the same kind, he comprehends them under the name of the greater.” ²

¹ A shilling, that is, 1/20th of a pound, or in American currency, a dime’s worth.

² Mattieu Virel (1555?-1621?), *The Grounds of Christian Religion*, London 1597, transl. by Stephen Egerton.

Thirdly, He must consider that the law of God is spiritual, reaching to the very heart or soul, and all the powers of it. For it charges the understanding to know the will of God; it charges the memory to retain it; and the will to choose the better and leave the worse; it charges the affections to love the things that are to be loved and to hate the things that are to be hated; and so it binds all the powers of the soul to obedience, as well as the words, thoughts, and gestures.

Fourthly, He must consider that the law of God must not only be the rule of our obedience, but it must also be the reason of it; we must not only do what is commanded, and avoid what is forbidden, but we must also do the good because the Lord requires it, and avoid the evil because the Lord forbids it. Yes, and we must do all that is delivered and prescribed in the law, for the love we bear to God. The love of God must be the fountain, the impulse, and the efficient cause of all our obedience to the law.

272 THE MARROW OF

Fifthly, He must consider, that just as our obedience to the law must arise from a right fountain, so must it be directed to a right end. And that end is that God alone may be glorified by us; for otherwise it is not the worship of God, but hypocrisy, says Ursinus's Catechism. So that according to the saying of another godly writer, the final cause or end of all our obedience must be God's glory, 1Cor. 10.13; or which is the same thing, that we may please him. For in seeking to please God, we glorify him; and these two things are always co-incident.

Sixthly, He must consider that the Lord not only takes notice of what we do in obedience to this law, but also in what manner we do it. And therefore we must be careful to do all our actions in a right manner, namely: humbly, reverently, willingly, and zealously.

Neo. I beseech you, sir, if you can spare that much time, let us have some brief exposition of some, if not all of the Ten Commandments before we leave, according to these rules.

Evan. What do you say, neighbour Nomologista, do you desire the same?

Nom. Yes, sir, with all my heart, if you please.

Evan. Well, then, although my affairs at this time might justly plead an excuse for me, seeing that both of you desire it, I will for the present dispense with all my other business, and endeavour to accomplish your desires, as the Lord is pleased to enable me. Therefore, I ask you to understand and consider that in the first commandment, there is a negative part expressed in these words: "You shall have no other gods before my face." And an affirmative part is included in these words: "But you shall have me only for your God;" for if we must have no other for our God, it implies strongly that we must have the Lord for our God.

Neo. I implore you, sir, begin with the affirmative part, and first tell us what the Lord requires of us in this commandment.

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 1.

Evan. In this first commandment, "The Lord requires the duty of our hearts or souls," Prov. 23.26; that is to say, the duty of our understandings, wills, and affections, and their effects.

MODERN DIVINITY. 273

Neo. And what is the duty of our UNDERSTANDINGS?

Evan. The duty of our understandings is to know God, 1Chron. 16.8. Now the end of knowledge is but the fulness of persuasion, even a settled belief, which is called *faith*. So that the duty of our understandings is to know God in such a way, as to believe him to be according to what he has revealed of himself to us in his word and works, Rom. 1.20.

Neo. And how has the Lord revealed himself to us in his *word*?

Evan. Why, he has revealed himself to be “most wise,” Rom. 16.27; “most mighty,” Deu. 7.21; “most true,” Deu. 32.4; “most just,” Neh. 9.33; and “most merciful,” Psalm 145.8.

Neo. And how has he revealed himself to us in his *works*?

Evan. He has revealed himself in his works to be “the Creator of all things,” Exo. 20.11; and “the Preserver of all things,” Psalm 36.6; and “the Governor of all things,” Psalm 135.6; and “the Giver of every good gift,” James 1.17.

Neo. And how must our knowledge of God and our belief in him, be expressed by their EFFECTS?

Evan. We must express, that we know and believe God to be according to what he has revealed of himself in his word and works, by remembering and acknowledging him whenever there is an occasion for us so to do.

For example; when we read or hear those judgments that the Lord in his word has threatened to bring upon us for our sins, Deu. 28.16, we are to express that we remember and acknowledge him to be most mighty, true, and just, by fearing and trembling at it. Psalm 119.120; Hab. 3.16. And when we read or hear of blessings that the Lord in his word has promised to bestow on us for our obedience, Deu. 28.2, then we are to express that we remember and acknowledge him to be most true and merciful, by our obedience to him, and by trusting in him, and relying on him, Gen. 32.9. And when we behold the excellent frame of heaven and earth, and the creations contained in it, then we are to express that we remember and acknowledge the Lord to be the Creator and Maker of them all, by praising and magnifying his name, Psalm 95.6, and 139.14. And when the Lord actually inflicts any judgment on us, then we are to express that we remember and acknowledge him to be the Governor of all things,

274: THE MARROW OF

and most mighty, wise, and just, by humbling ourselves under his mighty hand, 1Pet. 5.6. And by judging ourselves worthy to be destroyed for our iniquities, Ezek. 36.31. And by bearing the punishment of it, Lev. 26.41, with willing, patient, contented submission to his will and pleasure, Psalm 39.9. And when the Lord actually bestows any blessing on us, then we are to express that we remember and acknowledge him to be the most merciful Giver of every good gift, by humbly acknowledging that we are unworthy of the least of his mercies, Gen. 32.10; and “in giving him thanks for all things,” 1Thess. 5.18. And thus I have shown you the duty of our understandings.

Neo. I beg you, sir, let us next hear what is the duty of our WILLS.

Evan. The duty of our wills is to choose the Lord alone for our portion. Psalm 16.5, and 119.57.

Neo. And how must we express that we have chosen the Lord for our portion?

Evan. “By loving him with all our hearts, with all our souls, and with all our might,” Deu. 6.5.

Neo. And how must we express that we thus LOVE the Lord?

Evan. We must express that we thus love the Lord by the acting of our other affections, such as our desire for most near communion with him, Philip. 1.23, and by delighting most in him, Psalm 37.4; and by rejoicing most in him, Philip. 4.4; and by fearing most to offend him. Mat. 10.28; and by sorrowing most for offending him, Luke 22.62; and by being most zealous against sin, and for the glory of God, Rev. 3.19. And thus I have shown you what the Lord requires in the affirmative part of this commandment.

Neo. I beg you, sir, proceed to the negative part, and show us what the Lord forbids in this commandment.

Evan. In this first commandment, what is forbidden is “ignorance of God,” Jer. 4.22; also unbelief, or doubting the truth of God’s word, Isa. 7.9. And also the lack of fearing the

threatenings of God, Deu. 28.58, and fearing the threatenings of men either more, or as much as the threatenings of God, Isa. 51.12, 13; and also the lack of trusting or relying on the promises of God, Luke 12.29, and trusting or relying on ourselves, men's promises, or any other thing, either more, or as much as we trust or rely on God, Jer. 17.5; Luke 12.20.

MODERN DIVINITY. 275

And also not acknowledging the hand of God during affliction, Isa. 26.11; and acknowledging that the rod can strike without the hand of God, Job 19.11; and also not humbling ourselves before the Lord, Daniel 5.22; and pride of heart. Pro 16.5. And also impatience and discontentedness under the chastising hand of God, Exo. 17.2; and not turning to him that strikes us, Isa. 9.13; and also our forgetfulness of God in not acknowledging his merciful and bountiful hand in providing us all good things in a time of prosperity, Psalm 78.11; Deu. 32.18; and also sacrificing to our own nets, Hab. 1.16, in ascribing the acquisition of our riches to our own care, pains, and diligence in our callings, Deu. 8.17; and also unthankfulness to the Lord for his mercies, Rom. 1.21; and also our lack of love to God, 1Cor. 16.22; and loving any creature either more than God, or equal with God, Mat. 10.37; and also our lack of desiring his presence. Job 21.14; and desiring the presence of any creature either more, or so much as God, Prov. 6.25; and also our lack of rejoicing in God, Deu. 28.47; and our rejoicing either more, or as much in anything as we do in God, Luke 10.20; and also our lack of fearing to offend God, Jer. 5.22; and fearing to offend any mortal man, either more, or as much as fearing to offend God, Prov. 29.25; and also our lack of sorrow and grief for offending God, 1Cor. 5.2; and our sorrowing more, or as much, for any worldly loss or cross, as for sinning against God, 1Thess. 4.13; and also our lack of zeal, or our lukewarmness in the cause of God and his truth, Rev. 3.16; and our corrupt, blind, and indiscreet zeal, Rom 10.2.¹

And thus I have shown you what the Lord requires, and what he forbids in this commandment. And now, neighbor Nomologista, I ask you to tell me whether you think you keep this commandment perfectly, or not?

Nom. Sir, before I tell you that, I ask you to tell me how you prove that the Lord in this commandment requires all these duties, and forbids all these sins.

Evan. First, I know that the Lord in this commandment requires all these duties, because no man can truly have the Lord for his God, unless he has chosen him for his portion; and no man can truly choose the Lord for his portion, before he truly knows him; and he that truly knows God, truly believes both his threatenings and his promises;

276 THE MARROW OF

and he that truly believes the Lord's threatenings, must fear and tremble at them; and he that believes the Lord's promises, must truly love him, for faith always produces and brings forth love; and whoever truly loves God, must desire near communion with him — yes, and rejoice in communion with him; yes, and fear to offend him; yes, and sorrow for offending him; yes, and be zealous for his glory.

Secondly, I know that all these sins are forbidden in this commandment, because whatever the mind, will, and affections of a man are set on, or carried after, either more, or as much as they are after God, that thing is another god to him. And therefore, if a man stands in fear of any creature, or fears the loss of any creature, either more than God, or equal with God, he makes that creature his god. And if he trusts to, and puts confidence in any creature, either more than God, or equal with God, that creature is his god; and hence the covetous man is called an idolater, Eph. 5.5; for he makes his gold his hope, and he says to the fine gold, "You are my

¹ Originally Luke 9.55.

confidence,” Job 31.24. And if any man is proud of any good thing that he has, and does not acknowledge God to be the free giver and bestower of it, or if he is impatient and discontented under the Lord’s correcting hand, he makes *himself* a god; and if a man so loves any creature that he desires it to be absent, or delights in it being present, either more than God, or equal with God, that creature is another god to him. And hence voluptuous men are said to make their belly their god, Phil. 3.19. In a word, whatever the mind of man is driven after, or his heart and affections are set upon, either more, or as much as they are upon God, that is what he makes his god. And therefore we may undoubtedly conclude, that all the sins mentioned before, are forbidden in this commandment.

Nom. Then believe me, sir, I must confess that I come far short of keeping this commandment perfectly.

Evan. Yes, and so do all of us, I am confident. For has not every one of us sometimes questioned in our hearts, whether there is a God or not? And as touching the knowledge of God, may not all three of us truly say with the apostle, 1Cor. 13.9, “We know in part?” And which of us has so feared and trembled at the threatenings of God, and at the shaking of his rod, as we should? No, have we not feared the frowns, threats, and power of some mortal man,

MODERN DIVINITY. 277

more than the frowns, threats, and power of God? It is well if it has not appeared by our choosing to obey man rather than God. And which of us has so trusted and relied on the promises of God in time of need, as he should? No, have we not trusted in and relied on men and means, rather than on God? Has it not been manifested by our fearing poverty, and lack of outward things, when friends, trading, and means begin to fail us, even though God has said, “I will not fail you, nor forsake you?” Heb. 13.5. And which of us has so humbled ourselves under the chastening and correcting hand of God as we should? No, have we not rather expressed abundant pride by our impatience and discontentedness, and lack of submitting to the will of God; and by quarrelling and contending with his rod? And which of us has so acknowledged God in the time of prosperity, and been so thankful to him for his blessings, as we should? No, have we not rather at such times forgotten God, and sacrificed to our own nets, saying in our hearts, if not also with our mouths, “I may thank my own diligence, care, and pains-taking, or else it would not have been with me as it is?” And which of us has so manifested our love to God, by our desire for near communion with him in his ordinances, and by our desire to be dissolved and to be with him, as we should? No, have we not rather expressed our great lack of love to him, by our backwardness to prayer, reading, and hearing his word, and receiving the sacrament, and by our small delight in it, and by our unwillingness to die? No, have we not manifested our greater love for the world, by our greater desires after the profits, pleasures, and honours of the world, and by our greater delight in the world than in God? Or which of us has so manifested our love to God, by our sorrow and grief for offending him, as we should? No, have we not rather manifested our greater love to the world, by our sorrowing and grieving more for some worldly loss or cross, than for offending God by our sins? Or which of us have so manifested our love to God, by being so zealous for his glory as we should? No, have we not rather expressed greater love to ourselves, in being more hot and fiery in our own cause than in God’s cause? And thus I have endeavoured to satisfy your desires concerning the first commandment.

Neo. I beseech you, sir, proceed to do the same concerning the second commandment; and first tell us how the first and second commandments differ from one another.

278 THE MARROW OF

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 2.

Evan. Why, just as the first commandment teaches us to have the true God for our God, and none other; so the second commandment requires that we worship this true God alone, with true worship. And in this commandment likewise, there is a negative part expressed in these words, “You shall not make for yourself any graven image,” etc. And an affirmative part is included in these words, “But you shall worship me only and purely, according to my will, revealed in my word.”

Neo. I beg you then, sir, begin with the affirmative part, and tell us what are the means of God’s worship, prescribed in his word?

Evan. If we look into the word of God, we find that the ordinary means and parts of God’s worship, are invocations of the name of God, the ministry and hearing of the word of God, the administration and receiving of the sacraments, with all those helps and furtherances to the right performance of them.

But to declare this more particularly. *First* of all, prayer, both public and private is required in God’s word, as you may see in 1Tim. 2.8; Acts 2.21, 22; Daniel 6.10. *Secondly*, Reading the word, or hearing it read, both publicly and privately, is required in God’s word, as you may see in Rev. 1.3; Deu. 6.4. *Thirdly*, Preaching, and hearing the word preached, is required in the word of God, as you may see in 2Kings 7.1; 1Thess. 2.13. *Fourthly*, The administration and receiving of the sacrament is required in the word of God, as you may see in Mat. 3.6 and 26.26; 1Cor. 10.16. *Fifthly*, Praising God, in the singing of psalms, both publicly and privately, is required in the word of God, as you may see in Col. 3.16; James 5.13. *Sixthly*, Meditation on the word of God is required, as you may see in Psalm 1.2; Acts 17.11. *Seventhly*, Discussion about the word of God is required, as you may see in Mal. 3.16. And, *Lastly*, To better fit and stir us up to rightly perform these duties and religious fasting, both in public and private, is required in the word of God, as you may see in Joel 1.14, and 2.15; so also is a religious vow or free promise made to God, to perform some outward work, or bodily exercise for some end, as you may see in Eccl. 5.3, 4. Thus I have shown you the means of God’s worship which he has prescribed in his word.

MODERN DIVINITY. 279

Neo. Then I ask you, sir, proceed to the negative part, and tell us what the Lord forbids in this commandment.

Evan. Well then, I ask you to understand that what is forbidden in this commandment is the neglect of prayer, as you may see in Psalm 14.4. And also absenting ourselves from hearing the word preached, or any other ordinance of God when the Lord calls us to it, as you may see in Luke 14.18-20. And also rejecting the sacrament of baptism, as you may see in Luke 7.30. And also slighting the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, as you may see in 2Chron. 24.18.¹ And also slighting and omitting any of the other forenamed duties, as you may see in Psalm 10.4; John 3.32; Isa. 22.12-14. And also praying to saints and angels, as you may see in Isa 44.17;² Rev. 19.10. And also making images for religious uses, as you may see in Lev. 19.4. And also representing God by an image, as you may see in Exo. 32.8, 9. And so also are all carnal imaginations of God in his worship, as you may see in Acts 17.29. And also all will-worship, or the worshipping of God according to our own fancy, as you may see in 1Sam 13.9, 13³ Col. 2.23. Thus I have shown you both what the Lord requires, and what he forbids in this commandment. And now, neighbour Nomologista, I ask you, tell me whether you keep it perfectly, or not?

¹ Originally 2Chron. 30.10.

² Originally Isa. 63.16.

³ Originally 1Sam. 9.10, 13.

Nom. Indeed, sir, I am persuaded that I go very near it. But, I ask you, sir, tell me how you prove that all these duties are required, and all these sins are forbidden in this commandment?

Evan. For the proof of this, I ask you to consider that the worshipping of false gods is flatly forbidden in the negative part of this commandment, in these words, “You shall not bow down to them, nor serve, nor worship them,” Exo. 20.5. And worshipping the true God is implied and expressed in these words, Mat. 4.10, “You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve.”

Nom. But sir, how do you prove that these duties which you have named are parts of God’s worship?

Evan. In answer to this, I ask you to consider that to worship God, is to tender that homage and respect due from a creature to a Creator. Now, in prayer we are said to tender this homage to him, and to profess our dependence on him for all the good we have, and acknowledge him to be the Author of all good.

280 THE MARROW OF

And indeed, prayer is such a great part of God’s worship, that sometimes in Scripture, it is put for the whole worship of God. “He that calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved,” Rom. 10.13; that is, he that worships God rightly. Jer. 10.25, “Pour out your wrath upon the heathen who do not know you, and on the families that do not call upon your name”: that is, who do not pray, who do not worship God.

It is manifest that hearing the word is a part of God’s worship, because in hearing we manifest our dependence on God for knowing his mind, and the way to eternal life. Every time we come to hear the word of God, if we know what we do, we do this much: we profess that we depend on the Lord God for knowing his mind, and the way and rule of eternal life. And besides this, we also come to wait upon God in the way of ordinance — to have that good conveyed to us by way of an ordinance, beyond what the thing itself is able to do — and therefore this is worship. And it is manifest that receiving the sacrament is a part of God’s worship, in that when we come to receive these holy signs and seals, we come to present ourselves before God, and come to God for a blessing, in communicating to us some higher good than possibly those creaturely things that we employ are able to convey to us of themselves. We come to God to have communion with him, and that we might have the blessing of the Covenant of Grace conveyed to us through these things. And therefore when we come to be exercised in them, we come to worship God. The same might be said of the rest of the duties mentioned before; but I hope this may suffice to satisfy you that they are parts of God’s worship.

Nom. But, sir, you know that in this commandment there is nothing expressly forbidden but the making and worshipping of images. Therefore I question whether all those other sins that you have named are likewise forbidden.

Evan. But you must know that when the Lord condemns the primary, or greatest and most evident kind of false worship, namely, the worship of God at or by images, it is manifest that he also forbids the other kinds of false worship, seeing that this is the head and fountain of all the rest. Therefore, whatever worship is instituted by men that in any way hinders God’s true worship, are contrary to this commandment.

Nom. Well, sir, though these things are so, yet for all that, I am persuaded that I go very near to keeping this commandment; for I constantly perform most of these duties, and I am not guilty of doing the contrary.

Evan. But you must know, that for worshipping God rightly, it is not only required that we do the good which he commands, and avoid the evil which he forbids, but also that we do it in obedience to God, to show that we acknowledge him alone to be the true God, who has willed this worship be thus done to him. So that, as I told you before, the word of God must not only be the *rule* of our actions, but also the *reason* for them. We must do all things which are delivered and prescribed in the Ten Commandments, specifically for the love we bear to God, and for the desire we have to worship him. For unless we do them this way, we do not do them according to the sentence and prescript of the law, nor do we please God in it. Therefore, even though you have prayed and heard the word of God, and received the sacrament, and done all the rest of the forenamed duties, yes, and even though you have not done the contrary, yet if all this has been done either because the laws of the kingdom require it, or in mere obedience to any superior, or to gain the praise and esteem of men, or if you have in any way made yourself your highest end, you have not obeyed or worshipped God in it. For, says a judicious writer, “If any man observes these things in mere obedience to the king’s laws, or thereby to please holy men, and not through an immediate reverence for that heavenly Majesty who has commanded them, that man’s obedience is non-obedience; his keeping of these laws is no keeping of them;” because the main thing intended here is neglected, which is *setting up God in his heart*; and what is most of all abhorred, is practised, namely: the “fear of God taught by the precepts of men,” Isa. 29.13. To this purpose, that worthy man of God has said this, “Take heed, he says, that the praises of men are not the highest end that you aim at; for if it is, you worship men, you make the praise of men to be your god; for whatever you lift up in the highest place, that is your god, whatever it is. Therefore, if you lift up the praise of men, and make that your end, you make that your god, and so you are a worshipper of men, but not a worshipper of God.” (Mayer’s *Catechism*.)

282 THE MARROW OF

Again, he says, “Take heed of making *self* your end. That is, take heed of aiming at your own peace, and satisfying your own conscience in the performance of duties.” It is true, he says, when we perform the duties of God’s worship, we may be encouraged to it by the expectations of good to ourselves. Yet we must look higher; we must look at the honour and praise of God. It is not enough to do it merely to satisfy your conscience. Your main end must be that, by performing the duty, you may be fitted to honour the name of God. Otherwise we do do not do them for God, but for ourselves, which the Lord condemns, Zech. 7.5, 6.

And now, neighbour Nomologista, I request that you let me ask you once again, whether you think you keep this commandment perfectly, or not?

Nom. No, believe me, sir, I now begin to fear that I do not.

Evan. If you have any doubt about it, I would entreat you to consider for yourself, whether you have gone to the church on the Lord’s day to hear the word of God, and to receive the sacrament, and to do other duties, because the laws of the kingdom require it, or because your parents or masters have required it, or because it is a custom to do so, or because you think it is a credit for you to do so. And I ask you to also consider whether you have not abstained from worshipping images, and other such idolatrous and superstitious actions which the Papists use, merely because the laws of the land in which you live condemn such things. And I beg you to also consider whether you have not sometimes been zealous in prayer in the presence and company of others, in order to gain their praise and approbation. Have you desired that they would think you are a man of good gifts and actions? And have you endeavoured to enlarge yourself in that regard? And have you sometimes performed duties merely because otherwise your conscience would not let you be quiet? And have you sometimes fasted and prayed, and humbled yourself, merely or chiefly in hopes that, for doing so, the Lord would prevent or remove some judgment from you, or grant you some good thing which you desire? Now, I beseech you, answer me truly and plainly, whether you think you have done so?

Nom. Yes, believe me, sir, I think I have.

Evan. Then in all these things you have honoured and worshipped your parents, your masters, your magistrates, your neighbours, your friends, and yourself, as so many false gods, instead of the true God; and in this, you have been guilty of a breach of the second commandment.

MODERN DIVINITY. 283

Neo. I beg you, sir, proceed to speak of the third commandment, as you have done of the first and second; first, tell us how the second and third commandments differ.

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 3.

Evan. Why, just as the Lord in the second commandment requires that we worship him alone by true means, so in the third commandment he requires that we use the means of his worship in a right manner, so they may not be used in vain, Mat. 15.9. And in this commandment, likewise, there is a negative part expressed in these words, “You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.” That is, you shall not profane it by using God’s titles, attributes, ordinances, or works, ignorantly, irreverently, or in a formal, superstitious manner. And an affirmative part is included in these words, “But you shall sanctify my name,” Isa. 8.13; by using God’s titles, attributes, ordinances, works, and religion, with knowledge, reverence, and in a spiritual manner, John 4.24.

Neo. I ask you, sir, to begin with the affirmative part, and first tell us what the Lord requires in this commandment.

Evan. The Lord in this commandment requires that we sanctify his name in our hearts, with our tongues, and in our lives, by thinking, conceiving, speaking, writing, and walking in a way that becomes the excellency of his titles, attributes, ordinances, works, and religion.

Neo. And how are we to sanctify the name of the Lord in regard to his titles?

Evan. By thinking, conceiving, speaking, and writing holily, reverently, and spiritually of his titles, *Lord* and *God*, Deu. 28.58. And we do this when we meditate on them, and use them in our speech and writings with an inward spiritual fear and trembling, to the glory of God and the good of men, Jer. 5.22.

Neo. And how are we to sanctify the name of the Lord in regard to his attributes?

Evan. By thinking, conceiving, speaking, and writing holily, reverently, and spiritually of his power, wisdom, justice, mercy, and patience, Psalm 104.1, and 103.6, 8. And we do this when we think, speak, and write of them in a careful, reverent, and spiritual manner, and apply them to such good uses for which the Lord has made them known, Psalm 37.30.

284 THE MARROW OF

Neo. And in which of God’s ordinances are we to sanctify his name?

Evan. In every one of his ordinances, and especially in the three great ordinances: prayer, preaching and hearing the word, and administering and receiving the sacraments.

Neo. And how are we to sanctify the name of the Lord in PRAYER?

Evan. In prayer we are to sanctify the name of the Lord in our hearts, and with our tongues, in calling on his name in a holy, reverent, and spiritual manner; and we do this when our prayers are the speech of our souls, and not only of our mouths; that is, when in prayer we lift up our hearts to God, Psalm 25.1; and pour them out to him, Psalm 62.8; and when we pray with spirit, and with understanding also, 1Cor. 14.15; and with humility. Gen. 18.27, and 32.10; Luke 18.13;

and with fervency of spirit, James 5.16; and out of a sense of our own wants, James 1.5; and with a special faith in the promises of God, Mat. 21.22.

Neo. And how are you ministers to sanctify the name of the Lord in PREACHING his word?

Evan. We are to sanctify the name of the Lord in our hearts, and with our tongues, in preaching in a holy, reverent, and spiritual manner; and we do this when the word is preached not only outwardly by the body, but also inwardly with the heart and soul: when the heart and soul preaches, then the ministry of the word, on the minister's part, is used in a holy and spiritual manner, and that is when we preach in demonstration of the Spirit, 1Cor. 2.4; and in sincerity, 2Cor. 2.17; and faithfully, without respect to persons, Deu. 33.9; and with judgment and discretion, Mat. 24.14; and with authority and power, Mat. 7.29; and with zeal for God's glory, John 7.18; and with a desire for the people's salvation, 2Cor. 11.2.

Neo. And how are we hearers to sanctify the name of the Lord in HEARING his word?

Evan. By hearing it in a holy, reverent, and spiritual manner; and you do this when your heart and soul hear the word of God; and that is when you set yourself in the presence of God. Acts 10.33; and when you look at the minister as God's messenger or ambassador, 2Cor. 5.20, and so you hear the word as the word of God, and not as the word of man, 1Thess. 2.13; with reverence and fear, Isa. 66.2; and with a ready desire to learn, Acts 17.11; and with attention, Acts 8.6; and with alacrity, without wearisomeness or sleepiness, Acts 20.9.

MODERN DIVINITY. 285

Neo. And how are you ministers to sanctify the name of the Lord in ADMINISTERING the sacraments?

Evan. By administering them in a holy, reverent, and spiritual manner; and that is when we administer them with our hearts or souls, according to Christ's institution, Matt. 26.26; to the faithful in profession at least, 1Cor. 10.16; and with a hearty desire that it may become profitable to the receivers.

Neo. And how are we to sanctify the name of the Lord in RECEIVING the sacraments?

Evan. This we do when we rightly and seriously examine ourselves beforehand, 1Cor. 11.28; and rightly and seriously mind and consider the sacramental union of the sign, and the thing signified, and in our hearts perform those inward actions which are signified by the outward actions. Acts 8.37, 38; 1Cor. 10.1-6.

Neo. And how are we to sanctify the name of the Lord in regard to his WORKS?

Evan. In thinking and speaking of them in a wise, reverent, and spiritual manner; and we do this when we meditate on, and mention in our speech and writings, the inward works of God's eternal election and reprobation, with a wonderful admiration for the unsearchable depths of these, Rom. 11.33, 34; and also when we meditate in our hearts about the works of God's creation and administration, and mention them in our words and writings, and acknowledging his wisdom, power, and goodness in them, Rom. 1.19, 20; Psalm 19.1; and in acknowledging the workmanship of God in these things, we speak honourably of them, Psalm 139.14; Gen. 1.31.

Neo. And how are we to sanctify the name of the Lord in regard to his RELIGION?

Evan. By holy profession of his true religion, and by a way of life that is agreeable to it, to the glory of God, and to the good of ourselves and others. Mat. 5.16; 1Pet. 2.12.

Neo. And, sir, are we not also to sanctify the name of God by swearing by it?

286 THE MARROW OF

Evan. Yes, indeed, that was well remembered; we are to sanctify the name of the Lord in our hearts, and with our tongues in swearing by it in a holy, religious, and spiritual manner. And we do this when the magistrate requires an oath of us by the order of justice; that is, not against piety or charity, Gen. 43.3; 1Sam. 24.21, 22; and when we swear in truth, Jer. 4.2; that is, when we are persuaded in our conscience that the thing we swear is truth, and when we swear simply and plainly, without fraud or deceit, Psalm 15.4, and 24.4; and when we swear in judgment; that is, when we swear with deliberation, well-considering both the nature and greatness of an oath, namely: that God is thereby called to witness the truth, and judge and punish us if we swear falsely, Gal. 1.20; 2Cor. 1.23; and when we swear in righteousness; that is, when the thing we swear is lawful and just, and when our swearing is so that God may be glorified, Joshua 7.19; our neighbour may be satisfied, controversies may be ended, Heb. 6.16; our own innocence may be cleared, Exo. 22.11; and our duty may be discharged, 1Kings 8.31.

Neo. Well, sir, now I ask you to proceed to the negative part, and tell us what the Lord forbids in this commandment.

Evan. Just as the Lord requires in the affirmative part of this commandment that we sanctify his name in our hearts, with our tongues, and in our lives, by thinking, conceiving, speaking, writing, and walking¹ as becomes the excellency of his titles, attributes, ordinances, and religion; so in the negative part of it, he forbids the profanation of his name, by doing the contrary.

Neo. Well then, sir, I ask you first, to tell us how the TITLES of God are profanely abused.

Evan. They are profanely abused in various ways. First, by thinking irreverently of them, or using them in our common talk or writings in a rash, careless and irreverent manner. Psa. 50.22; Rom. 1.21. Such as when we say in foolish admiration, “Good God!” “Good Lord!” “Lord have mercy on us, what is this?” and the like. Or when by way of idle wishes or imprecations we say, “The Lord is my judge!” Gen. 16.5; or, “I pray to God that I may never stir, if such a thing is not true,” and the like. Or when by vain swearing, we mingle our speech and fill our sentences with needless oaths, such as, “Not so, by my faith!” and the like, Mat. 5.34; James 5.12. Or when by *jesting*, or in a merely *formal* way we say, “Thank God!” “God speed,” “Praise God’s name,” and the like, 1Sam. 23.21.

MODERN DIVINITY. 287

Neo. And I ask you, sir, how are the ATTRIBUTES of God profanely abused?

Evan. The attribute of God’s *power* is profanely abused, either by calling it into question, 2Kings 7.2, or by thinking, speaking, or writing of it carnally, carelessly, or contemptuously. Psalm 12.4; Exo. 5.2. And the attribute of God’s *providence* is abused either by murmuring at it in our hearts, Deu. 15.9, or by speaking grudgingly against it under the name of fortune or chance, in saying, “What a misfortune this was!” “What a mischance that was!” and the like. Deu. 1.27; 1Sam. 6.9. And the attribute of God’s *justice* is profanely abused, either by thinking or saying that God likes sin or wicked sinners. Psalm 50.21; Mal. 3.15. And the attribute of God’s mercy is profanely abused, either in presuming to sin in hopes that God will be merciful, or by *speaking* basely and contemptuously of it, as when we speak of some trifling thing saying, “It is not worth God’s mercy.” And the attribute of God’s *patience* is profanely abused by thinking or saying on the occasion of his forbearing to punish for a time, that he will neither call us to account, nor punish us for our sins, Rom. 2.4.

Neo. Now, sir, I ask you to show how God’s NAME is profanely abused in his ordinances; and first of all, begin with prayer.

¹ That is, conducting ourselves.

Evan. God's name is profanely abused in prayer, either by praying ignorantly, without the true knowledge of God and his will, Acts 17.23; Mat. 20.22; or when we pray with our mouth only, and not with the desires of our hearts agreeing with our words, Hos. 7.14; Psalm 78.36; and when we pray drowsily and heavily without fervency of spirit. Matt, 26.41; and when we pray with wandering worldly thoughts, Rom. 12.1, 2; and when we pray with any conceit of our own worthiness, Luke 18.9, 11; and when we pray without faith in the promises of God, James 1.6.

Neo. And how is God's name profanely abused in HEARING OR READING HIS WORD?

Evan. God's name is abused by this when we hear his word or read it, and do not understand it, Acts 8.30; and when we hear it only with the outward ears of our bodies, and not also with the inward ears of our heart and soul; and we do this when we read it or hear it with our hearts full of wandering thoughts, Ezek. 33.30; and when we read it or hear it with dull, drowsy, and sleepy spirits; and when in hearing it we

288 THE MARROW OF

conceive it to be the word of a mortal man who delivers it, rather than the word of the great God of heaven and earth, 1Thess. 2.13; and when we do not, with our hearts, believe every part and portion of that word which we read or hear, Heb. 4.2; and when we do not humbly and heartily subject ourselves to what we read or hear, 2Kings 22.19; Isa 30.9.¹

Neo. And how is the Lord's name profanely abused in receiving the sacrament of the LORD'S SUPPER?

Evan. We do this when either through lack of knowledge we cannot examine ourselves, or through our own negligence we do not examine ourselves, before we eat that bread, and drink from that cup, 1Cor. 11.28; and when, in the act of receiving it, we do not mind the spiritual significance of the sacrament, but either terminate our thoughts in the elements themselves, or allow our thoughts to rove, and run to some other object, Luke 22.19; and when, after receiving it, we do not examine ourselves as to what communion we have had with Christ in that ordinance, or what virtue we have found flowing out from Christ into our own souls by means of that ordinance, 2Cor. 13.5.

Neo. And how is the name of the Lord profanely abused in taking an OATH?

Evan. We do this when we call the Lord to be a witness of vain and frivolous things, by our use of swearing in common talk, Hos. 4.2; Jer. 23.10; and when we call God to be a witness of our furious anger and wicked purpose, as when we swear we will be revenged on such a man, and the like, 1Sam. 14.39, and 25.34; and when we call God to be a witness to our swearing falsely, Lev. 19.12; Zech. 5.4; and when we swear by the mass, or by our faith, or marriage, or by the crucifix, or by anything else that is not God, Jer. 5.7; Mat. 5.34-37.

Neo. And how is the name of God profanely abused as touching his WORKS?

Evan. When we either take no notice of his works at all, or when we think and speak of them other than we have warrant from his word to do; as when we do not speak of the inward works of God's election and reprobation, and are called to it, and when we murmur and cavil at it, Rom. 9.20; and when we either do not notice the works of his creation and administration, or do not take the opportunity to glorify the name of God by them, Psalm 19.1; Rom. 1.21.

MODERN DIVINITY. 289

Neo. And how is the name of God profanely abused in respect to his RELIGION?

¹ Originally Isa. 62.2.

Evan. When our conduct is not agreeable to our profession of faith, 2Tim. 3.5; and that is either when, in respect to God, it is but hypocrisy, or in respect to men, we walk offensively. For if we live scandalously in the profession of religion, we cause the name of God to be profaned by those who are outside, Rom. 2.24, and we become stumbling blocks to our weak brethren, Rom. 14.13.

And now, neighbour Nomologista, I ask you to tell me whether you think you keep this commandment perfectly, or not?

Nom. Sir, to tell you the truth, I had not thought that the name of God had signified any more than his titles. Lord and God.

Evan. Yes, but you are to know that the name of God in Scripture signifies all those things that are affirmed of God, or whatever it is by which the Lord makes himself known to men.

Nom. Then believe me, sir, I have come far short of keeping this commandment perfectly, and so does every other man, I am persuaded.

Evan. I am of your mind. For where is the man that so meditates on God's titles, and uses them in his speech and writings, with such reverence, fear, and trembling, as he should? Or what man can truly say that he never in all his life thought about them, or used them in his common talk, either rashly, carelessly, or irreverently? I am sure, for my own part, I cannot say so; for, alas! In the time of my ignorance, many times I used to say, by way of foolish admiration, "Good Lord!" "Good God!" "Lord have mercy on me, what is this?" Yes, and also many times I used to say, "I pray to God that I may never stir if such a thing is not so!" Yes, and I have at various times said, "The Lord be with you, and speed you!" And, "The Lord's name be praised!" — in a formal, cursory manner — all the while, my thoughts being exercised about something else.

And where is the man that has always thought, conceived, spoken, and written so holily, reverently, and spiritually, of the Lord's power, wisdom, justice, mercy, and patience, as he should? No, what man that can truly say he never in all his life called the attribute of the Lord's power into question, or never murmured at any act or passage of God's providence, or never presumed to sin in hopes that God would be merciful to him? I am sure I cannot truly say so.

290 THE MARROW OF

And where can we find the man that can truly say he has always read and heard the word of God in a holy, reverent, and spiritual manner? Indeed, where is the man that has not sometimes both heard it and read it in a formal, cursory, and unprofitable manner? Is there any man that can truly say he has always perfectly understood whatever he has read and heard — and that he has not sometimes heard more with the outward ears of his body, than with the inward ears of his heart and soul — and that he was never dull and drowsy, if not sleepy, while hearing and reading it — and that never had a worldly or wandering thought come in at that time — and never had the least doubting or questioning of the truth of what he read or heard? I am sure, for my own part, I have been faulty in many of these ways.

And is it possible to find a man that can truly say, he has always called upon the name of the Lord in a holy, reverent, and spiritual manner, or has not many times prayed rather in a carnal, unholy, or sinful manner? Where is the man that has always had a perfect knowledge of God and of his will in prayer, and whose heart has always gone along with his words in prayer, and that was never drowsy or heavy, or had wandering thoughts in prayer, and never had the least conceit that God would grant him anything for his prayer's sake, and never had the least doubt or question in his heart, whether God would grant him the thing he asked for in prayer. I am sure, for my own part, I can scarcely clear myself from any of these.

And can any man truly say he has always received the sacrament in a holy, reverent, and spiritual manner? No, does not every man rather have cause to acknowledge the contrary? Is there a man to be found that has always seriously and rightly examined himself beforehand, and

has always, rightly, with his heart, performed all those inward actions that are signified by the outward signs; does not every man and woman rather have cause to confess that either for lack of knowledge, or through their own negligence, they have not examined themselves as they should, or so actuated their faith, or minded the spiritual significance of the outward elements as they should, while receiving the sacrament, or so examined themselves after receiving them, as to what benefit their soul received by it? I am sure I have cause to confess all this.

MODERN DIVINITY. 291

And where shall we find a man that has always sanctified the name of the Lord in his heart, and with his tongue, by swearing in a holy, religious, and spiritual manner; rather, have not most men who have been called to take an oath, profaned the name of the Lord, either by swearing ignorantly, falsely, maliciously, or from some base and wicked end? And I think it is somewhat hard to find a man who never in all his life swore either by his faith, or by his marriage, by the mass, or by the crucifix. I am sure that I am not the man; and it is a rare man that can truly say he has always sanctified the name of God in his heart, and with his tongue, by admiring and acknowledging the wisdom, power, and goodness of God manifested in his works. For it is to be feared that most men either take no notice at all of the works of God, or else think and speak of them other than the word of God warrants them to do. I am sure I am one of them.

And it is a precious man that has always sanctified the name of the Lord by a holy and unblameable way of life, as he should. For, alas! many professors of religion, by their fruitless and offensive walking, either cause the enemies of God to speak evil of the ways of God, or else they cause their weak brother to stumble by it. It is well if I never did so. Thus I have also endeavoured to satisfy your desires concerning the third commandment.

Neo. I beseech you, sir, proceed to speak of the fourth commandment as you have done of the other three.

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 4.

Evan. Well, then, I ask you to consider that just as the Lord in the third commandment prescribes the right way to worship him, so in the fourth commandment, he sets down the time when he would be most solemnly worshipped, in the right way; and in this commandment there is an affirmative part, expressed in these words, “Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy,” etc.: that is, remember that the seventh day in every week is to be set apart from worldly things and business, and be consecrated to God by holy and heavenly employments; and there is a negative part, expressed also in these words, “In it you shall not do any work,” etc. That is, you shall not on that day do any such thing or work in any such way that hinders you from keeping a holy rest unto God.

292 THE MARROW OF

Neo. I ask you, sir, to begin with the affirmative part, and first tell us what the Lord requires of us in this commandment.

Evan. In this fourth commandment the Lord requires that we finish all our works in the space of six days, Deu. 5.13, and think about the seventh day before it comes, and prepare for it, Luke 23.54, and rise early on that day in the morning, Psalm 92.2; Mark 1.35, 38, 39. Yes, and the Lord requires that we make ourselves fit for public exercises by prayer, reading, and meditation, Eccl. 5.1; Isa. 2.3;¹ and join with the minister and people publicly assembled, with an assent of mind, and a fervency of affection in prayer, Acts 2.42; in hearing the word read and preached, Acts 13.14, 15, 44; in singing Psalms, 1Cor. 14.15, 16; Col. 3.16; in the sacrament of baptism, Luke

¹ Originally Isa. 7.10.

1.58, 59; and in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, as often as it is administered in that congregation of which we are members, 1Cor. 11.26.

Then afterwards, when we come home, the Lord requires that we seriously meditate on that portion of the word which we heard. Acts 17.11, and repeat it to our families, Deu. 6.7, and confer about it with others, if there is opportunity, Luke 24.14, 17; and that we crave his blessing when we have done all this, John 17.17.

Neo. And is this all that the Lord requires us to do on that day?

Evan. No; the Lord also requires that we do works of mercy on that day, such as visit the sick, and do what good we can for them, Neh. 8.10, 12; Mark 3.3-5, and relieve the poor and needy, and those in prison, Luke 13.16, and labour to reconcile those at variance and discord. Mat. 5.9.

And the Lord permits us to do works of urgent necessity on that day, such as traveling to places of God's worship, 2Kings 4.23; to heal the diseased, Hos. 6.1, 6; Mat. 12.7, 12; to prepare food for the necessary preservation of our temporal lives, Exo. 12.16;¹ to tend and feed cattle, Luk 14.5; Mat. 12.11; and such things.

Neo. I ask you, sir, proceed to the negative part, and tell us what the Lord forbids in this commandment.

Evan. In this commandment the Lord forbids idleness, or sleeping more than necessary in the morning on the Lord's day, Mat. 20.6; he also forbids us labouring in our particular callings, Exo. 16.28-30; Deu 16.8; and he also forbids us talking about our worldly affairs and business on that day, Amos 8.5; Isa. 58.13;

MODERN DIVINITY. 293

and he also forbids us to travel on any journey for our worldly business on that day, Mat. 24.20; or to keep any fairs or markets on that day, Neh. 13.16, 17; or labour in seeding and harvesting on that day. In a word, on that day the Lord forbids all worldly works and labours, except works of mercy and urgent necessity, which were mentioned before. And thus have I also declared both what the Lord requires, and what he forbids, in the fourth commandment. And now, neighbour Nomologista, I ask you to tell me whether you think you keep it perfectly, or not?

Nom. Indeed, sir, I must confess, there is more both required and forbidden in this commandment than I was aware of; yet I hope that I go very near to observing and doing all.

Neo. But, sir, is the bare observing and doing of these things sufficient to perfectly keep this commandment?

Evan. Oh no! The first commandment must be understood in all the rest. That is, obedience to the first commandment must be the motive and final cause of our obedience to the rest of the commandments. Otherwise it is not the worship of God, but hypocrisy, as I touched on before. Therefore, neighbour Nomologista, even though you have done all the duties the Lord requires in this commandment, and avoided all the sins which he forbids, if all this has been from such grounds, and to such ends, as I told you about in the conclusion of the second commandment, and not for the love you bear to God, and the desire you have to please him, you come short of keeping this commandment perfectly.

Neo. Sir, whatever he does, I am sure I come far short not only in this point, but in various others. For though it is true, indeed, that I am careful to finish all my worldly business in the space of six days, yet, alas! I do not so seriously think about and prepare for the seventh day as I should; nor many times do I rise so early on that day as I should; nor do I thoroughly fit and

¹ Originally Exo 1.1.

prepare myself by prayer and other exercises beforehand as I should; nor do I heartily join with the minister and people when I come to the assembly, as I should. Rather, I am subject to many wandering worldly thoughts and cares even at that time. And when I come home, if I meditate, repeat, pray, or confer about the word, alas! I do none of these with such delight or comfort as I should; nor have I been so mindful or careful to visit the sick, and relieve the poor, as I should;

294 THE MARROW OF

nor can I clear myself of being guilty of doing more worldly works or labours on that day, than works of mercy and urgent necessity. The Lord be merciful to me! I ask you, sir, to proceed to speak of the fifth commandment, as you have spoken about the rest. But first of all, I ask you to tell us what is meant by “father and mother”?

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 5.

Evan. By father and mother is meant, not only natural parents, but also others who are our superiors either in age, position, or gifts, 2Kings 5.13; and 6.21; and 13.14.

Neo. Why did the Lord use the name “father and mother” to signify and comprehend all other superiors?

Evan. Because the government of fathers is the first and most ancient of all others; and because the society of father and mother is that from which all other societies come.

Neo. And are only the duties of inferiors towards their superiors intended here?

Evan. No, but also of superiors towards their inferiors, and of equals among themselves. So that the general duty required in the affirmative part of this fifth commandment, “Honour your father and your mother,” etc., is that every man, woman, and child, should be careful to carry themselves as becomes them in regard to that order which God has appointed among men, and in regard to that relation which they have to others, either as inferior, superior, or equal.

Neo. I ask you, sir, proceed to the particular handling of these things. But first tell us, what is the duty of children towards their parents?

Evan. Why, the Lord in this commandment requires that children reverence their parents by thinking and esteeming highly of them. Gen. 31.35; and by loving them dearly. Gen. 46.29; and by fearing them in regard of their authority over them, Lev. 19.3. And this inward reverent esteem of them is to be expressed by their outward reverent behaviour towards them. Gen. 48.12. And this outward reverent behaviour is to be expressed in giving them reverent titles. Gen. 31.35, and by bowing their bodies before them, 1Kings 2.19, and by embracing their instructions, Prov. 1.8, and by submitting patiently to their corrections, Heb. 12.9, and by their succouring and relieving them in case of want and necessity. Gen. 47.12, and by making their prayers to God for them, 1Tim. 2.1, 2.

MODERN DIVINITY. 295

Neo. And, sir, what are the duties of parents towards their children?

Evan. Why, in this commandment the Lord requires that parents be careful that their children, with all convenient speed, and in due order, are admitted into the visible church of God by baptism, Luke 1.59; and that according to their ability, they yield and give their children such adequate food, clothing, and other necessities, as are fit for them, Mat. 7.9, 12; 1Tim. 5.8.

And that they train them up in learning, instruct them in religion, and endeavour to sow the seeds of godliness in their hearts as soon as they are able to speak, and to use reason and understanding, Deu. 4.10; and 6.7, 20, 21. And that they are careful to check and rebuke them when they do amiss, Prov.31.2; and that they are careful to seasonably correct their faults, Prov.

13.24; and 19.18; and that they are careful in time to train them in some honest calling, Gen. 4.2; and that they are careful to give them in marriage in due time, Jer. 29.6; 1Cor. 7.36, 38; and that they are careful to save up something for them, as their ability allows, Prov. 19.14; 2Cor. 12.14; and that they are earnest with God in prayer, for a blessing on their children's souls and bodies. Gen. 48.15, 16.

Neo. And what are the duties of servants towards their masters?

Evan. Why, the Lord in this commandment requires that servants have an inward, high, and reverent esteem of their masters, Eph. 6.5-7; yes, and that they have in their hearts a reverent awe and fear of them, 1Pet. 2.18; and they are to express this reverence and fear by their outward reverent behaviour towards them, both in word and deed, as by giving them reverent titles, 2Kings 5.23, 25, and by a humble, submissive countenance and carriage, either when their masters speak to them, or when they speak to their masters, Gen. 24.9; Acts 10.7; and by yielding sincere, faithful, willing, painful, and single-hearted service to their masters in all they go about doing, Col. 3.22; Tit. 2.10; and by a meek and patient bearing of those checks, rebukes, and corrections which are given to them, or laid upon them by their masters, without a grudging stomach, or a sullen countenance, even though the master does it without just cause, or in excessive measure, 1Pet. 2.18, 20; and by being careful to maintain their master's good name, in keeping secret those honest intents which he does not want disclosed; and as much as possible, to hide and cover their master's wants and infirmities, not publishing them abroad, 2Sam. 15.13; 2Kings 6.11.

296 THE MARROW OF

Neo. And what is the duty of masters towards their servants?

Evan. Why, the Lord in this commandment requires that masters be careful to choose for themselves religious servants, Psalm 101.6; and that they instruct them in religion and the ways of godliness. Gen. 18.19; and that they be careful to bring them to the public exercises, Joshua 24.15; and that they pray with them and for them daily, Jer 42.4;¹ and that they yield and give them food, drink, and apparel fitting for them, Deu. 24.14, 15; and that they see that they follow the works of their callings with diligence, Prov. 31.27; and that they be careful to instruct them, and give them direction in it, Exo. 35.34; and that they are careful to give them just reproof and correction for their faults, Prov. 29.19;² and care for them when they are sick. Matt. 8.5, 6.

Neo. And what is the duty of wives towards their husbands?

Evan. Why, the Lord in this commandment requires that wives carry in their hearts an inward opinion and esteem for their husbands, Eph. 5.33; which they are to express in their speech, by giving them reverent titles and terms, 1Pet. 3.6; and in their countenance and behaviour, by their modesty, reserve, and sobriety, 1Tim. 2.9; and in being willing to yield themselves to be commanded, governed and directed by their husbands in all things honest and lawful. Gen. 31.4, 16, 17; 2Kings 4.22; and they are also required to love their husbands. Tit. 2.4, and to express their love by their chastity and faithfulness to their husbands, both in body and mind. Tit. 2.5; 1Tim. 3.11; and by using the best means they can to keep their husbands' bodies in health, Gen. 27.9. They are also required to be helpful to them in the government of the family, and to be provident for their estate, by exercising themselves in some profitable employment, Prov. 31.13, 15, 19; and they are also required to stir up their husbands to good duties, to join with them in the performance of them, 2Kings 4.9, 10; and to pray for them, 1Tim 3.11.³

¹ Originally Jer. 10.24.

² Originally Prov. 29.29; and 19.29.

³ Originally 1Tim 2.12.

Neo. And what is the duty of husbands towards their wives?

MODERN DIVINITY. 297

Evan. Why, the Lord in this commandment requires that husbands be careful to choose religious wives, 2Cor. 6.14; and that they dwell with them as men of knowledge, 1Pet. 3.7; and that they cling to them with true love and affection of heart, Col. 3.19; yes, and that they content themselves only with the love of their own wives, and keep themselves only to them both in mind and body, Prov. 5.19, 20; they are also to be careful to maintain their authority over them, Eph. 5.23; and to live cheerfully and familiarly with them, Prov. 5.19; and to be careful to provide all “things necessary and fitting for their maintenance,” 1Tim. 5.8; and to teach, instruct, and admonish them, as touching the best things, 1Sam. 1.8; and to pray with them and for them, 1Pet. 3.7; and to endeavour to reform and amend what they see amiss in them, by seasonable and loving admonition and reproof. Gen. 30.2; and to bear with their natural infirmities wisely and patiently, Gal. 6.2.

Neo. And what is the duty of subjects towards their MAGISTRATES?

Evan. Why, the Lord in this commandment requires that subjects reverently think about and esteem their magistrates, 1Sam. 18.30; and carry in their hearts a reverent awe and fear of them, Prov. 24.21; which they are to express by their outward reverent behaviour towards them, both in word and deed, 2Sam. 9.6, 8; and by humbly, readily, and willingly submitting themselves to their commands, either to do them or allow them, 1Pet. 2.13; and by yielding a loyal and sound-hearted love to them, in not shrinking from them when they have need, but defending them with their goods, bodies, and lives, if occasion requires, 2Sam. 18.3, and 2.27; also they are required to make their prayers to God for them, 1Tim. 2.1, 2.

Neo. And what is the duty of magistrates towards their SUBJECTS?

Evan. Why, the Lord in this commandment requires that magistrates be careful to establish good laws in their kingdoms, and good orders among their subjects, 2Kings 18.4; Rom. 12.17; and be careful to see them duly and impartially executed, Jer. 38.4, 6; Rom. 13.3, 4; and that they be careful to provide for the peace, safety, quietness, and outward welfare of their subjects, Rom. 13.4; 1Tim. 2.2, and not oppress them with taxations and grievances, 1Kings 12.14.

298 THE MARROW OF

Neo. And what duties are people to perform towards their MINISTER?

Evan. Why, the Lord in this commandment requires that the people hold their minister in reverent regard and estimation, 1Cor. 4.1; and humbly and willingly yield themselves to be taught and directed in their spiritual affairs by him, Heb. 13.17; and pray for him, that the Lord would enable him to do his duty, Rom. 15.30, 31; and do their best to defend him against the wrongs of wicked men, Rom. 16.4; and yield double honour to him, that is, both singular love for their work's sake, and sufficient maintenance, both in regard to his person and his calling, 1Tim. 5.17, 18; Gal. 4.15.

Neo. And what is the duty of a minister towards the PEOPLE?

Evan. Why, the Lord in this commandment requires that ministers diligently and faithfully preach the pure word of God to their people, both in season and out of season, 1Cor. 9.16; 2Kings 4.2; and that they so truly and plainly expound it, that the people may understand it; and that they pour out their souls to God in prayer, for the spiritual good of the people, 1Thess. 1.2; and go before the people as a pattern of imitation to them, in all holiness of conduct Phil. 4.9.

Neo. And what is the duty of EQUALS?

Evan. Why, the Lord in this commandment requires that equals regard the dignity and worth of each other, and carry themselves modestly towards one another, and in giving honour to one before another, Eph. 5.21; Rom. 12.10. And thus having shown you the duties required in this commandment, I ask you, Nomologista, to tell me whether you think you have kept it perfectly, or not?

Nom. Sir, though I have not kept it perfectly, yet I am persuaded thta I have gone very near it; for when I was a child, I loved and revered my parents, and was obedient to them; and when I was a servant, I revered and feared my master, and did him faithful service; and since I became a man, I have, I hope, carried myself well towards my wife, and towards my servants; yes, and done my duty both to magistrates and ministers.

MODERN DIVINITY. 299

Evan. Good, but I must tell you that the Lord not only requires you to do them, but also that you do them in obedience to him; that is, in conscience to God's commandment, or for his sake, specifically because he requires it. Therefore although you did your duty to your parents when you were a child, and to your master when you were a servant, yet if you did it either for the praise of men, or for fear of their corrections, or to procure a greater portion or greater wages, and not because the Lord says in Eph. 6.4, "Children, obey your parents in the Lord;" and because he says to servants, "Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not to men," you have not in this kept this commandment. And though you have loved your wife, and in every way carried yourself well towards her, yet if it has been either because she comes from rich parents, or because she is beautiful, or because she brought you a good portion, or because she in some way serves and pleases you in the flesh, and not because the Lord says in Eph. 5.25, "Husbands, love your wives;" you have not in this kept this commandment. And though you carried yourself ever so well towards your servants, yet if it has been so that they might praise you, or to make them follow your business more diligently and faithfully, and not because the Lord says, "Masters, give your servants that which is just and equal," you have not in this kept this commandment. And though you have done your duty ever so well towards your magistrate, yet if it has been for fear of his wrath, and not for conscience' sake, namely: because the Lord says, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," you have not in this kept this commandment. And though you have given your minister his due maintenance, and invited him often to your table, and carried yourself ever so well towards him, yet if it has been so that he or others might think you are a good Christian, and a kind man, and not because the Lord says in Gal. 6.6, "Let him that is taught in the word, share all good things with him that teaches," you have not in this kept this commandment.

Neo. Well, sir, I cannot tell what my neighbour Nomologista has done, but for my own part, I am sure, I have come far short of doing my duty in any relation that I have had to others; for when I was a child, I remember that many times I was stubborn and disobedient to my parents, and vexed if I might not have my will, and slighted their admonitions, and was impatient at their corrections, and sometimes despised and contemned them in my heart because of some infirmity, especially when they grew old; nor did I pray for them as it seems I should have done;

300 THE MARROW OF

and the truth is, if I did yield any obedience to them at all, it was for fear of their corrections, or some such by-respects, and not in conscience towards God. And when I was a servant, I did not think so reverently of, nor esteem so highly, my master and mistress as I should have done, but I was apt to slight and despise them, and did not yield such humble, reverent, and cheerful obedience as I should have done. Nor did I patiently and contentedly bear their checks and rebukes, but at various times had risings and swellings in my heart against them; nor was I so careful to maintain their good name and credit as I ought to have been; nor did I pray to the

Lord for them as I ought to have done; and the truth is, all the obedience and subjection which I yielded to them, was for fear of their reproofs and corrections, or for the praise of men, rather than in conscience to the Lord's commandment.

And when I entered into the married estate, I was not careful to choose a religious wife; no, I aimed at beauty more than piety. And I have not dwelt with my wife as a man of knowledge; no, I have expressed much ignorance and folly in my carriage towards her; nor have I loved her as a husband ought to love his wife. For though it is true that I have had much fond affection towards her, yet I have had but little true affection, as evident in that I have been easily provoked to anger and wrath against her, and have not carried myself patiently towards her. Nor have I been careful to maintain my authority over her, but have lost it by my childish and indiscreet carriage towards her; nor have I lived so cheerfully and delightfully with her as I ought to have done, but I have carried myself very heavily, discontentedly, and uncomfortably towards her; nor have I been careful to instruct and admonish her as I should. And though now and then I have reproved her, yet for the most part it has been in a passion, and not with the spirit of meekness, pity, and compassion; nor have I prayed for her either so often or so fervently as I should. And whatever I have done that has been well done, I have been moved to it, in former times especially, by something in her, or done by her, rather than by the commandment of God. And since I became a father and a master, I have not done my duty either to my children or to my servants as I should. For I have not had such care, nor taken such pains for their eternal good, as I have done for their temporal. I have had more care, and taken more pains to provide food and raiment for them, than I have to admonish, instruct, teach, and catechize them;

MODERN DIVINITY. 301

and if I have reproved or corrected them, it has been because they have in some way offended me, rather than because they have offended God; and truly, I have neither prayed for them so often, nor so fervently as I should. In a word, whatever I have done by way of discharging my duty to them, I fear me, it has been out of natural affection, or to avoid the blame, and gain the good opinion of men, rather than out of conscience to the Lord's will and commandment.

And if I have at any time carried myself well, or done my duty either to magistrate or minister, it has been for fear or praise of men, rather than for conscience' sake towards God — so far have I been from keeping this commandment perfectly: the Lord be merciful to me!

Evan. Assure yourself, neighbour Neophytus, this is not your case alone, but the case of every man that has stood in all these relations to others, as it seems you have done, as I am confident any man that truly knows his heart will confess, yes, and any woman that is well acquainted with her own heart, I am persuaded, will confess that she has not had such a reverent esteem and opinion of her husband as she should, nor so willingly yielded herself to be commanded, governed, and directed by him as she should, nor loved him so truly as she should; nor been so helpful to him any way as she should, nor prayed either so often or so fervently for him as she should; and I fear, most women do all that they do out of fear of their husband's frowns, or to gain his favour, rather than out of conscience to the Lord's will and command.

And where is the magistrate that is so careful to establish in his dominions such good and wholesome laws as he should, or to see them executed or put into practice as he should, or that is so careful to uphold and maintain the truth of religion as he should, or that is so careful to provide for the peace, safety, and welfare of his people as he should? Or where is the magistrate that does not do what he does for some other cause, or for some other end, rather than because God commands them, or to the end that he may please him?

And where is the minister that does his duty in his position as he should? I am sure, for my own part, I have neither so diligently nor so faithfully preached the pure word of God as I should; nor so fully or truly expounded it and applied it to my hearers as I should; nor so poured out my soul

to God for them in prayer as I should; nor have I gone before them as a pattern of imitation in holiness of life and conduct, as I should: the Lord be merciful to *me!*

302 THE MARROW OF

Neo. Well, sir, now I entreat you to proceed to speak of the sixth commandment as you have done of the rest.

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 6.

Evan. Well, then, I ask you to consider, that in the sixth commandment there is a negative part expressed in these words: “You shall not murder.” That is, you shall not in heart, tongue, or hand, impeach or hurt either the life of your own soul or body, or the life of any other man’s soul or body; and an affirmative part is included in these words: “But you shall in every way, by all good means, seek to preserve them both.”

Neo. I beg you, sir, speak of these things in order; and first tell us, what is forbidden in this commandment as tending to murder OUR OWN SOULS?

Evan. That we may not be guilty of murdering our own souls, this commandment forbids all sinning against God, Prov 6.2; and also the careless neglect and wilful rejection of the means that God has ordained for salvation, Heb. 2.3.

Neo. And what is forbidden in this commandment, as tending to murder OTHERS’ SOULS?

Evan. That we may not be guilty of murdering the souls of others, it is forbidden in this commandment to give any occasion for others to sin against God, either by provoking them, 1Kings 21.25, or by counselling them, 2Sam. 17.21, or by evil example, Rom. 14.15.

Neo. And what is forbidden in this commandment, as tending to murder OUR OWN BODIES?

Evan. That we may not be guilty of murdering our own bodies, this commandment forbids excessive worldly sorrow, 1Cor. 7.10; Prov. 17.22; and also the neglect of food, drink, apparel, recreation, medicine, or any such refreshments, Eccl. 5.19; 6.2; and also excessive eating and drinking, Prov. 23.29, 30; Hosea 7.5; and also laying violent hands on ourselves, 1Sam. 31.4; Acts 16.28.

Neo. Well, sir, now I beg you, tell us what is forbidden in this commandment as tending to murder OTHERS’ BODIES; and first, what is forbidden in respect to the heart?

MODERN DIVINITY. 303

Evan. That we may not be guilty of murdering others with our hearts, this commandment forbids all hasty, rash and unjust anger, Mat. 5.22; and also malice or hatred, Lev. 19.18; 1John 3.15; and also envy. Psalm 37.1; Prov. 24.1; and also desire for revenge. Lev. 19.18.

Neo. And what is forbidden in respect to the TONGUE?

Evan. That we may not be guilty of murdering others with our tongues, this commandment forbids all bitter and provoking terms, Eph. 4.81; and also all wrangling and contentious speech, Prov. 15.1; and also crying out and unseemly shouting, Eph. 4.31; and also railing or scolding, Prov. 17.19; 1Peter 3.9; and also all reviling and threatening speech, Mat. 5.22; and also all mocking, scoffing, and deriding speech, 2Kings 2.23; John 19.3.

Neo. And what is forbidden in respect to the whole body, and more especially of the HAND?

Evan. That we may not be guilty of murdering others with our hands, in respect to the other parts of the body, this commandment forbids all disdainful, proud, and scornful carriage, Gen. 4.5; Prov. 6.17; and also all provoking gestures, such as shaking the head, gnashing the teeth, and the like, Matt, 27.39; Acts 7.54; and also all froward and churlish behaviour, 1Sam. 25.17;

and also brawling and quarrelling. Tit. 3.2. And more especially in respect to the hand, striking and wounding are forbidden, Exo. 21.18, 22; and also all taking away of life, other than in the case of public justice, just war, and necessary defence, Exo. 21.12; Gen. 9.6.

Neo. I ask you, sir, to proceed to the affirmative part of this commandment; and first tell us, What is required of us in respect to the life of our own souls?

Evan. In respect to the preservation of the life of our own souls is required a careful avoiding of all sorts of sin, Prov. 11.19; and also a careful use of all means of grace and spiritual life in our souls, 1Peter 2.2.

Neo. And what is required of us in respect to the preservation of the life of others' souls?

Evan. In respect to the preservation of the life of the souls of others it is required that according to our position and calling, and as present occasion offers, we teach and instruct others to know God and his will. Gen. 18.19; Deu. 6.7; and also that we do our best to comfort others that are in distress of conscience, 1Thess. 5.14; that we pray for the welfare and comfort of others' souls, Gen. 43.29; and that we give others good examples by our Christian-like walking, Mat. 5.16.

304 THE MARROW OF

Neo. And what is required of us in respect to the preservation of the life of our own bodies?

Evan. In respect to the preservation of the life of our own bodies, this commandment requires that we be careful to procure for ourselves the use of wholesome food, clothing, and lodging, and medicine, when there is occasion, 1Tim. 5.23; Eccl. 10.17; 2Kings 20.7; and also that we use honest and lawful mirth, rejoicing in a holy manner, Prov. 17.22; Eccl. 3.4.

Neo. And what is required of us in respect to the preservation of the life of the bodies of others?

Evan. In respect to the preservation of the life of the bodies of others, this commandment requires a kind and loving disposition, with tenderness of heart towards them, Eph. 4.31, 32; and also a patient bearing of wrongs and injuries, Col. 3.12, 13; and also taking all things in the best sense, 1Cor. 13.5, 7; and also avoiding all occasions of strife, and parting with our own right sometimes for peace' sake, Gen. 13.8, 9; and also all those looks and gestures of the body which express meekness and kindness, Gen. 33.10; and also relieving the poor and needy, Job 31.16; and also visiting the sick. Mat. 25.36. And now, neighbour Nomologista, I ask you to tell me if you think you keep this commandment perfectly, or not?

Nom. No, indeed, sir, I do not think I keep it perfectly, as you have expounded it, nor any other man.

Evan. Assure yourself, neighbour Nomologista, that I have expounded it according to the mind and will of God revealed in his word. For you see, I have proved it all by Scripture: I told you at the beginning that the law is spiritual, and it binds the very heart and soul to obedience; and that under one vice which is expressly forbidden, all vices of the same kind, along with all occasions and means leading to it, are likewise forbidden; and I have expounded it according to these rules. Therefore, I ask you to consider that as many sins as you have committed, and as many times as you have carelessly neglected, and wilfully rejected the means of salvation, so many wounds have you given to your own soul.

MODERN DIVINITY. 305

And as many times as you have given occasion for others to sin, so many wounds have you given to their souls.

And so many fits of worldly sorrow as you have had and so many times as you neglected the moderate use either of food, drink, apparel, recreation, or medicine when need has required, so many wounds have you given your own body.

And so many times as you have been either unadvisedly angry with anyone, or borne any malice or hatred towards anyone, or have secretly in your heart wished evil to anyone, or borne envy in your heart towards anyone, or desired to be revenged on anyone, then you have been guilty of murdering them in your heart. And if you have given others any wrangling and contentious speech, or any reviling and threatening speech, or carried yourself frowardly and churlishly towards others, and have not borne injuries and wrongs patiently, and expressed pity and compassion towards others, then you have been guilty of murdering them with your tongue. And if you have quarrelled with any man, or stricken or wounded any man, then you have murdered them with your hand, even though you have not taken away their lives. And thus I have endeavoured to satisfy your desires concerning the sixth commandment.

Neo. I beseech you, sir, proceed to speak of the seventh commandment as you have done of the rest.

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 7.

Evan. Well, then, I ask you to consider that in the seventh commandment there is a negative part expressed in these words, “You shall not commit adultery;” that is, you shall not think, will, speak, or do anything by which your own chastity or the chastity of others may be hurt or hindered. And an affirmative part is included in these words, “But you shall in every way, and by all good means, preserve and keep it.”

Neo. I beg you, sir, begin with the negative part and first tell us, What is that inward uncleanness that is forbidden in this commandment?

Evan. That we may not be guilty of the inward uncleanness of the heart, this commandment forbids all filthy imaginations, unchaste thoughts, and inward desires and motions of the heart to uncleanness, Mat. 5.28; Col. 3.5; along with all causes and occasions for stirring up and nourishing these in the heart.

306 THE MARROW OF

Neo. And what are the causes and occasions of stirring up and nourishing these things in the heart which we are to avoid?

Evan. That we may not stir up and nourish inward uncleanness in our hearts, this commandment forbids gluttony, or excess in eating and pampering the belly with foods, Jer. 5.8; and also drunkenness, or excess in drinking, Prov. 23.30, 31, 33; and also idleness, 2Sam. 11.12; and also wearing lascivious, garish, and newfangled attire,¹ Prov. 7.10; 1Tim. 2.9; and also keeping company with lascivious, wanton, and fleshly persons, Gen. 39.10; and also immodest, unchaste, and filthy speaking, Eph. 4.29; and also the idle and curious looking of men at women, or women at men. Gen. 6.2; 39.7; and also beholding love-matters, and the light behaviour of men and women represented in stage plays, Ezek. 23.14; Eph. 5.3, 4; and also immoderate and wanton dancing of men and women together, Job 21.11, 12; Mark 6.21, 22; and also wanton kissing and embracing, along with all unchaste touching and dalliance,² Prov. 7.13.

Neo. And what is that outward actual uncleanness which is forbidden in this commandment?

Evan. The actual uncleanness forbidden in this commandment is fornication, which is a fleshly defilement of the body, committed between man and woman, both of them being single and unmarried persons, 1Cor. 10.8; and also adultery, which is a defilement of the body, committed between man and woman, either one or both of them being married persons, or at least engaged to be married, 1Cor. 6.9, 18; Hos. 4.13.

¹ Not just new fashions, but gratuitously new in order to attract the attention and admiration of others.

² Dalliance: playful behavior intended to arouse sexual interest; flirtatious.

Neo. I beg you, sir, proceed to the affirmative part, and tell us what the Lord requires in this commandment.

Evan. The Lord in this commandment requires purity of heart, 1Thess. 4.5; and he also requires speech savouring sobriety and chastity, Col. 4.6; Gen. 4.1; and he also requires that we keep our eyes from beholding vanity and lustful objects, Psalm 119.37; Job 31.1; and he also requires that we be temperate in our diet, in our sleep, and in our recreations, Luke 21.34; and he also requires that we possess our vessels in holiness and honour, 1Thess. 4.4;

MODERN DIVINITY. 307

and if we do not have the gift of chastity, he requires that we take the benefit of holy marriage, 1Cor. 7.36; and that the man and wife in that estate render due benevolence towards each other, 1Cor. 7.5. Thus I have also endeavoured to satisfy your desires concerning the seventh commandment; and now, neighbour Nomologista, I ask you to tell me whether you think you keep it perfectly, or not?

Nom. Sir, I thank the Lord I am free from actual uncleanness, so that I am neither a fornicator nor an adulterer.

Evan. Good; but even though you are free from the outward act, yet if you had in your heart filthy imaginations, unchaste thoughts, or inward desires, or motions of the heart toward uncleanness, then notwithstanding, you have transgressed this commandment; or if you have been guilty of gluttony, or drunkenness, or idleness, or if you delight to keep company with lascivious and wanton persons, or if your tongue has uttered any unchaste or corrupt communication, or you have frequented stage-plays, or used immoderate dancing with women, or used wanton dalliance with kissing and embracing, then you have broken this commandment.

Neo. I beseech you, sir, proceed to speak of the eighth commandment, as you have done of the rest.

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 8.

Evan. Well then, I ask you to consider that in the eighth commandment there is a negative part expressed in these words, “You shall not steal;” that is, you shall by no unlawful way or means hurt or hinder the wealth and outward estate either of yourself or others: and there is an affirmative part is included in these words, “But you shall by all good means preserve and further them both.”

Neo. I ask you, sir, to begin with the negative part, and first tell us what is forbidden in this commandment, as a hurt or hinderance of our own outward estate.

Evan. That we may not hurt or hinder our own outward estate, in this commandment are forbidden idleness, sloth, and inordinate conduct, Prov. 18.9; 2Thess. 3.11; and so also are unthriftiness and carelessness, either in spending our goods, or in ordering our affairs and businesses, Proverbs 21.17; 1Tim. 5.8; and also unadvised suretyship, Prov. 11.15.

Neo. And what is forbidden in this commandment, as tending to hurt or hinder our neighbour’s estate.”

308 THE MARROW OF

Evan. That we may not hurt or hinder our neighbour’s outward estate, in this commandment is forbidden covetousness and discontentedness with our estate, Heb. 13.5; and also enviousness at the prosperity of others, Prov. 24.1; and also resolutions or hastening to be rich, as it were, whether the Lord affords us means or not, 1Tim. 6.9; Prov. 28.20; and also borrowing and not paying back, though able to do so, Psalm 37.21; and also lending at usury, Exo. 22.25; and also not restoring things borrowed, Psalm 37.21; and also cruelty in requiring all our debts, without

compassion or mercy, Isa. 58.3; and also praising any commodity we sell, contrary to our own knowledge of it, or debasing anything we buy, against our own conscience, Isa. 5.20; Prov. 20.14; and also hoarding up, or withholding the selling of corn and other necessary commodities when we may spare them, and others need them, Prov. 11.26; and also withholding hireling's wages, James 5.4; and also uncharitable enclosure, Isa. 5.8;¹ and also selling any commodity by false weights or false measures, Lev. 19.35; and also concealing things that are found, and withholding them from the right owners when they are known; and also robbery, or laying violent and strong hands on any part of the wealth that belongs to another, Zech. 5.3; and also pilfering and secretly carrying away the wealth that belongs to another, Joshua 7.21; and also consenting to taking away the goods of another, Psalm 50.18; and also receiving or harbouring stolen goods, Prov. 29.24.

Neo. Well, now, sir, I ask you to proceed to the affirmative part of this commandment, and tell us what the Lord requires in it.

Evan. This commandment requires a contented mind with that part and portion of wealth and outward good things which God, in his providence, has allotted to us, Heb. 13.5; 1Tim. 6.6-8; and so also in resting by faith on the promise of God, and depending on his providence, without distrustful care, Mat. 6.20, 26; and also a moderate desire for those things which are convenient and necessary for us, Mat. 6.21; Prov. 30.8; and also a moderate care to provide those things which are necessary for us, Gen. 30.30; 1Tim. 5.8; and also an honest calling, Gen. 4.2;

MODERN DIVINITY. 309

and also diligent, painstaking, and faithful labouring in it, Gen. 3.19; and also frugality or thriftiness, Prov. 27.23-27; John 6.12; and also borrowing for needs and good ends, only what we are able to repay, and making payment with thanks and cheerfulness, Exo. 22.14; and also lending freely without compounding for gain, Deu. 15.8; Luke 6.35; and also giving or conveying outward things to others, according to our ability and their necessity, Luke 11.41; and also using truth, simplicity, and plainness in buying and selling, in hiring and leasing, Lev. 25.14; Deu. 25.13-15; and also restoring things that are found, Deu. 22.2, 3; and also restoring things committed to our trust, Ezek. 18.7. And thus I have endeavoured to satisfy your desire concerning the eighth commandment; and now, neighbour Nomologista, I ask you to tell me whether you think you keep it perfectly, or not?

Nom. I can say this truly, that I never in all my life took away, or consented to the taking away, of so much as a pennyworth of any other man's goods.

Evan. Though you did not, yet if there has ever been in your heart any discontentedness with your own estate, or any envious thoughts towards others in regard to their prosperity in the world, or any resolution to be rich, other than by the moderate use of lawful means, or if you ever borrowed and did not repay to the utmost of your ability, or if you ever lent at usury, or if you ever cruelly required any debt above the ability of your debtor, or if you ever praised anything you had to sell above the known worth of it, or if you ever undervalued anything you were to buy, contrary to your own thoughts of it, or if you ever hoarded up corn in a time of dearth, or if you ever retained the hireling's wages in your hands, to his loss or hinderance, or if you ever sold any commodity by false weights or measures, or if you ever concealed anything found from the right owner, when you knew who he was; then you have been guilty of theft, and so you have been a transgressor of this commandment.

And though you have never done any of these things, and it is strange if you have not, yet if you were ever guilty of idleness, sloth, or in any way unwarrantably neglected your calling, or

¹ **Isaiah 5:8** Woe to those who join house to house; They add field to field, Till *there is no place* Where they may dwell alone in the midst of the land!

unthriflily misspent any of your own goods, or were ever negligent and careless in ordering your own affairs and business, or if you ever sustained any loss by your unadvised suretyship, or if you ever borrowed at usury, except in case of extreme necessity, then you have been guilty of robbing yourself, and so you have been a transgressor of this commandment.

310 THE MARROW OF

Neo. Now, I beg you, sir, proceed to speak of the ninth commandment, as you have spoken of the rest.

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 9.

Evan. Well, then, I ask you to consider that in the ninth commandment, there is a negative part expressed in these words: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour;” that is, you shall not think or speak anything contrary to truth, or that may tend to hurt or hinder either your own or your neighbour’s good name. And an affirmative part is included in these words: “But you shall by all good means seek to maintain them both, according to truth and a good conscience.”

Neo. Well, sir, I ask you to begin with the negative part; and first tell us what is forbidden in this commandment, in respect to our own good name.

Evan. That we may not be guilty of bearing false witness against ourselves, either by overvaluing or undervaluing ourselves,¹ in this commandment is forbidden too high a conceit or esteem of ourselves, Luke 18.9-11; and also too low a conceit, in undervaluing the good things that are in ourselves, Exo. 4.10, 13; and also procuring for ourselves an evil name by walking indiscreetly and offensively, Rom. 2.24; and also unjustly accusing ourselves when, in proud humility, we say, “We have no grace, no wit, no wealth,” etc. Prov. 13.7; and also excusing our faults by way of lying, Lev. 19.11.

Neo. And what is forbidden in this commandment, in respect to our neighbour’s good name?

Evan. That we may not be guilty of bearing false witness against any other man, in this commandment is forbidden contemning or thinking basely of others, 2Sam. 6.16; and also wrongful suspicion, or evil surmisings, 2Sam. 10.3; and also rash, uncharitable, unjust judging, and condemning of others, Mat. 7.1; and also foolishly admiring others. Acts 12.22; and also unjustly reviving the memory of our neighbour’s crimes which over time were forgotten, Prov. 17.9; and also forbearing to speak in the cause and for the credit of our neighbours, Prov. 31.8, 9;

MODERN DIVINITY. 311

and also all flattering speech, Job 32.21, 22; and also tale-bearing, backbiting, and slanderous speech, Lev. 19.16; Prov. 20.19; and also listening to tale-bearers, Prov. 26.20; and 25.23; and also falsely charging some ill upon another person before some magistrate, or in open court, Amos 7.10; Acts 25.2.

Neo. I ask you, sir, to proceed to the affirmative part of this commandment, and first tell us what the Lord requires of us to maintain our own good name.

Evan. To maintain our own good name, the Lord in this commandment requires a right judgment of ourselves, 2Cor. 13.5; with a love for, and care of our own good name, Prov. 22.1.

Neo. And what does the Lord in this commandment require of us to maintain our neighbour’s good name?

¹ Rom 12.3.

Evan. To maintain our neighbour's good name, this commandment requires a charitable opinion and estimation of others, 1Cor. 13.7; and also a desire for, and rejoicing in the good name of others, Rom. 1.8; Gal. 1.24; and also sorrowing and grieving for their infirmities. Psalm 119.136; and also covering others' infirmities in love, Prov. 17.9; 1Pet. 4.8; and also hoping and judging the best of others, 1Cor. 13.5-7; and also admonishing others before we bewray their faults, Prov. 25.9; and also speaking the truth from our heart simply and plainly on any just occasion. Psalm 15.2; Zech. 8.16; and also giving sound and seasonable reproofs for known faults, in love and with wisdom. Lev. 19.17; and also praising and commending those who do well, Rev. 2.23; and also defending the good name of others, if need requires it. Thus I have endeavoured to satisfy your desires concerning the ninth commandment; and now, neighbour Nomologista, I ask you to tell me whether you think you keep it perfectly, or not?

Nom. The truth is, sir, I conceived that nothing tended to break this commandment, except falsely charging some ill upon another before some magistrate, or in some open court of justice: and thank God, I am not guilty of that.

Evan. Though you have not been guilty of that, yet, if you have contemned or thought too basely of any person, or have had wrongful suspicions, or evil surmisings concerning them, or have rashly and unjustly judged and condemned them, or

312 THE MARROW OF

if you have foolishly admired them, or unjustly revived the memory of any forgotten crime, or have given them any flattering speech, or have been a tale-bearer, or a backbiter, or a slanderer, or listened to tale-bearers, you have borne false witness against your neighbour, and so you have been guilty of the breach of this commandment.

Or if you have not had a charitable opinion of others, or have not desired and rejoiced in the good name of others, or have not sorrowed and grieved for their sinful infirmities, or have not covered them in love, or have not hoped and judged the best of them, or have not admonished them before you revealed their faults to others, or have not given others sound and seasonable reproof, or have not praised those who do well, then you have also been guilty of false witness-bearing against your neighbour; and so you have transgressed this commandment. And though you have never done any of these things, and it is strange if you have not, yet if you had too high a conceit of yourself, or in a proud humble manner unjustly accused yourself, or procured for yourself an evil name by walking indiscreetly and offensively, or excused any fault by lying, then you have borne false witness against yourself, and thereby transgressed this commandment.

Neo. I beseech you, sir, proceed to speak of the last commandment as you have done of the rest.

SUM OF COMMANDMENT 10.

Evan. Well, then, I ask you to consider that in the tenth commandment there is a negative part expressed in these words, "You shall not covet," etc.: that is, you shall not inwardly think about, or long for what belongs to another, even though it is without consent of will, or purpose of heart to seek after it; and an affirmative part is included in these words, "But you shall be well contented with your own outward condition, and heartily desire the good of your neighbours."

Neo. Well, sir, I ask you to begin with the negative part; and first tell us what the Lord forbids in this commandment.

Evan. I ask you to take notice and consider that this tenth commandment was given to be a rule and level, according to which we must take and measure our inward obedience to all the other commandments contained in the second tablet of God's law.

For the Lawgiver, in the rest of the commandments, having dealt with those sins especially which stand in actual deeds, and are done on purpose, or with an advised consent of will — even though there is no doubt that the law of restraining concupiscence¹ is implied and included in all the former commandments — now last of all, in this last commandment, he deals with those sins which are called only concupiscences. They contain all inward stirring and conceit in the understanding and affections against every commandment of the law; and they are, as it were, rivers boiling out of the fountain of that original sin. For to covet, in this place, signifies having a motion of the heart without any settled consent of will. Briefly, then, in this commandment is forbidden not only the evil *act* and the *settled* evil thought, with the full and deliberate consent of the will (as in the previous commandments); but here is also forbidden the very first motions and inclinations to every evil that is forbidden in any of the previous commandments. This is evident in Rom. 7.7, and 13.9;² for it is not said in this commandment that you shall not *consent* to lust, but that “You shall not lust.” It not only commands the *binding* of lust, but it also forbids the *being* of lust. This being so, who does not see that in this commandment is contained the perfect obedience to the whole law? For how does it come to pass that we sin against every commandment, unless it is because this corrupt concupiscence is in us? Without this, we would of our own accord, and with our whole mind and body, be apt to do only good, without any thought or desire at all to the contrary. And this is all I have to say touching the negative part of this commandment.

Neo. Well, then, sir, I ask you to proceed to the affirmative, and tell us what the Lord requires in this commandment.

Evan. Why, original justice or righteousness is required in this commandment. This is a disposition and an inclination and a desire to perform for God — and for our neighbour for God’s sake — all the duties contained in both the first and second tablet of the law. From this it evidently appears that it is not sufficient, even though we forbear the evil, and do the good which is contained in every commandment, unless we do it readily and willingly, and for the Lord’s sake. To give you a few instances, it is not sufficient, even though we abstain from making images, or worshipping God by an image — no, even though we perform all the parts of his true worship, such as praying, reading, hearing, receiving the sacraments, and the like —

314 THE MARROW OF

if we do it unwillingly or in obedience to any law or commandment of man, and not for the Lord’s sake. Nor is it sufficient, even though we abstain from the works of our callings on the Lord’s day, and perform ever so many religious exercises, if it is unwillingly, and done for form and custom’s sake, or in mere obedience to any superior, and not for the Lord’s sake. Nor is it sufficient, even though a child shows ever so much honour, love, and respect to his parents, if he does it by constraint and unwillingly, or to gain the praise of men, and not for the Lord’s sake. Nor is it sufficient, even though a servant does his duty, and carries himself ever so well, if it is for fear of correction, or for his own profit and gain, and not for the Lord’s sake. Nor is it sufficient, even though a wife carries herself ever so dutifully and respectfully towards her husband, both in word and deed, if it is unwillingly, for fear of his frowns, or to gain the applause of those who behold it, and not for the Lord’s sake. Nor is it sufficient, even though a husband shows much love and respect to his wife, if it is because she is amiable or profitable, or to gain the praise of men, and not for the Lord’s sake. In a word, it is not sufficient, even though

¹ Concupiscence is a lust or an overwhelming desire to gratify ourselves, regardless of the object of our desire.

² For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, “You shall not covet.” (Rom 7:7) For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery,” “You shall not murder,” “You shall not steal,” “You shall not bear false witness,” “You shall not covet,” and if *there is* any other commandment, *all* are summed up in this saying, namely, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (Rom 13:9)

any man or woman does all their duties, in all their relations, if they do them merely for their own sake, and not for the Lord's sake.

Nor is it sufficient, even though a man abstains from killing, yes, and from striking, if it is for fear of the law, and not for the Lord's sake. Nor is it sufficient, even though he bridles his anger, and abstains from expressing any wrath, if it is because he wants to be considered a patient man, and not for the Lord's sake. Nor is it sufficient, even though a man visits the sick, clothes the naked, feeds the hungry, or in ever so many ways seeks to preserve the life of his neighbour, if it is for the praise of men, and not for the Lord's sake. Nor is it sufficient, even though a man abstains from committing adultery, if it is for fear of the shame or punishment that will follow, and not for the Lord's sake. Nor is it sufficient, even though we abstain from idleness, gluttony, and drunkenness, if it is done for our own gain's sake, and not for the Lord's sake. Nor is it sufficient, even though we abstain from stealing, and labour diligently in our callings, if it is for the fear of shame or punishment, or for the praise of men. Nor is it sufficient, even though we have abstained from false witness-bearing, and have spoken the truth, if it has been for fear of shame, or merely to do our neighbour a courtesy, and not because the Lord requires it.

MODERN DIVINITY. 315

I might have instanced various other particulars in which, even though we have done what is required, and avoided what is forbidden, if it has been for our own ends, in any of the particulars mentioned before, it is insufficient. Indeed, if it has been merely or chiefly to escape hell and to obtain heaven, and not for the love we bear to God, and for the desire we have to please him, we have in this transgressed the Lord's commandments. And now, neighbour Nomologista, I ask you, consider whether you have gone near to keeping all the commandments perfectly, or not?

Nom. But sir, are you sure the Lord requires every man to keep *all* Ten Commandments as you have now expounded them?

The Lord requires perfect obedience to all Ten Commandments

The Use Of The Law.

Evan. Yes, indeed he does. And if you question it, I ask you to consider further, that when someone asked our Saviour, which is the "great commandment in the law?" he answered, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This," he says, "is the first and great commandment; and the second is like it. You shall love your neighbour as yourself," Mat. 22.37—39.

Whereupon, says a famous spiritual expositor, "God will have the whole heart;" all the powers of our souls must be bent towards him; he will have himself acknowledged and reckoned as our sovereign and supreme good; our love to him must be perfect and absolute. He requires that there not be found in us the least thought, inclination, or appetite for anything which may displease him; and that we direct all our actions to this very end: that he alone may be glorified by us. And for the love we bear to God, we must do well to our neighbour, according to the commandments of God. Consider also, I implore you, that it is said in Deu. 27.26 and Gal. 3.10, "Cursed is every one that does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." Now, if you consider these things well, you will perceive that the Lord requires that every man keep all Ten Commandments perfectly, as I have expounded them, and that includes all those under the curse who do not keep them accordingly.

316 THE MARROW OF

Nom. Surely, sir, you mistake in saying that the Lord requires that every man keep all Ten Commandments perfectly; for I suppose you would have said, the Lord requires that every man *endeavour* to keep them perfectly.

Evan. No, neighbour Nomologista, I did not mistake. For I say again, that the Lord requires of every man, perfect obedience to all Ten Commandments; and that includes all those under the curse who do not yield to it. For it is not said, Cursed is every man that does not *endeavour* to continue in all things, but “Cursed is every one that does not *continue* in all things,” etc.

Nom. But, sir, do you think that any man continues in all things, as you have expounded them?

Evan. No, no; it is impossible for any man to do that.

Nom. And, sir, what does it mean to be under the curse?

Evan. To be under the curse, as Luther and Perkins well agree, is to be under sin, the wrath of God, and everlasting death.

Nom. But, sir, I ask you, how can this stand with the justice of God, to require man to do what is impossible, and yet to include him under the curse for not doing it?

Evan. You will perceive that it well stands with the justice of God to deal so with man, if you consider that these Ten Commandments which we have now expounded, or this law of God, as Ursinus’s Catechism truly says of it, is “A doctrine agreeing with the eternal and immortal wisdom and justice that is in God;” in which, Calvin says, “God has so painted out his own nature, that in a way, it expresses the very image of God.” And we read in Gen. 1.27, that man was at first created in the image or likeness of God, from which it must follow that this law was written in his heart. That is to say, God engraved in man’s heart such wisdom and knowledge of his will and works, and such integrity in his soul, and such fitness in all its powers, that his mind was able to conceive, and his heart was able to desire, and his body was able to execute, anything that was acceptable to God; so that indeed he was able to keep all Ten Commandments perfectly.

And therefore, though God requires impossible things of man, he is not unjust, nor does he injure us in doing so, because he commanded them when they were possible. And though we have now lost our ability to perform it, because we voluntarily fell from the state of innocence in which we were created at first, God has not lost his right to require of us what he once gave us.

MODERN DIVINITY. 317

Christ has redeemed believers from the curse of the law

Nom. But, sir, you know it was our first parents only that fell away from God in eating the forbidden fruit, and none of their posterity; how then can it be truly said that we have lost that power through our own fault?

Evan. In answer to this, I ask you to consider that Adam, by God’s appointment, was not to stand or fall as a single person only, but as a common public person, representing all mankind which would come from him. And therefore, if he had been obedient, and not eaten the forbidden fruit, he would have retained and kept that power which he had by creation, for all mankind as well as for himself. Even so, by his disobedience in eating that forbidden fruit, he was disrobed of God’s image, and so he lost that power, for all mankind as well as for himself.

Nom. Why then, sir, it would seem that all mankind is under sin, wrath, and eternal death!

Evan. Yes, indeed by nature they are so, “For we know,” says the apostle, “that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God,” Rom. 3.19; and again, he says, “We have charged both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin,” Rom. 3.9. And in another place he says, “We were by nature children of wrath as well as others,” Eph. 2.3; and, lastly, he says, “So death passed upon all men, for all have sinned,” Rom. 5.12.

Nom. But, sir, I beg you to tell me whether you think that any regenerate man keeps the commandments perfectly, as you have expounded them.

Evan. No, not the most sanctified man in the world.

Nom. Why then, sir, it would seem that not only natural men, but regenerate men also, are under the curse of the law. For if every one that does not keep the law perfectly is included under the curse; and if regenerate men do not keep the law perfectly, then they must also be under the curse.

Evan. The conclusion of your argument is not true. For if by “regenerate men” you mean true believers, then they have fulfilled the law perfectly in Christ; or rather Christ has perfectly fulfilled the law in them, and was made a curse for them; and so he has redeemed them from the curse of the law, as you may see in Gal. 3.13.¹

318 THE MARROW OF

Nom. Well, sir, now I understand you, and have ever been of your judgment in that point, for I have always concluded that either a man himself, or Christ *for* him, must keep the law perfectly, or else God will not accept him. And therefore I have endeavoured to do the best I could to perfectly keep the law; and what I failed in and came short of, I believed that Christ has done it for me.

Evan. The apostle says in Gal. 3.10, “As many as are *of the works of the law*, are under the curse.” And truly, neighbour Nomologista, if I may say it without offence, I fear that you are still *of the works of the law*, and therefore you are still under the curse.

Nom. Why, sir, I ask you, what does it mean to be “of the works of the law”?

Evan. To be *of the works of the law*, is for a man to look for, or hope to be justified or accepted in the sight of God, for his *own* obedience to the law.

Nom. But surely, sir, I never did that. For though I was ignorant of what is required and forbidden in every commandment, I had an idea that I came very near perfectly fulfilling the law. Yet I never thought I did all things contained in it; and therefore I never looked for, nor hoped, that God would accept me for my own obedience, without Christ’s being joined with it.

Evan. Then it seems that you did conceive that *your* obedience, *and* Christ’s obedience, must be joined together, and so God would accept you for that.

Nom. Yes, indeed, sir, *there* has been my hope, and indeed there is *still* my hope.

Evan. Ah, but neighbour Nomologista, as I told my neighbour Neophytus and others not long ago, so I tell you now: that just as the justice of God requires a perfect obedience, so it requires that this perfect obedience be a *personal* obedience. That is, it must be the obedience of *one* person only. The obedience of two must not be put together to make up a perfect obedience. Indeed, to say it as it is, God will let no one have a hand in the justification and salvation of any man, except Christ alone; for as the apostle Peter says in Acts 4.12, “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we may be saved.” Believe it then, I beseech you, that Christ Jesus will either be a whole Saviour, or he will be no Saviour; he will either save you alone, or he will not save you at all.

Nom. But, sir, if man’s obedience to the law does not help to procure his justification and acceptance with God, then why did God give the law to the Israelites on Mount Sinai, and why is it read and expounded by you that are ministers? I would gladly know of what use it is.

¹ **Gal 3:13** Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”);

Evan. The apostle says in Gal. 3.19, “that the law was added because of transgression.” That is, as Luther expounds it, “That transgressions might increase and be more known, and seen;” or as Perkins expounds it, “For revealing sin, and its punishment; for by the law comes the knowledge of sin,” as Paul says in Rom. 3.20. And therefore, when the children of Israel conceived that they were righteous, and could keep all of God’s commandments perfectly, as manifested by their saying in Exo. 19.8, “All that the Lord commands we will do, and be obedient,” the Lord gave them this law, with the intent that they might see how far short they came of yielding the obedience which it requires; and consequently, how sinful they were. Our Saviour also dealt this way with the young expounder of the law in Mat. 19.16, who it seems was sick from the same disease. “Good Master,” he says, “what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?” “He does not,” says Calvin, “simply ask which way, or by what means he should come to eternal life, but what good *he* should do to get it.” By this it appears that he was a proud justiciary, someone who swelled in a fleshly opinion that he could keep the law and be saved by it. Therefore he is worthily sent to the law to work himself weary, and to see his need to come to Christ for remedy.

Now then, if you would know of what use the law is, why first let me tell you that it is of special use to all those who have a conceit that they themselves can do anything to procure their own justification and acceptance in the sight of God; it is to let them see, as in a mirror, that they can do nothing in that case. And therefore, seeing that you yourself have such a conceit, I beseech you to labour to make use of it, that by doing so, you may be completely driven out of yourself to Jesus Christ.

Nom. Believe me, sir, I would be glad if I could make such a good use of it; and therefore, I beg you to give me some directions how I may do that.

Evan. Why, *first* of all, I would desire you to consider, in that regard, that all mankind was at first created in such an estate as I declared to you. The law and justice of God requires that the man who undertakes, by his own obedience, to procure his justification and acceptance in the sight of God,

320 THE MARROW OF

either in whole or in part, must be as completely furnished with the habit of righteousness and true holiness, and be as free from all corruption of nature, as Adam was in the state of innocency. This is to avoid the least corruption being mingled with any of those good actions which he does, and not to have the least motion of heart or inclination of will towards any of those evil actions which he does not do.

Secondly, I would desire you to consider that neither you nor any other man, while you live on earth, will be so furnished with perfect righteousness and true holiness, or be so free from all corruptions of nature, as Adam was in the state of innocency. Thus no good action which you do will be free from having some corruption mingled with it: nor will any evil action which you do not do, be free from some motion of your heart or some inclination of your will towards it. And therefore you can do nothing towards procuring your justification and acceptance in the sight of God. The prophet David, well considering this, cries out in Psalm 143.2, “Do not enter into judgment with your servant, O Lord! For in your sight no man living shall be justified.” Yes, and this made the apostle cry out, “Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!” Rom. 7.24. Yes, and this made him desire to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, Philip. 3.9.

Nom. But, sir, I am persuaded there are some good actions which I do, that are free from having any corruption at all mixed with them; and some evil actions which I do not do, towards which I have no motion of heart, or inclination of will at all.

Every man's best actions are corrupted and defiled with sin.

Evan. Surely, neighbour Nomologista, you do not truly know yourself. For I am confident that any man who truly knows himself, sees such secret corruptions of his heart in every duty he performs, that it causes him to unfeignedly confess that whatever good action he does, it is but a polluted stream from a more corrupt fountain. And whatever you or any other man conceives, it is most certain that whatever sin is forbidden in the word, or has been practised in the world, every man carries that sin in his bosom; for all have equally sinned in Adam; and therefore original lust is equally found in all.

Nom. Sir, I can hardly be persuaded of this.

MODERN DIVINITY. 321

Evan. Well, neighbour Nomologista, I cannot tell how it is with you. But for my own part, I tell you truly that I find my knowledge is corrupted and defiled with ignorance and blindness; and my faith is corrupted and defiled with doubt and distrust; and my love to God is very much corrupted and defiled with sinful self-love and love for the world; and my joy in God is greatly corrupted and defiled with carnal joy; and my godly sorrow is very much corrupted and defiled with worldly sorrow.

And I find my prayers, my hearing, my reading, my receiving of the sacrament, and like duties, are very much corrupted and defiled with dullness, drowsiness, sleepiness, wandering and worldly thoughts, and the like.

And I find my sanctifying of the Lord's name is very much corrupted and defiled by thinking and speaking lightly and irreverently of his titles; and by thinking, if not by speaking, grudgingly against some acts of his providence.

And I find my sanctifying of the Lord's day is very much corrupted and defiled, by sleeping too long in the morning, and by worldly thoughts and words, if not by worldly works.

And I find that all the duties that I have performed, either towards my superiors or inferiors, have been corrupted and defiled, either with too much indulgence, or too much severity, or with base fears, or base hopes, or some self-end and by-respect.

And I find that all my duties that I have performed, either for the preservation of my own or another's life, chastity, goods, or good name, have been very much corrupted and defiled, either with a desire for my own praise, or my own profit here, or to escape hell and obtain heaven hereafter; so that I see no good action which I have ever done that is free from having some corruption mixed with it.

And as for the motion of my heart, and the inclination of my will towards that evil which I have not done, it is also manifest; for though I have not been guilty of idolatry, either in making or worshipping images, yet have I not been free from carnal imaginations of God in his worship, nor free from will-worship.

And though I have not been so guilty of profaning the name of the Lord in such a gross manner as some others have been, yet I have not been free from an inclination of heart, and disposition of will to it; for I have both thought and spoken irreverently of his titles, attributes, word, and works, yes, and do so many times to this day.

322 THE MARROW OF

And though now I do not so grossly profane the Lord's day, as maybe others have done, and still do, yet I have done it grossly before. Yes, and I still find an inward disposition of heart, and an inclination of will, both to omit those duties which tend to sanctify it, and to do those worldly actions which tend to profane it.

And though when I was a child and young, I did not so grossly dishonour and disobey my parents and other superiors as others did, yet I had an inclination of heart and a disposition of will to it, as manifested by my stubbornness, and by not yielding willing obedience to their commands, nor submitting patiently to their reproofs and corrections.

And though it may be that I have done more of my duty to my inferiors than some others have done, yet I have found an inclination of heart, and a disposition of will, many times to omit those duties which I have performed; so that as it were, I have been glad to constrain myself to do what I have done.

And though I have not been guilty of the gross act of murder, yet I have had, and still have, an inclination of heart and a disposition of will to it, in that I have been, and still am, many times subject to rash, unadvised, and excessive anger; yes, I have been and still am at various times, wrathful and envious towards others who offend me.

And though I never was guilty of the foul and gross act of fornication or adultery, yet I have had an inclination of heart, and a disposition of will to it, in that I have not been free from filthy imaginations, unchaste thoughts, and inward motions and a desire for uncleanness.

And though I was never guilty of the gross act of stealing, yet have I had an inclination of heart, and a disposition of will to it, in that I have neither been free from discontentedness with my own estate, nor from a covetous desire for that which belongs to another.

And though I never bore false witness against any man, yet I have had an inclination of heart and disposition of will to it, in that I have not been free from contemning, despising, and thinking too basely of others; nor have I been free from evil surmisings, groundless suspicions, and rash judging of others.

And now, neighbour Nomologista, I ask you to tell me whether you think that some of these corruptions are in you, which you hear are in me.

MODERN DIVINITY. 323

Nom. Yes, believe me, sir, I must confess that some of them are.

The least sinful thought makes man liable to eternal damnation.

Evan. Well, even if you have only one of them in you, I ask you to consider that hereby you transgress one of the Ten Commandments; and the apostle James says, that “Whoever would keep the whole law, and yet offends in one point, is guilty of all,” James 2.10. And call to mind, I also ask you, that a curse is denounced against all those who do not continue in “all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.” Mind, I ask you, “that it does not *continue* in all things:” so that although you could do all that the law requires for a time, and avoid all that it forbids, and do that ever so exactly, yet if you do not *continue* doing it, but transgress the law only once in all your life, and only in one thought, you have thereby become subject to the curse, which, as you have heard, is eternal damnation in hell.

No, let me say more: even if you had never yet transgressed the law in your whole life up to now, not so much as the least thought, nor would ever do so while you live, yet you would thereby come far short of perfectly fulfilling the law; and so consequently you would come short of your justification and acceptance in the sight of God.

Nom. That is very strange to me, sir, for what more can be required, or what more can be done, than yielding perfect and perpetual obedience?

Evan. That is true indeed; there is no more required, nor can more be done; yet you must understand that the law requires passive obedience as well as active, suffering as well as doing; for our common bond entered into for us all, by God’s benefits towards the first man, has been

forfeited by his disobedience, both in respect to himself and to all mankind. Therefore, ever since the fall of man, the law and the justice of God not only require the payment of the debt, but also payment of the forfeiture. Not only is perfect *doing* required of him, but also perfect *suffering*.¹ “In the day that you eat of it, you shall die the death,” says the Lord, Gen. 2.17. No, let me tell you still more: in order for justice, the forfeiture should be paid *before* the debt; perfect suffering should go *before* perfect doing, because all mankind, by reason of that first and great transgression, are at odds and enmity with God. All of them are children of his wrath. And therefore God, saying this with holy reverence, cannot be reconciled to any man, before a full satisfaction is made to his justice by a perfect suffering, Col. 1.21.² Perfect suffering, then, is required for reconciling man to God, Eph. 2.3,³ and setting him in the same condition he was in before his fall; and perfect doing is required for keeping him in that condition.

324 THE MARROW OF

Nom. And, sir, is man as unable to pay the forfeiture as he is to pay the debt? I mean, is he as unable to *suffer* perfectly, as he is unable to *do* perfectly?

Evan. Yes indeed, every bit as unable. For man’s sin in eating the forbidden fruit was committed against God; and God is infinite and eternal; and the offence is always multiplied according to the dignity of the person against whom it is committed. Thus man’s offence must be an infinite offence, and the punishment must be proportionate to the fault. Therefore an infinite and eternal punishment is required at man’s hands, or else a temporal punishment that is equal and corresponds to the eternal. Now, man cannot sustain eternal punishment, because then he would never be delivered — he would be forever satisfying, and never have satisfied. This satisfaction is like the punishment of the devils and damned men in hell, which shall never have an end. And a temporal punishment cannot be equivalent to eternal either, because the power and vigour of no creature is such that it may sustain a finite and temporal punishment, equivalent to an infinite and eternal one. For the creature would be wasted, consumed, and brought to nothing sooner than it could satisfy the justice of God by this means. Therefore we may certainly conclude that no man can satisfy the law and justice of God, either by active or by passive obedience; and consequently, no man will be justified and accepted in the sight of God by his own doings or sufferings.

Nom. Sir, I see it clearly, and I am fully convinced of it, and I hope I will make use of it. But sir, is there no other use to be made of the law than this?

Evan. Yes indeed, neighbour Nomologista. You must not only labour by this to see your own insufficiency to procure your own justification and acceptance in the sight of God — even though that is the chief use that any unjustified person ought to endeavour to make of it — but you must also endeavour to make it a rule of direction for you, in your life and conduct.

MODERN DIVINITY. 325

Nom. But sir, if I cannot by my obedience to the law, do anything towards procuring my own justification and acceptance in the sight of God, or which I conceive is the same thing, if I can do

¹ In other words, perfect obedience to the law cannot qualify us for salvation, until perfect atonement has first been made for the existing debt of Adam.

² **Col 1:21** And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled²² in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight

³ **Eph 2:3** among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. ⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved).

nothing towards procuring my own eternal salvation, then I think anything I do would be in vain, for I cannot see any good that I will get by it.

**Though man cannot be justified by his obedience to the law,
yet his obedience shall not be in vain**

Evan. No, neighbour Nomologista, it will not be in vain; for even though you cannot by your obedience to the Law, do anything towards procuring your own justification or eternal salvation — yes, and even if you were never to make use of it to be driven out of yourself to Jesus Christ for justification and eternal salvation, but were everlastingly condemned — yet let me tell you this: the more obedience you yield to the law, the easier your condemnation will be. For no man, however exactly and strictly he walks according to the law, will thereby either escape the torments of hell, or obtain the joys of heaven. Yet the more exactly and strictly any man walks according to the law, the easier his torments will be, Mat. 11.22.¹ So though you cannot obtain the uneasiest place in heaven by your obedience to the law, you may obtain the easiest place in hell by it. And therefore your obedience will not be in vain. No, let me tell you more: although by your obedience to the law, you can neither escape that hell, nor enjoy that heaven that is in the world to come, yet you may thereby escape that hell, and enjoy that heaven which is to be had in this present world. For the Lord deals so equally and justly with all men, that every man will be sure to receive his due at his hands. Every man who is truly justified in the sight of God by faith in Christ's blood, shall for that blood's sake, be sure of the joys of heaven, even though his life may not be conformable to the law in many respects, even after believing. Yet the more unconformable his life is to it, the more crosses and afflictions he will be sure to meet with in this life, Psalm 89.30-32.² Even so, no man who is not justified by faith in Christ's blood will either escape the torments of hell, or attain the joys of heaven — however conformable his life may be to the law. Yet the more conformable his life is to it, the less he will have of miseries, and the more he will have of the blessings of this life. For it is not to unjustified men that the Lord speaks in Isa. 1.19 (though I suppose not only to them), saying, "If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the good things of the land."³

326 THE MARROW OF

Does not the Lord in the fifth commandment promise the blessing of long life to all inferiors that are obedient to their superiors? And may we not observe, and is it not found true by experience, that those children who are most careful to do their duties to their parents, are commonly more free both from their parents' corrections, and the Lord's corrections? And are they not likewise blessed with obedient children themselves, and also taste of their parents' bounty, and the Lord's bounty, as touching the blessings of this life, more than others who are disobedient? And may we not observe, and is it not found true by experience, that those servants who are most faithful and diligent in their positions are commonly more free either from the Lord's or their masters' corrections, and are likewise rewarded with such servants themselves, and with other temporal blessings both from their masters and from the Lord, than others who are not so? And may we not observe, and is it not found true by experience, that those wives who are obedient and subject to their husbands, are commonly more free from their frowns, checks, and rebukes — at least they are more blessed with peace of conscience and a good name — than others who

¹ **Mat 11:22** "But I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

² **Psa 89:30** "If his sons forsake My law And do not walk in My judgments, ³¹ If they break My statutes And do not keep My commandments, ³² Then I will punish their transgression with the rod, And their iniquity with stripes.

³ **Isa 1:17-20** Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow. ¹⁸ "Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, "Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool. ¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land; ²⁰ But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword";

are not so? And may we not observe that our more honest men, who for the most part live without committing any gross sin against the law, are commonly more exempted from the sword of the magistrate, and have many earthly blessings, more in abundance, than those who are gross sinners? And the Scribes and Pharisees, who were strict observers of the law in regard to the outward man, were not losers by it. “Truly,” says our Saviour, “I say to you, they have their reward,” Mat. 6.2. So that still, you see, your obedience to the law will not be in vain. Therefore, I ask you to do your best to keep the Ten Commandments as perfectly as you can. But above all, I beseech you, be careful to consider what has been said touching the special use of the law to *you*; so that through the powerful working of God’s Spirit, it may become an effectual means to drive you out of yourself, to Jesus Christ.

Oh, consider, in the *first* place, what a great number of duties are required and what a great number of sins are forbidden in every one of the Ten Commandments! And in the *second* place, consider how many of those duties you have omitted, and how many of those sins you have committed. And in the *third* place, consider that there has been much corruption mixed with every good duty which you have done, so that you have sinned in doing what in itself is good;

MODERN DIVINITY. 327

and that you have had an inclination of heart and a disposition of will to every sin that you have not committed, and so you have been guilty even of all those sins which you have not done. And in the *fourth* place, consider that the law pronounces a curse on everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them. And then, in the *fifth* place, make application of the curse to yourself, by saying in your heart, if everyone is cursed who does not continue in all things, then surely I am cursed, who have continued in nothing. And then, in the *sixth* place, consider that before you can be delivered from the curse, the law and justice of God requires that there be a perfect satisfaction made both by paying the debt and the forfeiture to the very utmost farthing — perfect doing and perfect suffering are both required. And then, in the *last* place, consider that you are so far from being able to make a perfect satisfaction, that you can do nothing at all towards it, and therefore, of yourself, you are in a most miserable and helpless condition.

Nom. Well, sir, I now plainly see that I have been deceived, for I truly thought that the only reason why the Lord gave the law, and why you that are ministers show us what is required and forbidden in the law, had been that all men might thereby come to see what the mind and will of the Lord is, and be exhorted and persuaded to lead their lives accordingly. And I also truly thought that the more any man strived and endeavoured to reform his life accordingly, the more he procured the love and favour of God towards him, and the more God would bless him, and do him good, both in this world and in the world to come. Yes, and I also truly thought that it was in man’s power to come very near the perfect fulfilling of the law, for I never read or heard any minister show how impossible it is for any man to keep the law, nor make any mention of any such use of the law, as you have done this day.

**Man is naturally apt to think he must do something
towards his own justification, and act accordingly**

Evan. Surely, neighbour Nomologista, these have been not only your thoughts, but also the thoughts of many other men. For it is natural for every man to think that he must and can procure God’s favour and eternal happiness by his obedience to the law, or at least to think he can do something towards it. For naturally men think that the law requires no more than the external act; and therefore it is in man’s power to keep it perfectly. Is it not an ordinary and common thing for men, when they hear or read that there is more required

328 THE MARROW OF

and forbidden in the law than they were aware of, to think to themselves, ‘Surely, I am not right. I have transgressed the law more than I thought I had, and therefore God is more angry with me than I thought he had been. Therefore, to pacify his anger and procure his favour towards me, I must repent, amend, and do better. I must reform my life according to the law, and so by my future obedience, make amends for my former disobedience.’ And if thereupon they attain to any good measure of outward conformity, they think they come near the perfect fulfilling of the law. If it were not that the doctrine of the Church of England is that no man can fulfil the law perfectly, and that none but Papists say the contrary, they would both think and say they *did* — or hoped they *would* — keep all the commandments perfectly. And on occasion of their outward reformation according to the law, they think (yes, and sometimes say) they are regenerate men and true converts, and that the beginning of their reformation was the time of their new birth and conversion to God. And if these men confess they are sinners, it is because they hear all others confess they themselves are sinners, rather than out of any true sight and knowledge, sense, or feeling they have of any inward heart-corruption. And if they acknowledge that a man is not to be justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Christ, it is because they have heard it preached, or because they read it in the Bible or some other book, rather than because of any imperfection which they see in their own works; or any need they see for the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And if they do see any imperfection in their own works, and any need for the righteousness of Jesus Christ, then they imagine that, as long as their hearts are upright and sincere, and they desire and endeavour to do their best to fulfil the law, God will accept what they do, and make up their imperfect obedience with Christ’s perfect obedience; and so he will justify and save them. But all this while, their own works must have a hand in their justification and salvation; and so they are still *of the works of the law*, and therefore under the curse. The Lord be merciful both to you and them, and bring you under the blessing of Abraham!

Nom. Sir, I thank you for your good wishes towards me, and for your great pains which you have now taken with me; and so I will at this time take my leave of you; only I wish, if it might not be too much trouble, that you would be pleased at your leisure, to give me in writing a copy of what you have said this day concerning the law.

MODERN DIVINITY. 329

Evan. Well, neighbour Nomologista, though I can hardly spare so much time, yet because you desire it, and in hope that you may receive good by it, I will before long, find time to accomplish your desire.

Neo. I ask you, neighbour Nomologista, tarry a little longer and I will go with you.

Nom. No, I must be gone; I can stay no longer.

Evan. Then farewell, neighbour Nomologista, and the Lord make you see your sins!

Nom. The Lord be with you, sir.

Neo. Well sir, now I hope you have fully convinced him that he comes far short of keeping all the commandments perfectly. I hope he will no longer be so well conceited of his own righteousness as he has formerly been. But now, sir, I ask you to tell me before I depart, whether you would have me endeavour to make the same use of the law which you advised him to make.

Evan. No, neighbour Neophytus, I do not look at you as an unbeliever, as I did him. Rather, I look at you as one who has already been driven out of yourself to Jesus Christ by the law. I look at you as a true believer, and as a person already justified in the sight of God, by faith in Christ. And so I look at you as one who is neither to question your inheritance in heaven, nor to fear your portion in hell. And therefore I will not persuade you to labour to yield obedience to the law, by telling you as I told him, that the more obedient you are to it, the easier torments you will have in hell. Nor would I have you apply the curse of the law to yourself, as I advised him to

do. For if you truly and thoroughly believe, as God requires you to, that Jesus Christ — the Son of God and your Surety (1John 3.23) — by his active and passive obedience, has fully discharged and paid both the debt and the forfeiture which the law and justice of God obliged you to pay, then you will not yield obedience to the law, to pay what you truly believe is fully paid and discharged already. And if you do not yield obedience to the law to discharge that, then do not yield obedience to the law in hopes of being made just thereby, or justified in the sight of God. And if you do not yield obedience to the law in hopes of being made just thereby, or justified in the sight of God, then you are not *of the works of the law*.

330 THE MARROW OF.

And if you are not *of the works of the law*, then are you not under the curse of the law; and if you are not under the curse of the law, then you must not apply the curse to yourself. And therefore, whenever you either hear or read these words, “Cursed is every one who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them,” and your conscience tells you that you have not, and do not continue in all things, and that therefore you are accursed — then make use of the curse, by taking the opportunity to cling more closely to Christ by faith, and say, O law, your curse is not to come into my conscience! My conscience is freed from it! For though it is true that I have not continued “in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them,” yet my Surety, Jesus Christ, has continued in all things for me. So that although I am unable to pay either the debt or the forfeiture, yet he has paid them both for me, and so he has discharged me from the curse; and therefore I do not fear it.

Neo. But, sir, though I am a believer, and so I am set free from the curse of the law, yet I suppose I should endeavour to do some of what is required, and to avoid whatever is forbidden in the law.

Evan. Yes, neighbour Neophytus, that you should indeed. For mind, I beg you, that this is how the case stands: as soon as any man truly believes, and so is justified in the sight of God, the holy Ghost, from the testimony of holy writ, warrants us to conceive that Jesus Christ, that is, God in Christ, delivers to him whatever is required and forbidden in the Ten Commandments. Jesus says, Col. 2.14; Eph. 2.15, “This hand-writing, this law of commandments, was held against you and contrary to you while it was in the hands of my Father as he stood in relation to you as a Judge; it was not cancelled, but it had the curse or penalty annexed to it, Isa. 38.14.¹ And so it had power to convince, accuse, condemn, and bind you over to punishment. I who undertook it for you and became your Surety (Heb. 7.22), have paid the principal debt; and I have also answered the forfeiture which lay against you for the breach of that bond; and my Father has delivered it into my hands. I have blotted out the curse or penalty, so that not one letter or tittle remains for you to see. Yes, I have taken it out of your way, and fastened it to my cross. Yes, I have torn it in pieces with the nails of my cross, so that it is altogether frustrated, and has no force at all against you.

MODERN DIVINITY. 331

Yet notwithstanding the matter contained in this law, even those precepts and prohibitions which I have now delivered to you, are the mind and will of my Father, and the eternal and unchangeable rule of righteousness, and that which is in my heart, Psalm 40.8; yes, and that which I have promised to write in the hearts of all those who are mine, Jer. 31.33; yes, and that which I have promised to make them yield willing obedience to, Psalm 110.3. I and my Father therefore commend it to you, as that rule of obedience by which you are to express your love and thankfulness to us, for what we have done for you. And therefore I will say no more to you

¹ **Isa 38:14** Like a crane *or* a swallow, so I chattered; I mourned like a dove; My eyes fail *from looking upward*. O LORD, I am oppressed; **Undertake for me!**

except this, 'If you love me, keep my commandments,' John 14.15. And you are my friend, 'If you do whatever I command you,'" John 15.14.

Neo. But sir, does God in Christ require perfect obedience to all Ten Commandments, as you have expounded them this day?

Christ requires that believers desire and endeavour to yield perfect obedience to all the Ten Commandments

Evan. I answer, yes. For though God in Christ does not require of you or any true believer, any obedience to the law at all, by way of satisfaction to his justice — for Christ has fully done that already — yet he does require that every true believer purpose, desire, and endeavour to do their best to keep all Ten Commandments perfectly, as I have expounded them this day. Witness what Christ himself says in Mat. 5.48: "Be perfect therefore, as your Father which is in heaven is perfect."

Neo. But, sir, do you think it is possible for me or any other believer to keep the commandments perfectly, as you have expounded them this day?

Evan. O no! You and I, and all other believers, have and *will* have cause to say with the apostle, Philip. 3.12, "Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect."

Neo. But will God in Christ accept my obedience, if it is not perfect?

Evan. Yes, neighbour Neophytus. Being a justified person, and it not being for justification, but for child-like obedience, I may say to you without fear of danger, that God will accept the will for the deed, and he "will spare you as a man spares his own son who serves him," Mal. 3.17. Yes, as a father pities his children, so the Lord will pity you, "for he knows your frame, he remembers that you are dust," Psalm 103.13, 14. Indeed, he will not only spare you and pity you for what you do not do, but he will also reward you for what you do.

332 THE MARROW OF

Neo. Do you say so, sir? Then I beseech you, tell me what this reward will be.

Believers shall be rewarded for their obedience, and with what

Evan. Why, if there are degrees of glory in heaven, as some, both godly and learned, have conceived there is, then I tell you that the more obedient you are to the law, the more your glory will be in heaven. But because degrees of glory are disputable, I cannot assure you of that. However, you may assure yourself of this: that the more obedience you yield to the Ten Commandments; and the more you please your most gracious God and loving Father in Christ, 1Sam. 15.22;¹ and the more your conscience witnesses that you please God; the quieter you will feel your conscience, and the more inward peace you will have. According to the Psalmist, "Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing shall make them stumble." ^{Psa 119.165} For though faith in the blood of Christ has made your peace with God as a Judge, yet obedience must keep your peace with him as a Father. Yes, the more your conscience witnesses that you do what pleases God, the more encouragement you will have, and the more confidently you will approach God in prayer. "Beloved," says the loving apostle, "if our hearts do not condemn us, then we have boldness towards God in prayer," 1John 3.21; for though faith in the blood of Christ takes away that guilt which subjects you to the legal curse, yet obedience must take away that guilt which subjects you to fatherly displeasure. Furthermore, you are to know that the more obedience you yield to the Ten Commandments, the more temporal blessings, outward

¹ **1Sam 15:22** Then Samuel said: "Has the LORD *as great* delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, As in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, *And* to heed than the fat of rams.

prosperity, and comfort you will have in this life, in the ordinary course of God's dealing. "Oh!" says the Lord, "that my people had hearkened to me, and Israel had walked in my ways! He would sooner have fed them with the finest of wheat, and I would have satisfied you with honey out of the rock." *Psa 81.13, 16* Besides, the more obedience you yield to the Ten Commandments, the more glory you will bring to God, according to what our Saviour said in John 15.8, "My Father is glorified in this, that you bear much fruit."

To conclude, the more obedience you yield to the Ten Commandments, the more good you will do to others, according to what the apostle said in Tit. 3.8, "This is a faithful saying, and I would have you affirm these things constantly, that those who have believed in Christ might be careful to maintain good works; these things are good and profitable for men."

MODERN DIVINITY. 333

Neo. But, sir, what if I were not to purpose, desire, and endeavour to yield obedience to all the Ten Commandments, as you say the Lord requires; what then?

Evan. Why, then, although it is true that you have no cause to fear that God will proceed against you as a wrathful judge proceeds against a malefactor, yet you have cause to fear that he will proceed against you as a displeased father does against an offending child. That is to say, although you have no cause to fear that he will un-justify you, and un-son you, and deprive you of your heavenly inheritance, and inflict the penalty of the Law of Works on you, and thus condemn you — for the apostle says, "There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus," Rom. 8.1 — yet you have cause to fear that he will hide his fatherly face, and withdraw the light of his countenance from you; and that your conscience will ever accuse and disquiet you. If it does, then you will draw back, and be afraid to ask anything of God in prayer. For even as a child, whose conscience tells him that he has angered and displeased his father, will be unwilling to come into his father's presence, especially to ask him for anything that he wants, even so it will be with you. And besides this, you will be sure to be whipped and scourged with many bodily and temporal chastisements and corrections, according to what is said concerning Jesus Christ and his seed, even true believers and justified persons. Psalm 89.30-33, "If his children forsake my law, and do not walk in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and do not walk in my commandments, then I will visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes. Nevertheless, I will not utterly take my lovingkindness from him, nor allow my faithfulness to fail."

Therefore, neighbour Neophytus, to apply these things to you a little more closely, and to conclude, let me exhort you that when you get home, call to mind and consider every commandment as you heard them expounded this day, and resolve to endeavour to do them accordingly. And always take notice how, and in what, you fall and come short of doing what is required, and of avoiding what is forbidden. And especially be careful to do this when you are called to humble yourself before the Lord in fasting and prayer, and upon going to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And so you will make a right use of the law.

334 THE MARROW OF

Neo. And, sir, why would you have me more especially take notice of my sins when I am called to humble myself before the Lord in FASTING and PRAYER?

In what manner believers are to confess their sins on a day of humiliation

Evan. Because the more sinful you see yourself to be, the more humble your heart will be; and the more humble your heart is, the more fit you will be to pray, and the more the Lord will regard your prayers. Therefore, when the Lord calls you to humble yourself in fasting and prayer on the occasion of some heavy and sore affliction, either felt or feared to come upon yourself, or

on the occasion of some sore judgment and calamity, either felt or feared to come upon the nation or place where you live, then take the opportunity to meditate, and consider seriously what duties are required, and what sins are forbidden in every one of the Ten Commandments. And then consider how many of those duties you have omitted, and how many of those sins you have committed. Consider also the sinful manner in which you performed those duties, and the base and sinful ends which you had in performing them. Consider also how many sinful corruptions there are in your heart, which break forth in your life; and the natural disposition of your heart to every sin which you do not commit; and then consider that although the sins which you now commit are not a transgression of the Law of Works, because you are not now under the law, Rom. 6.14; yet they are a transgression of the Law of Christ, because you still are under that law, 1Cor. 9.21. And though they are not committed against God as he stands in relation to you as a wrathful Judge, yet they have been committed against him as he stands in relation to you as a merciful and loving Father. And though they do not subject you to the wrath of a Judge, nor to the penalty of the Law of Works, yet they subject you to the anger and displeasure of a loving Father, and to the penalty of the Law of Christ.

Whereupon, draw near to God by prayer, speaking to him in this manner:

“O merciful and loving Father! I acknowledge that the sins which I committed before I was a believer, were a transgression of the Law of Works, because I was then under that law; yes, and they were committed against you, as you stood in relation to me as a judge; and therefore you might most justly have inflicted the curse or penalty of the Law of Works upon me, and so have cast me into hell.

MODERN DIVINITY. 335

But seeing that you have enabled me to believe the gospel — namely, that you have been pleased to give your own Son Jesus Christ to undertake [obedience and death] for me, to become my Surety, to take my nature upon himself, and be made under the law, to redeem me from under the law, Gal. 4.4, and 3.13; Rom. 5.10; and be made a curse for me, to redeem me from the curse, and to reconcile me to you by his death — I now know it does not stand with your justice to proceed against me by virtue of the Law of Works, and so cast me into hell.

Nevertheless, Father, I know that the sins which I have committed since I believed, have been a transgression of the Law of Christ, because I am still under that law: yes, and I acknowledge that they have been committed against you, even against you, my most gracious, merciful, and loving Father in Jesus Christ, and that it is therefore fitting that you should express your fatherly anger and displeasure towards me for these sins which your law has revealed to me, in bringing this affliction upon me, or this judgment on the place or nation in which I live. However, Father, knowing that your fatherly anger towards your children is never mixed with hatred, but always with love, and that in afflicting them you never intend any satisfaction for your own justice, but their amendment — purging out the remainder of those sinful corruptions which are still in them, and conforming them to your own image — I therefore come to you this day, to humble myself before you, and to call upon your name, not for any need or power that I conceive I have to satisfy your justice, or to appease your eternal wrath, and to free my soul from hell; for that I believe Christ has fully done for me already. But I do it in hopes to thereby pacify your fatherly anger and displeasure towards me, and to obtain the removal of this affliction or judgment which I feel or fear. Therefore I beseech you to pardon and forgive my sins, which have been the cause of it; yes, I beg you not only to pardon them, but also to purge them, so that this may be the fruit of it: taking away my sin, and making me a partaker of your holiness. And then, Lord, remove this affliction and judgment when it is your will and pleasure.”

Thus I have shown you the reason why I would have you more especially take notice of your sins, when you come to humble yourself before the Lord in fasting and prayer.

336 THE MARROW OF

Neo. And, sir, why would you have me take notice of my sins when I go to receive the sacrament of the LORD'S SUPPER?

Why and to what end believers are to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Evan. Because the more sinful you see yourself to be, the more you will see the need you have of Christ; and the more you see the need you have of Christ, the more you will prize him; and the more you prize Christ, the more you will desire him; and the more you desire Christ, the more fit and worthy you will be to receive the sacrament.¹

Therefore, when you are determined to receive the sacrament, take the opportunity to examine yourself as the apostle exhorts you, to behold the face of your soul in the mirror of the law, to lay your heart and life to that rule, as I directed you before. Then think with yourself and commune with your own heart, and speak like this in your heart: "Though I believe that all my sins are freely and fully pardoned and forgiven for Christ's sake, so that I will never be condemned for them, yet I do not so fully and comfortably believe it as I should; rather, I sometimes question it. And besides, though my sins do not have dominion over me, yet I feel they are too prevalent in me, and I would gladly have more power and strength against them; I would gladly have my graces stronger and my corruptions weaker. Therefore, knowing that in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, Christ seals to me the assurance of the pardon and forgiveness of all my sins; yes, and knowing that the death and bloodshed of Jesus Christ, which is represented there, has in it both a pardoning and purging virtue; yes, and knowing that the more fully I apprehend Christ by faith, the more strength of grace, and power against corruptions, I will feel — I will therefore go to partake of that ordinance, in the hope that I will meet with Jesus Christ there, and apprehend him more fully by faith, and so obtain both more assurances of the pardon of my sins, and more power and strength against them;" May the Lord grant you this for Christ's sake.

And thus having also shown you the reason why I would have you more especially take notice of your sins before you come to receive the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, I will now take my leave of you, for my other affairs call me away.

MODERN DIVINITY. 337

Neo. Well, sir, I acknowledge that you have taken great pains both with my neighbour and me this day, for which I give you many thanks. And yet I must entreat you to do me the like courtesy which you promised my neighbour Nomologista — and that is, at your leisure, to write me out a copy of the discussion we have had this day.

Evan. Well, neighbour Neophytus, I shall think about it, and it may be that I will accomplish your desire. And so the God of peace be with you.

Neo. The Lord be with you, sir.

¹ **1Co 11:27-29** Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks *this* cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. ²⁹ For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

There is little more to be attributed to me in all this, namely, “The Marrow,” than gathering and composing it. What I aim at, and intend in it, is to show myself and others who read it, the difference between the law and the gospel, — a point in which, I conceive, it is very necessary for us to be well-instructed. And that is for these reasons: —

First, Because, if we are ignorant of it, we will be apt to mix and mingle them together, and thus to confound one with the other; which, as Luther on the Galatians, p. 31, truly says, “does more mischief than man’s reason can conceive.” Therefore he advises all Christians, in the case of justification, to separate the law and the gospel as far apart as heaven and earth are separated.

Secondly, Because if we know rightly how to distinguish between them, the knowledge of it will afford us no small light towards the true understanding of the Scripture, and it will help us to reconcile all those places, both in the Old and New Testament, that seem to be repugnant. Indeed, it will help us to judge rightly in cases of conscience, and quiet our own conscience in time of trouble and distress. Yes, and we will thereby be enabled to test the truth and falsehood of all doctrines.

Therefore, for our better instruction on this point, let us consider these:

1st, Take notice of *what the law is*, and *what the gospel is*. Now, the law is a doctrine partly known by nature, teaching us that there is a God, and what God is, and what he requires us to do, binding all reasonable creatures to perfect obedience, both internal and external, [Rom 1.20](#) promising the favour of God and everlasting life to all those who yield perfect obedience to it, and denouncing the curse of God and everlasting damnation to all those who are not perfectly correspondent to it. [Deu 30.19](#)

338 THE MARROW OF

But the *Gospel* is a doctrine revealed from heaven by the Son of God, immediately after the fall of mankind into sin and death; [Gen 3.15](#) and afterwards it was manifested more clearly and fully to the patriarchs and prophets, to the evangelists and apostles, and by them it was spread abroad to others. In this gospel, freedom from sin, from the curse of the law, from the wrath of God, death, and hell, is freely promised for Christ’s sake to all who truly believe on his name. [Joh 1.12](#)

2dly, We are to consider what *the nature and office of the law is*, and what *the nature and office of the gospel is*.

Now, the nature and office of the law is to show us our sin, [Rom. 3.20](#), our condemnation, our death, [Rom. 2.1](#); [7.10](#). But the nature and office of the gospel is to show us that Christ has taken away our sin, [John 1.29](#), and that he is also our redemption and life, [Col. 1.14](#); [3.4](#). So that the LAW is a word of *wrath*, [Rom. 4.15](#); but the GOSPEL is a word of *peace*, [Eph. 2.17](#).

3dly, We are to consider *where we may find the law written*, and *where we may find the gospel written*.

Now, we will find this law and this gospel written and recorded in the writings of the prophets, evangelists, and apostles, namely, in the books called *the Old and New Testament*, or *the Scriptures*. For, indeed, the law and the gospel are the general headings which comprehend all the doctrine of the Scriptures. Yet we are not to think that these two doctrines are to be distinguished by the books and leaves of the Scriptures, but by the diversity of God’s Spirit speaking in them. We are not to take and understand whatever is contained in the compass of the Old Testament, to be only and merely the word and voice of THE LAW; nor are we to think that whatever is contained within the compass of the books called the New Testament, is only and merely the voice of THE GOSPEL. For sometimes in the Old Testament, God speaks comfort,

as he comforted Adam, with the voice of the gospel. Also sometimes in the New Testament he threatens and terrifies, as when Christ terrified the Pharisees. In some places, again, Moses and the prophets play evangelists; so that Hierom¹ doubts whether he should call Isaiah a prophet or an evangelist. In some places, likewise, Christ and the apostles supply the part of Moses.

MODERN DIVINITY. 339

Christ himself, until his death, was under the law, which he he did not come to break, but to fulfil. So his sermons made to the Jews, for the most part, run upon the perfect doctrine and works of the law, showing and teaching what we should to do by the right law of justice, and what danger ensues in non-performance. All these places, though they are contained in the book of the New Testament, yet are they refer to the doctrine of the law, always having included in them a privy exception of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. For example, Christ preaches, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God,” Mat. 5.8. Again, “Unless you are converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven,” Matt. 18.3. And again, “he that does the will of my Father which is in heaven, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven,” Mat. 7.21. And again, the parable of the wicked servant, cast into prison for not forgiving his fellow, Matt. 18.30; casting the rich glutton into hell, Luke 16.23. And again, “He that denies me before men, I will deny him before my Father which is in heaven,” Luke 12.9; along with various other places, all of which, I say, pertain to the doctrine of the law.

4thly, We are therefore to take heed when we read the Scriptures, that we do not take the gospel for the law, nor the law for the gospel, but labour to discern and distinguish the voice of the one from the voice of the other.

If we would know when the law speaks, and when the gospel speaks, let us consider and note that when in Scripture there is any moral work commanded to be done, either for avoiding punishment, or on the promise of any reward, temporal or eternal — or else when any promise is made on the condition that some work is to be done which is commanded in the law — then *the voice of the law* is to be understood there.

Contrariwise, where the promise of life and salvation is offered to us freely — without any condition of any law, either natural, ceremonial, or moral, or any work to be done by us — all those places, whether we read them in the Old Testament, or in the New, are to be referred to the voice and doctrine of the gospel. Indeed, all those promises of Christ coming in the flesh which we read in the Old Testament; yes, and all those promises in the New Testament which offer Christ on condition of believing on his name, are properly called *the voice of the gospel*.

340 THE MARROW OF

This is because they have no condition of our mortifying [sin] annexed to them, but only faith to apprehend and receive Jesus Christ. As it is written in Rom. 3.22, “For the righteousness of God, which is by faith in Jesus Christ to all, and on all who believe,” etc.

Briefly, then, if we would know when the law speaks, and when the gospel speaks, either in reading the word, or in hearing it preached; and if we would skilfully distinguish the voice of the one from the voice of the other, we must consider these:

Law. The law says, “You are a sinner, and therefore you shall be damned,” Rom. 7.2; 2Thess. 2.12.

Gosp. But the gospel says, No; “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,” 1Tim. 1.15; and therefore, “believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved,” Acts 16.31.

¹ That is, Jerome (Latin: *Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus*) c. 347-420; translator of the Latin Vulgate Bible.

Law. Again the law says, “Do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God; do not be deceived,” etc. 1Cor. 6.9. And therefore you being a sinner, and not righteous, shall not inherit the kingdom of God.

Gosp. But the gospel says, “God has made Christ to be sin for you who knew no sin; that you might be made the righteousness of God in him, who is the Lord your righteousness,” 2Cor 5.21; Jer. 23.6.

Law. Again the law says, “Pay me what you owe me, or else I will cast you into prison,” Matt. 18.28, 30.

Gosp. But the gospel says, “Christ gave himself a ransom for you,” 1Tim. 2.6; “and so he is made redemption for you,” 1Cor. 1.30.

Law. Again the law says, “You have not continued in all that I require of you, and therefore you are accursed,” Deu. 27.10 f.

Gosp. But the gospel says, “Christ has redeemed you from the curse of the law, being made a curse for you,” Gal. 3.13.

Law. Again the law says, “You have become guilty before God, and therefore shall not escape the judgment of God,” Rom. 3.19; 2.3.

Gosp. But the gospel says, “The Father judges no man, but has committed all judgment to the Son,” John 5.22.

5thly, And now, knowing rightly how to distinguish between the law and the gospel, we must in the fifth place, take heed that we do not break the orders between these two in applying the law where the gospel is to be applied, either to ourselves or to others; for even though the law and gospel, in order of doctrine, are many times to be joined together, yet in the case of *justification*, the law must be utterly separated from the gospel.

MODERN DIVINITY. 341

Therefore, whenever or wherever any doubt or question arises about salvation, or about our justification before God, there the law and all good works must be utterly excluded and stand apart, so that grace may appear free, and the promise and faith may stand alone. This faith alone, without law or works, brings you in particular to your justification and salvation, through the mere promise and free grace of God in Christ. So that I say, in the action and office of justification, both law and works are to be utterly excluded and exempted, as things which have nothing to do in that regard. The reason is this: seeing that all our redemption springs out from the body of the Son of God crucified, there is then nothing that can stand us in stead, but only that by which the body of Christ is apprehended. Now, because neither the law, nor works, but only faith, is the thing which apprehends the body and passion of Christ, only faith is therefore that matter which justifies a man before God, through the strength of faith’s object Jesus Christ, which it apprehends. Just as the brazen serpent was the only object at which the Israelites looked, and not any of their handiwork, and by the strength of this brazen object, through the promise of God, health immediately proceeded to the beholders, so too, the body of Christ, being the object of our faith, strikes righteousness into our souls, not through our working, but through believing [in him].

Therefore, when any person or persons, feel themselves oppressed or terrified with the burden of their sins, and feel themselves terrified and oppressed with the majesty of the law and the judgment of God, outweighed and thrown down into utter discomfort almost to the pit of hell — as sometimes happens to God’s own dear servants, who have soft and timorous consciences — when such souls, I say, read or hear any such place in Scripture which pertains to the law, let them then think and assure themselves that such places do not pertain or belong to them.

Indeed, do not let only those who are thus deeply humbled and terrified do this, but also let everyone who doubts or questions their own salvation, through the sight and sense of their sin, do the same.

342 THE MARROW OF

And to this end and purpose, let them consider and mark well the end for which the law was given, which was not to bring us to salvation, nor to make us good, and so to procure God's love and favour towards us: but rather to declare and convict us of our wickedness, and make us feel the danger of it. And that is to this end and purpose: that seeing our condemnation, and being confounded in ourselves, we may be driven by that to have our refuge in the Son of God, in whom alone is to be found our remedy. And when this is wrought in us, then the law has accomplished its end in us. And therefore it is now to give way to Jesus Christ who, as the apostle says, "is the end of the law," Rom. 10.4. Let every truly convicted person, then, who fears the wrath of God, death, and hell, when they hear or read any such places in Scripture that pertain to the law, not think that it applies to them, any more than a mourning weed belongs to a marriage feast. Therefore, utterly removing from their minds all cogitations of the law, all fear of judgment and condemnation, let them merely set before their eyes the gospel, namely: the glad and joyful tidings of Christ, the sweet comforts of God's promises, free forgiveness of sins in Christ, grace, redemption, liberty, psalms, thanks, singing, a paradise of spiritual jocularity, and nothing else. Thinking thus to themselves, the law has now done its office in me, and therefore it must now give way to its better; that is, it must give way to Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is my Lord and Master, the fulfiller and accomplisher of the law.

Lastly, Just as we must take heed and beware that we do not apply the law where the gospel is to be applied, so we must take heed and beware that we do not apply the gospel where the law is to be applied. For just as the former is like putting on a mourning-gown at a marriage feast, so the latter is but casting pearls before swine — in which there is great abuse among many. For it is commonly seen that proud, self-conceited, and un-humbled persons, worldly epicures and secure mammonists, to whom the doctrine of the law properly pertains, notwithstanding, put it away from them, and bless themselves with the sweet promises of the gospel, saying, "They hope they have as good a share in Christ as the best of them, for God is merciful," and the like. And contrariwise, the other contrite and bruised hearts — to whom the law does not apply, but rather the joyful tidings of the gospel — for the most part receive and apply to themselves the terrible voice and sentence of the law. By this it comes to pass, that many rejoice when they should mourn; and on the other side, many fear and mourn when they should rejoice.

MODERN DIVINITY. 343

Therefore, to conclude, in their private use of life, let every person discreetly discern between the law and the gospel, and apply to himself that which belongs to him. Let the man or the woman who never yet to any purpose (especially during health and prosperity) think of, or consider their latter end, who never yet fear the wrath of God, death, devil, or hell, but have lived, and still live a jocular and merry life — let them apply the curse of the law to themselves, for it belongs to them. Yes, and let all your civil honest men and women who maybe do sometimes think of their latter end, and have had some kind of fear of the wrath of God, death, and hell in their hearts, and yet have salved the sore with a dressing made of their own civil righteousness, with a salve compounded of their outward conformity to the duties contained in the law — in their freedom from gross sins, and their upright and just dealing with men — let these hearken to the voice of the law, when it says, "Cursed is everyone that does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them." [Gal 3:10](#) But let all self-denying, fearful, trembling souls, apply the gracious and sweet promises of God in Christ to themselves, and rejoice because their names are written in the Book of Life. [Luk 10:20](#)

APPENDIX

The Occasion of the “Marrow” Controversy, stated by the late Rev. John Brown, of Haddington.

While the Church of Scotland was clear and exact in her standards, and many of her preachers truly evangelical, a flood of legal doctrine filled many pulpits about the time of the Revolution.¹

The Arminian errors of Professor Simpson were also prevalent after this time; but the Assembly used him with great tenderness. However, they were far from being equally kind to those who earnestly endeavoured for a clear illustration of the doctrines of God’s free grace reigning through the righteousness of Christ. Mr. Hamilton of Airth having published a catechetical treatise concerning the *Covenant of Works and grace*, and the sacraments of *baptism and the Lord’s Supper*, in a more evangelical strain than some wished, the Assembly, in 1710, prohibited all ministers or members of this church to print or disperse in writing, any catechism, without the allowance of the Presbytery of the bounds, or the Commission.

The Presbytery of Auchterarder had begun to require candidates for licence to acknowledge that it is *unsound to teach that men must forsake their sins in order to come to Christ*. The Assembly, in 1717, on the same day they had dealt so gently with Professor Simpson, declared their abhorrence of that proposition as *unsound* and *most detestable* — as if men should only come to Christ, the only Saviour from sins, *after* they have gotten rid of sins by repentance. Mr. James Hog, one of the holiest ministers in the kingdom, had published or recommended a celebrated and edifying tract from the Cromwellian age, called *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*. The Assembly, in 1720, fell upon it with great fury, as if it had been replete with Antinomian errors, though it is believed that many of these zealots never read it, or at least had never perused it in connection with the Second Part of it — which is wholly taken up in manifesting the obligation, meaning, and advantage of observing the law of God. They condemned the offering of Christ as a Saviour to all men, or to sinners as such; and they condemned the doctrine of believers’ full deliverance from under the law, as being a broken Covenant of Works. They asserted that men’s holiness is a federal or conditional mean for them to obtain eternal happiness. They condemned as *Antinomian paradoxes*, these almost express declarations of Scripture: that believers are not under the law — that they do not commit sin — that the Lord sees no sin in them, and cannot be angry with them.² And they condemned the distinction of the Moral Law as a Covenant of Works, and a binding rule of duty in the hand of Christ.

APPENDIX. 345

In order to explain these expressions, Messrs. James Hog, Thomas Boston, Ebenezer and Ralph Erskine, Gabriel Watson, and seven others, remonstrated to the next Assembly against these decisions, as injurious to the doctrine of God’s grace. And in their answers to the Commission’s Twelve Queries, they illustrated these doctrines with no small clearness and evidence. Perhaps influenced by this, as well as by the widespread detestation of their acts (1720) on that point, the Assembly, in 1722, reconsidered them, and made an act explaining and confirming them. This

¹ That is, the Glorious Revolution in Scotland, also known as the Glorious Revolution, or the Revolution of 1688. It began in England when Catholic James VII of Scotland (James II of England) was removed from the thrones of England, Scotland and Ireland, and replaced by his Protestant daughter Mary and her husband William of Orange.

² Gal 5.18; 1Joh 3.6, 9; Rom 4.7; Rom 8.1.

was less gross and erroneous. Nevertheless, the twelve representers protested against it as injurious to truth; but this protest was not allowed to be marked. By the Assembly's appointment, the Moderator rebuked them for their reflections on the Assembly, in 1720, in their Representation;¹ and he admonished them to beware of the like in all time coming — against which they protested.

Queries agreed to by the Commission of the General Assembly, and put to those Ministers who submitted a Representation and Petition against the 5th and 8th Acts of Assembly 1720, with the Answers given by these Ministers to those Queries. ²

ADHERING to and holding, as here repeated, our subscribed Answer given to the Reverend Commission, when called by them to receive these Queries, we come to venture, under the conduct of the faithful and true Witness who has promised the Spirit of truth to lead his people into truth, to give an answer to those Queries. To which, before we proceed, we crave leave to represent that the title prefixed to it, namely: “Queries to be put to Mr. James Hog, and other Ministers, who gave in a Representation in Favour of *The Marrow*, to the General Assembly, 1721,” as well as that prefixed to the Commission's overture about this affair, has a native tendency to divert and bemist the reader, to expose us, and to turn the matter on its proper hinge, by giving a wrong colour to our Representation, as if the chief design of it was to plead, not for the precious truths of the gospel, which we conceive to be wounded by the condemnatory act, but for *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, which, though we value it as a good and useful book, and do not doubt that the Church of God may be much edified by it, as we ourselves have been, yet it never came into our minds to hold it or any other private writing, faultless, nor to put it on a level with our approved standards of doctrine.

QUERY. 1. — Are there any precepts in the gospel that were not actually given before the gospel was revealed?

Answer. — The passages in our Representation, marked as the grounds of this query, are these:

346 APPENDIX.

“The gospel doctrine is known only by a new revelation after the fall. Of the same dismal tendency, we apprehend, is declaring that the distinction of the law, as it is the *Law of Works*, and as it is the *Law of Christ* (as the author applies it) is altogether groundless. The erroneous doctrine of justification, as something wrought in, or done by the sinner, as his righteousness, or keeping the new and gospel law.”

Now, leaving it to others to judge if these passages gave any just occasion for this question, we answer it as follows, —

Ist, In the gospel, as contradistinct from the law, taken strictly as a doctrine of grace or good news from heaven, or help in God through Jesus Christ, for the lost self-destroying creatures of Adam's race, or the glad tidings of a Saviour with life and salvation in him for the chief of sinners, there are no precepts; all of these—including the command to believe and repent—belong to and flow from the law, which fastens the new duty on us, in the same moment that the gospel reveals the new object.

¹ *Representation* here means a presentation — a statement of facts and reasons made in an appeal or protest.

² “A masterly production,” says the judicious Mr. Fraser, of Kennoway, “which has undergone many impressions, and which discusses the points at issue with a perspicuity and energy that has commanded the esteem and admiration of Mr. James Hervey, and many others who had no immediate concern in the controversy.”

It seems evident to us from the Holy Scriptures that, taken strictly, there are no precepts in the gospel. In the first revelation of it, made in these words, — “The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent,” we find no *precept*, but a *promise* containing glad tidings of a Saviour, with grace, mercy, life, and salvation in him, to lost sinners of Adam’s family. And the gospel preached to Abraham, namely, “In you,” *i.e.*, in your seed, which is in Christ, “all nations shall be blessed,” is of the same nature. The good tidings of great joy to all people of a Saviour born in the city of David, who is Christ the Lord, brought and proclaimed from heaven by the angels, we take to have been the *gospel*, strictly and properly so called; yet there is no precept in these tidings. We likewise find the gospel of peace and glad tidings of good things are convertible¹ terms in Scripture; and the word of the gospel, which Peter spoke to the Gentiles, that they might believe, was no other than peace by Jesus Christ, crucified, risen, and exalted to be Judge of the quick and the dead, with remission of sins through his name, to be received by everyone believing in him. Much more might be added on this topic, but so that we are not tedious, we pass by them. We find the body of reformed divines are of the same mind as to this point; to instance a few, Calvin, Chamier, Pemble, Wendelin, Alting, the professors of Leyden, Witsius, Maestrick, Maresius, Troughton, Essenius.

That all precepts (including those of faith and repentance) belong to, and are part of the law, is no less evident to us. For the law of creation, or the Ten Commandments, which was given to Adam in paradise in the form of a Covenant of Works, requiring us to believe whatever God would reveal or promise, and to obey whatever he would command; all precepts whatever, must be virtually and really included in it. So that there never was, nor can there be, an instance of duty owed by the creature to God, that is not commanded in the Moral Law, if not directly and expressly, yet indirectly and by consequence. For instance, the same first commandment which requires us to take the Lord for our God, to acknowledge his essential verity and sovereign authority; to love, fear, and trust in Jehovah, in whatever manner he is pleased to reveal himself to us, and likewise to grieve and mourn for his dishonour or displeasure, requires believing in Jehovah our righteousness as soon as he is revealed to us as such; and it requires sorrowing in a godly way for the transgression of his holy law, whether by one’s self or by others. It is true, Adam was not actually obliged to believe in a Saviour till, being lost and undone, a Saviour was revealed to him;

APPENDIX. 347

but the same commandment that bound him to trust and depend on, and to believe the promises of God *Creator*, no doubt obliged him to believe in God *Redeemer*, when he was revealed. Nor was Adam obliged to sorrow for sin before it was committed. But this same law that bound him to have a sense of the evil of sin in its nature and effects, to hate, loathe, and flee from sin, and to resolve against it, and for all holy obedience, and to have a due apprehension of the goodness of God, obliged him also to mourn for it, whenever it would fall out. And we cannot see how the contrary doctrine is consistent with the perfection of the law; for if the law is a complete rule of all moral, internal and spiritual, as well as external and ritual obedience, it must require faith and repentance, as well as it does all other good works. And we can have no doubt that it does indeed require them, when we consider that without them, all other religious performances are, in God’s account, as good as nothing; and that sin being (as the Scripture and our own standard tell us), any lack of conformity to, or transgression of the law of God, unbelief and impenitency must be so too. And if they are so, then faith and repentance must be obedience and conformity to the same law, which the former are a transgression of, or an inconformity to; unbelief particularly being a departing from the living God is, for certain, forbidden in the first commandment; faith must therefore be required in the same commandment, according to a known rule. But what more do we need after our Lord has told us

¹ That is, interchangeable.

that faith is one of the weightier matters of the law? And it is not a second tablet duty which is meant there; this is evident to us by comparing the parallel passage in Luke where, in place of faith, we have the love of God. As for repentance, in case of sin against God, it naturally becomes a duty; and though neither the Covenant of Works nor of grace allowed it as any expiation of sin, or federal condition giving a right to life, it is a duty that is included in every commandment, on the supposal of a transgression.

What moves us to be more concerned for this point of doctrine is that if the law does not bind sinners to believe and repent, then we do not see how faith and repentance, considered as works, are excluded from our justification before God, since in that case they are not works of the law, under which character all works are in Scripture excluded from the use of justifying in the sight of God. And we can call to mind that, on the contrary doctrine, Arminius laid the foundation of his rotten principles, touching sufficient grace, or rather natural power. “Adam,” he says, “did not have power to believe in Jesus Christ, because he did not need him; nor was he bound to believe, because the law did not require it. Therefore, since Adam did not lose it by his fall, God is bound to give every man power to believe in Jesus Christ.” And Socinians, Arminians, Papists, and Baxterians,¹ by holding that the gospel is a new, proper, preceptive law with sanctions, and thereby turning it into a real, though milder Covenant of Works, have confounded the law and the gospel, and brought works into the matter and the cause of a sinner’s justification before God. And we reckon, we are rather called to be on our guard here, that the clause in our Representation, mentioning the new or Gospel Law, is marked out to us as one of the grounds of this query which we admit to be somewhat alarming. Besides all this, teaching that faith and repentance are gospel commandments, may yet again open the door to Antinomianism, as it sometimes did already, if we may believe Mr. Cross, who says, “History tells us that it sprung from such a mistake, that only faith and repentance were taught and commanded by the gospel, and that as they contained everything necessary to salvation, so the law was needless.”

348 APPENDIX.

On this topic also — namely, that all precepts belong to the law — we might likewise adduce a cloud of witnesses beyond exception, such as Perable, Essenius, Anth, Burgess, Rutherford, Owen, Witsius, Dickson, Fergusson, Troughton, and the Larger Catechism on the duties that are required, and the sins that are forbidden, in the First Commandment. But, without insisting further, we answer,

2dly, The gospel, taken largely for the whole doctrine of Christ and the apostles that is contained in the New Testament — or taken for a system of all the promises, precepts, threatenings, doctrines, and histories, that in any way concern man’s recovery and salvation — in this respect, the Gospel includes not only the Ten Commandments, but also the doctrine of the Covenant of Works. But [if taken] in this sense, then the doctrine is not contradistinct from the Law. In the gospel, taken at large in this way, we say there are doubtless many precepts that were not actually given (that is, that were not particularly and expressly promulgated or required) *before* the gospel was revealed. Loving our enemies, is one instance in a few of many such precepts: mercy to the miserable, bearing the cross, hope and joy in tribulations (in the prospect of their having a desired issue), love, thankfulness, prayer, and obedience to God *Redeemer*, zealous witnessing against sin, and witnessing for truth in case of defection from the faith, or defection from the holiness of the gospel, confessing our faults to one another, and forgiving one another. All the ceremonial precepts under the Old Testament, together with the institutions of Christ

¹ Richard Baxter was the chief proponent of “neo-nomianism”. He held that Christ instituted a new law, which if a sinner obeyed, would result in salvation. In dealing with this very issue, John Owen says he will not “inmix” himself “in any needless disputations”, but in his catechism he contends that Christ endorsed laws existing at the Creation and that were codified on Mt. Horeb. Owen therefore would not endorse neo-nomianism.

under the New Testament — faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, with many more, to say nothing of personal and particular precepts — were not actually given before the gospel was revealed. All of these are nevertheless reducible to the law of the Ten Commandments,¹ many of them being plain duties of the law of nature, though they had no due and proper objects, nor any occasions to be exercised in an innocent state.

It is true, there are many of them we would never have heard of unless the gospel had been revealed; yet they are not therefore in any proper sense, precepts of the *Gospel*, but precepts of the *Law*, which is exceedingly broad, extending to new objects, occasions, and circumstances. The law says one thing to the unmarried person, and another thing to the same person when married; it says one thing to him as a child, and another thing to him as a parent, etc., yet it is still the same law. The law of God is perfect, and like its Author, it must reach to every condition of the creature; but if every new duty or new object of faith required a new law, how strangely laws must be multiplied! The law itself (even as in the case of a man) may meet with many changes, and yet remain the same as to its essence. Now, as to faith and repentance, though the ability to exercise and accept them is by the gospel, yet it is evident that they must be regulated by the same law, because the transgression of that law made them necessary. The essence of repentance, it is plain, lies in repeating and renewing, with a suitable frame of spirit, the duties that had been omitted, or in observing the law that one had violated. For just as the divine perfections are the rule and pattern of God's image in man, in his *regeneration* as well as in his *creation*, so the holy law of God is the rule of our repentance, as well as the rule of our primitive obedience. And we cannot see why faith, when it has God *Mediator* or God *Redeemer* for its object, may not come from the same law as when it had God *Creator* or God *Preserver* for its object.

APPENDIX. 349

QUERY 2.—Is the believer not bound now by the authority of the Creator, to personal obedience to the Moral Law, even though it is not required for justification?

Ans.— What is given us for the ground of this query, is the following clause of our Representation, namely:—

“Since believers are” not under the Moral Law, to be thereby justified or condemned, we cannot comprehend how it continues any longer as a Covenant of Works to them, or such a law as to have a commanding power over them, that covenant form of it being done away in Christ with respect to believers.”

This clause of the Representation being so much one, even in words, with our Confession, we could never have expected the Reverend Commission would have moved a query upon it; but since they have been pleased to think otherwise, we answer affirmatively: —

The believer, since he does not cease to be a creature by being made a *new* creature, is and must ever be bound to personal obedience to the law of the Ten Commandments, by the authority of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, his Creator. But this authority is, as to him, issued by and from the Lord Jesus Christ, from whose mouth he receives the law, being his Lord God Creator, as well as his Lord God Redeemer, and having all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him; the sinful creature neither can nor will ever apply himself to obedience acceptable to God, or comfortable to himself, without the Creator's authority coming to him in that channel.

¹ **Mat 22:37** Jesus said to him, “You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind¹.” ³⁸ “This is *the* first and great commandment. ³⁹ “And *the* second *is* like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself¹.” ⁴⁰ “On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.”

We are clear and fully of the same mind with our Confession, that the Moral Law of the Ten Commandments forever binds all, justified persons as well as others, to the obedience of it, not only in regard to the matter contained in it, but also in respect to the authority of God the Creator who gave it; and that in the gospel, Christ does not in any way dissolve, but greatly strengthens this obligation; for how can it lose any of its original authority by being conveyed to the believer in such a sweet and blessed channel as the hand of Christ, since he himself is both the supreme God and Creator, and since the authority, majesty, and sovereignty of the Father is in his Son, he being the same in substance, equal in power and glory? “Beware of Him,” says the Lord to Israel, concerning Christ the angel of the covenant, “and obey his voice; do not provoke him, for my name is in him.”^{Exo 23.21f} That is, as we understand it, “My authority, sovereignty, and other adorable excellencies, indeed the whole fulness of the Godhead is in him; and in him only will I be served and obeyed.” And then it follows, “But if you shall indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak...” The name of the Father is so in him — he is so much of the same nature with his Father — that his voice is the Father’s voice: “If you obey his voice, and do all that I speak.”

We desire to think and speak honourably of Him whose name is “Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.” And it can only exceedingly grate our ears, and grieve our spirits, to find such doctrines or positions vented in this Church, especially at a time when the Arian heresy¹ is so prevalent in our neighbour nations, as to have an obvious tendency to darken and disparage his divine glory and authority — these doctrines are such that, if a believer should not receive the law of the Ten Commandments at the hand of God, as he is Creator *apart* from Christ, then the believer is *not* under its obligation, because it was delivered by God the Creator. And so he is loosed from all obedience to it, because it was enacted by the authority of the Lord Creator [i.e., the Father].

350 APPENDIX.

It is injurious to the infinite majesty of the Sovereign Lord Creator [i.e., the Father], and to the honour of his holy law, to restrict the believer to receive the Ten Commandments only at the hand of Christ. And what can be more injurious to the infinite majesty of the sovereign Lord Redeemer [i.e., Christ] — by whom all things were created that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they are thrones or dominions, principalities or powers ^{Col 1.16} — than to speak as if the Creator’s authority [i.e., the Father’s authority] was not in him, or as if [conversely,] receiving the Creator’s law from Christ loosed men from obedience to it, because it was enacted by the authority of the Father?² Woe to us if this doctrine is the truth, for we would be brought back to a consuming fire indeed. Apart from Christ, “He that made us will have no mercy upon us; nor will he that formed us show us any favour.”^{Isa 27.11} We humbly conceive that the Father does not reckon himself glorified, but contemned by Christians offering obedience to him as Creator apart from Christ. Nor does offering to deal with him in this way, or to teach others to do so, reveal a due regard for the mystery of Christ revealed in the gospel. For it is the will of the Father, the Sovereign Lord Creator, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour himself;^{Joh 5.23} and that at or in the name of Jesus every knee should bow; and that every tongue should confess Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father,^{Phil 2.10} who having in these last days spoken to us by his Son, by whom also he made the worlds,^{Heb 1.2} and with an audible voice from heaven has said, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased: hear him.”^{Mat 17.5} If it were not that we would be thought tedious, Perkins, Durham, Owen, and others, might have been heard on this topic. But we proceed to —

¹ Arius (c. AD 250–336), a presbyter in Alexandria. He asserted that the Son of God is subordinate to God the Father; the Son of God did not always exist, but was created by and is distinct from God the Father.

² This is a confused argument at best; there seems to be one too many or one too few “nots” in it. The bracketed statements were added in an attempt to make sense of it, but the attempt may not have been successful.

QUERY 3. — Does annexing a promise of life, and a threatening of death, to a precept, make it a Covenant of Works?

We *answer*, as in our Representation, That the promise of life, and the threatening of death, superadded to the law of the Creator, made it a proposed Covenant of Works to our first parents. And their own consent, which sinless creatures could not refuse, made it accepted as a Covenant of Works. “A law,” says the judicious Durham, “necessarily implies no more than, *first*, to direct; and *secondly*, to command, enforcing that obedience by authority. A covenant further necessarily implies promises that are made on some conditions, or threatenings that are added if such a condition is not performed. Now, he says, this law may be considered without the consideration of a covenant; for God was free to add or not add promises; and the threatenings, supposing the law had been kept, might never have taken effect.” From this it is plain, in the judgment of this great divine, that the law of nature was turned into a covenant by the addition of a promise of life, and the threatening of death. Burgess and the London ministers are of the same mind, *Vindiciae Legis*, page 61. “There are only two things which go to the essence of a law, and that is — 1st, *direction*; 2d, *obligation*. First, direction: therefore a law is a rule; hence the law of God is compared to light. Second, obligation; for the essence of sin lies in this, that it breaks this law, which supposes the obligatory force of it. In the next place, there are two consequents of the law, which are *ad bene esse*,¹ that the law may be better obeyed; and this indeed turns the law into a covenant. First the sanction of it by way of promise; that is a mere free thing: God, by reason of that dominion which he had over man, might have commanded his obedience, and yet never made a promise of eternal life to him. And, secondly, as for the other consequent act of the law, to curse and punish; this is but an accidental act, not necessary

APPENDIX. 351

to a law, for it comes in upon supposition of transgression. A law is a complete law, obliging, though it does not actually curse; as in the confirmed angels, it never laid any more than obligatory and mandatory act upon them; for it is plain that they were under a law, because otherwise they could not have sinned; for where there is no law, there is no transgression.”

Though there is no ground from our Representation to add more on this topic, yet we may say that a promise of life made to a precept of *doing*, — that is, in consideration or upon condition of one’s doing something, whether the doing is more or less, it is all the same. Because the divine will in the precept, is the rule in this case, it is a Covenant of Works. And as to believers in Christ, though in the gospel, largely taken, we admit that there are promises of life, and threatenings of death, as well as precepts; and that godliness has annexed to it the promise, not only of this life, but of that which is to come, in the order of the covenant. Yet we are clear that no promise of life is made for the performance of precepts, nor is eternal death threatened in case of whatever failings there are in their performing, or else their title to life would be founded not entirely on Christ and his righteousness imputed to them, but on something in or done by themselves. And their after-sins would again actually bring them under vindictive wrath and the curse of the law; they are forever delivered from these upon their union with Christ, who was made a curse for them to redeem them from under it, according to both Scripture and our Confession. Hence we know of no sanction that the law, standing in the Covenant of Grace, has with respect to believers, besides gracious rewards — all of them are freely promised on Christ’s account for their encouragement in obedience; and fatherly chastisement and displeasure are promised, in case of their not walking in his commandments. To a believer, these are no less awful, and much more powerful restraints from sin, than the prospect of the curse and hell itself would be. The Reverend Commission will not, we hope, grudge to hear that eminent divine, Mr. Perkins, in a few words on this topic. Having the objection put to him, “In the gospel there are

¹ For well-being.

promises of life upon condition of our obedience, such as Rom. 8.13, ‘If you through the Spirit,’ etc.; He answers, “The promises of the gospel are not made to the work, but to the worker; and to the worker, not for his work, but for Christ’s sake according to his work: e. g., The promise of life is not made to the work of mortification, but it is made to the one that mortifies his flesh; and that is not for his mortification, but because he is in Christ, and his mortification is the token and evidence of it.” As it is the old Protestant doctrine, we take it to be the truth. And as to the believer’s total and final freedom from the curse of the law upon his union with Christ, Protestant divines, particularly Rutherford and Owen, throughout their writings, are full and clear on this topic.

QUERY 4. — Did the Moral Law, antecedent to receiving the form of a Covenant of Works, have a threatening of hell annexed to it?

Ans. —Since the law of God never was, nor will ever be the stated rule in this world, either of man’s duty towards God, or of God’s dealing with man, except as it stands in one of the two covenants of works and grace, we are at a loss to discover the real usefulness of this query, as well as what foundation it has in our Representation.

As to the intrinsic demerit of sin, we are clear: whether there had ever been any Covenant of Works or not, sin deserves hell, even all that an infinitely holy and just God ever has or shall inflict for it;

352 APPENDIX.

yet what might have been the Creator’s disposal of the creature, in the supposed event of sin’s entering, without a covenant being made, we incline not to dip into here. But we reckon it is not possible to prove that a threatening of hell is inseparable from the law of creation, the obligation of which, because it results from the nature of God and of the creature, is eternal and immutable. For confirmed angels, glorified saints, yes, and the human nature of Christ, are all naturally, necessarily, and eternally obliged to love, obey, depend on, and submit to God, and to make him their blessedness and ultimate end. But none, we conceive, will be peremptory in saying that they have a threatening of hell annexed to the law they are under. And we can by no means allow that a believer, delivered by Christ from the Covenant of Works, is still made obnoxious upon every new transgression, to the threatening of hell that is supposed to be inseparably annexed to the law of creation, or the law of the Ten Commandments. Every reasonable creature must forever be under this law, since this would, in effect, be none other than, after he is delivered from hell in one respect, to bind him over to it in another. Whatever threatening one may suppose belonged to the Moral Law of the Ten Commandments, antecedent to its receiving a covenant form, all of it was, for certain, included in the sanction of the Covenant of Works. So that Christ, in bearing the curse of it, redeemed believers from the hell, vindictive wrath and curse that their sins in any way deserved. He cancelled, tore to pieces, and nailed to his cross the hand-writing that was against them. Hence the threatening of hell and the curse are actually separated from the law of the Ten Commandments which believers are under as a rule of life. To hold otherwise is the leading error, indeed, the very spring and fountain-head of Antinomianism. Burgess, Rutherford, and others, may be heard on all of this.

QUERY 5. — Is it unique to believers to be free of the commanding power of the law, as a Covenant of Works?

Though our saying that we cannot comprehend how the Covenant of Works, as such, continues to have a commanding power over believers; that covenant form of it being done with away in Christ with respect to them, gives no sufficient foundation to this query, since we affirm nothing concerning any but believers, whose freedom from the commanding power of that covenant, the query seems to allow for as much as we do. We answer affirmatively: for, since it is only to

believers that the Spirit of God in Scripture says, “You are not under the law,” [Rom 6.14](#) the main import of this phrase is subjection to the commanding power of it, as a covenant, — “but under grace;” and since, by virtue of their union with Christ, only believers are actually freed from being under the law by Christ’s being made under it, *i.e.*, under its command (as above) as well as under its curse for them. And since according to our Confession, it is the peculiar privilege of believers to therefore have no interest in it — that is, not to be under the law as a Covenant of Works, to be justified or condemned by it — we can allow no others besides believers, to be invested with that immunity.

All unbelievers within, as well as without, the pale of the visible church, since they seek righteousness only by the works of the law, and are strangers to the Covenant of Grace, we always took to be debtors to the whole law, in their own persons. And their obligation, under the DO, or commanding power of that covenant, we took to be inviolably firm, till such time as by faith they have recourse to him who is

APPENDIX. 353

“the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes;” [Rom 10.4](#) Otherwise we thought, and still think, that if their obligation to the command of that covenant is dissolved, merely by living under an external gospel dispensation, they would be cast completely loose from being under any covenant at all, contrary to the common received doctrine of the Protestant churches: namely, that every person whatever is in and under one or the other of the two covenants of works and grace. And unless they are under the commanding power of the Covenant of Works, they could never be found transgressors of the law of that covenant by any actual sin of their own, nor could they be bound over anew under the covenant-curse by it.

It is true that by the fall, the Covenant of Works is made weak and ineffectual as a covenant, to give us life, by reason of our weakness and disability to fulfil it, being antecedently sinners and obnoxious to its curse — which no person can be, and yet at the same time have a right to its promise. Hence, for anyone to seek life and salvation by it now, is no less than labouring after an impossibility. Yet it nevertheless continues in full force as a law requiring of all sinners, while they continue in their natural state — without taking hold of Christ and the grace of the new covenant by faith — requiring of them, we say, personal and absolutely perfect obedience, and threatening death upon every the least transgression. As we said above, believers and only believers, are freed from the commanding power of this law, requiring universal holiness in such rigour, that on the least failure in substance, circumstance, or degree, all is rejected, and we are determined to be transgressors of the whole law. “But to suppose that a person,” says Dr. Owen, “is by any means freed from the curse due to sin, and then, upon the performance of the perfect sinless obedience which the law requires, to deny that he should have a right to the promise of life by it, is to deny the truth of God, and to reflect dishonour upon God’s justice. Our Lord himself was justified by the law; and it is immutably true that he who does the things of the law, shall live in them.” “It is true.” adds the same author, “that God never formally and absolutely renewed or gave this law as a Covenant of Works a second time; nor was there any need for him to do so, unless it were declarative only. And so it was renewed at Sinai; for the whole of it being an emanation of eternal right and truth, it abides and it must abide in full force forever. Wherefore, it is only broken as a covenant so far that all mankind having sinned against its command — and so by guilt, with the impotency to obedience which ensued thereupon — they defeated themselves of any interest in its promise, and the possibility of attaining any such interest; thus they cannot have any benefit by it. But as to its power to oblige all mankind to obedience, and the unchangeable truths of its promises and threatenings, it abides the same as it was from the beginning. Introducing another covenant (he adds again on the same topic) inconsistent with, and contrary to it, does not instantly free men from the law as a covenant. For though a new law abrogates a former law inconsistent with it, and frees all from obedience, it is

not so in a covenant, which operates not by sovereign authority, but becomes a covenant by consent of those with whom it is made. So there is no freedom from the old covenant by the constitution of the new, till it is actually complied with. In Adam's covenant, we must abide under obligation to duty and punishment, till by faith we are interested in the new."

From all of this it appears to be no cogent reasoning to say that if the unbeliever is under the commanding power of the Covenant of Works, then he would be under two opposite commands at once, namely: to seek a perfect righteousness in his own person,

354 APPENDIX.

and to seek it also by faith in a surety; for though the law now requires of us both active and passive righteousness in our own persons, and likewise, upon the revelation of Jesus Christ in the gospel, as Jehovah our righteousness, obliges us to believe in and submit to him as such, yet as it is in many other cases of duties, the law requires both these of us, not in *sensu composito*, as they say, but in *sensu diviso*.¹ The law is content to sustain and hold for good the payment of a responsible surety, though it provides none itself; and it wills us, being insolvent ourselves, to cheerfully, thankfully, and without delay, accept the unparalleled favour offered to us. But till the sinner, convinced of his undoneness, otherwise accepts, uses, and pleads that benefit in his own behalf, the law will, and does, go on in its just demands and diligence against him. Having never had pleasure in the sinful creature, by reason of our unfaithfulness, it can easily allow for the marriage to another husband, upon a lawful divorce, after fair count and reckoning, and full satisfaction and reparation has been made for all the invasions upon, and violations of the first husband's honour. But when the sinner, unwilling to hear of any such motion, still clings to the law, its first husband, what wonder is it that the law in that case, goes on to use the sinner as he deserves? In short, this pretended absurdity, at worst, amounts to no more than this: Make full payment yourself, or find me good and sufficient payment by a surety, till which time I will continue to proceed against you without mitigation or mercy. Wherefore, the unbeliever is justly condemned by the law, both because he did not continue to do all things written in the book of the law, and because he did not believe on the name of the Son of God.

QUERY 6. — (1) Does a sinner, being justified, have all things at once that are necessary for salvation? And (2) Are personal holiness, and progress in holy obedience, not necessary to a justified person's possession of glory, in case of his continuing in life after his justification?

Ans. — The ground of this query marked out to us, is in these words of holy Luther, — "For in Christ I have all things at once, nor do I need anything more that is necessary for salvation." And to us it is evident that this is the believer's plea, namely: [faith in] Christ's most perfect obedience to the law, done for him in answer to its demand of good works for obtaining salvation, according to the tenor of the first covenant. Our Representation alleges that this plea is cut off and condemned by the Act of Assembly — but without saying anything about the old Popish reflection on the doctrine of free justification by faith, without works, as taught by Luther and other reformers; or anything about the hardship of having this question put to us, as if we had given some basis for being suspected as enemies of gospel holiness. Our consciences bear us witness, that it is our great desire to have this holiness advanced in ourselves and others; we are fully persuaded that without it, neither they nor we shall see the Lord. [Heb 12.14](#) We answer the first part of the query —

That, since a justified person, having passed from death to life, translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son, [Col 1.13](#) and blest with all the spiritual blessings in Christ, [Eph 1.3](#) is by virtue of his union with him, brought into and secured in a state of salvation;

¹ That is, not in the sense of the composite, but in the sense of the divided.

and therefore, in the language of the Holy Ghost, he is actually, though not completely, saved already; and since, in Christ he has particularly a most perfect, law-binding, and law-magnifying righteousness, redemption in his blood,

APPENDIX. 355

specifically the forgiveness of sins, peace with God, access, acceptance wisdom, sanctification, everlasting strength, and in a word, an overflowing, ever-flowing fulness from which, according to the order of the covenant, he does and shall receive whatever he wants. Hence, according to the Scripture, in Christ all things are his and in him he is complete. Considering these things, we say that we think a justified person has in Christ at once *all* things necessary to salvation, though of himself he has *nothing*.

To the second part of the query we answer, that personal holiness, and justification, being inseparable in the believer, we are unwilling, so much as the query does, to suppose their separation. Personal holiness we reckon is so necessary to the possession of glory, or to a state of perfect holiness and happiness — as the morning light is necessary to the noon-day warmth and brightness; as a reasonable soul is necessary to a wise, healthy, strong, and full grown man; as an antecedent is necessary to its consequent; as a part is necessary to the whole — for we take the difference between a state of grace and of glory, to be gradual only, according to the maxim, “Grace is glory begun, and glory is grace in perfection.” So necessary, again, as motion is necessary to evidence life, or in order to walk — not only habitual, but actual holiness and progress in holy obedience, one continuing in life, we are clear, are so necessary — that without them, none can see the Lord. And as it is not only the believer’s interest, but his necessary and indispensable duty, to still be going on “from strength to strength, until he appears before the Lord in Zion;”^{Psa 84.7} so the righteous, we believe, “will hold on his way; and he who has clean hands will grow stronger and stronger.”^{Job 17.9} For even though the believer’s progress in holy obedience, by reason of the many stops, interruptions, and assaults he frequently meets with from Satan, from the world, and from in-dwelling corruption, he is far from being alike at all times. Yet “the path of the just,” though he frequently falls, will be “as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.”^{Prov 4.18} Though he may, at times “become weary and faint in his mind,” yet he shall, by waiting on the Lord, “renew his strength, and mount up as with eagles’ wings,” etc.^{Isa 40.31} But still the believer has all this in and from Christ: for where can our progress in holiness come from, except from the supply of his Spirit? Our walking in holy obedience, and every good motion of ours, must be in him, and from him, who is *the Way and the Life*, who is our head of influences, and the fountain of our strength, and who “works in us both to will and to do.”^{Phil 2.13} “Abide in me,” he says, “and I in you. For without me you can do nothing. If a man does not abide in me, he is cast away as a branch, and is withered.”^{Joh 15.5, 6.}

But if the meaning of the query is that holy obedience is of such a necessity in order to *possess* glory, then as it imports any kind of causality, we dare not answer in the affirmative; for we cannot look at personal holiness, or good works, as properly federal and conditional means to obtain possession of heaven, though we admit that they are necessary to make us fit for it.

QUERY 7. — Does preaching the necessity of a holy life in order to obtain eternal happiness, have a dangerous consequence to the doctrine of free grace?

Ans. — The last of the two clauses of the eighth act of Assembly, being complained of in our Representation, is the first and main ground of this query. And before we give an answer to it, we crave leave to explain ourselves more fully as to the offence we conceive is given by that act.

356 APPENDIX.

Namely, it is that, in opposition to, and in place of the believer's plea of Christ's active righteousness, in answer to the law demanding good works for obtaining salvation according to the tenor of the first covenant — cut off, as we apprehend it, by the fifth act — ministers are ordered, in the eighth act, to preach the necessity of our own personal holiness, in order to obtain everlasting happiness. As also, our inherent holiness seems to be put too much on the same footing (as necessary to obtain everlasting happiness) with justification by the Surety. This frame of words, as follows, will well evidence it, namely: "Of free justification through our blessed Surety, the Lord Jesus Christ, received by faith alone; and of the necessity of a holy life, in order to obtain everlasting happiness." Moreover, the great fundamental of justification is laid down in such general terms, that adversaries will easily agree to it. Without mention of the Surety's righteousness, active or passive, or the imputation of either — especially since a motion in open Assembly to add those few but momentous words — *imputed righteousness* was slighted. And finally, the act is so little adapted to the end it was designed for, namely: — a testimony to the supreme Godhead of our glorious God and Saviour Jesus Christ, and against Arianism, especially since not the least intimation or warning against that damnable heresy is to be found in the act itself, nor was it made to that Assembly in passing it.

To the query, we answer that we cordially and sincerely admit that a holy life (or good works) is *necessary*, as an acknowledgment of God's sovereignty, and in obedience to his command: for this is the will of God, even our sanctification; and, by a special ordination, he has appointed believers to walk in them: *necessary* for glorifying God before the world, and showing the virtues of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvellous light: *necessary* as being the end of our election, redemption, effectual calling, and regeneration; for "the Father chose us in Christ, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy; the Son gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify for himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works;"^{[Tit 2.14](#)} and by the Holy Spirit we are created in Christ Jesus for them: *necessary*, as expressions of our gratitude to our great Benefactor — for being bought with a price, we are no more our own, but henceforth, in a most peculiar manner, we are bound in our bodies and in our spirits, which are his, to glorify and by all possible ways to testify of our thanksgiving to our Lord Redeemer and Ransomer. To him "who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up to death for us all;"^{[Rom 8.32](#)} to him "who humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, for us;"^{[Phil 2.7](#)} *necessary* as being the design, not only of the world, but of all ordinances and providences; even that, as he who has called us is holy, so we should be holy in all manner of conduct;^{[1Pet 1.15](#)} *necessary*, again, for evidencing and confirming our faith, good works being the breath, the native offspring and issue of it; *necessary*, for making our calling and election sure;^{[2Pet 1.10](#)} for though they are no plea, yet they are a good evidence for heaven, or an argument confirming our assurance and hope of salvation: *necessary*, to maintaining inward peace and comfort, though not as the ground and foundation for them, yet as effects, fruits, and concomitants of faith; *necessary*, in order to consider communion with God even in this life; for "if we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not practice the truth;"^{[1Joh 1.6](#)} *necessary*, to escape judgments, and to enjoy many promised blessings;

APPENDIX. 357

particularly there is a *necessity* of order and method, so that one must be holy before he can be admitted to see and enjoy God in heaven; that being a disposing mean, preparing for the salvation of it, and the king's highway chalked out for the redeemed to walk into the city;^{[Isa 35.8](#)} *necessary*, to adorn the gospel and grace our holy calling and profession; *necessary*, further, for the edification, good, and comfort, of fellow-believers; *necessary*, to prevent offence, and to stop the mouths of the wicked;^{[Psa 107.42](#)} to win likewise the unbelieving, and to commend Christ and his ways to the consciences; *necessary*, finally, for the establishment, security, and glory of churches and nations.

Though we firmly believe holiness is necessary upon all these and more accounts, and that the Christian ought to live in the continued exercise of gospel repentance, which is one main constituent of gospel holiness, yet we dare not say that a holy life is necessary in order to obtain eternal happiness; for to say nothing of the more gross sense of these words (manifestly injurious to the free grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, by faith in whose righteousness alone we are appointed to obtain salvation, from first to last), what is still obvious enough, though we are far from imputing it to the Assembly — however they may be explained into an orthodox meaning — we cannot look at them as wholesome words, since they have at least an appearance of evil. They are such a way of expression, that Protestant churches and divines have industriously shunned their use on that topic, knowing the strong natural bias in all men towards seeking salvation, not by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, but by works of righteousness done by themselves; and also knowing the danger of symbolizing¹ with Papists and other enemies of the grace of the gospel. Protestants choose to call holiness and good works necessary *duties* of persons who are justified and saved, rather than *conditions* of salvation; they choose to call them consequents and effects of salvation already obtained, or antecedents, disposing and preparing the subject for the salvation to be obtained, rather than any sort of *causes*, or proper means to obtain the possession of salvation. The Scripture, for the high praise and glory of sovereign grace, seems to have reserved this last honour peculiarly for faith. Scripture chooses to say that holiness is necessary in those who will be saved, rather than necessary to their salvation — that we are saved, not *by* gospel works, but rather *to* gospel works, as fruits and effects of saving grace; or that holiness is necessary to salvation, not so much as a means to the end, as a part of the end itself; this part of our salvation is necessary to make us fit for the other that is yet behind.

Therefore, since this [other] way of speaking of holiness with respect to salvation is, we conceive, without warrant in the holy Scripture, and dissonant from the doctrinal standards of our own and other reformed churches, as well as from the chosen and deliberate speech of reformed divines addressing these topics; and since it is at best but *propositio male sonans*,² and may easily be mistaken, and afterwards improved as a shade or vehicle for conveying corrupt sentiments about the influence of works upon salvation; we can only reckon that preaching the necessity of holiness in such terms, would have some dangerous consequence to the doctrine of free grace. We are all the more confirmed in this apprehension, that at this day the doctrine of Christ and his free grace, both as to the purity and efficacy of it, seems to be greatly waning; and that Popery, with other dangerous errors and heresies destructive of it, are waxing. This certainly calls aloud to the churches of Christ, and to his ministers in particular, for all the more zeal, watchfulness, and caution, with reference to the interests of truth; and that is especially at such a time so that, *cum hereticis nec nomina habeamus communia, ne eorum errori favere videamur*.³

358 APPENDIX.

In any case — certainly in framing acts and standards of doctrine — there is great need for delicacy in the choice of words. For the words of the Holy Ghost in Scripture, under which we include those which are equivalent to them in meaning and import, are an ordinance of divine institution for preserving the truth of the gospel. Once these are altered or varied, all the wisdom and vigilance of men will be ineffectual to that end. And it is well known, by costly experience to the churches of Christ, that falling in with the language or phrases of corrupt teachers, instead of serving the interest of truth (which never looks so good as in its own native simplicity) only

¹ *Identifying with* by the use of symbols, or here, by using similar words and phrases.

² A proposition ill-heard.

³ “we might not have these names in common with heretics, lest we seem to countenance their error.”

grieves the stable and judicious, staggers the weak, betrays the ignorant, and instead of gaining, it hardens and opens the mouths of adversaries. And just because it is said in a text, “They do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible,”^{1Cor 9.25} that will not warrant the manner of speech in the query. For the word, in the original language, “obtain” signifies only to *receive* or *apprehend*, being accordingly rendered in all Latin versions we have seen, and in our own translation in the immediately preceding verse: “One receives the prize;” and even if the word did signify to *obtain*, in the most strict and proper sense, it could not serve the purpose unless it were meant of the believer’s obtaining the incorruptible crown, not by faith, but by works. An ill-chosen word in a standard may prove more dangerous to the truth, than one not so justly rendered in a translation with several other things on this topic. This might be made very evident, if it were not that we have been, we fear, tedious on it already.

QUERY 8. — Does knowledge, belief, and persuasion that Christ died for me, and that he is mine, and that whatever he did and suffered, he did and suffered for me, the direct act of faith by which a sinner is united to Christ, and interested in him, as instituted in God’s Covenant of Grace? Or is that knowledge a persuasion that is included in the very essence of that justifying act of faith?

Ans. The query, it is evident, exceedingly narrows the import and design of the Representation in the place referred to. For there we assert nothing positively concerning the passages relating to faith, but we remonstrate against *condemning* them as to what, it seemed to us, hurt the appropriating act of faith; and fixed a blot on the Reformation, reformed churches, and divines who had generally taught, concerning faith, what is in the condemned passages. All of this, we might say, was done without determining whether the persuasion spoken of in the query was the direct and formal act of justifying faith or not. But now, since the query is worded so tightly, and since the matter in question is none other than the old Protestant doctrine on that topic (as we will endeavour to make apparent), the Reverend Commission, we humbly conceive, cannot take it amiss if we inquire, in the first place, into the true sense and meaning of this way of speaking about faith, that we are now questioned about.

Most of the condemned passages the query refers to, do not run in the order set down in it, but as follows: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved;”^{Act 16.31} that is, “Be truly persuaded in your heart that Christ Jesus is yours, and that you shall have life and salvation by him; that whatever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for you.” This is the same in substance with what has been commonly taught in the Protestant churches, and in the words of the renowned Mr. John Rogers of Dodham. He was a man so noted for orthodoxy, holiness, and the Lord’s countenancing of his ministry, that no sound Protestants

APPENDIX. 359

in Britain or Ireland, of whatever denomination, would in the age in which he lived, have taken it upon themselves to condemn him as erroneous. We have his definition of faith as follows: “A particular persuasion of my heart that Christ Jesus is mine, and that I shall have life and salvation by his means; that whatever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for me.” Here one may see, though the difference in words is almost none at all, yet it runs rather stronger with him than in *The Marrow*.

In this account of saving faith, we have, first, the general nature of it; namely, a real persuasion, agreeing to all sorts of faith whatever — for it is certain that whatever one believes, he is truly persuaded of it. More particularly, it is a persuasion in the *heart*, whereby it is distinguished from the general, dead, and naked assent in the *head* which one gives to things that in no way affect him, because he reckons they do not concern him. But with the heart, man believes here: “If you believe with all your heart,” says the Scripture. For when a man believes in his heart the

dreadful tidings of the law, or its curse, it signifies not only an assent to them as true, but a horror of them as evil. So it is here: being persuaded in one's heart of the glad tidings of the gospel, it bears not only an assent to them as true, but a relish of them as good.

Then we have the most special nature of it, namely, it is an appropriating persuasion, or a persuasion with an application to a person's self, that Christ is his own, etc. The particulars of this are *first*, that Christ is yours. The ground of this persuasion is the offer and grant of Christ as a Saviour in the word, to be believed in for salvation by all those to whom the gospel is made known by this offer, and setting forth Christ as a Saviour. Though before we believe, lacking union with him, we have no actual or saving interest in him; yet in some sense he is ours: namely, as it is lawful and warrantable for us (not for fallen angels) to take possession of him and his salvation by faith. Without this faith, our common interest in him as a Saviour, by virtue of the offer and grant in the word, will avail us nothing. Though the call and the offer of the gospel is really particular, everyone, both in point of duty and in point of interest, ought to appropriate, apply, or make his own, the thing that is offered, by believing. They have good and sufficient ground and warrant in the word to do so. Yet it is either neglected and despised, or the truth and sincerity of it is suspected and called into question, until — by driving home the word of the gospel with such a measure of evidence and power as to be effectual — the Holy Spirit satisfies the convinced sinner that, with application to himself in particular, “it is a faithful saying, worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came to save sinners,”¹[Tim 1.15](#) and the Spirit enables him to believe it. Thus the persuasion of faith is begotten, which is always proportioned to the measure of evidence and power from above, that sovereign grace is pleased to put forth to work it.

The next branch of the persuasion is, “that you shall have life and salvation by him,” namely, the life of holiness as well as of happiness; salvation from sin as well as from wrath; not in heaven only, but begun and carried on here, and completed hereafter; which is the true notion of life and salvation, according to the Scriptures, and as Protestant divines commonly explain it. Therefore this persuasion of faith is inconsistent with an unwillingness to part with sin, with a bent or purpose of heart to continue in it. There can be little question, we apprehend, whether this branch of the persuasion belongs to the nature of justifying faith; for salvation being above all things in a sensible sinner's eye, he can never believe anything to his satisfaction,

360 APPENDIX.

unless he sees a ground to comfortably believe it. Few therefore will, we conceive, differ from Dr. Collins, laying it down as a conclusion on this very topic, namely, that “a Christian cannot have true, saving, justifying faith, unless he does (I do not say, unless he *thinks* he does, or unless he *says* does, but unless he *does*) believe, and is persuaded that God will pardon his sins.” Further, this believing in the Son for life and salvation is the same as receiving him (this last is explained by the Holy Spirit himself in John 1.12);¹ and likewise, it evidently bears the soul's *resting* on Christ for salvation. For it is not possible to conceive of a soul resting on Christ for salvation, without a persuasion that he shall have life and salvation by him, namely, a persuasion of the same measure and degree as resting.

The third branch of the persuasion, “that whatever Christ did for the redemption of mankind, he did it for you,” — being much the same, in other words, as these words of the apostle — “Who loved me, and gave himself for me;”²[Gal 2.20](#) and coming in the last place, we think none will question that whoever believes, in the manner explained before, may and ought to believe this in a like measure and in the same order. And it is certain that all who receive and rest on Christ for salvation, *believe* it — if not explicitly, yet virtually and really.

¹ [Joh 1:12](#) But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.

Now, this account of justifying faith runs in terms that are much less strong than those of many eminent divines who used to define it by a persuasion of God's love, of his special mercy to one's self, of the remission of his sins, etc.; and it is the same for substance and matter, even though the words are not the same as our Shorter Catechism: "A receiving and resting upon Christ alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel." There it is evident that the offer of Christ to us, though mentioned last, is to be believed first. For till the soul is persuaded that Christ crucified is in the gospel set forth, offered, and exhibited to it as if expressed by name, there can be no believing on him. And when the offer is brought home to a person by the Holy Ghost, there will be a measure of persuasion that Christ is his, as explained above. And that *receiving*, or *believing in*, and *resting on* him for salvation, cannot be without some measure of persuasion that one shall have life and salvation by him, as already said. But more directly to the query:

We *answer, 1st*, Since our reformers and their successors, such as: Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, Beza, Bullinger, Bucer, Knox, Craig, Melvil, Bruce, Davidson, Forbes, etc., — men eminently endowed with the spirit of truth, and who fetch their notions of it immediately from the fountain of the holy Scripture; the most eminent doctors and professors of theology that have been in the Protestant churches, such as Ursinus, Zanchius, Junius, Piscator, Rollock, Danaeus, Wendelinus, Chamierus, Sharpius, Bodius, Pareus, Altingius, Triglandii (Gisbertus and Jacobus) Arnoldus, Maresius; the four professors of Leyden, namely: Wallaeus, Rivetus, Polyander, Thysius; Wollebius, Heideggerus, Essenius, Turretinus, etc.; with many eminent British divines, such as Perkins, Pemble, Willet, Gouge, Roberts, Burgess, Owen, etc.; the churches themselves of Helvetia, the Palatinate, France, Holland, England, Ireland, Scotland, in their standards of doctrine; all the Lutheran churches which, in point of orthodoxy on the topic of justification and faith, are second to none; the renowned synod of Dort, made up of eminent divines, called and commissioned "from seven reformed states and kingdoms, besides those of the several provinces of the Netherlands

APPENDIX. 361

— since all of these, we say, stand for that special *fiducia*, confidence, or appropriating persuasion of faith spoken of in the condemned passages of *The Marrow*, on which this query is raised; — the synod of Dort, besides the minds of the several delegates on this topic, in their several suffrages about the *Five Articles*,¹ declaring themselves plainly, both in their final decisions concerning those articles, and in their solemn and ample approbation of the *Palatine Catechism*,² as agreeable to the word of God in all things, and as containing nothing that should either be altered or amended; — and this Catechism being full and plain as to this persuasion of faith, has been commented on by many great divines, and received by almost all of the reformed churches, as a most excellent compendium of the orthodox Christian doctrine, and particularly by the Church of Scotland, as the Rev. Mr. Robert Wodrow lately told his Majesty King George, in the dedication of his history; — and since we, with this whole church and nation, by virtue of the awful tie of the oath of God in our national covenant, are ever bound to abhor and detest the Popish general and doubtful faith, with all the erroneous decrees of Trent — among which is opposition to the special *fiducia* of faith condemned in it — *this is established*: Protestants are so-called mainly for denying and opposing the confidence and persuasion of faith now in question, with application to one's self. By this renunciation, our forefathers no doubt pointed at and asserted to be held and professed as God's undoubted truth and verity, that particular and confident or assured faith, then commonly known and maintained in this church, as standing plain and express in her standards. In the same covenant, they bound themselves and us to the profession and defence of it, promising and swearing by the great name of the Lord our God.

¹ That is, the *Five Articles of Remonstrance* (1610).

² That is, the *Heidelberg Catechism* of 1563.

And since then, this same persuasion of faith — however speaking about that topic has come to be altered — was never denied or condemned by any judicatory of a reformed Church, until now.

CONSIDERING all these things, and what dangerous consequence such a judicial alteration may have, we cannot and we dare not consent to the condemnation of that point of doctrine. For we cannot think of charging error and delusion in a matter of such importance upon so many Protestant divines, eminent for their holiness and learning; upon the Protestant churches; and upon our own forefathers, so signally owned by the Lord; and also upon the standards of Protestant doctrine in this Church for nearly a hundred years after her reformation. Otherwise, if we were to speak this way, we are persuaded we would offend against the generation of his children. Nor can it ever enter into our minds that the famous Assembly of Westminster had it so much as once in their thoughts, to depart in this point from their own doctrine, and the doctrine of this church of which they were all bound to maintain by the strongest ties — nor to depart from the synod of Dort, which had so recently before settled the Protestant principles as to doctrine, and by doing so, surrender to Socinians, Arminians, and Papists, what all of them have a mortal aversion to: namely, the special *fiducia*, or the appropriating persuasion of faith. Protestant divines before and since that time contended for this to their utmost, as being not only a precious truth, but a point of vast consequence to religion. And we are sure the Assemblies of this Church understood, and received their confessions and catechisms, both larger and shorter, as entirely consistent with our confessions and catechisms before that time, as we have already made evident in our Representation, from the acts of Assembly receiving and approving the Westminster Confession and Catechisms.

362 APPENDIX.

We answer 2d, that it is to be considered that most of the words of the Holy Ghost, made use of in the Old and New Testament to express the nature of faith and believing, signify the confidence or persuasion in question; and consider that *confidence* and *trust*, as used in the Old Testament, are expounded as *faith* and *believing* in the New Testament; and the same things attributed to the latter, as were commonly attributed to the former. Diffidence and doubting are, by nature, acts and effects contrary to faith; peace and joy are the native effects of believing; the promises of the gospel, and of Christ in his priestly office held forth in it, are the proper objects of justifying faith; faithfulness in God, and faith in the believer, being relatives (and the former being the ground of the latter), our faith should correspond to his faithfulness, by trusting his good word of promise for the sake of it. It is certain that a believer, in the exercise of justifying faith, believes something in reference to his own salvation, on the ground of God's faithfulness in the promise. No other person whatsoever does or can believe if it is not to this purpose — that now Christ is and will be a Saviour to him, and that he shall have life and salvation by him; — we are utterly at a loss to conceive what other purpose it can be. Such persuasion, confidence, and assuredness are greatly attributed to faith in the Scripture; and the saints in Scripture ordinarily express themselves in their addresses to God in words of appropriation. And finally, according to our *Larger Catechism*, FAITH justifies a sinner in the sight of God, as an instrument, receiving and applying Christ and his righteousness, as held forth in the promise of the gospel; and faith rests upon these for pardon of sin, and for accepting and accounting one's self righteous before God for salvation. How faith can do this without some measure of the confidence or *appropriating persuasion* we are now on, seems extremely hard to conceive.

On these considerations, and others that are too long to be inserted here, we can only think that confidence or trust in Jesus Christ as our Saviour, and the free grace and mercy of God in him as crucified, are offered to us in the gospel for salvation (including justification, sanctification, and future glory), upon the ground and security of the divine faithfulness plighted in the gospel promise; and upon the warrant of the divine call and the command to believe in the name of the Son of God; or in other words, a persuasion of life and salvation from the free love and mercy of

God in and through Jesus Christ, a crucified Saviour offered to us upon the security and warrant mentioned. This is the very direct, uniting, justifying, and appropriating act of faith whereby the convinced sinner becomes possessed of Christ and his saving benefits; instated in God's covenant and family; always taking this along as assumed, that all is driven home and worked by the Holy Spirit who brings Christ, his righteousness, salvation, and whole fulness, near to us in the promise and offer of the gospel; at the same time clearing our right and warrant to intermeddle with all, without fear of vicious intromission,¹ encouraging and enabling us to a measure of confident application, and taking home all of this to ourselves freely, without money and without price.^{Isa 55.1}

This confidence, persuasion, or whatever other name it may be called by, we take to be the very same as what our Confession and Catechisms call accepting, receiving, and resting on Christ offered in the gospel for salvation; and the same as what polemic and practical divines call "*Fiducia specialis misericordiae*,"² "fiducial application," "fiducial apprehension," "fiducial adherence," "recumbence," "affiance," "fiducial acquiescence," "appropriating persuasion," etc. All of these, if duly explained, would issue in a measure of this confidence or persuasion we have been speaking of. However, we are fully satisfied that this is what our fathers and the body of Protestant divines, speaking with the Scriptures, called "the assurance of faith."

APPENDIX. 363

That once burning and shining light of this church, Mr. John Davidson, though in his Catechism he defines faith by a "hearty assurance" that our sins are freely forgiven us in Christ; or a sure persuasion of the heart that Christ by his death and resurrection has taken away our sins, and clothing us with his own perfect righteousness, has thoroughly restored us to the favour of God; which he reckoned to be the same as a "hearty receiving of Christ offered in the gospel for the remission of sins." Yet in a former part of the same Catechism he gives us to understand what sort of assurance and persuasion he meant, as follows: "And it is certain," he says, "that both the enlightening of the mind to acknowledge the truth of the promise of salvation to us in Christ, and the sealing up of the certainty of it in our hearts and minds (of which two parts faith consists, as it were) are the works and effects of the Spirit of God." In like manner, in our first *Confession of Faith*, Art. 3, 12, it is called, "An assured faith in the promise of God revealed to us in his word; by which faith we apprehend Christ Jesus, with the graces and benefits promised in him."— "This faith, and the assurance of the same, does not proceed from flesh and blood." And in our first Catechism, commonly called *Calvin's Catechism*, faith is defined as a "sure persuasion" and "steadfast knowledge" of God's tender love towards us, according to how he has plainly uttered in his gospel, that he will be a Father and Saviour to us through the means of Jesus Christ; and again, "faith which God's Spirit works in our hearts, assuring us of God's promises made to us in his holy gospel." In the *Summula Catechismi*, or *Rudimenta Pietatis*,³ to the question, "Quid est fides?" the answer is, "Cum mihi persuadeo Deum me omnesque sanctos amare, nobisque Christum cum omnibus suis bonis gratis donare;" and in the margin, "Nam in fide duplex persuasio, 1. De amore Dei erga nos; 2. De Dei beneficiis quae ex amore fluunt, Christo nimirum, cum omnibus suis bonis," etc. And to that question, "Quomodo fide percipimus, et nobis applicamus corpus Christi crucifixi?" the answer is, "Dum nobis persuademus Christi mortem et crucifixionem non minus ad nos pertinere quam si ipsi nos pro peccatis nostris crucifixi essemus. Persuasio autem haec est verae fidei."

¹ *Vicious intromission* – sinfully putting one thing into another.

² Confidence in special mercy.

³ A Latin Catechism, entitled *Rudimenta Pietatis* and *Summula Catechismi*, for the use of grammar schools. It is ascribed to Andrew Simpson, who was master of the grammar school at Perth, and the first Protestant minister at Dunbar. It was used in the high-school at Edinburgh down to 1710. Besides this, the Latin editions of the Heidelberg Catechism and Calvin's Catechism (translated by Patrick Adamson) were also in use.

From all these it is evident they held that a belief of the promises of the gospel, with application to oneself, or a confidence in a crucified Saviour for a man's own salvation, is the very essence of justifying faith; or that we become actually possessed of Christ, remission of sins, etc., in and by the act of believing, or by confidence in him, as explained above. And for them, this was the assurance of faith — which widely differs from the Antinomian sense of the assurance or persuasion of faith, which is that Christ and pardon of sin are ours, no less *before* believing than *after*; this is a sense which we heartily disclaim.

Whether these words in the query, “Or, is that knowledge a persuasion included in the very essence of that justifying act of faith,” are exegetic of the former part of it; or else a new branch of the query; we answer that we have already explained the persuasion of faith held by us. And we think that — in the language of faith, though not in the language of philosophy — knowledge and persuasion relating to the same object, go hand in hand in the same measure and degree.

It is evident that the confidence or persuasion of faith for which we plead, includes or necessarily and infallibly infers consent and resting, together with all the blessed fruits and effects of faith, in proportion to our measure of faith.

364 APPENDIX.

Having mentioned consent, we can only be more confirmed in this matter when we consider such a noted person as Mr. Baxter. He made the marriage consent to Christ, as King and Lord, the formal act of justifying faith, as an epitome of all gospel obedience — including and binding us to all the duties of the married state, and so giving us a right to all the privileges. By this as well as his other dangerous notions about justification, and other points connected with it, that are scattered throughout his works, he corrupted the fountain and endangered the faith of many. Yet in the end, he came to be of another mind, and he had the humility to tell the world as much. For Mr. Cross informs us (Serm. on Rom. 4.2, p. 148) that Mr. Baxter, in his little book *Against Dr. Crisp's Errors*, says, “I formerly believed the formal nature of faith to lie in *consent*; but now I recant it. I believe,” he says, “that it lies in *trust*: this makes the right lie in the *object*; for I depend on Christ as the matter or merit of my pardon, my life, my crown, my glory.”

There are two things further concerning this persuasion of faith to be mentioned: one is that such faith is not axiomatic, but real; that is, the sinner does not always have at his first closing with Christ, nor afterwards, such a clear, steady, and full persuasion that Christ is his, and that his sins are forgiven, and that he shall eventually be saved, that he dare profess it to others, or even positively assert it within himself. Yet, upon the first saving manifestation of Christ to him, such a persuasion and humble confidence is begotten, as is real and relieving, and particular as to himself and his own salvation, and which works a proportionate hope as to its outcome. Though he fears to express it directly and particularly about himself, because of the humbling impressions he has of himself and of his own guilt at the time, the awe of God's majesty, justice, and holiness on his spirit, and his indistinct knowledge of the doctrine of the gospel, along with the grounds and warrants of believing contained in it.

The other is that whatever is said about the habit, actings, strength, weakness, and intermittings of the exercise of saving faith, the same is to be said of this persuasion in all points. From all of this, it is evident that the doubts, fears, and darkness, so frequently found in true believers, can very well consist with this persuasion in the same subject. For though these may be, and often are in the believer, yet they are not of his faith, which in its nature and exercise is as opposite to them as light is to darkness, or the flesh is to the Spirit. Though they are in the same subject, yet they are contrary to one another, Gal. 5.17.¹ And therefore faith wrestles against them, though with various success, sometimes being so far overcome and brought under by the main force and

¹ **Gal 5:17** For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

much superior strength of prevailing unbelief, that it cannot be discerned more than the fire when covered with ashes, or the sun when wrapped in thick clouds. The confidence and persuasion of faith in many, at first especially, is but as the grain of mustard-seed cast into the ground, or like a spark amidst the troubled sea of all manner of corruption and lust, where the rolling waves of unbelieving doubts and fears, hellish temptations and suggestions and the like, moving on the face of that deep, are every now and then going over it. Were there not a divine hand and care engaged for its preservation, they would effectually extinguish and bury it. What wonder is it that many times in such a case it cannot be discerned? Yet it will still hold so much of the exercise of justifying faith, and so much persuasion. Indeed, not only may a believer have this persuasion and not know it for the time (as say Collins, Roberts, Amesius, and others, who distinguish the *persuasion* from the *sense* of it), but being under the power of temptation

APPENDIX. 365

and confusion of mind, he may resolutely deny that he has any such persuasion or conscience; while it is evident to others at the same time, by its effects, that he really does have it. For this, one may see, among others, the holy and learned Haliburton, in his “Inquiry into the Nature of God’s Act of Justification,” p. 27. And if one wants to see the consistence of faith’s persuasion with doubting well-discoursed and illustrated, he may consult Downham’s “Christian Warfare.”

But we *answer*, 3dly, there is a full persuasion and assurance by reflection, spiritual argumentation, or inward sensation, which we are far from holding to be of the essence of faith; but this last (inward sensation), being mediate, and collected by inference as we gather the cause from those signs and effects that evidence it, is very different from that confidence or persuasion that divines call the *assurance of faith*.

“*Sanctification*,” says Rutherford, “does not evidence *justification* as faith evidences it, with such a clearness as light evidences colours, though it is no sign or evident mark of them; but more as smoke evinces fire, and as the morning star in the east evinces the sun will rise early, or as the streams prove there is a head-spring from which they issue, though none of these make what they evidence visible to the eye. So sanctification gives evidence of justification only as marks, signs, and effects give evidence to the cause.”

He calls it a light of arguing and of heavenly logic, by which we know that we know God by the light of faith, because we keep his commandments.

“In effect,” he says, “we know the person must be justified in whom these gracious evidences exist, only by hearsay report or consequence, rather than by knowing or seeing justification or faith itself *in abstracto*. But the light of faith — the testimony of the Spirit by the operation of free grace — will cause us to see with our eyes, as it were, justification and faith; not by report, but as we see the sun-light.”

Again he says,

“We never had a question with Antinomians touching the first assurance of justification, as is proper to the light of faith. He (Cornwall) might have spared all his arguments to prove that we are first assured of our justification by faith, not by good works, for we grant the arguments of one sort of assurance which is proper to faith, and they prove nothing against another sort of assurance, by signs and effects, which is also divine.”

Further, as to the difference between these two kinds of assurance: the assurance of faith has its object and foundation *without* the man, but that of sense has them *within* him. The assurance of *faith* looks to Christ, the promise and covenant of God, and says, “This is all my salvation; God has spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice;” but the assurance of *sense* looks inward at the works of God, such as the person’s own graces, attainments, experiences, and the like. The assurance of faith giving evidence to things not seen, can claim an interest in, and plead a saving relation to a

hiding, withdrawing God. Zion said, “My Lord has forgotten me;” ^{Isa 49.14} and the spouse, “I opened to my beloved, but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone.” ^{Song 5.6} So he may be a forgetting and a withdrawing God to my *feeling*; “and yet to my *faith*, he is my God and my Lord still,” says holy Rutherford; “even as the wife may believe the angry and forsaking husband is still her husband.” But on the other hand, the assurance of sense is the evidence of things seen and felt. The one says, “I *take* him for mine;” the other says, “I *feel* he is mine.” The one says with the church, “My God yet *will* hear me, though he covers himself with a cloud that my prayer cannot pass through;” the other, “My God *has* heard me.” ^{Psa 66.19} The one says, “He *will* bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness;” ^{Psa 17.15}

366 APPENDIX.

the other says, “He *has* brought me forth to the light, and I behold his righteousness.” The one says, “Though he should kill me, yet will I trust in him;” ^{Job 13.15} the other, “He smiles and shines on me, therefore, I will love him and trust in him.”

On the whole, we humbly conceive, if the nature and grounds of faith’s persuasion were more narrowly and impartially under the guidance of the Spirit of truth, if it were searched into and laid open, instead of discouraging weak Christians, it would exceedingly tend to strengthen and increase faith, and consequently it will have a mighty influence on spiritual comfort, and true gospel holiness, which will always be found to bear proportion to faith, as effects bear proportion to the efficacy and influence of their causes.

QUERY 9. — What is that act of faith, by which a sinner appropriates Christ and his saving benefits to himself?

Ans. — This question being plainly and fully answered in what was said on the immediately foregoing question, we refer to that, and proceed to the tenth question.

QUERY 10. — Can the revelation of the divine will in the word — affording a warrant to offer Christ to all, and a warrant to all to receive him — be said to be the Father’s making of a deed of gift and grant of Christ to *all* mankind? Is this grant to *all* mankind by sovereign grace? And is it absolute or conditional?

Ans. — Here we are directed to that part of our Representation where we complain that the following passage is condemned: “The Father has made a deed of gift or grant to all mankind, that whoever of them shall believe in his Son, shall not perish;” and where we say that, “This treatment of the passage seems to encroach on the warrants mentioned, and also on sovereign grace which has made this grant, not to devils, but to men, in terms which none can be imagined more extensive;” which is agreeable to what we have already said in our Representation. We answer to the first part of the question, that by the “deed of gift or grant to all mankind.” we understand no more than the revelation of the divine will in the word, affording warrant to offer Christ to all, and a warrant to all to receive him; for although we believe that the purchase and application of redemption is peculiar to the elect, who were given by the Father to Christ in the counsel of peace, yet the warrant to receive him is common to all. Ministers, by virtue of the commission they have received from their great Lord and Master, are authorized and instructed to go preach the gospel to every creature, *i.e.*, to make a full, free, and unhampered offer of him, his grace, righteousness, and salvation, to every rational soul to whom they may in providence have access to speak. And if we had a voice like a trumpet, that could reach all the corners of the earth, we think we would be bound, by virtue of our commission, to lift it up, and say, “To you men we call, and our voice is to the sons of men. God has so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” This “deed of gift and grant, that whoever believes in Christ shall not perish,” etc., is not called a

“deed of gift, and grant of Christ,” either in our Representation or in the passages of the book condemned on that topic. Yet being required to give our judgment in this point, we think that, agreeable to the Holy Scripture, it may be so called, as it particularly appears from the text last cited, John 3.16.

APPENDIX. 367

There, by giving Christ, we understand not only his eternal destination by the Father to be the Redeemer of an elect world, and giving him unto death for them, in the fulness of time, but more especially giving him in the word to all, to be received and believed in. “The giving here cannot be a giving in possession, which is peculiar only to those who actually believe; rather, it must be such a giving, granting, or offering, as warrants a man to believe or receive the gift; and it must therefore be anterior to actual believing. This is evident enough from the text itself: he gave him, “that whoever believes in him should not perish,” etc. The context also, to us, puts it beyond controversy: the brazen serpent was given, and lifted up as a common good to the whole camp of Israel, that being stung by the fiery serpents, whoever in all the camp looked to it, might not die, but live. So here Christ is given to a lost world, in the word, “that whoever believes in him should not perish,” etc. And in this respect, we think, Christ is a common Saviour, and his salvation is a common salvation; and it is “glad tidings of great joy to all people,” that unto us (not to angels that fell) this Son is given, and this Child is born, whose name is called Wonderful, etc., Isa. 9.6.

We have a Scripture that is also to this purpose, John 6.32, where Christ, speaking to a promiscuous multitude, makes a comparison between himself and the manna that fell about the tents of Israel in the wilderness, saying, “My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.” As the simple raining of the manna about their camp is called a giving (ver. 31), before it was tasted or fed upon, so the very revelation and offer of Christ is called (according to the judicious Calvin on the passage) a giving of him, before he is received and believed on.

We also read of this giving of Christ to lost mankind in 1John 5.11, “And this is the record, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.” This giving in the text is not, we conceive, a giving in *possession*, in greater or lesser measure, but a giving by way of *grant* and offer, whereupon one may warrantably take possession. And the party to whom the grant is made, is not only the elect, but lost mankind; for the record of God here must be such a thing as warrants *all* to believe on the Son of God, But it cannot be any such warrant to tell, “that God has given eternal life to the elect.” For making a gift to a certain select company of persons can never be a warrant for all men to receive or take possession of it. This will be further evident if we consider that the great sin of unbelief does not lie in believing this record of God, — “He that does not believe has made God a liar,” says the apostle, ver. 10, “because he does not believe the record that God gave of his Son;” and then it follows in ver. 11, “And this is the record, that God has given us eternal life,” etc. Now, are we to think that rejecting the record of God is a bare disbelieving of this proposition: “That God has given eternal life *to the elect*”? Surely not; for the most desperate unbelievers, such as Judas and others, believe this; and their belief of it adds to their anguish and torment. Or by believing this, do they set their seal to it, that God is true? No; notwithstanding all this, they continue to make him out to be a liar in “not believing this record of God,” that by way of grant, God has given eternal life to lost mankind, and to themselves in particular. So they, as well as others, are warranted and welcome to believe it; and everyone to whom it comes, at their peril, are required to receive or take possession of it by faith. By *not receiving* this gifted and offered remedy, with application and appropriation, they fly in the face of God’s record and testimony; and therefore they justly and deservedly perish,

368 APPENDIX.

because the righteousness, salvation, and kingdom of God, was brought so near to them in the free offer of the gospel, and yet they would not take it. We think the great pinch and strait of an

awakened conscience does not lie in believing that God has given eternal life *to the elect*; but in believing or receiving Christ, offered to us in the gospel, with particular application to the man himself.¹ In Scripture this is called “eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of the Son of man.” Yet, till this difficulty is surmounted in greater or lesser measure, someone can never be said to believe in Christ, or to receive and rest upon him for salvation. The very taking or receiving must presuppose a *giving* of Christ; and this giving may occur (and it does for the most part) where there is no *receiving*. But there can be no receiving of Christ for salvation where there is no revelation of Christ in the word of the gospel, affording a sinner the warrant to receive him; and then, by the effectual operation of the Spirit, persuading and enabling the sinner to embrace him upon this warrant and offer. “A man,” says the Spirit of God in John 3.27, “can receive nothing, unless it is given him from heaven.” Hence Mr. Rutherford, in his “Christ Dying and Drawing,” etc., page 442, says that “reprobates have as fair a warrant to believe as the elect have.”

As to the second part of this question, *i.e.*, “Is this grant made to all mankind by sovereign grace? And, Is it absolute or conditional?” we answer that this grant, made in common to lost mankind, is from sovereign grace only. And because it is the ministers’ warrant to offer Christ to all, and the people’s warrant to receive him, it cannot fail to be absolutely free. Yet this is such that none can be possessed of Christ and his benefits, until they receive him by faith.

QUERY 11. — Is the division of the law, as explained and applied in *The Marrow*, justified? And can it not be rejected without burying several gospel truths?

Ans. — We humbly judge that the tripartite division of the law,² if rightly understood, may be allowed as orthodox. Yet, seeing that what we are concerned with, as contained in our Representation, is only the division of the law into the Law of Works, and the Law of Christ, we say that we are still of the opinion that this distinction of the law is to be carefully maintained. In that regard, according to the Scripture, We understand the Law of Works to be the *Covenant of Works* which believers are wholly and altogether delivered from — although they are certainly under the law of the Ten Commandments in the hand of a Mediator. And if this distinction of the law, thus applied, is overthrown and declared groundless, then several sweet gospel truths must unavoidably fall in its ruins. For instance, if there is no difference put between the law as a *covenant*, and the law as a *rule of life* to believers, in the hand of Christ, then it must follow that the law still retains its covenant-form with respect to believers, and that they are still under the law in this formality. This is contrary to Scripture, Rom. 6.14, and 7.1-3,³ and contrary to the *Confession of Faith*, chap. 19.6.⁴ It would also follow that the sins of believers are still to be

¹ In other words, even devils believe that Christ died for the elect; but they don’t believe he died for themselves. They acknowledge what the gift is, and its effect for those who believe, but they won’t receive that gift for themselves.

² The Law of Works, the Law of Faith (or Covenant of Grace), and the Law of Christ.

³ **Rom 6:14** For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. **Rom 7:1** Or do you not know, brethren (for I speak to those who know the law), that the law has dominion over a man as long as he lives?

² For the woman who has a husband is bound by the law to *her* husband as long as he lives. But if the husband dies, she is released from the law of *her* husband. ³ So then if, while *her* husband lives, she marries another man, she will be called an adulteress; but if her husband dies, she is free from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she has married another man. ⁴ Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another-- to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.

⁴ **WCF 19.6.** Although true believers are not under the law, as a Covenant of Works, to be justified or condemned by it; yet it is of great use to them, as well as to others in that, as a rule of life informing them of the will of God, and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly; it also reveals the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts and lives; so that, examining themselves by it, they may come to a further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin, together with a clearer although these are not due them by the law as it would be in a Covenant of Works. Thus, doing good and refraining from evil, because the law encourages the one and deters the other, is no evidence of a man’s being under the law and not under grace. sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of His obedience. It is likewise of use to the regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin: and its

looked at as breaches of the Covenant of Works, and consequently, that their sins not only deserve the wrath and curse of God (which is a most certain truth), but also make them actually liable to the wrath of God, and the pains of hell forever, which is true only of those who are in a state of black nature; *Lesser Catechism* ques. 19,¹ and contrary to the *Confession of Faith*, chap. 19.1.² It will likewise follow, that believers are still to eye God as a vindictive and wrathful Judge,

APPENDIX. 369

even though his justice is fully satisfied in the death and blood of their blessed Surety, apprehended by faith. These and many other sweet gospel truths, we think, fall in the ruins of the foresaid distinction, if it is condemned as groundless.

Query. 12. — Is the hope of heaven and fear of hell to be excluded from the motives of the believer's obedience? And if not, how can *The Marrow* be defended, which expressly excludes them, though it allows other motives?

Ans.— Here we are referred to the third particular heading, in which we think *The Marrow* is injured by the Assembly's act, which for brevity's sake we will not transcribe: but agreeable both to our Representation and the scope of *The Marrow*, we answer that taking heaven to be a state of endless felicity in the enjoyment of God in Christ, we are so far from thinking that this is to be excluded from being a motive for the believer's obedience, that we think it is the chief end of man, next to the glory of God. Psalm 73.25, "Whom have I in heaven but you?" etc. Heaven, instead of being a reward to the believer, would be a desolate wilderness to him without the enjoyment of a God in Christ. The Lord and the Lamb are the light of that place. God himself is the portion of his people; he is their shield and exceeding great reward. The very copestone³ of the happiness of heaven lies in being "forever with the Lord, and in beholding his glory;" and the believer is indeed to have his eye on this as the recompense of reward, and a noble motive for obedience. But to form conceptions of heaven as a place of pleasure and happiness without the former views of it, and to fancy that this heaven is to be obtained by our own works and doings, is unworthy of a believer, a child of God — in that regard, it is slavish, legal, mercenary, and carnal.

As for the fear of hell being a motive of the believer's obedience, we consider it one of the special branches of that glorious liberty with which Christ has made his people free, so that they yield obedience to the Lord, not out of slavish fear of hell and wrath, but out of a child-like love and willing mind.⁴ *Confession*, chap. 20.1. "Christ has delivered us out of the hands of our enemies, that we might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness, all the days of our lives," Luke 1.74, 75. A filial fear of God and of his fatherly displeasure, is worthy of the believer, being

threats serve to show what even *their* sins deserve; and what afflictions, in this life, they may expect for them, even though freed from the curse of it that is threatened in the law. The promises of it, in the same way, show them God's approval of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon its performance:

¹ **Q. 19. What is the misery of that estate into which man fell? A.** All mankind by their fall lost communion with God, are under his wrath and curse, and so are made liable to all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.

² **WCF 19.1** God gave a law to Adam, as a Covenant of Works, by which He bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience; God promised life upon the fulfilling of it, and threatened death upon the breach of it, and endowed Adam with the power and ability to keep it.

³ A final touch; a crowning achievement; a culmination.

⁴ 6. Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now, under the Gospel, either tied to, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed: but God is to be worshipped everywhere, in spirit and truth; such as, in private families daily, and in secret, each one by himself; so, it is to be done more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not to be neglected carelessly or willfully, or forsaken, when God, by His Word or providence, calls us there.

a fruit of faith, and of the spirit of adoption. But a slavish fear of hell and wrath, from which he is delivered by Christ, is not a fruit of faith, but of unbelief. And as far as a believer is not drawn with love, but is driven on in his obedience with a slavish fear of hell, we think he is under a spirit of bondage. And judging this to be *The Marrow's* sense of rewards and punishments with respect to a believer, we think it may and ought to be defended.

And this doctrine, which we apprehend to be the truth, stands supported not only by Scripture and our *Confession of Faith*, but also by the suffrages of some of our soundest divines; for instance Mr. Rutherford: — “Believers,” he says, “are to be sad for their sins, as offensive to the authority of the Lawgiver and the love of Christ, though they are not to fear the eternal punishment of them;” *sorrow* for sin, and *fear* for sin, are most different to us. Again, says the same author, “Servile obedience, under apprehension of legal terror, was never commanded in the spiritual law of God to the Jews, more than to us,” Durham (*loco citato*.) “The believer,” he says, “being freed from the law as a covenant, his life does not depend on the promise annexed to the law, nor is he in danger by the threatenings adjoined to it.

370 APPENDIX.

Both of these are made void to believers through Christ.” And to conclude, we are clearly of Dr. Owen’s mind about the use of threatenings of everlasting wrath with reference to believers. Though he admits they are declarative of God’s hatred of sin, and his will to punish it, yet in regard to the execution of them, it is inconsistent with the covenant, and with God’s faithfulness in it. He says, “The use of them cannot be to beget in believers an anxious, doubting, solicitous fear about the punishment threatened, grounded on a supposition that the person fearing will be overtaken with it, nor to beget a perplexing fear of hell-fire. Even though it is often a consequence of some of God’s dispensations toward us from our own sins, or a consequence of the weakness of our faith, it is nowhere prescribed to us as a duty; nor is the ingenerating of it in us the design of any of the threatenings of God.” His reasons, together with the nature of that fear which the threatening of eternal wrath ought to beget in believers, may be viewed among the rest of the authorities.

These are some thoughts that have been offered to us upon the queries, which we lay before the Reverend Commission with all becoming deference, humbly craving that charity (which thinks no evil) may procure a favourable construing of our words, so that no sense may be put upon them, nor inference drawn from them, which we never intended. And in regard to the tenor of our doctrine, and of our aims in our conduct (though with a mixture of much sinful weakness), we have been sincerely pointed at the honour of the Lord Jesus as our king as well as priest, as our sanctification as well as our righteousness. We can only regret that we have been aspersed,¹ as turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and casting off the obligation of the holy law of the Ten Commandments. For we are persuaded that the damnation of those who either do that, or teach so, is just and unavoidable if mercy does not prevent it. But now, after this plain and ingenuous declaration of our principles, if we must still lie under the same load of reproach, it is our comfort that we have the testimony of our conscience clearing us in that matter.^{2Cor 1.12} And we have no doubt that the Lord will in due time bring forth our righteousness as the light, and our judgment as the noon-day.^{Psa 37.6} We only add that we adhere to our Representation and Petition in all points; and so much the more, now that we have already observed the sad fruits, and bad improvement made of the Assembly’s deed, complained of in it.

These answers, contained in this and the preceding pages (namely: of the manuscript given in) are subscribed at Edinburgh, March 12th, 1722, by us,

¹ Charge falsely or with malicious intent; attack the good name and reputation of someone.

Messrs. JAMES HOG, Carnock.
THOMAS BOSTON, Etterick.
JOHN WILLIAMSON, Inveresk.
JAMES KID, Queensferry.
GABRIEL WILSON, Maxton.
EBENEZER ERSKINE, Portmoack.
RALPH ERSKINE, Dunfermline.
JAMES WARDLAW, Dunfermline.
HENRY DAVIDSON, Galashiels.
JAMES BATHGATE, Orwel.
WILLIAM HUNTER, Lilliesleaf.

THE END.

