

GOD'S OPERATIONS OF GRACE BUT NO OFFERS OF HIS GRACE

*To which are added two brief treatises.
The One about Invitation, and the other
about Exhortation of Sinners to come to
Christ; both examined and consistently
stated with the Glory of Free Grace, to
rectify some Common and Prevailing
Mistakes in Ministers, who now with Time,
are running in the Present Generation.*

By Joseph Hussey

**A Poor Despised Servant of JESUS CHRIST,
and Pastor of the Congregational Church of
Christ at Cambridge.**

Ezekiel 4:1-2.

1707

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PREFACE

There have been many shifts in the sands of theological issues and terminology since the days of Fuller, Rushton, and Joseph Hussey, but the basic issues remain the same. In his Defence of Particular Redemption, William Rushton expressed the truth, that to be clear on the doctrine of election and the atonement, is more important than preaching the Gospel; that is, we must first understand the foundation principles of the good news;-then may follow the proper manner of presenting that good news. The erroneous and unscriptural teaching of a universal atonement by the sacrifice of Christ, inevitably leads to the equally erroneous proclamation of a universal offer of Salvation. The vital issue, then, still remains, namely, Did Christ make atonement for the sins of the human race? Is the good news or Gospel, to be preached as a means to secure eternally the subjects of that universal atonement? Was the utility or purpose of the Gospel to "save" all the lost, or to "call out" or convert only the redeemed elect? The so-called Free-offer system was another by-product of the doctrine of universal atonement. It was the manner of preaching adapted by those men who not only believed that Christ died to save all men, but also that men by nature, possess a Free-will ability whereby they may "accept or reject" the proposed "offer" of the good news. The burden of Mr. Hussey's arguments is primarily to refute the unscriptural and Christ-dishonouring system of "Free offers" indiscriminately addressed to all alike. It is truly a blasphemous presentation of Christ's "finished" redemption, offered to all who will make it Effectual by their acceptance of the proposed offer! The reader will note that Mr. Hussey's arguments against Free-offers of Grace, are well undergirded with the scriptures of truth, especially those touching depravity of the human will, election, Effectual calling, and the work of the Holy Spirit in regeneration or the new birth. The author pauses to ask this pointed question: "Therefore why do you not look to bring the form of preaching to God's work, than to bring

down the power of God's work to your form of preaching?" We must face the fact that now in our times, nearly all of "Christendom" is no longer concerned with the foundation doctrine of election and particular redemption. The chief concern is for the best operational "methods" to bring the most members into their system. The chief motive in the religious world is not to honour and exalt Christ and His Grace, but rather to advance a religious organization, often called "Christian Evangelism." This old writing, will therefore be of interest to those only who still have some respect and concern for "the truth as it is in Jesus" and for "all the counsel of God." It is to you, the following pages are again presented, for your confirmation and establishment in the truth. Having been written nearly three hundred years ago, you will find the style of expression somewhat different than now used. This, however, in many respects is refreshing and to the point. Once the reader gets the author's trend of thought and expression, he will be well rewarded. If it be God's will, may it please Him to use it in stirring up some "pure minds" on this important matter. W. J. Berry, Sr., North Carolina, 1973. {From the abridged 1973 Edition, Primitive Publications, USA.}

The Editor to the Reader I

The Sovereign love of God the Father, the free gift of his Son Jesus Christ, the saving, irresistible and abiding operations of the Holy Ghost, together with the revelation and application of them to the mind, and consciences of his own elect, and none other, irrespective of any worth, worthiness, state, or condition whatever, are the truths testified and maintained in this work, in opposition to pretended Calvinistic preachers of the Gospel; who in his, as well as our days, are the greatest opposers of the cross of Christ, for instead of being content to stand in the counsel of God, and point sinners to Christ; as John did, with "behold the Lamb of God," or, as the Apostles did, showing the way of Salvation; or as the Spouse did,

describing Christ's beauty, till someone falls in love with him, leaving our Lord to make his own choice.

They, under pretense of extra-liberality, go a step, one awful step further, than the Counsel of God, by offering Christ to all their hearers; and very often, that none may mistake their presumptuous generosity, will then intently urge upon their hearers, one in all, to accept, and not to miss, but at that very moment to accept their offer of Christ.

How men came by such authority I know not, and how the transfer can be made without the Holy Ghost, who is generally left out of the question on such occasions, would be as difficult for me to explain, as for them to perform. If this is not spiritual wickedness in high places, and Popery in the abstract, I know not what is!

Such conduct, such offers, such proffers, may very well agree with the traders of Rome, who have Christs in wood and in stone, hanging at the girdle of every popish priest. Such Christs as these, such preachers may offer and proffer to all men; such men may and can accept such Christs, and may as easily part from them again, when they have got them.

A popish Christ is a Christ of wood, a false preacher's Christ is a Christ of words; but Christ Jesus, our Lord, whom Paul preached, and Mr. Hussey holds forth in this book, is the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace; who fills Heaven and Earth, by whom all things exist and consist, by whom these very beings are held in being, that vainly and presumptuously pretend to offer and proffer him one to another.

The Christ of God, who is equal with the Father, seated on the throne of his Glory, holding all power, dominion, and might; made higher than the heavens, to whom all principalities and powers are subject; and at whose presence both the earth and the heavens shall flee away, is neither to be offered, proffered, lent, borrowed, bought, sold or given of men. He is the gift of the Father, to as many as the Father has ordained to eternal life, and none other. This Christ, this gift of the Father, is revealed and applied to the heirs of Salvation by the Holy Ghost,

when, where, and how he pleases; not when, where, and how men please. And the man that attempts to supersede such plan of operations in any respect sets himself against the Counsel of God, the Covenant of God, the Work of God; and, as far as he goes, sins against the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of God.

It is not to whom men will offer Christ; but to whom the Father will give him, even to such as he hath ordained to eternal life; to such, and such only he gives power to believe on him, to receive him, and become the sons of God, even to as many as believe on his name.

These gifts and callings of God, the Holy Ghost reveals, while Christ is preached, or pointed to; not while he is offered, from one sinner to another. The Holy Ghost countenances no such conduct. When he, the Spirit of truth, shall come, he shall guide, not offer, you into all truth, for he shall take of the things that are Christ's, and show them unto you.

The Holy Spirit does not teach men to offer, but to preach, or expound Christ; it is wickedness in any man as a fallen finite creature, to attempt to offer Christ who is infinite in Majesty, Glory, and Holiness, indiscriminately to all men, who are by nature rebels, in chains of guilt, having no desire towards him, and seeing no beauty in him.

But it would not be wickedness to describe or preach Christ, though infinite in majesty and glory, to such rebels; neither would it be wickedness to direct enemies in chains, to petition Christ, though he be infinite in Majesty, and glorious in Holiness; because he says of such, that they shall come after me in chains, and with weeping and bitter supplications, will I lead them.

These and other glorious truths Mr. Hussey not only preached, but very ably defended; against whom? The avowed enemies of Christ? No, these were not half so dangerous in his opinion as they who pretended to hold a form of sound words, calling themselves Calvinists, when, at the same time, they privately hated the doctrines he held, and by a kind of underground way of proceeding in their matter of preaching, kept back the Sovereignty of Christ, and held him forth in a conditional

way of offers and proffers; so artfully, if possible, as to overturn with one hand, what they pretended to build with the other.

The glorious truths, contended for by Mr. Hussey, having a direct tendency to discover the hypocrisy of pretended half-hearted preachers of Free and Sovereign Grace. The only way left them to escape detection, was by calling him an Antinomian, and by warning people against reading or hearing him; so, by blinding their eyes, and prejudicing their minds, till they can neither see the hypocrisy of their counsellors, nor their own souls interest in Christ, may be easily led away to the slaughter.

Now, reader, if you value your soul's prosperity, or the favour of Christ, beware! And whenever you hear men call such doctrines Antinomianism, ask them for their experience, and you will find that they are no more than Arminians in disguise, though Calvinists by profession.

Seek a blessing of the Lord, then read it for yourself; afterwards take the book and ask their opinion; if they are not sound at heart, they must immediately, to prevent your discovering their Arminianism, call it Antinomianism. Adieu, while I remain for Christ's sake, the truth, and your soul's sake, yours sincerely, THE EDITOR. *{From the 1792 Edition printed for G. Terry.}*

The Editor to the Reader II

To the Godly in Christ Jesus. Respecting Mr. Hussey's treatise on God's Operations of Grace, permit me to say, that in every age Satan has had his engines planted against mount Zion "the church of the living God, the beloved city," either to distress or to destroy her. Among others, false apostles, false ministers, false doctrines, were none of the least, in order to pervert the right ways of the Lord, and to turn aside the simple from the paths of understanding.

In the days of Mr. Hussey, the author of this precious and experimental treatise, they abounded. Ministers of Satan transformed into angels of light, appear

to him more detestable and more dangerous to the church and fold of Christ, than open opposers of the truth as it is in Jesus. Such wolves in sheep's clothing had crept in unawares, not merely to spy out, but, if possible, to root out the liberties and privileges of the children of God.

These base ends they endeavoured to accomplish, not by fair, open, avowed opposition to the truth, but by holding it in unrighteousness; walking in craftiness, and half-heartedness, and hypocrisy; by feigned words, making merchandise of the simple and their experiences, holding the letter of the word, but denying the spirit thereof; holding the form, but denying the power, from such he turned away.

Their business was to aim oblique strokes at Christian experience and confound the marks of sound Conversion; so that the hope of the righteous is removed. These base ends were to be accomplished, by calling an assurance of faith, vain presumption - a good hope, a false notion - communication with Father and Son through the Spirit, forged imagination - repentance unto life, a thing uncertain - an application of the word of life and promise to the soul, fanaticism and delusion; in short, that a life of faith in the Lamb of God, was not so much to be depended on as a life of doubting; that the love of God shed abroad in the heart, was not sufficient to produce good works, unless slavish fear was mixed therewith.

Thus, these arch heralds of Satan attempted to destroy the believer standing on the Rock of Ages, to tear from his bosom every ground of comfort, and to pluck him from the strongholds, by first obliterating the marks of his regeneration, sonship, and interest in Christ; and then, if possible, debase him to the level of their own uncertainties.

Yet, to give a finishing stroke to the whole, brand him with the odious name of Antinomian, while themselves, as enemies to the power of godliness, were the only characters in the world that deserved it.

In opposition to such, and in order to stop the mouths of such betrayers of the flock of Christ, the Lord raised up our author, and caused him to send forth this

treatise, on God's Operations of Grace; who, well aware of the craft of his adversaries, was, in the strength of the Lord, enabled to hold forth and defend those truths that his enemies had endeavoured to obscure; describing, the marks, evidences, privileges, difficulties, and temptations of the children of God. Likewise, the Glory of Christ, and his Kingdom, Offices, Characters and Covenant Engagements, &c., the abiding influence and sufficiency of the Holy Ghost to teach his people, and to guide them into all truth; the privileges of saints, and the portion of hypocrites; the work of Christ's ministers, and the devices of Satan's messengers; the sufficiency of Christ, and the insignificance of everything short of him.

Now reader, for your sake as well as my own, I have republished this; if you know your interest in these things, happy are you. If you do not, be advised to rely on no man's bare word; hear for yourself, read for yourself, pray for yourself, and get a knowledge of your interest in Christ for yourself; such a thing is to be had, and without it religion is vain. Therefore, prove all things, hold fast that which is good, be not deceived, God is not mocked, whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap, for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. That the latter may be your portion, is the wish of yours, &c.

{From a Second - Undated - Revised and Corrected Edition printed for G. Terry.}

***To the Brethren in the Ministry of Christ,
of all Persuasions, even as many as have
put on our Lord Jesus Christ in their
Ministerial Office.***

Brethren,

Grace, Mercy, and Truth be with you; even Peace from God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Lord. My heart is stirred up to write a few things to you, not as patrons of the author, but as possessors of the Truth as it is in Jesus; which truth, you are called by Him to hold forth to

others. What cause have you to thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled you, for that He has counted you faithful, putting you into the ministry! Many of you who are poor and despised, yet count it all joy when you fall into divers temptations. Some few of you who are learned in part, {as to what men value in learning,} put your highest proficiency in this, that you have learned Christ; and as to any other learning too, you could never have received it, except it had been given you out of Christ's Nature-Fulness from above. Christ is a more learned Person than ever any else hath been who hath attained unto the greatest learning upon earth; I mean he is so even in the very things men call learning; I exclude not philosophy, languages, history, antiquity, arts and sciences; for in all these respects Christ has the Pre-Eminence, though he teacheth not these things by his Spirit. You who are his ministers in better things; in the things of a Gospel Revelation; how honourable a relation do you bear to the Highest LORD and Potentate! What transcendent work and service is the service of the Gospel, in which you are called to serve the Lord! But as you are ministers of Christ, I am persuaded that you do not live without your Ministerial trials; and are not the trials of the ministry {throughout the extent of them} some of the greatest of trials? It's a miracle of Grace that so many stand, and so few desert. As to my own part, I can remember my own Ministerial buffetings; for I have been sometimes upon the brink of laying all down, through a view of my own insufficiency in the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures of Truth. Nor could I find relief {but only increased in doubts} by whole shelves of learned Annotators, or Doctors, of any denomination, though no sort of interpreters since the Reformation have escaped my view. But alas! When I had gathered up Elijah's mantle, without the Lord God of Elijah; and when I ran before my Master with Elisha's staff, and laid the staff upon the face of the dead child, as the prophet's servant did upon the Shunamite's, I found it contributed nothing to soul conversion, nor soul recovery; for under the dry staff there was neither voice nor hearing! Nevertheless, the Lord himself hath visited me in my temptations, and

relieved me in my ministry. He hath carried me through and above the storms that beat upon me in my office. My ministry was to be Christ's, and not to be my own; and therefore his Grace hath been sufficient for me. When this temptation storm concerning the sense of Scriptures had been blown over, another storm beat upon my soul; and that was still from my own further insufficiency to keep off from the latent natural Arminianism that still sprung up in my own proud, blind and conceited mind, and made all my Calvinism and Orthodoxy to be but form and notion. I seemed to lack the powerful life of that Grace to possess and fill my soul in all my sound notions thereof; and without this vital principle in Operation I found all my orthodoxy to be but a burden of dead, heavy preaching on my heart and hands. I found the occasion of this mischief to have been my following of various authors, and labouring to varnish my beliefs, where I could not support them, by human testimonies; though Christ hath expressly said, that he received not testimony from man. And I did it not as some do, who seem to believe they come off well, when they have told us, they'll mention the testimony of two great men, suppose Dr. Ames and Dr. Owen; but I verily thought with myself I came off but poorly, if I did not thoroughly search the Fathers, such as the two Clements, Ignatius, Justin Martyr, Theophilus, Irenaeus, Tatian, Maximus, Tertullian, Hippolitus, Origen, Ammonius, Minutius Foelix, Novatian, {though counted a heretic,} Gregory, Cyprian, Victorinus, Arnobius, Iactantius, Eusebius, Athanasius, Didymus, Hilary, Titus Bostrensis, Cyril, Optatus, Ambrose, Basil, Gregory Nazianzen, Jerome, Epiphanius, Ruffinus, Chrysostom, {that golden mouth charmer,} Augustine; all these on from A.D. 70 to about A.D. 400, {as we commonly reckon,} and from thence further on to the innumerable writers of 1000 years more, even down to the bottom of our school men. In this search I spent many years, still with mine eye upon the Holy Scripture, and upon what measures of Gospel light and spirituality had been dispensed forth unto any of them; thereby still to make up my reckoning in the close, and improve in my own light, from what everyone could contribute in any part of

the Gospel; but alas, upon the search I have found them utterly to fail my expectation, and to deal deceitfully, in comparison of the Scriptures themselves, as Job speaks of his friends, when he compares them to the dried summer brooks that deceive the thirsty traveller. And truly brethren, I may tell you, who have tried testimonies as much as most of you, that an itch among us to bring in testimonies even of modern authors to revealed truths, especially when the testimony stops the growth of further Reformation and an increase in the knowledge of the Gospel of Christ, and advances in Spirituality, is a very pernicious practice, and for ought I see is bringing down the wrath of God upon unsanctified pens. If a man's argument lay in human wisdom, human testimonies may be proper to adorn and strengthen it; and it may be necessary in making out the matter of fact, and often even stops the mouths of men who can talk of nothing else, except their earthly glosses upon heavenly things. But the best of human testimonies are an ill medium to testify to the truth of the Gospel, because the Gospel is all built upon Divine Revelation, and thus it needs not to receive testimony from men. But some men have little else to write upon any argument, except just what is written in their hand. It is clear to me, that the man who goes about to defend the faith of the Gospel, or refute error, by testimony from authors, would have been an active instrument, to have done as much disservice to the Lord Christ in some of the ancient councils {made up of the learned doctors of the particular age in which they met} that have been called to put truths to the vote, and enact Canons of Anathema upon all that were otherwise minded, and could not subscribe to the article, or the declaration; as the men did, who were delegated to compose such ecclesiastical synods, and sit as members in them upon church matters. As to this matter of synods, we have no evangelical history of the councils, done with Gospel remarks upon all their horrid disorder, to serve the Truth; and I am persuaded it would appear, that the original of them was not to be found in Acts 15 {from whence they are fetched} for I never knew {by what I have seen} one council in the world, sitting upon Divine

Matters, like it; either as to the nature of the argument, or the importance of the conjuncture, or the authority of the persons, or the assistance of the mind.

Well, all these things {in the Lord's providential timing} vanished, and were gone with me, when Christ clearly led me into more of the love of the Father, the knowledge of Himself and the Operations of the Spirit, in my last book. This sweetly calmed the storm of troubles raised upon my own insufficiency in the ministry, and rebuked the temptation which had staggered me from holding on my work; and Christ taught me to keep off from the natural Arminianism that runs through all our common labours, whether fitted to the eye or ear, for want of clear distinguishings. This also calmed the storm of troubles raised upon my thoughts in departing from human testimonies, and wading through difficult points, where I saw no author before me that had either waded or ferried over! The fruit of my labours in the following piece, I therefore dedicate and present to you, hoping the Lord may use it to instruct, or strengthen you in His own work; and if he does, you will bless God in Christ who hath raised a better structure in the Word of Truth, than is hereafter pulled down in human writings. Covet earnestly the best gifts, and yet show I unto you a more excellent way, which that you may obtain and receive, is the hope and prayer of, brethren, your brother in Christ, and in the Lord's work, **Joseph Hussey**.

EPISTLE TO THE READER

Reader, having met with very gracious dealings from my God, not only in carrying me through a large tract formally¹, but in blessing the publication thereof to so many souls far and near, as holy and savoury testimonies {of their experience upon this argument by me in

¹ Reference is to Hussey's previous work titled, *Glory of Christ Unveiled, or the Excellency of Christ Vindicated*, 1706.

manuscript} do witness; and since there are very few copies of the 500 books printed, now remaining, which are not sold off, my heart has been again drawn forth to publish a new labour.

As to my former volume I'll add one caveat to the reader, to take off an undo aspersion, for it hath been insinuated, as if I had there stolen what hath been confessed to be excellent about eternal things, out of Dr. Goodwin's volume two, and part one. I am bound to declare, that this is utterly false! For all those things were meditated in my own thoughts, digested into the form they appear in, and were all printed off before ever I saw the Doctor's treatise, where there is said to be such a harmony. Nor had I seen it then, but that providentially I heard it spoken to me, concerning what the doctor had written. If I had seen him, it is very probable my thoughts might have been carried to another subject; for I do not choose to write the same things which I know to have been well done before. I do not know to this day, that there is anything in it like plagiarism or book-stealing. If it appears to be another, let the parallel decide it. Let the Doctor be put in one column, and let me be put in another column, thereby comparing the two. For without a demonstration of the fact, it is a bearing of false witness to publish it.

The doctrine of the descent of Christ's humanity, there opened and maintained, without either the heretical elapse, or any abstract notion of pre-existence, to cut off one part of his sacred humanity from another {for pre-existence is accustomed to be confined to souls, and not extended to bodies, in the schools of Plato} wherewith some men would fight against it, and others cloud it, is a Doctrine of Christ, which through Grace, will be more and more illustrated and confirmed from the Scriptures, since it's broken out into the world; and at this day doth shine the brighter, from the Spirit of Christ, through the curtain, and stands the firmer, even through the feebleness of the opposition. Let impartial readers examine the cause of both sides.

I had written a small essay upon two things in the Revelation, the one is, to prove the drying up of the River

Euphrates, as to the overflowings of it upon the European side of the Empire, to be passed, since the Treaty of Karlowitz in 1699. And the other is, to prove that the two witnesses spoken of in Revelation chapter eleven arose and stood upon their feet in Great Britain in the year 1687², or an entire commentary upon the 11th of the Revelation. And particularly, that the street of the great city of Rome which hath reigned over the kings of the earth, is a word fitly adapted by the Holy Ghost, not only to the geographical situation and length of England and Scotland, as a Street that bears its proportion to a City, but is fitted to the fore-view of the Union of the Two Kingdoms into One, and so designed by the spirit of Prophecy; that by putting this double pointer over the text-hand, we may not be at a loss in finding out where to read the Divine Accomplishment; wherein also are overthrown all the pretensions of an earlier rising of the Witnesses among the Waldensians. But the Lord hath at present put me upon another work, and filled me with more earnest longing to attempt something towards a rectifying of the Office of a Preacher Sent.

This piece therefore, so far as the Lord hath shown me, is to set part of the Doctrine of the Gospel in a clearer light than either nature or education have discerned it. The discourse beats down offers of Grace and of Christ to sinners, tenders and proposals of Grace and of Christ to sinners. And doth not this sound harsh? But what is it in us which makes us think so? Is it Grace or Nature? Read the treatise and then judge, whether the emphasis is to

² Reference here no doubt is to the Declaration for Liberty of Conscience, a proclamation made by James II of England in 1687. The Indulgence was a first step at establishing Religious Freedom in the British Isles. The Declaration granted broad religious freedom by suspending penal laws enforcing conformity to the Church of England and allowing persons to worship in their homes or chapels as they saw fit, and ended the requirement of affirming religious oaths before gaining employment in government office. By use of the royal suspending power, the king lifted the religious penal laws and granted toleration to the various denominations, Catholic and Protestant, within his kingdom.

be laid upon the Free Grace of God in Christ to sinners; or, upon offers, tenders and proposals; and you will see that sinners have a great deal more given them {as to their eternal relation in Christ, &c.,} both by God in Christ, and by the doctrine in this treatise, than so imagined.

But there are some among us who tell you, that they do not like controversy. This may be so; as difficulties and unbelief in doctrines make them controversial. These have more need therefore to be cleared. He that believes only that which was never controverted, believes perhaps in effect little more than that the sun shines, or that the rain falls. He is something of a naturalist, and perhaps that is near all he is good for? If he has taken up anything of Religion, he has taken it up surely upon some outward trust, without any inward power or experience. {"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." I Cor.4:20.} Whatsoever a man is convinced he sees, controversy ceases respecting that thing. But till your soul doth truly behold it, {by the sealing work of God the Spirit,} you know not whether it be true or false; if it once becomes your faith, your doubts will vanish. You live by it, and have done prating. Debates are swallowed up when they shine in Gospel Evidence. Oh, but still you say you do not love controversy! It is very hard to beat men off from harping upon this string. Well, pray what is it you do love? Do you love the shop? Do you love to buy and sell? Take heed of it; that is all controversy; for one thinks the article worth so much, another says it is worth so much; and here they raise a controversy. The buyer is sometimes controverting the price before he can be brought up to the seller's charge; and the seller is controverting it, and giving whole lengths of words, before he sells you one inch of matter, or can be brought down to the terms of this merchant. Besides, what love have you for your estates? What value have you for your rights and property in this world? Are these never controverted? When they are called in question, and your rights invaded, do you defend your rights, and give fees to a lawyer, and stand a trial of the cause with your adversary, and that at a far greater charge than the

price of a small book? Is not this controversy? You will go on nevertheless; saying, you are in the right, you will have a trial; you will not be duped. Yet how suddenly does the name of a controversy run some off from looking into the things of God? How tamely do they give up their rights {for controversies are putting God's children's rights upon trial} about God in Christ, and of the Kingdom of Heaven? How easily doth Satan and their own corruption beat them off from discoveries of their right to the best things, as if they had no interest therein. What think you of God's Book? Is there no controversy in that? Why do you buy a Bible with the book of Job in it? That book is a controversy between him and his three friends; and, perhaps, you have not skill enough to tell me which of them was in the right? May it not be feared that you who say that you do not love controversy, love the world visibly more than you visibly love the Lord Jesus Christ? For if you did not, it would be hard for you either to find a heart or a tongue to talk at this rate. Let me shut it up in a word; for what is it that is not a controversy? Do you possess one point that is of any significant value that has not been sifted and scrutinized in the furnace {of experimental Grace and truth} that is not so? {"Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." I Cor.3:13.} How can you be against controversies, when God is for them, Christ is for them, and the Spirit is for them? The book of Job is a controversy between man and man. The whole Bible is a controversy between God and the Sinner, between Christ and Antichrist, between the Spirit and the World. Yea, it is all controversy between God, and good men in their faults. Everything that strikes at a man's faults, as this Book does, is a controversy between God and sin. {"Hear the word of the LORD, ye children of Israel; for the LORD hath a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there is no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land." Hos.4:1.}

Well, but some say the thing is tedious. We love short undertakings. But why is that? Perhaps because you have no inheritance in these matters; or, at least, do not

yet see it, or what may be even worse, have no concern, care or desire to see it. These papers are despised. Why? Because they do not make out the title to some estate, house or lands; otherwise the length of the matter would be no objection, but a security to the title. Who ever found fault in purchasing an estate, house or land, {which yet make up a local world that must be set on fire at the latter day, when the Doctrine of the Gospel will bear the flames, while the whole world shall be burnt up} and cared not to meddle with the estate, because the writings were a little tedious and puzzling; or because in the grand deed of settlement and conveyance there was so much exposure of error and naming of men? It comes to pass that men will not buy the truth of Christ. Why? Because it is so bulky in leaves, so much detecting of the errors of men, and so full of controversy, that it is too much for their narrow penny. Whereas they forget that the bargain of the book is easy, since the whole estate mentioned in the writings is all freely bestowed and given gratis to the children of God in the Covenant's Everlasting Rolls! It is plain that men trifle with their souls, but are in earnest with their bodies and estates. Elaborate writings have been sanctified of God to the belief of the Gospel; and the longer our thoughts are kept close to the matter, and brought to view and attend spiritual things, the more we are enabled to see into them.

In the chapter which respects inviting sinners to come to Christ, I have shown the phrase of coming to Christ was fitted to Him when He was once upon the earth. Nevertheless, men have applied it in present relation to Christ, since he is ascended into Heaven. I cannot say but heretofore I may have used the phrase, though sparingly, when it was necessary I should be understood in it, as keeping close to another man's phrases; and where my work swelled into so great a bulk, that I had no room to discuss it, if I had raised the least doubt upon it. But here it comes in my direct way to state and expound the Truth of the matter respecting these things.

In the things of God I have not empty margins. What is an empty margin? Why, when it's run on through

entire pages in the things of God, all in a man's own words, and no frequent assistances come in upon the brim of the paper {for when we print, it's presented to the eye} from God's Word. And how this can be accounted for in men not Divinely inspired, I am at a loss to tell you? I have, as helped to confirm the matter of my argument from testimonies of God's Holy Word, placed a plenteous company of scriptures in my work, not as ornaments of the page, but as so many redundant proofs besides the other texts, which are brought, or opened in the body of the treatise.

I leave all in thy hands, reader, with the blessing of the Lord of Hosts, who filleth the hungry with good things, but the rich he sendeth empty away,

Joseph Hussey.

God's Operations of Grace, &c.

CHAPTER ONE

The method propounded, the matter stated, and followed into the grand plea for offers, and there briefly examined and defeated.

The order of this little writing will consist principally of three points. 1. Concerning offers of Grace. 2. Concerning invitation of sinners to come to Christ. 3. Concerning exhortations to sinners to come to Christ. And albeit I may insist mostly {if the Lord will} upon the first branch of these three laid down, thereby, through the Lord's assistance, to rectify the mistaken doctrine about offers of Grace, and to advance the true doctrine of Free Grace Operations working efficaciously upon the elect of God; yet I may likewise add something, though very briefly, which belongs to the other two branches. To begin by laying down the method of handling the first, viz., the offers of Grace and Salvation.

I. To show how men do verbalize their offers of Christ, in name and thing.

II. To disprove them, and overthrow their scheme, as an ill, anti-evangelical state of the matter, and that by manifesting three principal points in the debate. 1. That to offer Christ to sinners, is not to preach Christ to sinners. 2. That to propound such an offer in the external means, is no means of the Spirit's working an internal ability in sinners, to close savingly with any such offer. 3. That to suggest an offer of Christ, and a gift of Christ to be both one thing, is a barefaced error. {"Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds; lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled." Deut.22:9.}

III. To resolve the puzzling question, how then must we preach the Gospel unto sinners, if we do not propound an offer of Salvation to them? In the resolution of which doubt, proffers of Grace, offers of Christ, tenders

of Salvation, etc., will be withstood and overthrown, as unscriptural and powerless forms.

IV. To make some reply unto the mis-adapting of divers texts of Scripture that are commonly mistaken upon this argument.

V. Lastly, to make a further reply to the more common and current pleas, used by weak men, for want of better arguments.

We begin and show, how these men state the doctrine of their offer.

1. As to the name, men have stored it with a show of wisdom and will worship as the Apostle says, Col.2:23, in a sufficient increase of their own procuring. {"Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the LORD thy God, when he led thee by the way?" Jer.2:17.} For the word "offer" is not to be found in Scripture in any other sense than to sacrifice; and to be sure, when these men offer Christ, they do not mean that they sacrifice him; no, they have another meaning in the term, as it relates to the preaching of the Gospel, though they thus express themselves. And therefore they speak sometimes of offers of Grace; sometimes propounding the offer; sometimes proposals of the Gospel offer; sometimes tenders of the Gospel; sometimes tendering Salvation, which are all Blind and Scripture-less forms! {"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Acts 20:30.} Methinks, if men had meant preaching the Gospel by these phrases, it is an intolerable assault upon the sacred text of both Testaments, to word it so perversely. The Oracles of God have an elegant variety of expression, to set forth the preaching of Jesus Christ. As for example, it is called speaking, I Cor.2:7,13, speaking the word, Phil.1:14, preaching, Acts 20:25, preaching the Gospel, Lk.30:1, preaching glad tidings, Isa.61:1, preaching the kingdom of God, Acts 28:31, preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, Matt.4:23, teaching, Col.1:28, teaching the word of God, Acts 18:11, teaching the things that concern the Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 28:31, showing the glad tidings of the Kingdom of God, Lk.8:1, declaring glad tidings, Acts 13:32, showing by the Scriptures, Acts

18:28, bringing glad tidings of good things, Rom.10:15, &c., and the like. But never once in all this variety of phrase, do the Scriptures call preaching the Gospel by the names and phrases of offering, proffering, propounding or tendering Grace, Christ, Salvation and glad tidings to sinners. How conceited must some men be of their own, or other men's wisdom, who notwithstanding they have so little to say in behalf of these unscriptural phrases, are yet resolved, Deut.2:30, to keep them up. {"For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." I Cor.1:19.} Whereas this very hint, {if no more could be said,} that the phrases are without any Scriptural support, I Pet.4:11, and their meaning unable to justify a correct understanding, or to make an agreeable signification to befit the Gospel, Acts 15:15; if no more could be said, is enough to make poor, humble, modest souls drop such expressions, even such of the children of God, who are sensible that their mouths are not filled with Gospel sweetness, unless as they have experienced the flowing rivers of living water, Jn.7:38, in the opening of their mouths wide, Psal.81:10, the Lord Christ having filled them. Now if men find as great a sweetness in phrases of human invention and imagination, and in defence of them, as they find in the Holy Ghost's language of the Bible, which hath plentifully spoken the same things, and far better to instruct us, it is a sure sign that their mouths have not been opened wide, nor can it be any argument that Christ fills them. For in the Holy Scriptures the Lord uses expressions enough to fill a man's mouth, when he speaks of the preaching of the Gospel, so as that he shall have no need to use these sickly terms and ill-worded phrases, into which the tongues of so many false preachers have been dipped and sunk.

2. As to the matter in hand, they have distributed the meaning of their terms into different classes. By which they persuade us, that they do not all speak with one mind, Rom.15:16, while they speak with one mouth, professing to glorify God and to save men by offers of Gospel Grace or by the proposals of the Gospel, and by

the tenders of Salvation made unto them, in their way of supposedly preaching the Gospel. {"For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." II Cor.2:17.} Some have looked upon these terms to be general redemption offers; and indeed men may easily see that without general offers of Grace they cannot preach consistent enough with general redemption doctrines, as without General Redemption Doctrine they cannot preach consistently with general offers of Grace. Moreover, what they call universal grace offers, or universal proposals, and general tenders of Grace to sinners, are the same things, while these general men strive to keep up a consistency in their notions of universal philanthropy towards every individual soul of mankind. These persons have also understood them to be Free will offers, &c., and have ascribed an indifference to the balance of the will, to poise its inclination equally towards accepting or rejecting these offers of Grace. {"Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge?" Job 42:3.} And as they admit a methodical offer of Grace, necessary for conveying the Grace of God, upon the supposition of a Free balance of self-power, to determine and incline the will to accept of God's Salvation, they must then suppose a balance towards the Grace admitted, even so far as there are supposed offers or tenders of Grace made to those souls who receive them; inasmuch that such Free-willers and professors of Grace, are according to their own principles, consistent enough with themselves. {"And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD." Ezek.20:44.} The great difficulty is how to bring some men holding our principles of Grace to be consistent with themselves.

3. Others have set up with conditional offers, with conditional proposals, and with conditional tenders. That is, you shall enjoy Heaven and Salvation, if you will repent and believe, and perform sincere obedience to the conditions of a Gospelized Law. And thus the Neonomians

interweave a coarse thread of Popery, {out of which the terms of New Law and Conditions first arose, as I have observed, by tracing the Popish writings extant through a long series of ages} as it runs through all their fine cloth they make up for heaven, spun out of other men's spinnings, into a reformation of manners and sincere obedience, &c., but how short is this of the fine linen, clean and white, Rev.19:14, and the white raiment, Rev.3:18, which is the imputed righteousness of God, Rom.4:6, put upon the unrighteous, Rom.4:5, and thereby made the righteousness of saints, as the Holy Spirit calls it. "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." Rev.19:8.

4. Another sort of men, who strictly seem to profess a renunciation all the three kinds, do yet stand up very resolutely to maintain a fourth sort of offer, which they would fain persuade us are Free offers, Effectual offers, Essential offers; and all of them, to be sure, of the Evangelical and Ministerial Grace variety. Whatever these may be, yet they have never once attempted to demonstrate what is the nature of an evangelical or Ministerial offer, proving it Free or Effectual by the Gospel, in the hands of him that ministers these offers; except what unavoidably in the tendency partakes with the other three kinds; viz., either with universal Grace, or Free Will, or with Conditionalism. This is certainly a strange apprehension about Gospel offers, to professedly separate from the other three, and yet to keep up it's very being by mingling with the others. {"Thou shalt not sow thy vineyard with divers seeds; lest the fruit of thy seed which thou hast sown, and the fruit of thy vineyard, be defiled. Thou shalt not plow with an ox and an ass together. Thou shalt not wear a garment of divers sorts, as of woollen and linen together." Deut.22:9-11.} Besides, all the other three are called evangelical tenders as well as this, and under that warranty of denomination are, by one or another, made to be a ministerial offer. For their sakes principally, and for some others who fall into this evil, merely through inadvertence, not perceiving the evil thereof, I have been made willing to write this small

Treatise. For, as for a fourth sort of proposals and offers of Grace to sinners, it is, without doubt, a non-entity in point of true distinction from the other three. For, indeed, in setting the bias, whatever the pretence about principle and inclination may be, it's so turned and fixed, that with all velocity the bowl runs to the Arminian side; and the truth is, it is impossible for fallen nature to keep against blasts towards Free Grace, though you bring in Free offers and Grace offers that sound plausible to an ear not intuned to the tenor of the true Gospel, and thereby "by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Rom.16:18.

But still in a further stating of the matter it must be laid open negatively, what men do not content themselves to mean by these offers and proposals of Grace to sinners; and again positively, what they do mean likewise by the same.

I. Negatively, to show what they do not mean by them.

1. By offers of Grace and offers of Christ to sinners, they do not mean that the doctrine of Grace, and doctrine of Christ, and of Salvation ought to be preached to Jews and Pagans, if there were such in our assemblies. For, though this was the case in the days when the Apostles preached; yet in our days of universal profession, Jews or Pagans seldom attend our assemblies, Rom.11:19, to hear the doctrine of Christ preached. The object of our preaching therefore is much another thing as a matter of practice, than the object of preaching was in the former times. If there were such kinds of hearers now in our assemblies, yet there would be none amongst any of us who have received the common doctrine of the Gospel to deny, that the said doctrine of Grace was to be preached unto them, according to the precedent in which the apostles did it. Here then we all agree without dispute, in one and the same affirmative.

2. By offers of Grace, &c., to sinners, these proponents of a Free offer System are not satisfied to mean, that the doctrine merely of some special branches of the Gospel, as for instance imputed righteousness, justification without conditions, &c., are not to be

preached to some present rejecters of the doctrine of Grace and doctrine of Christ; for here again, so far as we are merely Orthodox, we do all agree, that the said doctrines are and ought to be preached to all despisers and neglecters, and ought to be so preached to all men, though the particular truths are rejected. {"Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Acts 13:41.}

3. By offers of Grace, and proffers of Christ, or tenders of Salvation, the tenderer thinks it not enough to mean, that the mere doctrines of Salvation are preached and to be preached to the whole unregenerate part of our auditory. For none of us have ever denied or argued down this particular, nor are we going about it now. And so there can be no room for debate here.

II. Now positively, and more directly, to show how men do state their meaning of the thing, touching offers of Grace.

1. By offers of Grace, tenders of Christ, and of Salvation to sinners, they must mean by these terms, that Grace itself, that Salvation itself; that is to say, a true and Saving interest in Christ, as well as the doctrine of Christ, is and ought to be made by them into an offer, Proposition, Bargain or Agreement; so that by accepting this offer and by their improving the so-called means of Grace men may be saved. This is the thing which these Gospel Conditionalists do mean by preaching the Gospel; but this continued error of the day, notwithstanding so many fallacious books have been written in its defence, I do, for the honour of the Spirit and his work utterly deny; yea, must, through help obtained of the Lord, Acts 26:22, both oppose and disprove. I know that a labour in the Gospel of this nature, though not so large as men's labours have been when otherwise employed, will be to the glory of Free Grace in the substance of that Grace, and will take down the notions of men walking in a vain show, Psal.39:6, by propounding their offers of the Free Grace of God, as they term it. Herein may be a discovery as to that which is professed of this nature to be offered, propounded and laid before sinners, is not indeed the

preaching of the Gospel at all; much less is it preaching the true Grace of the Gospel, unto us which are saved, I Cor.1:18, being the "power of God unto Salvation." Rom.1:16. For though the bulk of matter and method in a discourse may be propounded, with arguments brought to convince the rational judgment, I Cor.10:15, of men that hear or look into these things; because this outer face of the letter in doctrine and argument, is but the exercise of common gifts unsanctified by the Holy Ghost; yet, as to Salvation in the hidden wisdom and power of the doctrine, {"we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory," I Cor.2:7,} and the true Saving Grace of the Gospel, there can be no propounding of this, for its all laid transcendently out of their reach, in the eternal streams of love, beyond proposals and tenders; so that it flows out of the heart of God alone, and is plenteously shed forth upon all the elect of God, {"having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear," Acts 2:33,} in the gracious bestowment of the Holy Spirit and His graces from God the Father, through Jesus Christ, under the true preaching of the glad tidings of the kingdom of God, Lk.8:1, without which effusion of Salvation, {"which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour," Tit.3:6,} none ever did, and none ever could partake thereof.

2. By offers of Grace, tenders and proffers of Salvation, &c., 'tis evident that men do thereby imply that Free Grace and full Salvation is propounded, tendered, and offered to all sinners within the sound of the Gospel trumpet; or why do they make the tender of Salvation for acceptance to all that hear, but to imply thereby, that all who hear may be saved if they but comply with these terms of Salvation. This they call preaching the Gospel; howbeit this conceit, in such as profess against the notion of a General Redemption doth bring them in self-condemned. {"Knowing that he that is such is subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself." Tit.3:11.} Therefore this idolatrous offer must be struck at, and opposed by the ark, till it be fallen down; for it cannot

stand before the Gospel in the Evidence of Operation, whilst God the Spirit is discovered, the Free worker of the Operations in Effectual Grace; but it must tumble as Dagon was fallen before the ark, I Sam.5:4, and be shamefully handled too in being cut off to the very stump.

3. By offers of Grace, &c., men do urge that Salvation itself, as well as the doctrine of Salvation, proposed and tendered to all sinners in our assemblies indiscriminately, is so necessary as a branch in the work of the ministry, and if this be not done, that is, if we do not propound the offer of Salvation to all within the sound of our doctrine, {according to these prophets, diviners, and dreamers, Jer.27:9,} we do not preach as we ought, nor take heed to fulfil our ministry, Col.4:17, which we have received in the Lord. And further, this omission by some is condemned in the Ministers of Christ, as the tenth Antinomian error³, namely, that if they preach or assert as follows, "that ministers of the Gospel ought not to propound the offers of Salvation unto all those whom God calls them to preach; seriously inviting them to improve the Lord's channels of Effectual Grace that they may be saved; and assuring them, in the way of their Ministerial duty, of the Salvation of all such as believe in Christ; yet because some want ability to close with the offer, all shall not be saved." And then the antithesis or opposition to what they call the error, is this, "that though men want ability to believe savingly, yet it is the duty of Gospel ministers to make the offer, and testify unto them, that whoever believes and repents shall be saved. And that it is the duty of the people to make use of their natural faculties, with such external means and workings which the Spirit of God affords them, that they may believe, repent, and be saved."

Here is now the true state of the matter, faithfully represented on both sides. But are there none of the honest, zealous, and mistaken brethren, Lk.19:11, who easily discern the feebleness of the plea? As if the all, or any of the all, who shall not be saved, could improve the

³ "Declaration of the Congregational Ministers in and about London, against Antinomian Errors," 1699, pages 41, 42.

conveyances of God's Grace in Christ, that they may be saved! Was ever anything more nakedly expressed among men, who glory in their profession of being Congregational or Orthodox? And again, as if Grace might be put off so notoriously, as with the bare offer in a proposition; for instance, that whosoever believes and repents shall be saved. Why is it that we cannot discern the truth of the matter that just as here is their total plea that is laid down for an offer, so here is a total exclusion of the efficacy of the Grace that must save. Is not this a piece of robbery committed against the LORD Himself in the Operations of his Holy Spirit, Mal.3:8, or, in effect, denying His Effectual Operations of Grace, while they make an external show of an ineffectual, incompetent, weak and useless offer of Grace? Does not the plea confine the Operations of the Holy Spirit to mere common and external workings? Wherein hath it once advanced to give Jehovah the Spirit his due honour in the internal and mighty workings of his Grace on the hearts of those whom he would bring to Christ, and that these believe, repent and are saved? It therefore necessitates me to suppose, that our brethren looking upon the said plea to be a poor fortification of their offers of Grace to sinners, to resist assaults upon the doctrine of the offer as their own way of preaching, will still undertake to mend it. Now I am sure, if they will bestow a little labour upon the ramparts broken down to build them up again, and if they do it to any purpose it must be thus; that whilst the offer of Christ is propounding in the external means to sinners, the Spirit of Christ may be setting in with them, and working an internal ability in these sinners, to close savingly with their offer. For if they do not say this, they say nothing in effect to make any debate.

Whatever it be, all is still built upon a very loose supposition. For it's a sure thesis, that offers of Salvation to sinners are no preaching of Salvation unto sinners. For, though men through their own darkness mistake the preaching of the Gospel, and turn the notion of it, or their own way of preaching it, into what they call offers of Salvation; yet still preaching the Gospel, according to the mind of Christ, I Cor.2:16, is quite another thing than

tendering the Gospel, and proffering the Gospel, as the Lord may help me sufficiently to clear afterwards, and prove in this treatise. At present, I shall fairly return a thought or two upon the mending clause, suggested on the behalf of these offers. It cannot be denied, but if it was absolutely true, that an offer of Salvation was the means of Salvation, yet the notion could not be kept close to the particular principles of the Orthodox, while they propound the offers of Salvation to all those to whom God calls them to preach. The Spirit is neither working Christ in the hearts of all sinners to whom men expressly incline to propound their Grace-offer, nor have the Orthodox any reason from their own first Principles of the Gospel, to expect that he should be so setting in and working in any, Eph.1:11, even of the elect of God themselves. Because, as 'tis no means of the Spirit's working faith and forming Christ in the heart, Gal.4:19, so their universal or promiscuous propounding of their offer of Salvation to all to whom they feel that God calls them to preach, is an open contradiction to their own first principles of Gospel Truth; for they {the credal orthodox in their mix} own a particular Election only to Salvation. What have they to do then to make Universal offers of Salvation? And, they confess a natural inability in all men to all spiritual good? What have they then to do to propound Salvation, which is a spiritual good in the object, and requires a spiritual act of the faculty, where yet they do not insist upon a change of nature? For as the separating of Salvation from the effectual operation of Salvation is inconsistent, so the conjoining of Salvation with some mere external work of human nature, as the fore-mentioned plea does, is downright Arminianism. But if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth, II Tim.2:25, a few things may be afterwards made known to that end, while the Lord may be pleased to make the same effectual, even to eliminate and slaughter these wild pleas which are so injurious to the Grace of God.

CHAPTER TWO

A disproof of offers, or, the proof of the first of the three crowning points in this debate; viz., that offers of the Gospel, and offers of Salvation to sinners, are no preaching of the Gospel, nor preaching Salvation unto sinners.

Do you look, Sirs, upon your Free offers of Grace, &c., {as you call them} to be preaching the Gospel? Yes surely, you will say, we look upon these, especially if we look only one way, to be both one and the same. That is, we look upon them, that albeit all preaching of Christ to sinners is not an offer of Christ to them, yet every free offer of Christ to sinners is preaching the Salvation of Christ to them. Nevertheless I tell you the truth, that offers of Salvation are a thing that falls far short of preaching the Gospel; and a thing that falls far shorter than preaching the Salvation of the Gospel unto sinners. For observe, the power of the Gospel attends preaching the Gospel, and Salvation attends the preaching of Salvation, but neither the power of the Gospel, nor Salvation, attend the offer as they attend the preaching of the Gospel. {"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." Eph.1:13.} But here I shall begin my disproof of their vain scheme, and enter upon an overthrow of their doctrine of the offer, as an anti-evangelical form of corrupting the Word of God; being the first thesis of three laid down about offers; and prove from God's Word that to propound the offer of Salvation to sinners, as it is an unscriptural thing, so it is not preaching the Salvation of the Gospel unto sinners. Offers are not preaching the Gospel, nor preaching its Salvation.

1. I argue first from the practice of the apostles. Their practice was to preach Christ, not to offer him. The apostles preached the word of the Lord everywhere, in every city, and in every province, whither they came, Acts

15:36, at Thessalonica, at Berea, &c., everywhere preaching the word. But they nowhere tendered or offered the Salvation of that word.

2. I argue from their ordination to the said practice. Paul was ordained a preacher, I Tim.2:7, and never ordained a propounder of an incompetent and useless offer of Grace, as it is termed. He was to keep to a free proclamation of the truth as it is in Jesus, Eph.4:21, and not to warp, as men do in our times, all into some free proposal, whereby sacred Gospel truths are bartered away for all to latch hold upon.

3. I argue from instances of preachers. Noah was a preacher of righteousness, II Pet.2:5, the Holy Ghost does not say, Noah was a Free propounder of righteousness; that is, a poor, low, earthly thing that would degenerate and sink the preaching of the Gospel into another form, having nothing of the true glory of the Gospel left in it; therefore the Holy Ghost will not so much as give it a good name, or enrol it in God's book. Paul likewise was a teacher of the Gentiles, II Tim.1:11, not a tenderer of Salvation to the Gentiles. For this latter custom comes by men's conversation with fleshly wisdom, and not by the Grace of God. Solomon was an admirable ecclesiastic or preacher, a preacher that was wise, Eccles.1:2, and a preacher that sought to find out acceptable words, Eccles.12:10, the Preacher {as he was so designated} and king over Israel in Jerusalem, Eccles.1:12, and here he is altogether the preacher, and not once anything said of him as the propounder of an offer.

4. I argue from the defect of the poor opinion about offers. One thing it lacks, Mk.10:21, and that is texts to prove that proffering and preaching are in the sense of the Holy Ghost the same thing. The coincidence supposed can never be maintained. The apostle was not careful to ask how they should offer, but how they should preach, Rom.10:14, except they were sent. Christ's Person and Doctrine may be both preached, whether in pretence, as sound and orthodox notions, or in truth, of power and experience, as the apostle says, Phil.1:18, yet Christ is preached, says he; but how Christ can be offered

the Scriptures assists no man to make out; for there the Holy Ghost is silent.

5. I argue from the flattery of offers, undertaking to work persuasion, and from thence I argue the faithfulness of preaching. An offer entices a natural man to a self-inflated conceit of his own ability, even whilst he hears the sounding of the words, even though the tenderer would assure him he hath none. So that propounding the offer of Christ is a mere flattery, to bolster up ones conceit of himself. The offer of Salvation is enticing to the ears of natural men that have never experienced a saving change of Grace. But on the other hand, preaching Christ is not done with enticing words of man's wisdom. If the preaching of the Gospel carries not the cause by power and faithfulness, it falls to the wayside. Offers gain none of its ground by creature-flattery.

6. I argue from the nature of an offer to the nature of preaching the Gospel. An offer in Latin is called *oblatio*, or bringing a thing over against one, and laying or setting it down before one, still at some distance; and so, according to the grammatical sense of the word, offering is not preaching in any sense whatsoever. Offering consists in the doctrine or notion of Salvation, in mere sound, being brought to a sinner's ears, and set down against him in so many words, which in all this the speaker falls short of preaching the Gospel, and so entirely fails in his enterprise. The nature of an offer at most is distant and withdrawn; it is not unto one, unless one accepts it. The tenderer indeed, may as we say be eloquent in speech and in appearance, and thus speak home to us; but, alas, at the bottom it is no such thing, because the tender doth not come home, if it be a season of non-acceptance. II Cor.6:2. But preaching goes home in the office and power of the Blessed Spirit, working an acceptance in the soul of the Doctrine or of the Salvation set forth, or of both, according as those who hear it are elect in Christ, and thus absolutely wrought on; or non-elect, without any ears to hear or minds to grasp that salvation being set forth in Christ, through the preaching of the Gospel. {"For the word of God is quick, and

powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." Heb.4:12.} Consequently offering is not preaching the Gospel. The nature of that is otherwise; for as preaching the Gospel of God is preaching glad tidings to sinners, Lk.8:1, so it is bringing the good news home unto the persons; not laying it down before the sinner, and there leaving it in a haphazard way to fall out as it may.

Preaching is a home-act or inward testimony to elect and non-elect, making manifest the savour of the knowledge of Christ in every place, II Cor.2:14-16, both in them that are saved, and in them that perish. offers convey no savour of Christ, because they do not reach home, neither a savour in the Doctrine, nor a savour in the Salvation; nor a savour of death unto death, in formality, to the unregenerate formalist that perishes without the savour of Christ; nor a savour of life in the Principle unto life in the possession thereof, and home to Eternal Life in those whose heart the Lord opens, Acts 16:14, to attend unto Christ; for the Principle and Profession of the lively believer is destitute of the savour, as soon as preaching degenerates into offering and proffering, for then a saint quickly loses his sweet words, Prov.23:8, and will have to vomit that morsel which spoils the rest. {"A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." Gal.5:9.} An offer doth not bring comfort home. Grace offers may move, but it is at a distance from the proper object. The doctrine alone preached is a home-act or inward testimony, even to the very non-elect; and the Doctrine and Salvation both together, are home-acts to the elect of God. The doctrine alone preached is a home-act, even against such as God hath not chosen in Christ; for such vessels there are, Rom.9:22, as appear, I Jn.2:19, Matt.20:16, Jn.8:47, Jn.10:26, Matt.7:23, &c., and these are two sorts, where the Gospel comes; namely, open rejecters of the mystery and open receivers of the literal doctrine. The doctrine preached, when the mystery comes to be laid open, is a testimony against all rejecters of Christ. For they soon begin to snuff at it, to

stumble at the word, and be disobedient, I Pet.2:7-8; whereas an offer of Grace is so plausible to nature, that any man may face it without offence; nor will it touch them to the quick to drive about tossing around invitations and offers, but to preach Free Grace will be an offence to all who perish in the way. Psal.2:12. For, the preaching of Grace, as the Mystery of the doctrine is laid open, makes them presently reply against God, Rom.9:20, and quarrel with the Most High, saying, "why doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will," Rom.9:19, as they did in the ninth of Romans. It soon touched them, especially when the points of Sovereignty or Absolute Grace, Irresistibleness, Discrimination, Passiveness, &c., are preached in the power and unction of the Holy Ghost, for men cannot pretend to offer a sinner these vital Operations, for they being, indeed, matters of Divine Operation, bear no resemblance to this debilitated system of offers and invitations. Nevertheless, ministers of Christ are necessitated to preach these Operations of Grace, II Cor.3:6, and to be sure, the preaching of them may as directed by the LORD, be a home-act and vital testimony, even to them that God hath passed by, as to their being chosen in Christ.

These doctrines are inimical to carnal wisdom, so carnal wisdom must of necessity be hostile to these truths. {"Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Rom.8:7.} The doctrine of Christ preached is an enemy to their self-love, carnal interests, carnal ease, &c., insomuch that preaching the true Gospel frets wicked men, and irritates their minds, eats into the frame of their spirits, gnaws upon their inward pride, and fills them with rage. {"And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath." Lk.4:28. "When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them." Acts 5:33.} Stephen's hearers gnashed upon them with their teeth, to hear the doctrine of Truth preached. Acts 7:54. He certainly did not offer them Christ, for they might perhaps have laughed at that, but he preached Christ notably, and this preaching enraged them. Such preaching either kills or makes alive, Acts

24:25, if it be delivered in the unction of the Spirit, and makes a noble discrimination in the auditory. Acts 28:24. So that all non-elect rejecters of the Father's Christ, or open rejecters of the Doctrine of Free Grace preached according to the Spirit's Revelation of it in the Word, cannot stand before Preaching. offers I know will leave them to debate upon it, but of all that profess to be dispensers of the Word, I have observed that professors of the Grace of God who compromise in this point, with their Free offer, as they call it, are all too thwarted and confounded in their way; but preaching Christ will cheer, II Cor.1:12, the testimony of their conscience by the Grace of God. Oh, how did it enrage the Jews at Antioch to contradict and blaspheme; for when the apostles preached, it vexed them immediately. {"But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming." Acts 13:45.} So when Paul preached Jesus and the resurrection it presently touched the philosophers of Epicurus and the Stoics to the quick, and stirred up their wisdom to encounter him. {"Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoicks, encountered him. And some said, what will this babbler say? Other some, he seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods; because he preached unto them Jesus, and the Resurrection." Acts 17:18.} If Paul had stood offering them terms, they would only have laughed him to scorn, and thought it not worth their while to have urged an argument against him; but his preaching set them upon a philosophical prating; and the account given of the cause of their opposition, was not that Paul propounded an offer, but he was, as they thought, a teller, or celebrater, {as the word in Greek signifies, which we read "a setter forth"} of strange gods. How ignorant and prejudiced were they! As if they took the Resurrection, as some have thought, to be one god, as well as Jesus to be the other!

Preaching is a home-act, the doctrine preached reaches men's consciences, let them do what they will. Accordingly, Noah preaching in his day went home to the disobedient spirits, who, in the Apostle's days, long after

were in the prison of hell. I Pet.3:19. The doctrine of Preservation in the ark was preached, and not offered. Noah was a preacher of righteousness." II Pet.2:5. Again, the ark was built for Noah and his house, Heb.11:7; it was not prepared for, nor tendered to the old world. Thus the open rejecters of the mystery find preaching the Doctrine of Christ to be a home-act, as it stirs up their corruptions.

Furthermore, there are others of the non-elect who do not reject the Doctrine of Christ, but receive it in the lump, when the doctrine is preached to them. Thus Simon Magus believed at Philip's preaching Christ in Samaria, Acts 8:13, and the stony-ground hearers that first sprung up were brought to it by sowing the seed of the Word upon them, and afterwards they withered away, Matt.13:5-6; to these may be added, the hard-hearted Israelites in the wilderness, who, it is said, Heb.4:2, had the Gospel preached unto them; but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. Deut.1:32. The Holy Ghost would, according to the Counsel of God, give them the Word, but it was not his good pleasure to bestow Faith of the Operation of God with the Word, Col.2:12, nor was he bound thereto in God's Covenant and Promise. So likewise the Gospel of Canaan's rest had been preached home to them, verse 6, for it appears by their story in the wilderness, that they did many things, as the fruits of that preaching, Mk.6:20; yeah, for with an external faith they received the Gospel preached in its types. Then believed they his words; they sung his praise; but they soon forgot the works of the LORD, and waited not for His counsel. Psal.106:12-13. And so the people to whom the type of the Gospel-rest was preached, entered not in, because of unbelief, at last. Heb.4:6. Thus the Gospel comes with a home-act to the consciences of even the non-elect, a home testimony in preaching the doctrine to them that receive the testimony and truth thereof, though they are not the chosen of God. Such preaching lays hold, and by a common Operation, Acts 8:13, worketh a common faith in the non-elect; and as a fruit of it they make a profession of the same; albeit, they receive it not, nor can receive it, in a new nature, in

which workmanship of the Spirit, Eph.2:10, the Doctrine together with the power of Salvation, comes to God's chosen in Christ. They receive it not under a distinguishing work of the Spirit of Grace, as the Spirit is the Principle in the effectual operation thereof, as well as the Worker of it.

The doctrine of the Gospel preached is a home-act to the elect of God. Among these the doctrine of the Gospel may sometimes be singly received by preaching, before the Salvation of that doctrine and faith of God's elect, Tit.1:1, is concomitantly received {by this remnant, according to the Election of Grace, Rom.11:5,} among the elect of God. Observe these two, that doctrine and power, may be separated in the elect themselves for some time; and we may perceive this, not only because the elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, I Pet.1:2, are saved and called with a holy calling, II Tim.1:9, under one Word of Truth, of his own will, and are not so begotten under another word of truth; even as the Spirit will, I Cor.12:11, as is said of his distribution of the several gifts of God. "This also cometh forth from the LORD of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." Isa.28:29. But I say also, we may suppose a separation of these sometimes, viz., Doctrine and Salvation, as to the elect for a time, by warranty of the word. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand," I Cor.15:1, it was applied, and went home in preaching the Gospel unto them, in that they had received the doctrine, and stood therein. For Salvation is clearly distinguished in the next words, "by which {the Gospel preached unto you, and received by you} also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory {or hold fast the doctrine from a principle of Grace} what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain," 15:2; that is; in vain as to Salvation, if you have only received the doctrine in the letter, without receiving the power, or a change of nature with the doctrine; for then indeed you have only received the doctrine with an outer court faith, Matt.13:20, if you have received it without a change. Again afterwards, verse 12, Christ was preached,

that he rose from the dead; and this was plainly brought home. For, through the Spirit, preaching had produced faith, II Cor.4:13, there being no more reason to question the truth of the doctrine, than to doubt the preaching of the doctrine. Both are alike coupled, verse 14, so that the nature of preaching is to be applied in the power thereof, till it arrive at the person's conscience, and not to parley, by suspensions of the will, or non-acceptance of the sinner, in mid-way, as these offers do. {"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." I Thes.1:5.} Preaching sticks not in the thick clay of human proposals, nor loses its errand in propounding an offer, by any difficulties in the way whatever, through which it passes. {"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa.55:11.} Give me powerful preaching, Rom.1:16, for that God hath ordained; as it alone "is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword." Heb.4:12. An offer, {though you call it Evangelical and Ministerial,} or what you will, yet performs nothing where it is not accepted.

But now preaching doth a great deal of good in the very convictions it brings into wicked men, even while the doctrine itself is rejected. Preaching glorifies God in the very angering of the men whom God hath not chosen, by revealing to them their portion of the Word. Compare I Sam.16:10 with 17:28. "Jesse made seven of his sons to pass before Samuel, and Samuel said unto Jesse," {aye, and that preaching went to Eliab's heart, who was the eldest brother, to hear that of seven of Jesse's sons, Samuel should say to Jesse,} neither "hath the Lord chosen these." Well, what follows in the next chapter? "And Eliab his eldest brother heard when he spake unto the men, {after he came down unto his brethren in the Army,} and Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither, and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know thy pride, and the naughtiness of thine heart; for thou art come down that thou mightest see the battle." As if he

had said, "what, David, thou thinkest to be king in Israel dost thou not, if the king here falls in battle, because Samuel lately hath anointed thee at Bethlehem? Aye, therefore thou art come down to see the issue of the battle, how it fares with Saul, that if he dies, thou wilt mount up to be king in his room." Thus, preaching Election Grace to David touching the sceptre of Christ, had vexed Eliab to the core, and the doctrine of non-election touching himself and the passing by his other brethren {born all of them before David} with a "neither hath the Lord chosen thee," had exceedingly angered him. This now as to preaching. But sure an offer of a horn of oil, or an offer of Christ, while the anointing falls in its winnowing effect in separating sheep from goats in the midst of the congregation, as David was anointed, as 'twas put upon David, as designated for David, and not proposed to David, in the midst of his brethren; for this must needs displease God, because of his appointing the particularity of the anointing from the Holy One, as appears I Jn.2:20, compared with verse 19; so likewise offers too must needs also displease God, because they are so commonly dispersed unto men.

And so your Free offer is very indeterminate, and yet pretended to be in the Lord's name too, while the Lord knows them that are His. II Tim.2:19. Moreover, your offer of Salvation is universal; for you so offer Salvation, as it is plain you exclude none from Salvation. You offer Salvation to the lump; yet know, that your offer of Salvation can never reach home to all that God calls you to preach to; whereas preaching the doctrine of Christ is effectual in the hands of the Spirit to work Salvation in the experience and power thereof in all whom believe. Your Obligatory offer too is as wide as the rest.

To proceed and prove, as the Scriptures have shown us the powerful and discriminating effect of Gospel preaching, to prove that preaching the Gospel, and offering the Gospel, are not one and the same thing, according to the mind of Christ.

1. By preaching, the doctrine of the Gospel is carried home to the hearers, whether they will or no. We meet with many proofs of this, "and he commanded us to

preach unto the people," Acts 10:42, "and he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you," Acts 3:20, "opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ." Acts 17:3. This Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ; he is the Messiah of whom the Old Testament speaks, Christ the Anointed who will save his people from their Sins. Matt.1:21. "Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them," Acts 8:5, "be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." Acts 13:38. Hence Paul's anathema in the same style of preaching, and in the same pattern of wording it, by which we know the meaning to be quite another thing than that of an offer. "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, if any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal.1:8-9. In all these places it is expressed that preaching applies directly unto persons, but proposals are things that are only put before persons, as the word signifies. Offers are bringing things before them, and leaving them at a distance over against them, which wait for acceptance before the things proposed or offered can approach unto them, or be approached unto. But preaching, whether of life unto life, or death unto death, hath some answerable approach to persons in the assembly, and therefore is a home-act, and creates a comprehensive response from them. {"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law." Matt.10:34-35.} The Holy Ghost tells us so of preaching; men, in order to excuse their degeneracy and hypocrisy, tell us so of offers. Preaching the Gospel testifies on God's behalf, and exalts the Triune Lord in all his Person, the Lord the Father, the Lord the Word, the Lord the Spirit. {"The lofty looks of man shall be humbled,

and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day." Isa.2:11.} The testimony of preaching justifies God, in condemning all refusers of the doctrine of Christ, as well as justifies God in condemning men, who though accept the doctrine in a Christ-less state, yet having no interest in the Salvation of the Doctrine, walk unworthy of the very form of that sound doctrine in the unregeneracy of their natures, having secret enmity in their hearts against the Power of Godliness. The testimony of preaching likewise justifies God, in holding forth the Spirit of Grace, as the quickening principle for acceptance, wherewith to receive the Salvation of Christ, as well as to receive the doctrine of it; for God gives His Spirit as the life-giving principle to work in all His own elect. Now the offer of the Gospel because it is not preaching the Gospel, does not justify God in the condemnation of one, or Salvation of another; but seems rather to justify the creature's acceptance of what the elect by gift shall inherit, who are saved by the Gospel. "Thy people also shall be all righteous; they shall inherit the land for ever, the branch of my planting, the work of my hands, that I may be glorified." Isa.60:21. Acceptance of the Gospel is a piece of the Gospel wrought in the soul by Jehovah the Spirit, which your tenderers of Salvation, either overlook or deny. Neither can offers be a fit means calculated to justify God, in condemning men for refusing a doctrine which was never preached to them; but rather offers justify God in condemning a minister, who, instead of preaching to conscience, offers his proposals, and leaves his messages at a great distance off-hand, as seems good to the profferer to fix them in mid-way, and wait for the sinner's acceptance. Offers lay all down for acceptance at mid-way block, and never get further. Whatever it be that is offered, Doctrine or Salvation, before the elect, or before the non-elect, or before all promiscuously, there it sticks in midway, waiting for a motion from man's free-will to accept. This is in no ways preaching the Gospel to Sinners!

2. By preaching, the doctrine is carried home to the elect of God, personally discriminating part of the hearers. So the Person of Christ, who is Salvation, may

be personally preached; but how can He be personally offered? The Holy Spirit's language is that Christ is the Word, which by the Gospel is preached unto you. I Pet.1:25. It's said in Acts 20:7, of the disciples who came together to break bread, that Paul preached unto them the Gospel. The Gospel, as to Christ's Presence with their souls effectually wrought in them to an acknowledgement and submission to the Truth. {"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." I Thes.2:13.} So in Acts 8:35, it is said of the eunuch, "then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." Here preaching was a home-act to the good of His chosen. Psal.106:5. It penetrated quite through, and stuck not at mid-way.

3. I argue from the scope which the Scriptures give us in preaching as it exalts the sovereignty of God. "And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen {mind that is an act of His sovereign Grace} through faith," Gal.3:8, or bringing justification home into their very souls through the eye of their faith, it follows "preached before the Gospel unto Abraham;" because, by preaching, God's sovereignty is exalted. Offers exalt not the sovereignty of God in the congregation, nor are they suitable to it. Preaching the Gospel doth, and is fitted thereto. Therefore, preaching and offering are not both one. All preaching the Gospel is fitted to exalt the Sovereignty of God, but offering the Gospel is not fitted unto that service. How can they then be proved to be both one? Besides, if offers had exalted the sovereignty of God to the elect, Isa.45:4, then the Scripture would have spoken of them that they did so, but it nowhere speaks of them after that manner. Offers, therefore, exalt not God's Supreme will. {"Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Isa.46:10.} Preaching the Gospel is preaching glad tidings in an Effectual Sovereign display of Irresistible Grace to the elect Israel whom God hath

chosen, Isa.44:1; and the blessings of the Gospel, as in Matthew 5, in the hearing of the multitudes, are pronounced and conveyed to the poor whom the LORD hath chosen rich in Faith, and heirs of the Kingdom. But proffering the Gospel debases the Sovereignty of God, instead of exalting it. How abject and precarious is it in the great and glorious name of Jehovah, to stand up and say, "here sinners, I offer you Christ, why don't you take Him?" Ah; this is taking God's name in vain, and perverting God's message, if the man may be called a messenger. Preaching is supreme, as it breaks in upon a man's conscience by Authority, Matt.7:29, whilst offers are servile, making parleys debase the awful Majesty of God, and so cannot be the same thing with preaching, which exalts the Majesty of God. {"That men may know that thou, whose name alone is JEHOVAH, art the most high over all the earth." Psal.83:18.}

4. Lastly, I argue from the efficacy of preaching, which God the Spirit savingly attends; and thence I prove that no offer of Grace did ever come up to preaching the Gospel. 'Tis not preaching the Gospel, when it ceases to be the joyful sound, Psal.89:15, but it does cease to be so whilst the preacher sinks from Operations of the Gospel by God the Spirit, into offers of the Gospel, by mere propounding of empty tidings. Offers of Grace to sinners are, therefore, disproved divers ways from Effectual Grace to be the same with the preaching of Grace.

Preaching the Gospel is a revealing act. {"And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed." Isa.40:5.} Offering the Gospel is a tendering act. In preaching the Gospel the soul sees something of the glory of the Gospel by it, Jn.6:40; but an offer though it be an open act of propounding Christ to the soul, yet reveals nothing of Christ; it is no glass of the Gospel for sinners to view themselves in, till they are transformed by the renewing of their mind, Rom.12:2; nor are they changed into the same image, II Cor.3:18, from glory to glory, {discerning the glory of the Lord thereby,} even as by the Spirit of the Lord thereby.

Though the Gospel is opened when it is preached, yet it is hid when offered. {"Opening and alleging, that

Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ." Acts 17:3.} The very mystery is not seen in it. Though men upon the housetops pretend to offer Christ, the people do not see what is said to be offered. They can behold nothing to answer the pretence, {"here, souls, I offer you Christ, why should you not this moment accept him,"} whereas, preaching under the unction and power of the Spirit, sweetly reveals Christ in the soul, Gal.1:16; but offers never so much as lay him open to the soul, but tender him unseen, wrapped up in grave clothes, with his face in a napkin. It is plain, then, offering is no preaching. Letter and spirit are separable among the receivers. The spirit is preached to saints, to you excellent ones, Psal.16:3; yea, to the elected together with you, I Pet.5:13; while the whole visible clutter, the letter or seen part, passeth among the rest, who are blinded, Rom.11:7, and never see the kernel. It is an unseen thing, therefore, to the eye of the body, so cannot be offered, but must be preached to men. Salvation is the substance of Gospel doctrine, as the kernel is of the nut, therefore cannot be tendered separate from the visible cluster of the doctrine; nor indeed is that doctrine tendered at all, while preached unto all; and while Salvation apart from the letter is preached to those people, who touching election are beloved of the Lord. Rom.11:28. {"Not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." I Cor.10:32.} While men, therefore, are making offers of an Unrevealed and unseen Christ, that they themselves have not experienced, let them not think it is preaching the Gospel in the Salvation and Glory of it.

Preaching the Gospel has to do with the elect of God, in order to their conversion, answerable to the settlement of their relation in Christ; and so to bring them, for the making of their calling and election sure, II Pet.1:10, to an Evangelical Communion with Father, Son, and Spirit, by more spiritual, lively and fixed believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, through the indwelling and consolatory Operations of God the Spirit to this end; preaching the Gospel is mightily owned by the Spirit of

God to change the sinner's affections, and elevate his capacity under Sanctification of the Spirit in the New Nature unto Supernatural Believing and Supernatural Communion. {"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." II Thes.2:13.} The scriptures do speak so much, and almost constantly of the Holy Ghost, either as to his Person or Work upon the soul in passive phrases, whether it be expressed of Spiritual Believing or Spiritual {concomitants} Repentance unto life, love, joy, &c., Acts 11:18, or of its fruit of the Spirit, Gal.5:22, that Ministers of Christ, who are put in trust with the Gospel, are to use all such wholesome words and passive phrases of exalting the Spirit and his work, as are fitted to bring up the report of the Gospel to the honour and glory of God the Spirit, in the practical mysteries of Christ. And surely there never was more ground to require this from ministers than now, when believing is so slightly talked of, and pressed as if it were but a bare natural act; notwithstanding so many books have been written of the Spirit's work to explain the Scriptures upon this subject. For almost forty years long, in an eminent manner, this convincing light has been springing forth under John Owen's labours in 1674⁴. Yet much has the Spirit been grieved by the neglect with some of the last, and with many of the present generation. {"And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria; they prophesied in Baal, and caused my people Israel to err." Jer.23:13.} For to this day the notion of an offer of Grace exists, though it is a mere conceit, adapted to feed unconverted hope; as if believing on the Lord Jesus Christ was an act of the soul, before a man be born of the Spirit. {"Jesus answered and said unto him, verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jn.3:3.} Offers do naturally feed this conceit, and cherish it in the bosoms of unconverted men, however some cunning preachers have an artful way to shift and wrest, Eph.4:14, to make

⁴ John Owen, Discourse on the Holy Spirit, 1674.

you believe they mean preaching, though they call it by this odd name, pretending that offering Christ and preaching him are both one.

Preaching the Gospel takes hold of the heart, and the reason is, because the Lord owns preaching. It is his own ordinance, and so it is made an effectual means to convey the Spirit unto Christ. But offers, being of human devising, must needs prove ineffectual, for offers do not take hold of the heart. The devil will maintain his fort a whole siege against your offers, and know for certain that the evil spirit in a sinner is never likely to yield, or be subdued at that rate. "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, {said the evil spirit in the Acts,} but who are ye?" Acts 19:15. So the devil hath such a strong hold in sinners that he will but leap upon your offers, and laugh at them thus, "the Gospel I know, and preaching of the Gospel I know; but these offers and proffers merely insult, he will exclaim, and so what are ye, ye powerless motions?" Now consider this, ye self-fabricated preachers, will you go and make proposals to Satan? The devil is to be defeated of his captives by preaching deliverance to the captives, Lk.4:18, and an Effectual opening of the prison doors to them that are bound. {"The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isa.61:1.} But souls in slavery, and under the present power of the god of this world, II Cor.4:4, are not to be got out of his hand by parleys, for they must be translated from the power of darkness. Col.1:13. Do not think to bring them off from the jaws of unseen destruction, by tendering an unseen Salvation to them.

The devil in the sinner, is stronger than the sinner, or you and your offers. Lust in the heart, unbelief in the nature, captivity in the will, do all pinion the man, and stake him down against your offers. But the preaching of the Gospel breaks in with power, opens the heart, disarms unbelief, brakes their bands in sunder, Psal.107:14, and by the arm of Jehovah the preaching is not in vain. Offers rob the Father, and rob Christ, and the Holy Spirit, and

the soul and all. They rob Free Grace, in keeping back part of the price of our Salvation, and that is strength and ability to lay hold of Christ. Thou dost offer me Christ, poor creature; but why do you not offer me the Spirit, who is my impetus and motion for Christ? Oh, how fruitless it is to speak of Christ as a free offer, and yet to keep him off at a distance in the Gospel with your wary proposals, that Free Grace shall not strike in too near the soul, but you'll keep grace and the soul asunder, till the soul agrees to accept it! Yes, rather than preach Grace home, you'll stand and hammer the sinner, as if you had met him about business at the Exchange, and being about to drive a bargain with him, will tender Christ upon certain conditions; thus also you'll manage the offer, {at least some of you,} as if you were proposing a match for your son or daughter, and meant to give extraordinary encouragement too for closing it. {"But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear, but walked in the counsels and in the imagination of their evil heart, and went backward, and not forward." Jer.7:24.} You will propound a free offer, provided the sinner gives up himself, wholly and without the least reserve to Christ. Ah, but the Lord, I am sure, will never make you fruitful in converting souls at this rate. This will never do! The Spirit of Christ must show you quite another way of preaching, and bow your hearts to it likewise.

Preaching of the Gospel is so spoken of in the Holy Scriptures, as in point of efficacy, that no offer of Grace can match it; and consequently it is not the same thing.

An offer is in word only, but preaching is in Power. "For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." I Cor.4:20. Effectual preaching is the stretching forth of the rod of that kingdom. {"The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Psal.110:2.} {Mic.7:14 with Mic.5:4 - "Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood." - "And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God; and they shall abide; for now shall he be great unto the ends of the earth."} Preaching the Gospel is an act in Christ's name, and in Christ's

Spirit, in the preacher Christ hath sent, Rom.10:15, and so is influenced with God's mighty working, but man's propounding the offer is never so influenced as I can find, throughout my Bible; for instance, some poor souls who have found God's power attend preaching the Gospel, have found God's power withdrawn under offers. Preaching is a binding up of the broken in heart, Isa.61:1, but offers have been known to fetter and to fret the wound. {"As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths." Isa.3:12.} Preaching manages well; as it brings deliverance to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound, Lk.4:18, whereas, offers can say nothing but that they mean well. They make essays, they essay at this, and essay at that, but they produce nothing. Preaching Christ unto the Gentiles is a home-act; it is accompanied with Christ's being believed on in the world, I Tim.3:16, and says Paul to his Corinthians, "therefore whether it were I or they, so we preach, and so ye believed." I Cor.15:11. How was Christ preached to the Gentiles? Why Christ was preached so powerfully, so effectually, so closely, so savingly, that the Gentiles, Acts 13:42, besought that the same words, Phil.3:1, might be preached to them the next Sabbath. But when do the Scriptures ever tell us that offers had that effect? So that profferers of the Gospel have introduced this controversy, by corrupting the text with foreign phrases, such as proffering, or offering; mean what they may, it is no matter; the word {by turning it into Latin} means *oblatio*, which surely all of them know means another thing than preaching. They who are effectually called, are not called to Christ by offers of Salvation, but by preaching Salvation to them. "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness, but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God." I Cor.1:23-24. For though wisdom in the Counsels of the Gospel, goes before power, and contrivance precedes accomplishment; yet, the power of the Gospel is felt before the wisdom of the Gospel is discerned. And that is

the reason why, unto those that are called, Christ crucified is the power of God, before He is the wisdom of God to them. In a word, Christ is preached to the saving of the soul, Heb.10:39, but He is offered to the amusing of the auditory; which produceth nothing that is close, home, and applicatory, to neither elect or non-elect, but a mere sound of a common form to muse on. Wheresoever Christ is offered, it is certain He comes not home enough for God to be glorified, either in men's accepting or refusing Christ. In offers, Christ is only laid before men distantly, ineffectually, and sinners still lost, as to any recovering efficacy of help by such tenders. {"The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat, saith the LORD." Jer.23:28.}

Preaching the Gospel, both in Matthew 11:5 and Luke 7:22, {"the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them." - "Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached,"} where the words are, the poor have the Gospel preached to them, and to the poor the Gospel is preached, is rendered in a passive efficacy of preaching, that is, the poor are gospelized or transformed, Rom.12:2, into the very image and spirit of the Gospel. Besides, it shows us what poor are meant, even the poor in condition, because the blind who receive their sight, and the lame who walked, and the lepers who were cleansed, and the dead who were raised up, whom John's disciples had looked on and seen, were not figuratively the blind, lame, lepers, and dead, but strictly and absolutely in condition were such. Now the argument for Conviction of John's Disciples must be all of one and the same piece of evidence, or some part of the evidence will be an unfit means to remove the doubting and questioning of the said disciples; for they came to Jesus to see a sign of his being the Messiah, Matt.11:2-3,

according to the Truth of the Prophecies; and among other prophetic signs of Messiah in the Days of his Humiliation, it was foretold that his converts and followers should be an afflicted and a poor people, Zeph.3:12, as to their outward condition in this world, not poor in spirit, Matt.5:3, merely as elsewhere. Outward poverty is seen by men, inward poverty, or poverty of spirit, is not so discerned; and so here could have been no sign or evidence and demonstration to men that Jesus was the Christ. {Jn.20:31 with Acts 18:28. - "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." - "For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ."} Accordingly it proves that offers can be no preaching, because they cannot be rendered in the passive success, as preaching here is. The effect that offers have upon poor people can't be rendered thus in passive efficacy. I can say properly that a man converted is evangelized, and it comes up to the efficacy and truth of the thing, that he is so turned into the life and power of the Gospel. But if I say in the passive of the other word, that a man is offered, it would be unscriptural nonsense, for it can in no wise signify that he was brought under the effect and seal of this unscriptural term. Then further, when a man comes to offer Christ, he loses his labour; for, as to him who accepts the offer, what can you say of such a man? You never can say such a man is offered, nor can you say he is offerized, and you certainly cannot say that he is converted. But the man who has received the preaching or evangelizing, he may be fitly said to be evangelized. On the other hand, if a man should say of him who hath the benefit of the offer, he is offered, and thereby mean he is converted, he would speak utter nonsense, because it would not signify that he is converted. The active, {as in the other way, of preaching,} cannot be turned into the passive. He that hath the Gospel preached to him to conversion, is preached into the image of the Gospel. But supposing a man were converted by the offer, what sense would it be to say he that accepts the offer is offered into the image

of the offer? Preaching, therefore, and offering, are not the same thing.

Preaching the Gospel is bringing the blessing of the Gospel to be of experimental virtue, in standing of the purpose of God according to election. {"For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Rom.9:11.} A man by experience knows something of the Gospel, and both hears and feels how it enters his soul, Rom.10:17, under the preaching of it. For my own part I declare, I can give no account of any good I ever got by men's offers of Grace; but through Grace I can speak somewhat to the praise of the Gospel of Christ, concerning what I have got by the preaching of Grace. Oh! when a minister comes, while under the taste of the blessing in his own soul, to preach Christ, he may be sure that when he comes thus to preach Christ, he shall approach to God's chosen ones, in the fulness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ. Rom.15:29. He will not then tantalize the people of God with offers, nor talk to them of Grace that waits their acceptance, but cannot enter them; whereas Grace preached comes with a blessing, and entered as well as draws near. But offers prevail with no benefit on the hearers, for the more they are examined, the less they prevail. Thus I have proved that offers of Christ are not preaching of Christ.

CHAPTER THREE

Proof of the second of the three points in this debate; or, the proof of this proposition, that to propound the Grace-offer in the external means, is no means of the Spirit's working an internal ability in sinners to close savingly with the offer; neither doth or will he set in with offers to any such End.

This proposition is a direct reverse, or quite contrary theme to the triumphs of the plea about offers; yea; it's contrary to the very mending clause of their article suggested so plausibly before in favour of offers. The emendation of defects discovered in their article is this, that while the offer of Christ, say they, is propounding in the external means to sinners, the Spirit of Christ may be working an internal ability in these sinners to close in savingly with the offer. {"And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness; for it shall not be forgotten out of the mouths of their seed; for I know their imagination which they go about, even now." Deut.31:21.} I design, if the Lord will, in this chapter, a direct confutation of this vain confidence. For it is an error injuriously vented to the dishonour of Free Grace. {"This is thy lot, the portion of thy measures from me, saith the LORD; because thou hast forgotten me, and trusted in falsehood." Jer.13:25.} And it is also a corrupt principle of some men very wrongfully held to the dishonour of the Holy Spirit and his work! Psal.29:2.

Now the arguments I shall bring against this false opinion, in order to pull down so specious a piece of old Adam, are such scriptural proofs of the Free Gift of Grace, as by the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, may be carried on in this chapter. These blessed truths may be wrought up sweetly, higher and higher, unto what surmounts all the Doctrine of your offers in the low lands of this waste wilderness. {"For we have made lies our

refuge, and under falsehood have we hid ourselves." Isa.28:15.} And in hope that God peradventure will give men repentance to the acknowledging of the truth, II Tim.2:25, a few things shall be made known, which may prove Effectual of God to wound and slay the sore-plea, I Thes.2:13, which is so injurious to the Grace of God.

Argument 1. Offers of Grace and tenders of Salvation are no means of a saving ability to close in with Christ⁵, because they are neither means of Christ's Institution, nor of the Holy Spirit's Operation. God hath appointed the preaching of the Gospel, and Christ hath commanded it, II Tim.4:2, to preach the Word, and to bear his name, Acts 9:15, but neither hath God appointed, nor Christ commanded, the propounding of the Gospel, as the means to work his Grace. And however God the Spirit works upon the preaching, yet he works not upon a proposal, nor fills up an offer of Grace with any of his own presence of Grace, to accompany such a pretended offer to the saving change of a sinner. The Gospel is no means of working by a proposal, but it is a means of working in the Spirit's hand by the Spirit's fore-operation on the Gospel, Jn.5:4, in order to work with it an internal ability in the Sinner. The Spirit works by Fore-Operation on the Gospel, as the Gospel is a Revelation and an Institution of Christ according to the Fore-Ordination of God the Father. Also, that fore-operation of the Spirit on the Gospel, according to God's fore-ordination is performed by him in an act of Christ's Minister's Evangelizing, or in their preaching the Gospel, they having a taste of it in their own souls by the Spirit pre-operatively, while they are delivering it. {"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is

⁵ Note that throughout this treatise when we come across such phrases as "closing in with Christ," "closing with Christ," "close with Christ," &c., we may understand a saving embrace or grasp of Gospel Salvation as it resides in Christ, to a degree of measurable Spirit-wrought Assurance or Faith that Christ hath indeed redeemed us by his blood, and by virtue of his righteousness imputed or reckoned to our account, we stand in a state of Justification before God.

with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." I Jn.1:3.} And that before it is followed with any distinct and consequent Operation of the Holy Ghost in the soul of any elect sinner it is preached to, unto Conversion, and so to any certain object to be converted to Jesus Christ with Power, the Spirit comes down from Heaven with the Gospel, I Pet.1:12, fills it, and fills the minister's soul, and so makes it efficacious to an elect sinner in the congregation, Ezek.37:7, and to the elect alone, in respect to Saving knowledge; and that so distinctly and discerningly, that every one of such say, surely it is to me; this is preached, this is brought unto me, and thus poured into me! What reason then is there here, to expect the blessing of the Gospel in offers of Christ, Rom.15:29, when as indeed it is none of the means of the blessing? The Spirit is concerned in the preaching of Christ, but he is not concerned in tendering of Christ. Jer.5:31. He regards not proffers, if ever he reveals the arm of the Lord with power. Isa.53:1. Proposing is no apt means in itself, as it is no appointed means to attain the end. It is preaching the Doctrine and Salvation united, which the Holy Spirit delights to work by, Jn.16:14, that is the means pre-ordained of God, and which God takes up, and puts a Divine stamp upon, graciously working therewith in the Conversion of the elect. And as the doctrine is to be preached to the non-elect for other ends than Salvation, {of which hereafter in a separate chapter,} so neither Doctrine nor Salvation are means to be offered or tendered to any sinners for acceptance; but the doctrine is to be preached, even to the non-elect, for acceptance or refusal, and so is to be preached to all promiscuously. The Doctrine and Salvation are both to be preached, as the joint means of faith and comfort to the elect of God. For so long as a minister preaches the Gospel, he uses Christ's means, and these are apt means to convert souls; but when he degenerates into offers, Christ leaves him to sound forth a dead letter. II Cor.3:6. {The purpose of the Evangel or Gospel is to call out or convert the quickened elect, and not a means of regeneration, which is the work of the Holy Spirit alone.} Men whose principles are to offer Christ, do, without

doubt, presumptuously take upon them a way of dispensing the Word which Christ hath never instituted. Paul's preaching the kingdom of God, Acts 20:25, was carried on by this apt means, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of God, verse 24, not by this unapt device of the creature in offering the Gospel and tendering the Grace of God.

Argument 2. Proposing the offer in the external means, can be no means at all of the Spirit's working an internal ability in sinners to close savingly with the offer, because it is the Spirit Himself who is the Author of this internal ability. The faculty, though sanctified, is no self-mover in the sanctification, but is led to Christ by God the Spirit. Gal.5:18. Now the Holy Spirit, who is the Author of the internal ability or himself the worker of it, is neither offered, nor indeed can be. The Spirit is sent, as God's hand, stretched out through Christ in the Office of Comforter. {"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Jn.14:26.} It is the Comforter whom the Father will send. "Behold, {saith Christ,} I send the promise of my Father upon you." Lk.24:49. And in John 15:26, "but when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." And again, John 16:7, "nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." This was also secretly meant in the breathings of the Old Testament, as Psalm 144:7, testifies, "send thine hand from above," yea, thy Christ, the Man of thy right hand, Psal.80:17, and then thy Spirit through Him. Next, rid me, and deliver me out of great waters; that is, out of great depths of sin and sorrows, out of sins and sufferings, from out of corrupt doctrines {that are foul waters, Jer.8:14,} entertained by strangers to the truth, out of great trials for my faithful standing it out, and my not receiving them, as others do. Deliver me from the hand of strange children, that I may be neither drowned in a spirit of error,

nor persecuted for the spirit of truth by strange or hypocritical children that believe not the glorious Gospel of the Grace of Christ. {"Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood." Psal.144:11.} Now is it necessary this should be done under an act of Providence, as well as under an act of Grace, in translating out of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son? Col.1:13. Is it necessary to free the soul from the bondage of men, and not necessary to free the soul from the slavery of Satan? Eph.2:2. If the Spirit is the author of an escape from outward opposition and the hatred of the world, how much more is he the Author of every deliverance from the inward power of lust and corruption, in his Operation of a full ability to believe on the Lord Jesus, and to close savingly with him in the revelation of eternal life.

How sweetly is the sending of the Spirit, as well as the sending of Christ from the Father, hinted in the Old Testament? As Psalm 110:2, "the LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion." And it is plain that the promise was to take place, after Christ was ascended and gone to Heaven. What was that promise then of the rod of his strength, to be sent after Christ was gone into Heaven, I Pet.3:22, but the Holy Spirit, who should be sent down from Heaven, I Pet.1:12, to carry on the Gospel and Government of Christ in this world, in spite of all the enemies of Christ, whether among the Jews or Gentiles? Acts 4:27. The request is, Psalm, 43:3, "O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles." Here is Christ and the Spirit, whom the Father was to send. For, says Christ, "I am come a light into the world," Jn.12:46, and saith the apostle, speaking of Christ, "the darkness is passed, and the true light now shineth." I Jn.2:8. So God's truth, joined with God's light, may well be interpreted of the Spirit, because the Spirit is Truth. I Jn.5:6. These two were prayed for to be sent forth as Persons, though under the similitude of qualities; because the substance of the Old Testament Doctrine and Types about Christ and the Spirit ran in these two streams of

similitude, Light and Truth. These Two in God, Christ and the Spirit, were to be sent by the Father, as Persons, to guide the soul to Mount Zion, the true church, where God's presence remains and dwells; of which literal Mount Zion was the figure; and so was the temple upon it, in times of old. {"For the LORD hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it." Psal.132:13-14.} It is an act proper to a person to conduct and lead others; and so these, the Christ of God, and the Spirit of Christ, are for spiritual conduct. "O send out thy light and thy truth; let them lead me; let them bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles," Psal.43:3, to thy Gospel churches, wherever these churches shall be planted, while Gospel times exist.

The Spirit is said to come, John 16:17, "nevertheless I tell you the truth; it is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you." The Comforter will not come unto you. Will not; for he hath a will of His own! The will of the Comforter is the will of God, because the Comforter is God; and He will not come unto you, if I go not away. Likewise John 15:26, "but when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." When the Comforter, is come, &c., this is the character of Him in relation to His office, for He is the One that comes. Talk not then of sinners coming to Christ before you duly insist upon the Comforter's coming unto sinners; for when He is come, saith Christ, Jn.16:8, "he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Again, verse 13, "howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth." It is his Divine Office still to come. Again, Acts 1:8, "but ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." It is a wonder to me, that while the Scriptures speak so much of the Spirit's coming to the creature, ministers should still insist so much upon the coming of the creature to Christ, without the Spirit, expressly. But what will not men do to uphold their offers and their offices when we

see they seek to turn the Holy Spirit and His Operations out of place?

The Spirit is said to fall, Acts 10:44, "while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word," and so, Acts 8:16, "for as yet he {the Holy Ghost} was fallen upon none of them." So Acts 11:15, "and as I began to speak, {says Peter, rehearsing the matter, of which he was accused by the Jewish brethren for going in to the Gentiles,} the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning."

The Spirit, who is the Author of an internal ability to close with Christ, is shed forth, Acts 2:33, "therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." He is shed on, Tit.3:4-6, "but after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, 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, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." {"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light." Psal.36:8-9.} He is, as this Divine Agent and Worker of all inward strength, faith, love, and joy, shed abroad, "because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom.5:5. Thus the Scriptures witness.

Now let me step to the use of it, and weigh it in the balance of the sanctuary. Job 31:6. Is the Spirit sent in an offer of the Spirit, or is your offer a means of sending Him? Is the Spirit not sent in the promise? {"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal.3:14.} Or rather, is He not sent in evangelizing, and preaching the Father's promise, Christ's ascension to God, and His intercession there at the right hand of God, to send His Spirit? Is God's hand of power in the Office of the Spirit stretched out through Christ by means of propounding Christ, or propounding

the Spirit to the flock; or by virtue of the righteousness of God by Christ, Rom.3:21, preached, even as God sent His Son by virtue of God's own love freely to us, I Jn.4:9-10, according to the preaching which hath been spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets, Acts 3:21, since the world began? Does the Spirit come by means of offers of Christ, or by preaching the mission of Christ, which made way for the mission of the Spirit? Did not the Spirit's coming depend upon Christ's going to the Father? And is not the preaching of the Gospel a means of his coming still; not as a so called means of Grace offered, but as filled with Christ's presence?

Again, does the Spirit descend or fall to work an ability by your offers of Christ as the external means; or by advancing the Person of Christ as the true cause; and by advancing His office, His dignity, glory, fulness, &c., as so many arguments for the Holy Spirit's descending upon an elect sinner to work faith? {"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." Acts 10:44.} It is the preaching of the Gospel, not offering, that advances the mysterious and hidden cause of the Spirit's falling in and with the Word. "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith," Gal.3:2, as the apostle says to the foolish Galatians. Mind, by the hearing, not the offering of faith. For if a sinner lays hold of Christ, before the Spirit lays hold of him, he must receive the Spirit of life, Rev.11:11, afterwards by works of the law, and not by the hearing of faith; not by the Gospel, to be sure, for that tells us that the Spirit of the Father works in the sinner before the sinner comes to Christ. {"It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Jn.6:45.} Is the Spirit shed forth, or shed on, or shed abroad for this internal ability of coming and closing {as they will have it} with the offer, as the offer is propounded; or, is he shed down to work this ability to believe in Christ, as the Gospel is advanced? Suppose a minister, in the darkness of his spirit, should say, "Lo, here, I offer you the Spirit, sinners, take him!" Would it not be strange doctrine? And yet why not, "here

I offer you the Spirit," as well as, "here I offer you Christ?" {"In transgressing and lying against the LORD, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression and revolt, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood." Isa.59:13.} For as Christ, in regard of Divine Order and Priority, is, if possible, a greater gift than the Gift of the Spirit, so Christ cannot be closed with, in a way of Salvation Grace, without the Spirit to create or work that faith, which is "of the operation of God." Col.2:12. The Spirit cannot come, or fall, or be shed on, to do this separately from Christ; for he comes in God's gift of Christ to the soul, and one cannot be without the other. Why then I have Christ by God's Donation antecedently to my having the Spirit of Christ as a worker of the ability to close with Christ; so likewise, I have the Spirit antecedently to my having the faith which the Spirit works in me. So that none of this can be offered me, for my internal ability to receive Christ, how then is an offer of Christ, as an external means, a means of my ability wrought in me to close with Christ? {"It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty; or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite; so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion." Isa.29:8.} "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say." I Cor.10:15.

Argument 3. Proposing the offer in the external means can be no means of the Spirit's working an internal ability in a sinner to close in savingly with the offer, because the Spirit is the living principle of a saving ability, and continues to work in the soul by and from principle into all the Acts that are correspondent with it. {"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil.2:13.} Principles for closing with Christ can never be offered consistently with the Gospel, for it is in consequence of a prior interest in those principles that I am ever brought freely to close with Christ. I cannot have a new heart to close with Christ, but as the Spirit of Christ must be the indwelling principle of that new heart, in which the new heart must subsist as

its substantial Principle. {"Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." I Cor.2:12.} "All my springs are in Thee," Psal.87:7, says David. Otherwise, how can I be in the Spirit, Rom.8:9, live in the Spirit, Gal.5:25, and pray in the Spirit? Eph.6:18. How can I worship God in the spirit, or in the Holy Ghost, if the Holy Spirit be not my Principle of life, Gal.3:3, the life of my praying, and of my Gospel worship? {"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." Phil.3:3.} For the text tells me that, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Jn.4:24. What is the meaning of that phrase "in spirit?" The meaning is evident, that to worship God in spirit, is to worship him in the power and unction of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit of God being the principle of worship in those who are brought to a full participation of the mystery of Gospel-worship. It is plain that the phrase, "in spirit" is expounded and meant elsewhere of the Holy Ghost, as in Matthew 22:43, where Christ says to them, "how then doth David in spirit call him Lord?" There it must be understood of the Holy Ghost, this signifying, Heb.9:8, as the apostle's phrase is. For the Holy Ghost was the Principle, as well as the Author, of that bright discovery of the Messiah to the soul of David, which inspired and guided him by the Spirit of prophecy. {"Worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." Rev.19:10.} Therefore to worship God in Spirit then cannot be meant of joining the soul with the external performances, as Dr. Hammond⁶ hath paraphrased it.

There are clear reasons against it. 1. Because then there would be no more excellence in the Christian worship as to the Principle than had been common before in the Jewish worship, where the soul was joined with the

⁶ Henry Hammond, 1605-1660, Church of England; a pioneer Anglican theologian, much influenced by Richard Hooker and Lancelot Andrewes, but also by that form of Arminianism as found in Hugo Grotius, whom he defended in his writings.

external performances. 2. Such low a conjunction as the soul joined with outward performances and ceremonies, will never agree with so high a description of the state of the worshippers as is there given, so as to bring it up to the character of the text, Jn.4:23, "but the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth; for the Father seeketh such to worship him." Such? Whom? Why, such having the Spirit to be their Principle in worship, thereby to know what they worship. Jn.4:22. And thus having the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, they as true worshippers, Jn.4:23, have Christ together with the Father, for the object of their Gospel-worship. {"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." Eph.1:17.} This Spirit of wisdom, the Holy Spirit, is also the Spirit of revelation of the object, as well as the Spirit in which God is rightly worshiped, and the only principle thereof. Spiritual worship does not consist in a bare soul-union with external performances of the Christian religion. 3. When Spirit is joined with Truth, it does not mean in Scripture phrase of our spirit only, but God's Spirit. To this agree the testimonies of I Jn.4:6, I Pet.1:22, Jn.14:17, Jn.16:3, &c. 4. When soul is joined with spirit it is not joined with truth, but with the body, and that in divers places. This plainly shows us when to interpret spirit as meant of the companion of the body. As in the following texts, James 2:26, I Cor.6:20, I Cor.5:3, so the conjunction of body with spirit as in other texts which clear it, that the phrase in spirit, {"God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," Jn.4:24,} can bear no interpretation of that nature. To shut it up with one instance, I Thess.5:23, about spirit, soul and body. {"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."} Your whole spirit, that is, the frame and temper of your mind under all Providences, and soul {which hath all the reasonable faculties, understanding, conscience, will and affection,}

and body, {which consisteth of the several members,} be presented blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus.

Well, how can I be, and live, and pray, and worship in the Spirit, if God the Spirit be not my vital Principle, in and from which, through Christ, I live in the Spirit, and pray in the Holy Ghost? Now can a minister from the pulpit say to a sinner, speaking of the Spirit as a principle, "here I offer you the first indwelling principle, the Spirit?" Or can he say of what is commonly reckoned the first principle of Grace, a new heart, "here is a new heart for thee, sinner; here is regeneration, here is faith for you; come sinner, take these principles of life, and come and lay hold of Christ?" Why, how would this divinity sound from our pulpits! How would the holy doves by the rivers of waters, Song.5:12, be scared out of their wits at a preacher that should come among them, and talk at this rate! But if ministers are not wont to say thus to sinners, concerning the Spirit, as a principle of Divine life, of motion in the soul, working faith for closing {looking to Christ for all of Salvation} with Salvation, and all other grace in the soul; then why should men accustom themselves to say thus of Salvation, "here I offer you Salvation, take it?" {"If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, saying, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people." Mic.2:11.} Why do not they at once openly say, "come sinner, here is the Spirit, which is the first principle of all this faith and willingness, by which you have an internal ability to close with the offer; here, I do now therefore offer you this Spirit of God, and tender this principle; here, take into yourselves the means of this new heart which I offer you, accept of this ability, and therein close with the Free offer!" {"Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee; and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment." Lam.2:14.}

On the other hand, if they are ashamed openly to say this, nor after this manner, then why should they accustom themselves to say, "here I offer you Christ?" It is readily granted, that such supposed tenders of the

Spirit of Grace, Zech.12:10, as a First Principle in the soul, and the propounding of other principles of the soul that are spiritual, and that according as the Spirit pleaseth to work them, would be strange doctrine, when put up thus in offers, and sent along to the ears of men. And yet why may not the sound be, "come I offer you the Spirit and Spiritual principles, I offer you the very ability to close with the offer," as well as "I offer you Christ, and I offer you Salvation?" For these latter blessings, which men still venture and pretend to offer are the greatest of all blessings. Christ is the greatest gift of God's love. And what is the greatest gift of God's love to be offered and tendered to men, and yet they will not readily offer and tender you the less; namely, the saving ability itself to close with the main blessing of all? By all their twisting then, it is plain, that offering Christ can be no means of obtaining Christ, because it's no means of obtaining an ability to close with Christ upon offers. {"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Rom.16:17.}

If an offer of the inward ability, be the means of that inward ability, why are men so unfaithful in their offers of Christ, as not to offer the ability too, and urge it home upon them touching Christ, as they urge it upon them to accept Christ? Why not? "Here I tender you faith, the power of closing with Christ practically; I offer you regeneration, I reach out a heart, I tender you a will to do it." Thou dost offer Christ to a sinner. Oh, vain and blind man! Why not the Spirit of Christ to a sinner too? If you offer a sinner privileges above nature, why do you not offer that sinner principles above nature to receive them? Surely one may as well be done as the other. Well, I am sure that both Christ and his Spirit may be exalted, and must be too; but who will say that both may be offered, and must be too, Christ and the Spirit too, as the principle of closing with him? Oh, it shows that offers are not the means to work an internal ability, to quicken the faculty of a soul that does savingly close with Christ, much less to become the true life principle of the soul afterwards. Exalting of the Father, and exalting of his

Christ, Acts 4:26, are the Spirit's means of working this inward ability. For the glorious Name of God in the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost, are to be lifted up in preaching the Gospel. These are means of imparting spiritual light. But your offers lift up nothing, except your own folly and darkness! Isa.2:11. Oh, to exalt the Spirit while preaching the Father and Christ, as the fountain of life and motion in the soul, is a means of conversion to many; but propounding an offer of I know not what, while all the glorious Mystery of God and Christ are veiled by the very tender and proposal of this mock benefit, is a means to delude many, but convert none, to strengthen none, or work the saving ability, no not in one soul. The Spirit Himself must be the strengthening principle of my soul's faculties, Rom.8:13, as well as the Author of its renovation, to cause me to act in a saving embrace of Christ by faith. For, after all, the soul's faculty renewed, is not the sinner's principle. It is but the instrument for the use and motion of Grace in the Spirit's hand. The Spirit Himself by indwelling is the Principle without which, II Tim.1:14, without whose abiding influence, after he had become the Author of Sanctification, and renewed the faculties, the man would relapse into a total deprivation of the habits and abilities of the new creature. Grace as a habit or quality, could never subsist in the faculty of a man, separate from the Spirit as his principle, to maintain by continual indwelling, what he once created by in-working. {"In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph.2:22.} Now are offers of Christ and Salvation to the sinner the means of working this inward ability of the sinner to close with Christ, when as this inward strength of power wrought in the soul by the Holy Spirit, quickening the faculty, and abiding the very principle of the powers, I Jn.3:24, and so enabling the faculty quickened, to will, to choose, and to lay hold? And this principle the Spirit becomes, by an indwelling adobe, as well as he is the inward worker of that power in the soul. {"And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." I Jn.5:6.}

His first Operation on the faculty, as the effect of his gracious influence, turns the soul toward Christ. The

Scripture is full to this purpose. "Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, {as a Person of the Godhead in the Trinity,} and shall be in you," Jn.14:17, as a delegate from the Father, one called, and so named the Paraclete, carrying on Salvation with the Messiah, and as a principle of far clearer and stronger experience and influence in believing, as well as a principle of influence for gladness and consolation. This, as to the principle of conversion, is the substance of that prayer in Ephraim, Jer.31:18, last words, "turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the LORD my God." So the absolute promise, Ezek.36:27, "I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." There is the Holy Spirit as the cause and worker. Then, Ezek.37:14, "and shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live, and I shall place you in your own land; then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD." The Holy Ghost is there signified as the principle of life. And in chapter 11:19, "and I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you." How? Why, to be sure, as an inward worker of the ability, and as the principle of the ability together. Again, II Cor.1:22, "who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts," i.e., a principle of Grace, which is of the same piece with glory. {"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Eph.1:13-14.} The LORD is to us here, only in a lower measure, what he will be in a higher measure hereafter. For as God fills us with Himself, and dwells in us Himself, who is our portion; so inhabiting us more abundantly, He will be in us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, II Cor.4:17; a glory to be revealed in us, Rom.8:18, and the revealer of it to be admired in all them that believe. For, as earnest money is the same species, though not of the same value, as the full sum is

to be of, which is behind; so the Spirit is given as an earnest in our hearts, is God bestowing Himself upon us, through Christ, by the Spirit, in giving us of the same kind of blessedness, which He will bestow upon us with Him in Heaven. {"The LORD is the portion of mine inheritance and of my cup; thou maintainest my lot." Psal.16:5.}

Thus, II John 1:2, the apostle speaks of "the truth's sake, which dwelleth in us, and shall be with us for ever." Doubtless it is one of the titles of the Holy Ghost, who is there spoken of, whom the faithful were enabled to call by the name of Truth in that daring generation of professors, I Jn.2:27, who were headed by Ebion and Cerinthus⁷ in their blasphemies against the Holy Ghost, and also of the Son of God; and no doubt but they counted and called the indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the saints, as their principle of Divine Life, a lie. Therefore to do the Spirit honour, in the face of that formal generation, the apostle calls him the Truth, and professes his love to the elect wrought on by the truth of the Gospel, II Jn.1:1, and was knit to them "for the Truth's sake which dwelleth in us." Yea, it is expressly the Spirit's title, I Jn.5:6, "the Spirit is Truth," and I Jn.4:12, "God dwelleth in us," i.e., dwells in the believer as the principle of life, motion, and obedience to Christ. Likewise, verses 15-16, "whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." God dwells in him that confesses Jesus is the Son of God; it being in that erroneous day which the apostle bent his style against, esteemed both a fanatical and dangerous point to hold. And it cost the saints much to be faithful to Christ in that age; and, it seems, not one in that day was able to come up to this sound, holy and bold confession, that Jesus was the Son

⁷ Cerinthus was the founder of one of the earliest heretical sects of those who claimed to be followers of Christ. He was brought up in Egypt but removed to Asia Minor, where he propagated his false doctrines. In regards to Ebion, Jerome believed that he lived at the time of the Apostle John and had been refuted by John for not believing in Christ's Pre-Existence. In a book called "Against All Heresies," an anonymous work once attributed to Tertullian, Ebion is referred to as the successor to Cerinthus.

of God, Rom.10:9, unless he had God the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, the principle of the same confession. Likewise, verse 16, "and we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." He that dwelleth in love; {for in that day too the faithful were hated for holding supernatural truths,} he that dwelleth in love, therefore of the Truth, and of them that hold it, "dwelleth in God," as his Principle of it, and God dwelleth in him, as his possession and heritage forever. So II Tim.1:14, "that good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us," a powerful Maintainer of his own interest, and of the image of Christ in us. II Cor.3:18. To which add I Cor.3:16, "know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" And how dwelleth the Spirit of God in you? The answer is, in you, as ye are his temples to inhabit, and as he is your principle to actuate you. {"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Rom.8:9.} The indwelling of the Spirit is acknowledged as a known case in the saints of the New Testament, and his abiding in them, as their principle is shown by his falling on them. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead {i.e., the Spirit of God; for God raised Christ from the dead,} dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Rom.8:11. It is plain, that this was the indwelling principle of the saints, for by this principle they "walked after the Spirit," verse 1, and by this principle they "minded the things of the Spirit," verse 5. Now this was from a holy similitude between the principle in them and the objects before them. And that the Spirit of God was their principle so to walk in the Spirit, and so to mind the things of the Spirit, as is further evident in what the Apostle supposes of these Romans, verse 9, "if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Thus the Spirit of God after sanctification and possession of the faculty, moves the faculty towards the Object, both as the gracious author, and the gracious principle of the motion. But yet still, to take in more of

the bowels of the mystery, I proceed to a fourth argument.

Argument 4. The Spirit's working an internal ability in sinners, is an Operation of God's Grace which he works under the Imputation, Rom.4:22, of the Righteousness of God, Rom.3:22, to the elect in Christ, according as he has chosen us in Him. Eph.1:4. How does the Spirit work faith to lay hold of Christ? Without all doubt his Operation of Faith and all Grace is in and under the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ, Phil.3:9, because of the antecedent virtue of this righteousness to appease God's Justice, II Pet.1:1, and remove the obstacles in the way of God's mercy. For how can I think the Spirit works an ability to close with Christ, before Christ closeth with the sinner by the Holy Ghost? And how can Christ close with the sinner by his Spirit, except in the righteousness of God? Rom.1:17. And how can Christ close with the sinner by the Holy Ghost in the righteousness of God, unless it be under that righteousness? And then it must be under the same righteousness that he works faith; because it is in the virtue and use of that righteousness of God wrought in Christ, II Cor.5:21, that the Spirit, or Holy Ghost, works all the ability in the heart of a sinner to close with Christ. Besides, the Father hath treasured up all the Applicatory Store in Christ, Col.2:3, of which fulness we receive, as it is called, Jn.1:16, the Spirit officially brings in his Office, and must therefore necessarily be understood to work under the righteousness of Christ, imputed to and found upon the elect of God, as the over-ruling and predestinating Cause of their believing, since all Power is put into Christ's hands of the Father. Matt.11:27, 28:18. Otherwise we take in wrong conceptions of the Spirit's working, as if the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, who is the Spirit of Christ from the Father, wrought on the sinner to believe without the glorifying of Christ. Jn.16:14. But this must not be admitted; for the Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto us. Jn.16:15. Again, faith is obtained through the righteousness of God, II Pet.1:1, from whence it is plain, that the Spirit who is the Author and Principle of it from Christ, Heb.12:2, both works it, and dwells in us, to maintain the use of it under the

righteousness of God, II Cor.5:19; and so becomes unto us in his Operations and Supplies, a Worker and a Principle, in the very virtue of God's Righteousness wrought in Christ, Rom.10:3, through the death and blood of his Son. Now to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, Rom.4:5, what do your offers signify, either as to God's Imputation of Righteousness, Isa.54:17, or as to God's Operation of Faith under it? It is evident that all this Doctrine of Christ is fitted to preaching the Gospel, but it is not fitted to the doctrine of the offer; as it is erroneous to suppose that an offer can be any means of an inward ability to close with Christ, which doth so absolutely depend entirely upon the Operation of the Spirit under the Righteousness of God.

This ability or power comes upon us, is wrought upon us, and therefore cannot be proffered to us. The Spirit will not, and cannot honourably work without the Imputation of Christ, I Cor.1:30, but offers of Christ are without a due regard of the Imputation of Christ's righteousness, or the work of the Spirit, therefore are not fit means to work this ability. {"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezek.36:26-27.} How can the working of the ability in sinners by the Spirit be expected under that sort of pretended preaching which exalts nothing of the Imputation of Christ's to the person of a sinner, Gen.15:6, nor insists at all upon it as the comprehensive act of God's Grace, wherein the Operation of the Spirit is included? {"Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Psal.32:2.}

Would they have an internal ability without an internal Worker thereof, {"according to the effectual working in the measure of every part," Eph.4:16,} under the Righteousness of God? Would they have faith to come and lay hold of Christ without an internal Manager of that faith, and without an indwelling Principle of strength in the soul to stay and uphold the workmanship of God? And

that whilst there is an absolute need of this strength to uphold it, against all the opposite powers of lust, darkness, unbelief, and self-love? Now as the Righteousness of God in Christ abides on a sinner, Rom.8:33, so in this righteousness abiding there is a Foundation of God's Free Grace Justifying, Dan.9:26, upon which the Spirit doth not only work renewing Grace, I Pet.1:2, as faith, repentance, humility, watchfulness, and the entire effects of sanctification, as joy, comfort, stability, and perseverance therein; but the Spirit abides in the soul as the living principle of Grace, dwelling there secretly, silently, surely, faithfully and federally, Isa.59:21, {"hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit," I Jn.4:13,} even though he may at times suspend his gracious Operations, when he reproveth our follies, and corrects our disorders in this life; and when he is grieved, Eph.4:30, to a ceasing of his joyous Operations and his glad witness with our spirits, Rom.8:16, thereby putting us to grief, and making our hearts sad, by the testimonies, texts and arguments, which he brings against our follies. II Cor.7:9-11. Thus, he changes the theme that he used to insist on, and alters his voice in the Gospel into heavy tidings, which will make any new creature to be sad in heart, and full of grief and heaviness! Forasmuch then as he is the principle of this grief in the soul, he Himself is said to be grieved in the provocation of it. For which cause, he further convinces us of the sin of quenching the Spirit in his operations. I Thes.5:19. All this latitude now, which is consistent Gospel, and respects the Spirit and his work, falls in with preaching of the Gospel, and preaching of the Righteousness of God, as the chariot of his praise, in which He rides to take possession of the sinner's heart. But apply it to your offers, and all this sinks and dies; it is lost, for you hear nothing of it in your free tenders. The propounding of the offer is no external means; it's not the chariot of Praise, State and Honour, in which the Spirit comes to execute his office, under Christ's Mediatorial righteousness.

Argument 5. To go on, the Holy Spirit's Operation in all these respects, namely, on the Gospel, on the heart in moving the faculty of it towards the Object, both as the Worker and the Principle of the motion, and all under the Righteousness of God through Christ, depends upon a cause, and so will work Salvation by nothing that is below that cause, as the true means in the hand of that cause. The cause of the Spirit's working Salvation is jointly the Father and the Son. The preacher then ceaseth to preach the Gospel, while by sinking into his offers, he ceases to ascribe Glory to the Father and Son, in the joint cause of the Spirit's Operation. Now the foundation of that cause is a foreordination of the elect to Salvation by an act of the Father, and redemption of the elect to that Salvation by an act of the Son, and fore-Operation of the Spirit upon the means of that Salvation, in his applicatory work, while he is applying Salvation from the Father and the Son, who have certainly begun it, and advanced it in and by Jesus Christ. Salvation, as it is managed by the Holy Ghost, depends entirely upon the joint cause of Salvation in the Everlasting Covenant of Grace, in the Father and Son, respecting what had been wrought long ago by God and Christ, for the ability of a sinner in the work of Faith. This traces the work of Salvation by the Holy Ghost still on further from the beginning thereof. The Spirit works all his works towards Salvation, by the Father's pattern, Jn.5:17, and by Christ's sampler. {"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." Jn.10:15.} Accordingly, the Spirit works them in Salvation upon all the elect alone, as well as in Providence for the elect's sake, Matt.24:22, according to what the Father and Christ have done and purposed. The Spirit's Operation produces a new creature in the work of faith, Gal.6:15, which is called the Operation of God. Col.2:12. So that God and Christ do cause Salvation to be wrought off by the Spirit's pre-operation upon fit means. And salvation in believing is wrought through the Spirit's working effectually on the Gospel, to make it a right preaching from the joint cause thereof. Then it is the Spirit forms Christ in the soul, Gal.4:19, lets in the object of faith through the eye of

faith, to fall in directly upon the new born soul that now hath this ability created in it to discern Christ; and so Christ is formed in the heart, after the manner any outward object is formed in the eye. When I say I have such a man or object in my eye, 'tis not meant that the man or object are in my eye locally, that is impossible; but they are in my eye objectively, I see them. So when it is said that Christ is formed in us, or Christ is in us the hope of glory; it is not to be understood that Christ, who is now corporeally at the right hand of God, is locally and substantially formed in us, or is so in us the hope of Glory; but that Christ, who is at the right hand of God, is the object of faith, the substantial object of faith, let in spiritually to the soul born from above, so that the soul sees Christ by a living act of faith, just as he is represented in the Word. And this is Christ formed in us. When we come spiritually to have a complete sight of Christ in the Glass of the Gospel, and this also is Christ in us the hope of Glory.

Neither are these, as the Quakers have urged that we make them, two Christs, one without us and another within us; whereas they have no Christ, but call the light within them by that name. Christ is not divided; there is but one Lord Jesus Christ, I Cor.8:6, and he is at the right hand of God, and we believe on him as risen and exalted there. Neither doth Christ formed in us, or Christ in us the hope of glory, suppose two Christs, any more than a conception of the object; or of a man seen, supposes two objects, or two men, one in the eye, and another before the eye. 'Tis but one object, or one man still; even while the conception is in the eye, and the object without the eye. It is here also, as with the face of a man seen in water; for when a man looks into the water, and sees a face there formed by reflection, which directly answers to the face formed without the water; there are not two faces, but one face represented. One face is seen, which casts its own single reflection on the water. Well, it's the Spirit's work from a certain cause to form Christ in the soul. He produces Faith as an eye to discern God in Christ; and thence by discerning Christ's Person and Righteousness, to feel a heart wrought to stoop to Christ,

and the righteousness of God in Christ, and to use a hand wrought in faith to lay hold upon what is brought to the new creature, convinced of self-weakness; and to use a foot, or the new creature's ability for walking, to go or come to Christ, as the soul is ordered and trained up under divers exercises of Providence, fitted to the said motions, before faith, through the Spirit's Office under the righteousness of God, can be enabled in the said acts and motions, to discern, to stoop, to receive and lay hold of what is brought; also to go or come, and lay hold again of what is set down in the eye of the soul at a further distance. All such acts as these show that the work of Grace is begun and carried on in the soul by Operations of Grace, and not by offers of Grace; and whilst preaching Christ is the Spirit's way of bestowing spiritual light, offers of Grace engender mere darkness.

Argument 6. The true means of Salvation in the hand of the Cause to work the ability of believing, are by the Everlasting Covenant of God's Grace, far advanced above offers of Grace. The Everlasting Covenant of Grace which was made by and among all the three glorious Persons of Jehovah, Jehovah the Father, Jehovah the Son, and Jehovah the Spirit, upon the foundation of God's electing love in his own Supreme Will and Free Grace. Also, the Father's gracious mission of the Holy Ghost, as Comforter, in the name of God's Son, as Christ, according to the Free and Everlasting Covenant, do neither of them signify the least provision made towards the blessing of these offers, but do confer all the signification of the blessing upon the Operation of the Spirit, as provided in the Covenant with Christ, {"I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house," Isa.42:6-7,} which provisions of Grace are evangelizing, or preaching Effectual Grace and Salvation by Jesus Christ, as begun, advanced, and perfected by the Glorious Three, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Nothing short of which is properly glad tidings! It is said of the Spirit, Jn.15:26-27, "when

the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me, {the Person and accomplishments of Christ,} and ye also shall bear witness." Christ could say this to his disciples, for he knew the Covenant that it should be so. But now if an offer could bear witness, yet he that hears the offer cannot from the offer bear witness, because it is not provided in the Covenant to be a means of Conversion; neither is it provided that he who hears the offer shall bear witness; but it is provided in the Covenant that he who hears the right Gospel-Preaching, even the Holy Ghost's pre-operated and prepared Gospel, Jn.16:13-14, which exalts the witness of the Spirit, Jn.14:26, shall believe under the hearing, and bear witness too of what he hears. Oh, to come forth, and to preach God's Covenant Operations of Grace, and not to put off poor sinners with your uncovenanted proffers! If you preached the true means of Salvation and did not put souls off with an offer of the Great Salvation, Heb.2:3, you would be ministers and workmen, indeed, that need not be ashamed! II Tim.2:15. And it would be a mighty argument that the Spirit of God attended your ministry! Then you would be enabled to go on and do great things in God's name, and in God's hand, let who would oppose you, in so bright an advancement of the Glory of God by Christ! The Lord grant, that the Holy Spirit may teach us to preach Jesus Christ faithfully, and burn up our chaff {of which offers of Christ are some part} with unquenchable fire, Matt.3:12, even the holy trying and refining Operations of God the Spirit. Mal.3:2-3.

CHAPTER FOUR

The third principal point is to prove that an offer of Grace is no Gift of Grace; and then where is your offer?

How strangely do men run beyond the bounds of truth and modesty, while their zeal towards the doctrine of the offer, precipitates {or drives} them into this foolish assertion, which afterwards causes them confidently to utter among the common sort of people, namely, that a gift and an offer are both one. How is that Scripture fulfilled, "there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err." Isa.30:28. {"Because God hath deprived her of wisdom, neither hath he imparted to her understanding." Job 39:17.} Let these who offer God's Grace in Christ blush! The transport of their pride does most wretchedly expose their judgment, while it causes me some doubt, whether they can fairly tell me what their Free offers even mean. Besides, it can proceed from no regular chain of thought in men to trump up this identity. It is mere confusion; for a gift and an offer are never one sort of act, nor one sort of thing acted. To make one thing identically of two, that are so different one from the other, is certainly a very inexcusable fiction of the brain.

I will begin to disprove this error from the Scriptures. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," I Cor.2:14, as the Holy Ghost teaches us by the Apostle Paul. Consequently a natural man's notion of them, will spoil a spiritual man's apprehension of them, I Cor.2:12, while the spiritual man forsakes the light of the Scriptures, to dress up the matter of a gift of God in his thoughts, which must be according to the assistance he receives from a natural man about it, who is both dark and blind. My meaning, to speak home to this matter is this, that he who goes by the mere help of his dictionary in this matter, will soon injure his concordance in the very

doctrinal parallels of his Bible, and that in very fundamental truths too, by this promiscuous confusion of drawing forth gifts into offers. For what though the infinitive verbs, {*dare, donare, proebere, &c.*,} be promiscuously or as mixed together be rendered, to offer or proffer, by grammarians; yet still our holy well-ordered Bible admits of none of this blind confusion. Nay, if we consult natural men themselves in the turning of words, and do weigh some texts against it, we may find advantage sufficient on the Gospel's side.

We are told in Latin that *offero* is to offer or tender, to proffer or propose, and that the phrase *oblatio pecuniae* signifies a tendering of money. Now let us bring this to some pecuniary instances {or money instances} in the Bible and see what will come of it. Where can we find that the Scriptures afford us evidence to conclude that an offer and a gift are both one? Is a tendering of money the gift of money? Is a tendering of any other human reward the gift of that reward too? I say a human reward, for in this I begin to fall on humanity, because it is humanity here that has corrupted divinity. And besides, in a mere offer of this instance something may be learned to carry further.

To instance in Naaman the Syrian's offer to Elisha, who plainly, among other natural good things, which Naaman calls a blessing, II Kings 5:15, tendered him bags of money, as appears by the sequel of the matter in comparing verses 22 & 23. "Behold, now I know that there is no God in all the earth, but in Israel; now therefore, I pray thee, take a blessing {an earthly blessing, some money} of thy servant." Well, this was but a tender of money, no gift thereof, for the Prophet refused it, verse 16, "but he said, as the LORD liveth, before whom I stand, I will receive none. And he urged him to take it; but he refused." How then could that be given which never was received? It was offered, and that is consistent with a refusal; it was not bestowed, for that is consistent only with an acceptance. Elisha would not meddle with the money, but it was Gehazi, his covetous servant, who ran after the rich Syrian, and begged of him some of that money, which just before had been offered

his master. Gehazi sued for one talent of silver, which is three hundred and seventy five pounds of our money, as Brerewood⁸ computes it; but Naaman urged him with a large gift of two talents, or seven hundred and fifty pounds; which was more money than the servant knew what to do with, to bestow on himself. Thus Naaman's proffer and tendering of money to Elisha became Naaman's gift to Elisha's servant in procuring that servant's acceptance of the money. This proves that a gift of money, and an offer or tendering of money, are two distinct things; although some dictionary-divines may take the liberty of confounding or mingling them as much as they please.

So the Scripture distinguishes {in humanity} the offer of a thing from the Gift thereof; as in the instance of Balak's offer to Balaam, Num.22:17, "for I will promote thee unto very great honour, and I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me." Thus Balak proffers him an outward reward, which he also magnified into a whatsoever he would have, I will do whatsoever thou sayest unto me, if he would but curse the people of God. And Balaam replies, if Balak would give me {as large as he hath offered me, and far more} even his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go beyond the word of the Lord. Here a large proffer was made in Balak's words, {though not so large as in Balaam's,} but still as to gift, which lay in the effectual performance of deeds, there was no gift of the proffer, but an absolute disgrace of Balaam, after the proffer was ineffectually made. The gift was suppressed, while the offer alone was expressed. If Balak had hit on it, he should have promoted Balaam first of all, that Balaam might have been forestalled by his honour; and then if he had miscarried in his point, Balak could the more notably have degraded him afterwards. But look to Balaam, there was no such thing to be had out of an offer, no gift of honour. For when it came to the upshot, the proffer of whatsoever that covetous wretch would have

⁸ Edward Brerewood, 1565–1613, was an English scholar and antiquary. He was a mathematician and logician, and wrote an influential book on the origin of languages.

had, who loved the reward of divination, II Pet.2:15, all vanished from proffer into persecution, and from the proffer of honour into the pouring out of contempt upon Balaam, Num.24:11, "therefore now flee thou to thy place; I thought to promote thee unto great honour; but, lo, the LORD hath kept thee back from honour." An offer of honour here was no gift of the honour. Therefore these two are distinct even in human things. The Scripture does not confound them.

See what will be made of that instance in Acts 8:18, "and when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money." He made an offer of it, but he could not make it a Gift. They are distinct things, and cannot be made to be the same things in these instances. Yet I observe the Greek word in the original is, he brought it near. For so the preposition in a compound is elsewhere rendered, Heb.10:22, "let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith;" so that in Simon's act towards the apostles, there was an adduction of the money, but the word is not an oblation of the money. Oblation, or offering of money, is laying money before one as an enticement towards a bargain, although nothing of the enticement should prevail, and while it is unknown whether the money will be accepted or rejected; but adduction, or bringing money near one, as this word for Simon's dealing in the case signifies, is such a bringing it, as wherein it is morally reckoned the money will be accepted, and as ready money is brought, in actual payment of a sum, to him whom the money concerns. Thus Simon brought it near the apostles, and immorally concluded they would take it up and grant him the thing he desired. So that the translation, he offered them money, comes not home to the elegant original, he brought money near, which the apostles entirely rejected with the severest indignation, "thy money perish with thee, &c.," Acts 8:20, and here indeed, although it did not prevail on the apostles to become Simon's gift, yet as an ungodly offer, it brought down an effectual curse upon Simon. By all this it discovered that gifts and offers are very distinct.

We have another instance, in money given into the hands of church officers, at a collection for the saints, or poor. This is the gift of the congregation's money, not the offer of their money. And it is one thing to give the money in the church, and another thing for the church to propose, as II Cor.8:4, how it shall be distributed. By the whole it appears, even in the distribution of human substance, that a gift of money is another thing than the offer of money. Gifts to the poor, Psal.112:9, as the phrase is, Est.9:22, are not offers to the poor. What advantage then have men for their offers from their Dictionary in the dark, when the Concordance of places in the Bible calls for exposition in the light?

Let me argue against this coincidence further in the distribution of human gifts. A gift either finds, or effectually procures acceptance, or it is no gift. Indeed, in the nature of gifts in general, there must be a mutual concurrence on both sides. A gift is effectual as far as it finds or makes acceptance; an offer is ineffectual, as it neither finds nor makes acceptance; because it ceases not to be an offer, and so falls short of a gift, specifically distinguished by the acceptance. It is not contrary to the nature of an offer, that it is tendered on one side, and yet rejected on the other. But giving and having are reciprocal, that is, where one is, there the other is too. "A gift is as a precious stone in the eyes of him that hath it; whithersoever it turneth, it prospereth," Prov.17:8, as the value is upon the score of possession, so it becomes a gift because he hath it. But offering and having are not reciprocal. "Many will intreat the favour of the prince; and every man is a friend to him that giveth gifts," Prov.19:6, that giveth gifts, not that offereth offers. Sure then they are distinct. So Prov.18:16, "a man's gift maketh room for him," he that starves not a cause in seeing it, hath counsel enough to plead for him. The reason is, his gift prevails, and is effectual on the part of the receiver, to make him a possessor, as well as effectual on the part of the giver, so as not to be alienated from his own possession any longer. Whereas a man's offering, which, at most, is bargaining, may leave him but where he was. And be sure, if a man's gift makes room for him, God's

gift is so effectual that it much more makes room for God in Christ, by his Spirit, to enter the heart of a sinner. So, Prov.21:14, "a gift in secret pacieth anger," but an offer only defers anger, if it be hearkened to at all; and if it be not hearkened to, the proposal inflameth anger, as Prov.6:35.

Next is the consideration of common gifts of God or Divine gifts in human things. A gift is Effectual in what kind soever it is. The wise man says, Eccl.3:13, that eating, drinking, and enjoying the good of a man's labour is the gift of God. It is not written, it is the offer of God, the tender of God. No, but the gift of God. Then they be not both one thing. The rich men, Lk.21:1, did not make proposals of their bounty, but cast their gifts into the treasury; and this also was of God that opened their hearts to do what they did, who yet opened the widow's heart more, though she threw in but two mites, because she cast in all that she had, summed up in one farthing. Mark 12:42. And here we see in God's gift of human things, giving and having are reciprocal and mutual. "Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that," I Cor.7:7, it is not offered him, so as that he might have it if he would, or he hath it not because he refuses it. But every man has it, the text says. Where one is the other is. Where the gift is, the having of the gift is too. On the other hand, having and offering are not reciprocal. Why then do we make fools of ourselves with the notion of a Grace-offer? Besides, it is said of God, in the dispensation of natural and spiritual blessings, that he giveth, whereas it would spoil the sense to say, he offereth. Therefore these twain are not the same thing.

This is proved in natural things. "He giveth to all life and breath and all things." Acts 17:25. It is not that he offers life and breath and all things. So, I Tim.6:17, "the living God giveth us richly all things to enjoy." It is not that he proffers us richly, etc. Thus Job 5:10, "who giveth rain upon the earth, and sendeth waters upon the fields." It is not, who tenders rain by causing his thick rainy clouds to hang over, or before the earth, as they say a tender of Grace is laid before a sinner; but the Holy

Ghost saith, who giveth rain and sendeth it. Acts 14:17. These are operative and effectual phrases. So, Jer.5:24, "let us now fear the LORD our God, that giveth rain, both the former and the latter, in his season; he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest." He giveth rain, not he offereth rain. Accordingly, Psal.147:16, "he giveth snow like wool; he scattereth the hoarfrost like ashes." Now, if he offered it, as sometimes clouds in hard frosty seasons make a show of it, but do not yield it, neither does it come, so the earth cannot receive it. Also, Psal.146:7, "he giveth food to the hungry," with Psal.147:9, "he giveth to the beast his food," and Eccl.2:26, "for God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy." Likewise, Jer.31:35, "the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night." Deut.26:11. Yea, Eccl.5:18, God giveth unto man "all the days of his life." It is not in any of those natural things, spoken of as in an ineffectual way, as God offereth to man or beast. Not so, then giving and offering are not both one.

This is proved in spiritual things. "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." Isa.9:6. So, I Thess.4:8, "God who hath also given unto us his Holy Spirit." It is not, to us a Son is offered, nor that God hath offered his Holy Spirit. It is said, II Pet.1:3,4, "according as his Divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue; whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." The promises are not offered, but are given us, Gal.3:18, and Christ keeps the gift in his own hand for us, and so manages it to serve all the gracious ends of the Donor. So in Psalm 16:7, "I will bless the LORD, who hath given me counsel." And, Heb.2:13, "behold I and the children which God hath given me." Also Job 35:10, "God my maker, who giveth songs in the night." And, Isa.40:29, "he giveth power to the faint." Moreover, Psalm 84:11, "he giveth Grace and Glory;" and that is quite another thing than the offer of Grace and Glory. Also, Phil.1:29, "for unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also

to suffer for his sake." So the Object of faith is given, Jn.6:32, "Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven." And, II Thess.2:16, "now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace." Again, Prov.3:34, the LORD "giveth grace unto the lowly." And, Job 34:29, "when he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?" He giveth quietness; not he propounds the offer of quietness. So, II Tim.3:16, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God." The Scripture is not offered, but bestowed. Then in John 14:27, "peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." Also, Mal.2:5, "my covenant was with him of life and peace; and I gave them to him for the fear wherewith he feared me, and was afraid before my name." So, II Cor.3:6, "the Spirit giveth life." And, James 1:5, "if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." And lastly, I Cor.15:57, "but thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." So that a gift is no offer.

Objection: Gifts and offers in Scripture seem to be coincident, or words that mean one and the same thing, as Psalm 72:10, "the kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts."

Answer: Gifts and offers in Scripture have been plainly distinguished; and therefore no instances can be brought down to prove a coincidence. Whatever that phrase shall offer gifts, may mean, it doth not justify the pretension, so long as offer signifies proffer, for that is the sense in which we are distinguishing it. But rather, that phrase of the Psalmist signifies the *mincha* among the Hebrews, or the un-bloody sacrifice, a gift and present made in the offerings of God, under the Law; as appears too by the Apostle's use of the phrase, in his coupling it with the *zebach* or bloody sacrifice. For sacrifice and gift went together in the same legal worship at the altar. "For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both

gifts and sacrifices for sins." Heb.5:1. So Hebrews 8:3-4, "for every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer. For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law." So that there too in Psalm 72:10, as there the term is used for the offering of gifts, in the same sense as gifts were offered to God at the altar; and what is this to the offer of Grace and offers of Christ to sinners for their acceptance? What cognation or kin is there between the two phrases? I see none whatsoever. Again, Heb.9:9, in the first tabernacle "were offered both gifts and sacrifices." And Heb.11:4, "by faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts." His sacrifice in the repetition of the same thing is called his gift. Every sacrifice is an offering till accepted, and then it is a gift. So that we see a gift and an offering, where they are coincident, are of kin, but in the dry offerings, and also in the Law of the *zevachim*, or bloody sacrifices. But yet they are not so of kin in the preaching of the Gospel to sinners, as to make a gift of the Gospel and an offer of the Gospel to be the same thing. No, it will not hold to argue that these are the same, because offering of sacrifice and gift of sacrifice are sometimes understood to be the same thing; for we have express Scripture to identify a gift and an offering to God, but none to identify a gift of Christ and an offer of Christ to be the same to a sinner. The phrase of the Psalmist evidently comports with the Juridical Institution about the offering of the *minchah*, {grain offering,} the dry sacrifice or gift; to which particular there are many texts in the Old Testament that speak. {"The voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts; for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever; and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD." Jer.33:11.} And upon this consideration is that phrase of sacrificing praise to God to

be understood; because it holds good even under the New Testament, that praise is one of the spiritual sacrifices, {or un-bloody sacrifices, like the *mincha*, except as sprinkled with the blood of Christ,} which are offered up to God. For he that offereth praise glorifies God. Psa.50:23. {"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." I Pet.2:5.} Also, under Grace, by Christ Jesus we are to offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name, instead of offering to God the fruit of the ground, and the first-fruits of all our increase, Prov.3:9; as those did under the Law; and then it is joined with "to do good, and to communicate, forget not; for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Heb.13:15-16.

But further, as to Psalm 72:10, I need only to observe, that the phrase of offering gifts is common to all sorts of things given to God in general, and therein comprehends the gifts, which even according to the Law, the kings of Sheba, or the wise men from the East, Matt.2:1, should offer gifts to the Lord Christ, which they did of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Matt.2:11. For otherwise we have the same phrase of offering gifts applied also to the Jewish firstborn, who were given or offered to God under the Law. The place is Ezek.20:31, which answers to this phrase of the Psalmist, "for when ye offer your gifts, when ye make your sons to pass through the fire, ye pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day." When ye offer your gifts, what is the meaning? Why, when you offer your first born, you do it after the manner of the idolatrous ceremonies of Molech. Their firstborn were their principal gifts, which, as they thought they offered to God. These were the first-born of man and beast. They were given to God, according to his own institution. Exod.13:2,12. The ground of it was in remembrance that the first-born of Israel were preserved, when all Egypt were smitten in their first-born, and destroyed. {"To him that smote Egypt in their firstborn; for his mercy endureth for ever; and brought out Israel from among them; for his mercy endureth for ever."

Psal.136:10-11.} You pollute yourselves, says God, with your idols, in that you make your sons {to which the gift of the first-born answers} to pass through the fire, Jer.32:35, pretending to dedicate them to me according to the statutes of Molech, Amos 5:26, which I have severely forbidden. Lev.20:1,2. That is the meaning of the place in Ezekiel. Now the kings of Sheba {or the princes, the chief ones for human wisdom, as the wise queen of Sheba who came from the South to hear the wisdom of Solomon} offered their gifts; it was a part of Christ's reward that he should receive honorary gifts, and offerings of sustenance in his infancy. Accordingly, the wise men from the East, the princes or chiefs of all the Arabian astronomers, devoted and gave their substance to the Lord Christ, who, as God, telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names, Psal.147:4, though as the infant Jesus, he was born king of the Jews. Matt.2:2. Therefore it was that they gave Christ the honorary hire, as the Hebrew-root for gift in Psalm 72:10, will bear, "shall offer gifts." It's spoken in the same sense with the phrase, "offer an offering" unto the Lord, even in the sense of sacrificing, or offering at the altar; and Christ being an Altar too in his priestly consecration of God, whereof, or of which offerings at that altar we have a right to eat, Heb.13:10, the gifts presented to Him, were in the offering of the wise men, and likewise in our offering of praise to God, sanctified by the altar.

Beside, the word here in Psalm 72:10 "to offer" is but a word that appertains to a person's external act in drawing near to the object; and yet hath no inherent power to enter, where it comes nearest. It comes from a Hebrew root that signifies only to approach, or draw near, approaching, came to, or was near. The word from the same root is used about offering sacrifice of sweet odors in the original, or *chaldee* of Ezra 6:10, "that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savours unto the God of heaven," offer sacrifices or *mehakrebin*, offering sacrifices, as we read it in the participle. So the gifts of those rich men, Luke 21:1, are called "the offerings of God." The phrase therefore, of offering gifts, in Psalm 72:10, is not any proof that a gift of Grace in the Gospel, and an offer of

Grace, are one and the same thing, as some would ignorantly pretend.

Let us come fully to the direct matters of the Gospel, and there let us see how an offer can claim equal efficacy with a Gift; and how men can prove them both one in the matter before us. Be sure, the gifts and calling of God go together, and both are without repentance. Rom.11:29.

1. In the Gospel we have positively God's gift of Christ, which no offer can come up to. I argue, therefore, from the efficacy of the gift against the inefficacy of the offer, to prove, they are not the same in preaching the Gospel, or as means of converting sinners. God's unspeakable gift of Christ effectually procures acceptance, II Cor.9:15; it's contrary to the nature of the gift of God, that there should be no Effectual acceptance of what is given. The Son of God did receive on Him the gift of God, and was to all the full intents of God's purposes the Mediator, the Father giving him to be Christ, or giving the Manhood of Christ unto his only begotten Son, that his Son thereby effectually became the One Mediator in the Person of Christ as God-man; and although the elect, for some time after their being and standing in the world, knew not this gift, Isa.55:5, received not this gift themselves, yet their Head {as was most congruous and agreeable to the nature of the relation for a Head to do} first knew it, and received the gift of God in Himself for them. Hence, John 4:10, "if thou knewest the gift of God, &c." It was an absolute gift, and had been received, though the woman of Samaria as yet received it not. Yet it had been received in the Eternal Settlement by the Son of God, who chose to become Christ the Free-gift, before any person in the world had received, or could receive the same gift. A gift always is effectual, an offer ineffectual. So, John 3:16, "God gave his only begotten Son." God gave him into the world in the visible Human Nature from the womb of the Virgin, according to the secret settlements of Christ, where he was effectually received, first in the womb of the virgin under the overshadowing of the Power of the Highest,

Lk.1:35, and hence received by as many as received power to believe on Him. Jn.1:12.

2. In the Gospel we have directly God's gift of the Spirit, or the Holy Ghost, by and through Christ, which no offer of the Spirit can equal, for it is an Effectual conveyance, and so not an offer, for that is ineffectual. The gift of the Spirit's Person, as he is the Paraclete, or, as in office called another Comforter, besides Christ, to accomplish the same ends, which is manifestly above any offer of Grace. The Spirit himself is bestowed, as the Comforter, or as a Person in office, to work and maintain his gifts and graces. Thus, Acts 2:38, "ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," for as one Person in office was given, which Person is Christ, as the Object of Gospel-Believing; so another Person is given as a Sealer, Eph.1:13, after he was given as a Sanctifier, and that other Person is the Spirit or the Holy Ghost. Again, Acts 8:18, "the Holy Ghost was given," and verse 20, he is called "the gift of God." The gift, as to his several distributions in the Office, or the distributions of his gifts to the Church, unto some members in one kind; unto some again in another kind. Thus, Heb.2:4, the apostle speaks of these distributions, as God the Holy Spirit's gifts according to his own will. Above all, the distribution of them is most plenteously displayed, I Corinthians chapter 12, where, verse 1, they are called spirituals, i.e., spiritual gifts, as much as to say gifts of the Spirit, or gifts that accompany the gift of his Person in the free bestowment of the Spirit on the elect of God. The same are called, verse 4, diversities of gifts, but by the same Spirit, who works them and maintains them according to the will of God; yea, they are called diversities of operations, verse 6. This plainly distinguishes gifts from offers, for Grace-offers can be no Grace Operations. Then in verses 9, 28, 30, another distributions of these gifts, as suited to the former times of working miracles, are called the gifts of healing. These could be no offers because of their efficacy and operations still. So that, let us instance how we may, in Scripture, gifts are most certainly not offers; because these gifts being spiritual, as distinguished from all the

temporals of this life, of which I wrote before, they are called the "best gifts." I Cor.11:31.

How then will men, who make preaching of Christ and offering of Christ to be both one thing, reconcile this, that the offer and the gift of Christ are one thing too? The gift of Christ and preaching of Christ surely are distinct things. Preaching of Christ does not lie in tendering but in proclaiming the glad tidings. It lies in showing, telling, and declaring, &c., the things of the Kingdom of God. These are the proper acts of our ministry in the word and doctrine. Then preaching, and the gift of what is preached, are not the same. Therefore, if you supposed that preaching of Christ and tendering of Christ were both one, yet still gift and offer could not be one. For preaching lies in glad tidings, but the gift of what is preached, is an effectual interest in the glad tidings, and these are very distinct. Besides, gift in the things of Christ and the Gospel is never called offer, proffer, tender, as we can find in the Bible, neither in the original, nor in the translations. And it's strange to me, if they were both one, why a gift should not be sometimes rendered an offer in the translation, or at least sometimes rectified in the margin, which we do not find. Without doubt it would have been so if preaching the Gospel, and the gift by Grace, had been the same as an offer or a proffer of the Gospel. Are these words and phrases ever used synonymously in our Bibles? How readest thou? Men have taken up an ill custom, and they seem loath the people should take notice they have been mistaken! But nevertheless the people do see it, and will see it more and more. Yea, the more men seek by such means to cover their nakedness, the more they expose it.

Gifts of the Gospel, explained as such, are in God's word thus distinguished; gifts for, gifts to, gifts upon, and gifts into. I may pursue it according to this quadruple distinction.

1. Gifts "for;" gifts are for the elect, and are received by One chosen for them, even by their Head, before they are accepted of themselves who are the heirs. {"Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted

one chosen out of the people." Psal.89:19.} As the Holy Ghost saith, "thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men." Psal.68:18. They are Effectual gifts, inasmuch as they are received by Another, even the Lord that hath chosen Zion, Psal.132:13, the Lord Christ for them; or rather, according to the original, in the Man. Thou, Oh Son of God hast received gifts in the Man, in the Man Jesus, the chosen of God, Lk.23:35, as the head of the corner, I Pet.2:7, for every one of the members; and so in the Man for all the elect of God. Thus Christ Himself, the Man in the Son of God is a gift of God for His people to know and believe on, in the time God hath set. This truth will appear in Scripture under a double branch of donation. As to God's gift of Christ for, so Rom.8:32, "he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all," i.e., gave Him for us all. This act of God, in giving Christ to the cross for us was Effectual in him that was so given; for he was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Phil.2:8. Here a gift is distinguished from an offer, and cannot be the same.

As to Christ's gift of Himself, for, in point of saving benefit, as the preposition signifies. This also was an Effectual Act. {"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." Gal.1:4.} Christ gave Himself for our sins. He gave Himself, being above the power of them, to bear away the heavy burden, I Pet.2:24, as a porter bears away a load, as the word *sebalam*, Isa.53:4, signifies. {"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."} That is, gave himself to come under the imputation of them. Here was not an offer of Grace, but rather an Operation of Grace. So Gal.2:20, the Son of God "loved me, and gave himself for me," says Paul. He gave himself for me to be above the reach and power of my own sins in particular.

And withal, Eph.5:25, Christ loved the church, and gave Himself for it, even for the church, to sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, Heb.10:22, {or with the abundant gift of the Holy Ghost,} by the word, verse 26. Likewise, Tit.2:14, "who gave Himself for us," to wit,

for this end, "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works," and Jn.10:11, "the good shepherd giveth His life for the sheep;" for this end, that the sheep may be saved into the life of Grace here, and into Everlasting Life and Glory hereafter. {"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." Isa.53:6.} "Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time," saith that scripture, I Tim.2:6, for all who have their election of God. {"Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God." I Thes.1:4.} In point of Substitution and Suretyship, as the preposition, or that sort of "for" signifies. See Matthew 20:28, "even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many," in the stead of many, or in the room and place of many. To give his life for many; not to propound the offer of his life for many.

2. Gifts are "unto;" the meaning is, gifts in Scripture {touching the Gospel, or the good news about the Kingdom of God} are home, effectual and discriminate. They come so "unto" and on the behalf of some one person, as that he is by special Grace singled out from every other person. The elect are given "unto" Christ by an Act of God within himself, purposed from eternity. {"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph.1:4.} Neither is there any other Head or Saviour trusted with the bestowment of these gifts, but he in whom God's soul delighteth. Isa.42:1. Our persons are an absolute gift to Christ, without any qualifications foreviewed in them to incline God unto the choice; and so was done immediately by a gift of God the Father. "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word." Jn.17:6. Thou didst not propound an offer, but didst promote thine own Free Choice. And, Jn.6:37, "all that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." It is a mighty effectual home act which an offer is not. The

Father hath given many to be under Christ, who were never given to be in Christ, or to be of the mystical body in the Everlasting Settlements. This giving unto, is a very effectual gift.

Christ is given "unto" the elect. Unto them, so that there is a conveyance of the grant and purchase. {"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9.} Christ is given in his Person to be a Head over all unto the church, which is his body. Eph.1:22. His body is of a different consideration; some of his body are glorified already; some are called, and not yet glorified; others are neither yet glorified, nor yet called, but yet all are of Christ's mystical body still, and shall be called and glorified, if there was no other reason for the assertion but Christ's interest alone; because they make up Christ's fulness. "Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph.1:23.

Again, Christ is given in his righteousness "unto" the elect of God. This righteousness unto the elect of God, is the gift, Rom.5:16, and the gift by Grace, verse 15, and the free gift, verses 15-16, and is expressly the gift of righteousness, verse 17. {"For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Rom.5:17.} And, Rom.6:23, "the gift of God is eternal life," for as death, the wages of sin, is paid, not offered, so eternal life, being the gift of God, in opposition to wages, is not offered, but bestowed. And yet ministers come with their propounding of an offer, and telling sinners that the offer of God is eternal life. Oh, how do these fat ones on earth, when they eat and worship, stain the velvet cushion by pouring out foolishness, and changing, Rom.1:25, the truth of God into a lie! {"The mouth of fools poureth out foolishness." Prov.15:2.}

The Spirit is given "unto" the saints. "God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 11:17. So, Matt.7:11, "if ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children,

how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" Which text compared with Luke 11:13, bring us to this interpretation of the Scripture by Scripture, that the good things which are given to God's children by their Father, are summed up in this one gift, the Spirit of Christ. And why? Because the Holy Spirit is the worker and the principle of the good things. Wheresoever God hath given Christ, he giveth the Spirit of Christ to be and to testify of Him. Rom.8:9.

Grace and privilege are given "unto" the elect. Thus says the apostle, "unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Eph.4:7. And, Acts 11:18, "when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." There is Grace as a fruit of the Spirit; and likewise by the same Spirit there is the fruit of the ministry, in the spiritual distribution of the Holy Ghost given by preaching the Gospel. So, Rom.1:11, "for I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;" that is, more Grace of the Gospel under privilege and operation of the Spirit; and other gifts of Christ by His Spirit, are explained to be the officers of the church, wrought up by the Holy Ghost, for the ministry of the Gospel; both extraordinary officers given to some churches, as apostles, prophets, and evangelists; and ordinary officers given unto others, even such as continue by a constant succession in the said grant, being pastors and teachers of the saints and mystical body of Christ. {"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph.4:11-12.} All are for his body, the church. And so he doth not name to whom they are given, as sinners; but in naming the officers or ministers, he comprehends the objects to whom they are given unto, according unto Grace, and that is as to their mystical relation, being the body of Christ, though so many thousands of them may be yet in their blood, Ezek.16:6, unconverted. What an encouragement is here for faithful ministers of Christ in

all ages to go on, and preach the absolute Gospel, and throw away all these offers, with their if's and but's, {as ill placed,} being assured that Christ will own their labours by his Spirit, who preach the pure and unmixed Gospel to sinners, holding Christ in view; because it will be for the perfecting of saints in the issue; being sure to have them brought forth under the spiritual labours of such a ministry. Also verse 12, shows it to be a grant unto the church, as the most special object of Grace; because as to the first object of all in this grant, it is more general, and said to be "unto" men, verse 8, "he gave gifts unto men;" that is, by his gifts he discriminated men from evil angels who received no benefit at all by Christ; for in his ascending, when he had given gifts unto men, Christ spoiled the very chief of them that were fallen angels, the devils, even principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it, Col. 2:15, after he had wrought out a full victory for such as he had chosen and had not cast away. {"Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them." Psal.68:18.} Well, in all these instances the matter is home; a gift is "unto" but an offer is before, and laid down over against the sinner, and there, according to the nature of a proposal, stops, and comes on no further than midway-block. How then, is a gift and an offer the same thing?

3. Gifts are "upon;" upon the person favoured. The gift of Christ's Righteousness, even the Free Gift, came upon all men {saved by Grace} unto justification of life. Rom.5:18. All the elect of God are universally passive under it. There is not one of the whole number that concurs in the least unto it.

The gift of the Spirit is "upon," so in Acts 10:44-45, "while Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost." And Tit. 3:5-6, "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, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Where now will you find an offer upon any? An offer cannot close, it sticks upon terms, and stands aloof from the sore. Psal.38:11. It talks of wine and oil, but pours none on. Whereas the Gospel is a free gift. When they had nothing to pay, {neither Pharisee nor Publican,} he frankly forgave them both. Lk.7:42. Oh, now this works upon a sinner. The Holy Ghost is in it. The power of mortification eats into old Adam, and, as a principle of new life, takes away the disease sweetly.

But moreover, the gift of a common mercy may even be upon men in a general sense. We read of such an outward mercy as has eminently come on God's servants, in the fruit of prayer. And how? As the Spirit, who works up the heart to Gospel prayer, and is the principle of it in the soul, comes upon us from God and Christ, and so the mercy bestowed is a fruit of prayer, as prayer is a fruit of the Spirit, and that mercy is a gift upon us; and this must be the meaning of that place, II Cor.1:11, "ye also helping together by prayer for us, that for the gift bestowed upon us by the means of many persons thanks may be given by many on our behalf." The gift here meant, was that gracious deliverance from death; aye, from a very severe sentence of death for the cause of Christ, which Paul and Timothy had been threatened with by their persecutors, and of which death they had the sentence in themselves, II Cor.1:9, concluding they should not escape the peril, and that there would be no further enlargement for them. However the prayer of many, praying in the Holy Spirit, Jude 20, altered the case; for God, by this means, granted their deliverance from so great a death at that time, as was in all appearance at hand, and ready for them in a perilous hour. This he calls a gift upon them by the means of many. It came upon them from God the Spirit effectively, who wrought it out graciously for them, and was bestowed on them by the means of many; it being evidently an answer to their prayer, and obtained by the intercession of many. {"The LORD is nigh unto all them

that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth." Psal.145:18.}

4. Gifts are "into;" spiritual gifts into the nature of the person endowed. So that the gift is inwrought by the Spirit; as the word for inwrought prayer is called effectual fervent prayer, James 5:16, and hereby God's Gift in the Gospel effectually procures acceptance of the sinner. Hence too, God's Spirit being given, is put within a man, within the nature of persons effectually wrought on. {"And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezek.36:27.} Therefore, Eph.2:8, "by Grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Faith is within us; and if faith be a gift, that gift is within us. But now let any man tell me how offers can be within a man, whereas it is the nature of an offer to be only without a man? Upon the whole, it is plain, that an offer is not equal to a gift. An offer approaches, but a gift enters. An offer is near, but a gift comes home upon and within one. Thus I have proved that an offer of Grace is no gift of Grace to sinners.

Last of all, upon the matter of this chapter I ask, why doth not the preacher sometimes say, "here I give you Christ, sinners," as well as he will dare to say, "here I offer you Christ, sinners," if a gift of Christ and an offer of Christ be both one? But surely his own modesty would blush at the harshness of the expressions. "Here, sinner, I give you Christ, I give you Salvation!" Why, then, does not their wisdom blush at their folly of confounding these two things, and running both into one? Is it not because their folly is overlaid with flint and obstinacy, and till God takes away the stony heart, and gives them an heart of flesh, Ezek.36:26, they cannot be ashamed, Jer.6:15, or blush thereat.

CHAPTER FIVE

A solution of the grand question; how must we preach the Gospel, if we do not offer the Gospel? Or, how must we preach Christ to sinners, if we do not offer Christ to sinners?

Objection: Sir, we are sorry you have struck at the ministry of wise, great, and learned men, far beyond yourself. Pray, if we are not to follow them in this method of the ministry, how must we preach? And for my part, says one, I cannot preach the Gospel if I do not propound the offer of the Gospel to sinners; nor can I reckon that I do preach the Gospel, unless I tender Salvation to all whom I am called to preach; nor dare I do otherwise.

Answer: I might take notice that this is poor arguing, when set in the face of the three former chapters, the strength of which is founded on God's Word and Spirit. Heb.4:12 – Psal.33:6 – Jn.1:1 – Rev.19:13. Nevertheless, if men are at a loss how to preach, unless they go on in the old road, let me solve the inquiry more fully. I must divide my answers into one general resolution of the case, how preaching the Gospel must be, and to what end without offers of Salvation; and thereupon enter into many particulars to resolve this point. The one general solution to the question is this, we must preach the doctrine of Salvation to all sinners openly within the hearing; and must preach Salvation included in the doctrine, which is the gift of God, to the elect alone, who are hid among them. But as to propounding an offer, either of the Doctrine or Salvation, it is a form of man's devising; and because of the evil nature of it, as I shall show hereafter, we must do it in no respect. This in the general, men must preach the Word of God, and the testimony held; that is, they must so preach as to fulfil the Scriptures, Rev.6:9, which everywhere speaks of evangelizing, or of preaching the Gospel, or, what is in its own nature good news and glad tidings, which, likewise, in the whole analogy of faith do give us light to expound

the preaching of the Gospel according to the above distinctions, but do nowhere speak of propounding an offer, or tendering either Doctrine or Salvation. As to preaching the doctrine of the Gospel to all, though the Salvation of it reach but to the elect alone, the advantage, so far as intended in the Scripture, is much every way, as the apostle says; chiefly, because the wisdom of God, the government of Christ, the interest of the Church, and the sword of Justice, are all magnified, by the preaching of the doctrine of the Gospel to all sinners, without offers of Grace, or proposals of Salvation made.

From the wisdom of God I argue the solution of the question, how must we preach the Gospel to sinners, if we do not offer the Gospel to sinners? We must preach the Gospel in the doctrine. This is to be made known in the letter, or external revelation to all, because of the wisdom of God in that doctrine, Deut.32:2, hath engaged to confound the wisdom of this world. "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." I Cor.1:18. The doctrine of the cross of Christ then, or the doctrine of Salvation, in which that Salvation is brought to the elect alone, is a doctrine that must be preached for condemnation even to them that perish; or else how will the wisdom of God in preaching it appear to be foolishness to them that perish? {"For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish; to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life." II Cor.2:15-16.} Especially while they follow man's wisdom, I Cor.2:4, which aims to alter God's way of wisdom, and forsakes his wisdom in their own way of preaching. So verse 21, "for after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching {and pray what was then, is now, the foolishness of preaching, which contradicted, and still contradicts, the method and wisdom the times have contrived} to save them that believe." And albeit there be many ways of deviating from the pattern, some far more gross than others, as I have plentifully insisted upon in my last book about the Glory of Christ Unveiled; yet this

more refined device of offering Christ, where we should keep to the pattern of Preaching, Exod.25:40, {especially while one generation hath mellowed it for another generation to gather it,} makes the true pattern to be accounted foolishness; while men have learned and found more wisdom to change the form of preaching Christ into the modish form of an offer. God's wisdom in his Grace hath contrived a way of saving His elect, which the world must hear of, even the efficacy of what they account to be foolishness of preaching, to the end their own wisdom may be baffled, and God's wisdom glorified. So, Acts 9:22, Paul, in preaching the doctrine of Christ to the very enemies of Christ in their synagogues, increased the more in strength, and confounded, {by the wisdom of God in the Old Testament,} the Jews who dwelt at Damascus, "proving that this is very Christ." You may be sure he did not carry himself in the matter with what men now-a-days call temper or candour, which is a new phrase got up, calculated only to make the Gospel beg for its entertainment in the world. The synagogues opposed him, but he had strength from Heaven to confound them all. We read of none converted there at Damascus. What then? The Gospel nevertheless is preached, and the end of it there is attained; namely, God's wisdom glorified, while the faith is preached which once Paul destroyed. Gal.1:23. The wisdom of God must be preached to sinners, and the report made, though not one soul be converted by the Grace of God in all that synagogue. The net must be let down into the waters, though the fish may not lie where the net comes, and a man may toil all night and take nothing. Lk.5:5. This is a mighty argument for preaching the Doctrine of Christ, where the Salvation in the doctrine, or the power thereof, may not be applied to one single person. {"And there they preached the gospel." Acts 14:7.}

I argue from the Kingdom and Government of Jesus Christ. There is a singular advantage reaped by the right of Christ's Government. It is therefore called preaching of the Gospel of the kingdom of God. "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God." Mk.1:14.

And again, Matt.24:14, "this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations." The preaching of the Gospel of the Kingdom is the preaching of so high and heavenly a Dispensation in the hands of the Lord Christ, that it's above all human, secular, and temporal interests in the world. {"Jesus answered, my kingdom is not of this world." Jn.18:36.} The Gospel of the Kingdom of God is above all methods, ministrations, and the wise and learned ways of preaching. It consists not in humanity or natural affection, which now passeth for divinity. No, nor in second-hand offers and proposals, which force out of the gift of God, and dishonour the Operations of the Spirit. The way of man is wide from the paths of wisdom; man, left to himself, in the pride and stoutness of his mind, Isa.9:9, will adhere unto darkness and vanity, until God hath hedged up his way with thorns, Hos.2:6, or broken him to pieces by humbling or silencing him in the dust! The Gospel belongs to a high and glorious kingdom, and shall give way to no one on earth, but all interests, dominations, wisdoms, ways, and forms under Heaven, shall stoop or be broken by our Lord Christ's Kingdom and Sceptre, in the efficacy of his Almighty Spirit! All the pride, wisdom, thoughts, and ways of man, must stoop, and shall give way unto the Gospel, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God! The preaching of the Gospel, therefore, is not only to save such souls as are given of God to him who is elect, precious, I Pet.2:6; but it is also to show Christ's greatness in the work, and is part of the travail of his soul, Isa.53:11, to see the saved brought into Gospel-Order, out of which orderly number of the saved his Glorious Kingdom shall arise, and be exalted above the tops of the mountains, Mic.4:1, at the latter Day. For, order ultimately in the kingdom of glory, as now in the spiritual and established kingdom of Grace. Christ's present kingdom, on earth, is not of this world, Jn.18:36, but differs from all other kingdoms; so this order, I say, is, and shall be, a special fruit of the Gospel; consequently, the Government of the Spiritual Kingdom of Christ, under the success of the Gospel, is to be propagated everywhere for the elect's sake, in the face of

men, though they may persecute and despise it. {"Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." Isa.9:7.} All the world must thus hear of Christ's greatness, and so of the report of doctrine, which, as a King, he hath received by authority from the Father to bring into the world, though they can neither enjoy the Salvation, nor believe into Christ's Person without a prior bestowal of Grace to grasp hold of God's mercy in Christ. Sure then, ministers of Christ do know how to preach the Gospel to sinners, that even the non-elect may believe into the testimony of Jesus, without offers of Grace to them. Christ hath a monarchical government in all the world; or all the world are subjects of it in providential administrations. {"The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all." Psal.103:19.} He has also a special government in the churches of Christ, and in the consciences of believers. The sceptre of this government in all the world extends regally beyond the saving virtue of his priesthood. {"The LORD shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion; rule thou in the midst of thine enemies." Psal.110:2.} The Gospel, therefore, by virtue of this extensive government, is to be preached on the behalf of God's elect to all people, to all sorts of sinners, under the whole heavens, in season and out of season, wheresoever there is an opportunity to utter the joyful sound. {"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O LORD, in the light of thy countenance." Psal.89:15.} Millions of non-elect sinners have been, and must be, though under other sins, respited, and have not been, nor shall be, damned, before they have heard the Gospel, and sinned against it {worse than what all their other sins amount to} by despising the wisdom of God in it, and trampling on the Government of Christ set up among the elect, being included within the monarchical government of Christ extending over all the world. {"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall

be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mk.16:15-16.}

The Jews had the doctrine of Christ preached to the body of them throughout their towns, cities, and villages, to show God's sovereignty in commanding them to bow to Christ's authority, though he had not given Him to be a Saviour to any except His elect body. Matt.11:25. 'Tis the kingdom of God is concerned in it; and therefore, though you do not offer Salvation to sinners, you must preach the kingdom of God to sinners. So the Jews had it preached to them, Acts 28:31, and the elect of God among the Gentiles had it preached thus to them, openly, in the face of the times, as it was preaching of the kingdom of God, or God's will, who would have the election to obtain it, Rom.11:7, though the rest were blinded; and it should be done, whether the world would or no. "And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom," says he, to them at Ephesus, "preaching the kingdom of God." Acts 20:25.

Oh! This kingdom of God, this sovereignty, this same I will, and ye shall, among the people, makes man's free-will to buckle, and puts Satan's kingdom under daily contribution. When men were sent forth by the Holy Ghost, Acts 13:4, they preached the Word of God to hearers of whom they might be morally confident would oppose, instead of receive the truth as it is in Jesus. When Paul and Barnabas were set forth by the Church at Antioch, they went each of them to Salamis, among the zealous enemies of the Gospel, yet, Acts 13:5, "they preached the word of God in the synagogues of the Jews." The Jews everywhere, elect and non-elect, must hear of this Man's sceptre, and the record that God hath given of His Son, I Jn.5:10, though they had no right to His blood; and that in an especial manner, as Christ was the King of the Jews, Jn.19:19, though they impudently derided him with the title. Christ is a special King to crush gainsayers, as well as a special King to defend the Church, or all those who by virtue of His blood believe on Him, and regard His pure worship entirely. The Holy Ghost saith that "he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father

David; and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Luke 1:32. Well then, shall not enemies hear of his kingdom, as well as the elect of God hear of his Salvation? He shall be called the Son of the Highest. Oh, blessed be God for this, it makes me not to fear men nor their reproaches, nor their hatred, nor afraid of their standing aloof from me, Psal.38:11; {as if the poor creatures were afraid of catching the plague in coming near me, so little have they of Christ;} it tells me, when they come to town, to keep off the infection. We should be bold in Christ's cause, and they who are made free by the truth are so. {"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jn.8:32.} Since we see Christ is to be exalted in our preaching, do any of his ministers now, who see this, cry out, "how shall we preach the Gospel, if we do not offer the Salvation of the Gospel unto sinners?" The Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David, and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there shall be no end. This is the good news which we tell to all sinners, as we have opportunity, within the hearing, whether they will hear or forbear. Though "his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, we will not have this man to reign over us," Lk.19:14, yet what came of it; could they withstand this Mighty King, after the solemnities of his Coronation? No; verse 27, "but," saith he, "those mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, {ye angels of God, that are strong enough to bind them,} and slay them before me." And is not this good news to God's people, who, for the Gospel's sake are disturbed by the adversaries of the Lord Christ, and of His throne, yet here is a scope to preach the Gospel of his Kingly Office, the Gospel of the Kingdom, since Christ is a King to them to whom he is no Priest. But now do you go and offer Christ for a priest to all sinners without distinction, and so give them all secret hopes of Salvation? And then cry, if we do not preach the Gospel thus, how shall we preach the Gospel to sinners? The text tells you, you must preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to them, you must exalt the person and work of Christ. Do this then, when you do not

preach the Gospel of the blood of Christ to them. For that is a blessing of the kingdom, and to be given to none but to them for whom it is prepared. {"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Matt.26:28.} How can Christ be a priest to all, if he hath not died for all as an expiatory and atoning sacrifice? So, then, as many were made, only to be ruled over by Christ as a King, there is enough of the Gospel to be preached to them; namely, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. Ministers are not to offer Salvation, but to preach the Gospel of the Kingdom to all sinners that come within the Meeting House. That is, you must preach that the Gospel comes down from Him who hath a Royal and Supreme sceptre in His hand, and that He will give His efficacious blood and His Holy Spirit, after another manner, to whom He pleases. This is the Gospel of the Kingdom; that Effectual Salvation by Christ, conveyed in the good news, must go no otherwise than according to, and shall come in no wise short of the Laws, Counsels, Settlements, and Eternal Decrees of Heaven! Oh, now, this is Good News for me to wait under such a Gospel as comes accompanied with this powerful rod in Zion, Psal.110:2, till the Spirit of God clears it up to me, as an Effectual gift of the Grace of God upon me. 'Tis the Gospel of the Kingdom of God, and, therefore, not one strong lust in my heart shall master it. God's Spirit will be too hard for my unbelief, and for all my other corruptions, while I sit under this Unchangeable Gospel, which men and devils strike at it, and yet God hath said shall stand! This Gospel of the Kingdom of God and Christ satisfies me, whilst another meets with no delight in it. It makes out Salvation to me among ten thousands of men who are left to drown in sensuality, pride, covetousness, malice, and wrath; while the Gospel breaks ground, and maintains the field of battle, with the sword of the Spirit, against every false profession; and neither pulpit nor pew can stand before it!

'Tis to me! To me a sinner! To me a vile worm! It is a melting thought within me that the Kingdom-Sceptre should be a Marriage-Sceptre unto me, which, in the hand of Christ as a Judge, is an iron sceptre unto others. {"But

unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Heb.1:8. "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psal.2:9.} The Holy Ghost now accompanies this distinguishing Gospel, because it is Truth. But he never goes along with men's sermonizing, because it's flattery and falsehood.

Again, as John the Baptist, before Christ's coming, first preached the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel, as it is said, Acts 13:24, so the doctrine and testimony of Salvation, and the doctrine and testimony of the forgiveness of sins, ought to be preached to sinners through this Man Jesus. {"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:38-39.}

The doctrine is to be preached to all according to the general command of Christ in the commission that he gave unto his apostles. This commandment of preaching was that they should go into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature. Mark 16:15. Go, preach to every creature, i.e., go, preach glad tidings; for this is the nature of the Gospel to all the elect of God. Go and preach, in a general extent, even as Jesus among the Jews departed to teach and to preach in their cities. Matt.11:1. And it was done accordingly. The Gospel {says the Apostle} "was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister." Col.1:23. Go, preach the Gospel to all, making known the doctrine to Jew and Gentile. {"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Tit.1:9.}

It is plain, Acts 10:36, that the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, related to Christ's Dominion which must be exalted, and that, as it was extended, and as the Commission ran for preaching the Doctrine of Peace by Jesus Christ, through the blood of his cross, Col.1:20, as he was Lord of all, though only

Saviour of the body to some, Eph.5:23, and so was first published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached, as saith the Apostolic history. Acts 10:37. This produced a more general effect in the sceptre of Messiah's Kingdom then begun; but more especially under the power of his Kingdom's rod, while the people had a sight of miracles, and the apostles spake with tongues. The doctrine sometimes had a delegated and commissioned power to close in notionally with their faculties, where it had no special influential power to close in savingly with their hearts. Likewise their faculties had the common power of influence, reciprocally to receive the notion of the doctrine, and the truth in the letter. For hereby the Holy Ghost intended, as we find, to square in more comprehensively a place for the sound of the Gospel to go forth into all the earth, and their words {not their offers, even the Apostle's preaching} unto the ends of the world. Rom.10:18. And again, a very large area or ground-plot of profession was designed for the new building, and that by the power of the Spirit of God from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum in Paul's travels, Rom.15:19, {which in the whole, from his first beginning, until his being prisoner at Rome, are computed by a very ingenious and learned geographer, to be ten thousands of miles; though from Jerusalem and round about unto Illyricum, abstractly taken, it was not more than a thousand miles travel, in all probability,} where that Apostle had fully preached the Gospel of Christ. Moreover, all the whole square of Europe is since taken in. And why so? To this end, that the Owner of the structure might still be exalted, and his title magnified as Lord, who had bought the whole extent of ground in the charter of His covenant, II Pet.2:1, to plant and to sow in, and to build upon; insomuch that we find the Apostles strove to preach the Gospel where Christ was not so much as named, Rom.15:20, and so great a square was taken in for the Gospel, partly to this end, that it might be openly seen that Christ's sceptre had lost nothing, but had gained ground, by the falling off of the Jews. Hence men's rational powers are made to stoop and witness to the Lord

Jesus, whom God hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds. Heb.1:2. And a community of men, being, by God's providence, made providentially subject to the Mediator, through teaching and preaching the word of the Lord in every city where the word of the Lord hath been sent to be preached, Acts 15:35-36, though there hath been but here and there of the hearers the elect of God to made spiritually subject to the Lord Christ. {"Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you; and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion; and I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." Jer.3:14-15.}

Besides, it must need be so, for Christ is King of all, and hath a right to govern all by this Rectorial Sceptre; and that, as he is both Lord and Christ the Anointed One, or the Messiah, anointed for the rule and government of all in the natural part of religion, as well as Messiah under the special unction of Jehovah, anointed for the Salvation of the Church alone. {"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep." Jn.10:14-15.}

Hence, when the Evangelist gives an account of the preaching of the Gospel, he tells us, that all the cities had the Gospel preached in them. Acts 8:40. Likewise it came to pass, from this Universal Kingship of the Lord Jesus, {"and hath put all things under his feet," Eph.1:22,} that kings themselves were exhorted to submit to Christ, Psal.2:10-12, as a greater King than themselves, and were foretold they should lay their hands upon their mouths, and not utter a word against it. {"So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him; for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider." Isa.52:15.} For God will have it so, or he will pull them out of their thrones as he hath not only threatened, but performed, both to Pagan and Papal monarchs. {"I will shake the heavens and the earth; and I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy

the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen." Hag.2:21-22.} Quite often where the Gospel of the Kingdom has been resisted, Psal.107:40, the LORD then hath destroyed the bloody instruments that did it, whilst he hath been saving his chosen by the Gospel, in giving drink, says he, Isa.43:20, "to my people, my chosen." And whilst he has taken upon him to "avenge his own elect which cry day and night unto him," Lk.18:7, the Gospel is a Gospel of Free Grace to His elect, and in it is displayed Christ's full prerogative, both as to them and all the world besides. Thus the Lord our Righteousness, Jer.23:6, will carry it on amidst the world, even his Gospel, as the proclamation of a Sovereign and Uncontrollable King, the High Magistrate, Justice and Judge, who will have his own laws stand, and make all other laws stoop and give way to His. We must preach Christ thus; and this indeed is good news to the elect, {hid for some time amongst the rest,} to strengthen their hearts.

Now will any ask me, how they must preach the Gospel to sinners, if they do not offer the Salvation thereof unto them? I'll answer em, there is subject enough respecting the Gospel and Kingdom of Christ to preach to all. Here's the good news of the sceptre, a sceptre of Righteousness and Power, to make as many as the Lord pleases outwardly bow to the pure Gospel, the whole sceptre being providentially swayed for the good of the elect, who receive the Salvation of the Gospel. {"There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Seth." Num.24:17.} This is some of the fruits of preaching the Gospel to all sinners, and for this helpful benefit the LORD will give to non-elect sinners good allowances in this present life; and indeed that is it which natural men most love. But if they will not live peaceably with God's people, but persecute them, he will make their hearts ache, under the very message which is good news and a joyful sound to His own. So that to the end that God's people might lead peaceable and quiet lives, I Tim.2:2, in the exercise of all godliness and honesty, the Lord will have many saved out

of the superfluity of naughtiness that drown men in destruction and perdition, and will bring them to the knowledge of the truth. I Tim.2:4. Accordingly, both Jewish and Pagan worlds, in the general lump of sinners, were exhorted to a natural acceptance of, or submission to, Christ's Sceptre, in receiving the doctrinal report of the Gospel taught in Christ's name.

Thus sinners are still, in general, to be exhorted to accept of the sound doctrine, or form of sound words they seem to come short of; that while by a common blessing attending the natural capacity of receiving it, they embrace the doctrine of Salvation, the elect of God may fare the better, whose lot it is to be awakened and fall under the power of godliness in their quarters. This necessary and natural subjection to the King, whose name is the Lord of Hosts, depends upon his relation of being the Universal King. {"And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men; and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is the LORD of hosts." Jer.51:57.} Therefore, a rejection of the Doctrine and Witness hath been, and is, in all ages dangerous; though the Salvation therein, through the influences of the blood of Christ in the Operations of the Spirit, is applied to, and received by the elect alone. Therefore, what with rejecting the doctrine by some, and corrupting the doctrine with Pagan and Jewish mixtures of worship and practice by others, who have outwardly embraced it, as to some parts of the Gospel, under this debasement, it hath woefully involved a vast number of people beneath the desolating strokes of Heaven. Whole countries have been ruined for opposing the revealed Gospel, and rejecting the witness God has given of His Son, or despising the doctrine of our Lord Jesus Christ. Many places of the Roman Empire have been dismally shattered and broken up with earthquakes for the same cause. God hath pierced them through with the sword of war, and infected the air with noisome pestilences, for despising the wholesome breathing of the Spirit of his Grace. Yea, as to ourselves, instead of fanning winds to cleanse us, the LORD hath, with stormy winds rent us,

because of the reproaches we have cast upon his Spirit in those messengers who have both preached and written, by His authority, under the evident Operations of the Holy Ghost, while the Spirit hath blown in the Doctrine of the Gospel where he supremely wills. Other places too, for the same provocation of the great King of Heaven, have been filled with plagues and covered with inundations of both wars and famines. Kingdoms and nations have been laid together, in one common heap, under wasting and consuming judgments. At times, plagues and judgments have wasted much of the blood and treasures of all Europe. And why? Because the Gospel of the Kingdom of God has been despised among them, both by professor and profane; and the ground of God's unseen controversy with man, hath been the vengeance of his Temple, and the quarrel of his Covenant. {"The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of his temple." Jer.50:28. "And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant; and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy." Lev.26:25.}

I argue again, separately, from the common advantages which accompany the interest of Christ, in preaching the Doctrine and Testimony of Salvation to all, notwithstanding Salvation by the doctrine is received by none but the elect. And I argue thus, to solve the question, how must we preach the Gospel to all without offers of Grace, or tenders of Salvation? To answer this end, the doctrine is to be held forth in preaching the Gospel to all people, Lk.4:43, whether the Salvation of the doctrine has accompanied it or not. This sound was to come to, and upon, all whom Christ had sent the apostles forth, Acts 10:42, to preach the doctrine of the Gospel to. The reason is, because God had an elect people up and down in the cities, as in Rome, Rom.1:15, in Corinth, Acts 18:10, in Troy, II Cor.2:12, in Antioch, Acts 13:48, in Derbe, Acts 14:20, and in other nations abroad likewise, that have heard the Gospel preached since. For, indeed, to the elect, lying hid, the Salvation in the doctrine hath

ever belonged; and the elect have fared the better in that the doctrine hath come to others, Mk.16:20, to whom the Salvation doth not belong. For which cause the body of the nations are punished who reject the doctrine, which, as an highway of common profession serves as an outward conveyance of bringing home that Salvation in Christ to all for whom it is intended, which way is distinct from the external highway of profession, furnishing temporal advantages to the elect. {"And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those; the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Isa.35:8.} And accordingly in the very first ages of the church, the power of Salvation attended the doctrine of godliness to the called, and chosen, and faithful, Rev.17:14, the Lord's own in Election-Grace, chosen from the beginning to Salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; for such have been always, more or less, a scattered people. {"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth; whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." II Thes.2:13-14.} And faithful preachers sometimes through havoc of the church, have been scattered abroad, and made to go everywhere preaching the word, Acts 8:4, which, through the power of the Spirit, finds the elect. The chosen generation, I Pet.2:9, have ever been found out by the preaching of the Gospel, as they have lain hid among the pots, or among a greater number in the world, as Acts 11:20, and sometimes among a greater number of Jews, as when the apostles travelled as far as Phenice, and the isle of Cyprus, and the city of Antioch, preaching the word to none but the Jews only, as saith the Holy Spirit, Acts 11:19; and sometimes among other visible professors of the Gospel round about them, and among them, while God hath been bringing forth his chosen with gladness, Psal.105:43; at which angels have rejoiced, Lk.15:10, even when one sinner hath been brought to repentance;

although the world have remained angry and have not done so, but has reviled them for leaving them, contrary to Egypt at the coming forth of Israel; for Egypt was glad, Psal.105:38, when the children of Israel departed.

Furthermore it is, that within this common extent of Old, through the dominions of the empire belonging to Rome Pagan, the elect of God, even the chosen and sanctified, II Chron.7:16, were more advantageously covered, and thereby the sheep of the Lord's hand were folded. {"For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand." Psal.95:7.} This distinction between the letter of the doctrine and the power attending it makes the very doctrine of election useful, in preaching it among all nations, to find out the elect of God, and to bring Jacob, Isa.41:8, whom the LORD hath chosen. Whereas the other pretence in offers of Salvation are but the quieting device of fallen nature to lull the doctrine of Election asleep, thereby to please the Times, and give less disturbance to the world. Besides, the outward and additional advantage gained in defending the true church of Christ against the wild boar out of the wood that wastes it, Psal.80:13, or from the infidel world that would root up the very doctrine preached, Acts 17:18, is a greater good to the true church of Christ than without that ordinary Providence, would accrue unto it by Effectual Grace alone. The testimony of the Spirit's Operations on the elect, the chosen inheritance, Psal.33:12, have been demonstrated by ordinary providences and judgments, whereby the outward safety of the church from the malice of the devil, hath been affected by an earth, which hath helped the woman, Rev.12:16-17, while the dragon hath been wroth with the remnant of her seed. This hath prospered on the Church's side, beyond what could have been visibly brought about, if only the number of the elect, chosen in Christ to Everlasting Life, had been called by the Gospel, and if all the rest of the world, Rom.11:7, had remained in their utter enmity unto it. For the fruits would then be too naked, being alone without the leaves. And as the leaves of a tree, though not fit for the table, are serviceable to the fruit, and ornamental to the tree,

without which it must be naked, and exposed to ripen on naked twigs; so are professors in this case of preaching the Gospel.

Hence there are texts that speak of provincial preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom among the people of the Jews, while Jesus preached in their synagogues through all Galilee. Mk.1:39. So again, Matt.4:23, Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. Likewise in Matt.9:35, Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom. The Scripture tells us of preaching Jesus Christ the Son of God, among the Corinthian Gentiles, II Cor.1:19. So it tells us, Gal.1:16, of preaching the Son of God among the heathen, and of the Gospel which Paul preached among the Gentiles. Gal.2:2. So, Eph.3:8, preaching among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. For there are many saving conversions with power, where the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, Psal.135:4, or Gospel experience, where the Lord hath chosen Jerusalem, Zech.3:2, which may be compared to grown and ripe fruits. And there are many serviceable conversions of quite another kind, which are only in form, which may consist of an acceptance of the doctrine of the Gospel, either in part or in whole, as it happens; and so the Apostle implies, II Cor.11:4, by putting the case of another Gospel which they had not accepted. Now an acceptance of the doctrine of the Gospel, Matt.7:28, where it is not accompanied with the Salvation of the Gospel, may be compared to leaves or branches that only shelter and protect the fruit; so far they are serviceable, but not valuable in God's account, nor in man's account, except it is to be burnt. And as there are several kinds of these serviceable formal conversions, so the brighter and more evangelical the form, still the more serviceable is the conversion, though not the more valuable. The leaf of the vine, Psal.80:8, does more good to the grapes against a scorching sun, than the leaf of other trees does to their own fruits which may need the leafy covering less.

Now the doctrine of Grace, in the common lump of it, Isa.28:9, hath been made useful, and may be made of

special use again, to some of the elect of God, or the children of Jacob his chosen, through an external acceptance of the Gospel among the non-elect party; such, likewise, may serve, in God's purposes and providences, to form a kind of bridge for the Gospel to pass over more effectually unto others of the chosen number, for the sake of the elect. God may make use of them to take the common cluster in the garden of nuts from among scholar-like preachers, and thereby to carry the kernel still further on, where it profits the eater, being stripped both of case and shell.

Therefore, the Gospel ought to be preached to all, to maintain its orthodoxy, where yet it's Salvation doth not come. There was need of the general notion and common reception of the doctrine of Christianity in the world to a common end. Hence the Gospel was preached apostolically in whole provinces, Acts 10:37, as likewise in the cities; "and when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down into Attalia, as the witness is, Acts 14:25, and so it must go on still ordinarily in that outer and visible doctrinal way among the non-elect, as well as among the elect of God. It was formerly useful to maintain the general expectation of Messiah's coming, Lk.3:3-6, and his dying for sin; that God was in Christ reconciling the world, II Cor.5:19, i.e., was taking off the common enmity of the world, both of Jew and Gentile, against this doctrine of Messiah; and so was a bowing of the world promiscuously to Himself, as to the general reception of Gospel Truth.

Hereby his own elect have often been outwardly shaded and covered through men embracing the common doctrines of Salvation, that a handful of them would have been preserved in towns or countries, in the times of Open and Pagan persecution. And still such a general reception of the Gospel still keeps up the common interest; for there is a great deal of Christ naturally, fitted to the reason of man. "That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Jn.1:9. Christ is the Head of nature, the Ruler of nature, &c. Now in the common notional acceptance of Christ, there is room for nature in common light and gifts of reason, in

temper, largeness of intellectual capacity, and other endowments and human qualifications thereof, to stoop to Jesus Christ professedly and externally, and to exalt Christ nominally by men's falling in with the surface of the Gospel, and by espousing the outward face of the Christian religion. Thus it tends, under a wise and providential management, in the hands of Him that hath made all things for Himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil, Prov.16:4, to fulfil the Scriptures; for thus "the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away." Matt.13:47-48. We are therefore to preach and witness the doctrine of Christ with expectation of fruit, at least according to a doctrinal profession; and that many will be brought in professedly to serve, at least, for an outward defence in the works and ways of Providence, round about the Lord's own; for thus it shall be by preaching the doctrines and records of the Gospel in the external forms of truth, profitable works, necessary to all within the sound, and to all that usually come in and go out among us. We must therefore preach the Eternal Salvation of the Gospel more discriminately in the Lord's hand, to gather together his elect from the four winds, Mk.13:27; and that as the Spirit works in them savingly to believe on Jesus Christ, guiding and leading them to this eternal life in Christ, Rom.8:14, if the Spirit of God owns us, as ministers of the New Testament, II Cor.3:6, powerfully to gather together his elect, under our voices, as the angels shall collect their bodies, and gather His elect together, at the latter day. {"And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matt.24:31.} We must now preach in such a discrimination of the power from the form, as the Spirit of God will own our preaching for the elect's sake, who have already, perhaps most of them, accepted so much of Christ as to have built their out-works of profession. For as to out-works now among professors they are for the most part extensively wide enough, as we want more

of the inward work of the Spirit, testifying to the extensive framework of Gospel Truth. We wait for more of the special power to accompany the common form, as there once lacked common power to cause the common form. But there lacks no power now to cause the form, because not only education and custom, but the liberty of the day, have made it {the Christian Religion} the common fashion. Moreover, as to the outward works of profession, raised in all ages out of the mere doctrine, where salvation into Christ Jesus {the true Gospel ark} hath not accompanied it, the doctrine in and of itself hath been sufficient to advance an outer court profession. Which likewise, in the several ages of God's purifying and trying Dispensations hath been made serviceable to the inner-court change, for defence and protection. For God will raise out-works to beautify and protect the in-works. By this means the Jews, through a long process of time have been able to see, that the nations of the Western Empire have been as much outwardly devoted in zeal to Jesus Christ, as their Nation had once been outwardly devoted in zeal to God, as to his Temple, and the Law of Sacrifices. Hence they have seen how Messiah's interest hath visibly grown to an advance of worldly glory, which they, as men, might somewhat judge of; since once they imagined in their disobedient and gainsaying forefathers, Rom.10:21, that it could never have risen to so honourable a pitch, as in a little time it was brought. Again, both Jew and Pagan have necessarily seen, that there is such outward substance in the Doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ, as that all along it hath yielded a great foothold to the common steps of Christianity, where multitudes, notwithstanding the first persecutions, have both naturally and rationally embraced it. And so the Christian Religion in the success of it has weighed down the Jew, Acts 19:17, and weighs likewise against a great bulk of the Pagans. And yet all this advantage is short of what the elect of God have been brought unto in the Gospel by the Effectual Operations of God the Spirit. For these have inwardly partook of God's Salvation, whilst others have shared but in some of the Christian doctrine, according to the common lot. Thus it appears, why the doctrine of Salvation ought to be

preached to all in respect of God's wisdom, and Christ's right of governing, and also in respect of the common advantages to the interest of Christ in the world which are reaped thereby.

I argue for the necessity of preaching the doctrinal report of Christ unto all, distinct and separately from a revelation of the arm of the Lord, as Isaiah distinguishes, Isa.53:1, or distinct from the Salvation in the doctrine to the elect, from the personal advantages that accrue unto men by a mere doctrinal believing of the Gospel, short of a vital and evangelized believing into Christ Jesus. And this I argue to a further resolution of the question, how must we preach Grace if we do not offer Grace to sinners? The preachers of the Gospel must preach the doctrine, though it be not accompanied with the Salvation, and to those to whom Salvation may not belong. There are temporal advantages to the mere doctrinal receivers, which the Lord doth bring along with their outward acceptance of the notion of the Gospel. Wherever God sends the Gospel of the Kingdom, it is not in vain. The doctrine, we are assured, shall be received by many; and doctrinal advantages, as gifts, learning, reputation, and rewards of common usefulness to be received in this life, shall crown the outward reception of it; and that often far beyond the measure of these outward things in this life, Lk.16:25, which shall be given to real receivers of Salvation itself. Protection in Providence is a constant fruit of the outward reception of God's messages. A common faith that hath entertained the doctrine, has saved nations from many common judgments; it has reprieved them from national calamities, for such are the favourable consequences of a natural entertainment of Gospel Truths.

This natural receiving of the doctrine of the Gospel, and the temporal effects of it in the Divine Providence, hath been much like the natural repentance of Nineveh at the preaching of Jonas; and may be compared to the sparing of that great city the space of forty years, Jon.4:11, which are meant by the prophetic forty days in that prophet's message, "yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." Jon.4:11. {"The men of

Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it; because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here." Matt.12:41.} At the end of which days, or years, Nineveh was appointed to be overthrown, for the wickedness that had passed already. And albeit, the Ninevites took the limits of the prediction to be forty natural days, in which space the threatened overthrow not coming to pass, as they apprehended it would at forty days end, they returned to their wonted wickedness; and so Nineveh was destroyed to purpose, according to the true intendment of the Lord in Jonah's preaching; even at the end of forty prophetic days; which destruction we read of in the first and second chapters of Nahum, containing the substance of the fearful overthrow of that city. A common reception of the truth of the Gospel hath sheltered nominal Christians from the ruinous seizure of infidel nations, and hath been blessed to an expulsion of the Turks in Germany, and of the Moors in Spain. So great numbers of doctrinal believers have been protected, for the sake of their doctrinal believing, among ourselves; as the Lord hath rewarded that doctrinal faith in this life by the preservation of our public liberties, which a mere handful of the new-born sons of God, who are scattered through this isle of Great Britain, could never, humanly speaking, have enjoyed without the others, who make by far the greater figure. So the more extensively the doctrine and the testimony of Grace is received in every Congregation, the more God pours out the fruits of that doctrine, and blesses the substance of congregations, to spiritually enrich men for the maintenance of doctrine and ordinances necessary in the said Assembly. If the elect in all nations who are called inwardly, were to be brought forward without a vast number of others called outwardly, and lodged in the out-buildings of Zion, they would be swallowed up in this world, because of the abounding wickedness of it, were it not for so many thousands of professors, where the Gospel comes, who temper the common profession, and allay the prodigious enmity that is in man against the Sovereign Grace of God. So a common profession may bring the peace of man to men,

having many common advantages in it, where yet the Salvation of the Gospel may not come, or the peace of God in their souls. Peace with the times, peace in families, or peace from the common miseries of war, may be the fruit, either of countenancing, or of entertaining the Doctrine of the Gospel. On the contrary, the Romans destroyed the Jews, over whom yet they would have had no power if the Jews had embraced the common doctrines of Messiah.

Furthermore, I argue from the Justice of God that must be glorified, even upon those who refuse the sound doctrine of Salvation, when that doctrine hath been preached among them and rejected. {"Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you." Prov.1:24-27.} And this also I argue in defence of preaching the word to all men, notwithstanding Salvation by the word is to be preached to God's elect alone. For a further solving of the question, how must we preach Christ, if we do not offer Him, and tender Salvation unto sinners? I answer, the doctrine is to be preached with an eye to God's mercy as to the elect, and an eye to his justice, as to despisers. It is also to be preached boldly, as Paul preached at Damascus. Acts 9:27. For though Salvation cannot be offered, yet we are to bear a testimony of the word of the Lord, notwithstanding it brings down a judgment upon men for refusing it. {"Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive; for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Acts 28:25-27.}

Our work is to testify of Christ to men not to offer Christ to men. Peter and John "testified and preached the word of the Lord, returned to Jerusalem, and preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans." Acts 8:25. When an assault was made, both of the Gentiles and also of the Jews, with their rulers, to use Paul and Barnabas despitefully, and to stone them, {saith Luke in his history of the matter, Acts 14:5-7,} "they were aware of it, and fled unto Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and unto the region that lieth round about," and there they preached the Gospel. We cannot suppose the Gospel could be preached in whole regions, II Cor.10:16, but the Justice of God would meet with provocations enough among contemners and clamorous Christ opposers to send forth his wrath upon such heathens till it consumed them as stubble. {"And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee; thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble." Exod.15:7.} The kingdom of God is not only to be preached where it hath met success, but also where it has been rejected; as Christ said, Luke 4:43, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities also; for therefore am I sent." And no question but in such a variety of places the Gospel preached doth arrive where the open refusers dwell. The disciples went through the towns preaching the Gospel. Lk.9:6. Now when the Gospel is preached in any town or country, fame carries the tidings, and tells men, by hearsay, what the doctrine or report is. The message brought is soon broached, and dispersed in all our coasts. The errand comes mixed with heavy tidings, to condemn a generation of gainsayers in Chorazin and Bethsaida, as well as with glad tidings, to delight the Lord's Jerusalem.

The doctrine and witness of Christ comes to all, but principally on the errand of Salvation to God's elect, to bring the true efficacy of that eternal redemption, Heb.9:12, which is in Jesus Christ, derived from the main fountain of God's eternal purposes. On the other hand, while men refuse and bespatter glorious truths, such truths as most exalt God in Christ, and most debase man in himself, some of the other ends, even purposed by the

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, are accomplished. It was once said of Christ Himself, for the glorifying of God's Justice, as well as setting forth the mercy of God, that "this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against." Lk.2:34. Of which words I can truly say, it is a text which God the Spirit has marvellously used to strengthen my own faith in Christ. For if it was once so with Christ, I need not wonder if it is still so with a book or a sermon that does most eminently exalt Him. One righteous end of bringing the Gospel to a place, is the condemnation of the enemies and opposers, who stand up against the doctrine of Christ; for as to the main and essential points of the doctrine of Christ and Salvation, they are made out so plain in God's word, that when made out agreeably, by preaching according to the common light of the word to interpret them, none can deny them. For which cause non-elect wranglers and refusers of the pure doctrines, Acts 4:2, by which Salvation comes to a Rufus, chosen in the Lord, Rom.16:13, or to an elect sister, II Jn.1:13, will be justly condemned for their hard speeches spoken against them. {"To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him." Jude 19.} The Lord only knows what a sermon, or what the very title-page of a book, that exalts Christ more than flesh or blood may desire to hear of, have extorted from the mouths of men of a reprobate mind! All which has been taken in shorthand, and being written in Heaven, will one day be produced out of the mystical character against them! {"And this is the writing that was written, MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN. This is the interpretation of the thing, MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL; thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." Dan.5:25-27.} A refuser of the doctrine of Christ dies with the greatest aggravation under the Law of Works! Mal.3:5. The doctrine will come in as a swift witness against such as reject it, whether they be opposing preachers, or incensed people. For there be of

both sorts whom Satan stirs up against some of the eminent points of the Gospel, yea, against the frame of the whole Gospel; some men not being able to endure it, because the wisdom of God in a mystery, I Cor.2:7, confounds their own darkness. {"According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this day." Rom.11:8.} It's no difficulty to produce individuals of these sorts who are mounted up to a very high profession in the church. Howbeit I am to preach every true doctrine as Christ preached them in the synagogues of Galilee, Lk.4:44, though the mystery of godliness, I Tim.3:16, as the alone foundation of all true religion as it stands in Christ will surely be despised in Galilee, and in every synagogue will be spoken against. This now is a way of preaching in which God is glorified, though it be eventually in the condemnation of many who have shut out the very doctrine and record as soon as it hath arrived at their cities, towns or villages, Acts 14:4-5; likewise, it will more evidently and triumphantly condemn the assembly of the wicked, Psal.22:16, who have gathered themselves together, not to answer it, but protest against it. As for the Salvation in the Mystery or Doctrine, it is a free gift, the Lord bestowing it upon whom he will; and those whom he wills to possess it are the Jesurun, or the upright, whom he hath chosen, and whom, by the Gospel, he effectually calls into it, to an acknowledgement of it. {"Thus saith the LORD that made thee, and formed thee from the womb, which will help thee; fear not, O Jacob, my servant; and thou, Jesurun, whom I have chosen." Isa.44:2.} But the doctrine, as distinct from Salvation, is to be preached to ministers and people, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, Ezek.2:7, because the doctrine or report reaching their consciences, will have some sure effect to the glory of God. And if that effect be the glorifying of God's justice, by aggravating the condemnation and torments of those haters of God in the doctrine who do not belong unto the Lord, then the Gospel of the Kingdom is not preached in vain. For this is an end which must be accomplished against the wicked, who have eyes to see

and see not, ears to hear and hear not, Ezek.12:2; as well to be glorified in those to whom the Spirit makes it effectual for life, comfort, and salvation. By this it appears, that sinners who neglect and despise the doctrine of Christ, by slighting him either upon the Cross or upon the Throne, by neglecting his Person, or despising his Offices, by denying the Divinity, or stumbling at the glory of the Humanity, which broke out in open apparitions of the God of Israel, as the Glory-man. {"And they saw the God of Israel; and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness." Exod.24:10.} They will each one have a dreadful account to give unto Him that will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom he hath ordained, and whose glory hath been manifested in God's raising him from the dead.

We preach the hidden glory of the Man Jesus, I Cor.2:7, since God hath now opened that Heavenly Glory in the Scriptures. We tell all men the glory of the Man Christ Jesus. {"And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it." Ezek.1:26.} For indeed, Christ is often called "the Man." {"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." I Tim.2:5. "And speak unto him, saying, thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD; even he shall build the temple of the LORD; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne; and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." Zech.6:12-13.} See also, Zech.13:7; Judges 13:10-11; Ezek.47:3; Psalm 80:17; Ezek.10:2, 6; Ezek.40:4; Dan.12:6; Ezek.9:3, 11; Zech.1:10; Lam.3:1, &c. And Christ is likewise called "this Man." {"But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." Heb.10:12. "Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the

forgiveness of sins." Acts 13:38.} See also, Mic.5:5; Heb.3:3; 7:4; 7:24; 8:3, &c. Thus the Holy Ghost hath honoured Christ under that very character of reproach which he had suffered by his adversaries; as appears, "but his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, we will not have this man to reign over us." Lk.19:14.

We preach a whole Christ, and believe into his whole Person God-Man, "whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen," Rom.9:5; though some have believed and confessed His humanity, as Messiah, who had no understanding or belief of his Divinity; so John 7:31 & 46, John 9:33 & John 10:41. We tell all men, I say, the glory of the Man, as Joseph said unto his brethren, "ye shall tell my father of all my glory in Egypt, and of all that ye have seen in Egypt." Gen.45:13. For Christ's sake, and for Zion's sake, we cannot hold our peace. {"For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth." Isa.62:1.} We tell all men of the glad tidings of the everlasting love of the Father, Jer.31:3, in the glory of His Son Jesus! We tell all men of the glory of the Man, that it was a glory before time; a glory hid with God! We proclaim to all, the glory and pre-eminence of the Man, Col.1:18, clothed with wonder, under the Old Testament, Dan.7:9, and fore-appearing to give most certain notices of the New. We preach the glory of the Man, as Alpha; and His glory, as Omega; for He is the beginning of the creation of God, Rev.3:14, and the ending of all the works of wonder! {"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Rev.1:8.} They are begun and finished in Him. They run on apace to an open consummation of the Glory Union, as the works run on through the channels of redeeming love into the ocean of eternal wonders and the bosom of Everlasting Grace! We tell all men that Christ, as Mediator, is fitted to overlay and establish our study and knowledge of the glorious Trinity; thus we still keep

Christ in our eye, as we pass in our thoughts through Him into the knowledge of God; so that albeit that Christ hath a Divine Nature, before he received on him his second Nature, as Man-Mediator or the Nature of Christ in God; therefore as a believer, I must pass in my thoughts through Christ, to discern and look upon that first Nature of God. Otherwise, I am a natural Deist, and act as a poor, proud and dead philosopher still; {and yet this is the common way of our systems and bodies of divinity,} but under the vain application of my thoughts to God in the darkness of Babylonian confusion, I am nothing of the Christian.

However men cavil at the antiquity of the Human Nature of Christ, and loose themselves in their own notion about a real Incarnation of Christ, resolving to lean upon the staff of philosophy in this matter, instead of leaning upon our Beloved, Song.8:5; yet it is plain to him that believeth, that Christ's Humanity was real, really rich and glorious, Jn.17:5, before the foundation of the world, a real blessing of the church under the Old Testament, Heb.13:8, and for our sakes really became poor under the New. II Cor.8:9. {"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Phil.2:5-8.} His fore-appearances, {for I reject that most scandalous word of most authors, *praeludium*, in the business, suggested from the stage, and not from the Spirit of Christ,} under the Old Testament, were real, and not imaginary. Christ was no incomplete Christ, though not come into the world in the flesh, under the Old Testament. {"These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him." Jn.12:41.} The Human Nature of Christ was federally complete in him, body and soul, as the Great Exemplar, pattern and draught of our nature from him. {"For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Eph.5:30.} Nevertheless, the Humanity of Christ was not after the same manner as it

was in the times of his descending from Heaven and his open Incarnation from the womb. His humanity was spiritually real under the Old Testament, though not palpably or physically real till the New Testament. Christ was the substance of the manna in the wilderness, Jn.6:31-33, and so was the super-Essential bread of Heaven, Jn.3:13, even as the Lord's Prayer teaches us, "give us this day our daily bread." Matt.6:11. {"I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Jn.6:51.} He was infallibly as the Man of the right hand, the bread in Heaven before his descent, or before he came down from Heaven, Jn.6:38, as largely made out in my other book, of the Glory of Christ Unveiled.

The humanity of Christ was a spiritual body in the Old Testament, as it was a natural body in the New Testament from a supernatural cause. It was a subsisting Humanity before time, and it was an existing and pre-existing Humanity in the times of the Old Testament. It was subsisting, as it stood personally in God the Son. It was existing and pre-existing, as it stood forth {from Christ's secret subsisting with God} to be seen by men, and stood forth to be so seen in Christ's fore-appearances in the Old Testament; while his body was spiritual and super-celestial, {higher than celestial, especially in spirituality or divinity,} and such as was every way fitted to give being to the shadows of the Law; for these were all necessarily younger than the body of Christ that was cast upon them, or from which Body of Christ the shadows of the Law fell. {"Now to him that is of power to establish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began." Rom.16:25. "To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." Eph.3:9.} Now as this pre-existence was peculiar to Christ, because of the true fore-appearance of his Incarnation, so it confirms unto me, that Origen's hypothesis about the common pre-existence of souls, was as a dream fetched

from the schools of Plato; because it is essential to all pre-existence, that there be a fore-appearance. But this reality was peculiar to Christ's Human Nature, as a fore-display, Exod.33:23, of the future Incarnation from the womb of the Virgin palpably, and hath never been common to all souls in general, as the Platonists and Origenians have asserted. So, we tell all men of the Ancient Glory of the Human Nature of Christ, and of the Everlasting Love of the Father to all the elect of God federally in Him. Gen.1:26 – II Cor.8:9. We tell all these things from the housetops! Matt.10:27. And though we gather but handfuls of corn, Psal.72:16, yet the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon! We tell men that light is come into the world, and men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil. Jn.3:19. We tell men that in the very preaching and professing at this day, there is a neglect, Heb.2:3, and awful despising of Christ's Great Salvation. Poor creatures neglect Christ who is the great and only Salvation of God's elect. For indeed the words there in the second chapter of the Hebrews are but an application of what the Apostle had opened of the Person and Righteousness of Christ in the former chapter. {"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath 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, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb.1:1-3.} We tell sinners how dreadful it is to be found refusing of the doctrine or report of Christ, in their not submitting unto this point of Truth, the doctrine of Ultimate Supremacy, to wit, that God is the Master of his own Grace, and that he calls out whom he wills to partake thereof amongst us. Matt.20:15. We preach that there is an Operation of Power under the Doctrine to discover by an Effectual call who are God's elect. We teach men, that there is an aggravated condemnation upon the refusers of the doctrine. That this doctrine comes to all; that Salvation comes in and by the doctrine to many, and is

put into every chosen vessel. We declare to men, that the refusers of glad tidings are such as put away from them the Doctrine of Jesus Christ, and put a slight upon the doctrines of the highest Grace. We preach the truth of God, whilst some call it error, who never would, nor could go about laboriously from God's Word to prove it error.

We preach the deep things of God, I Cor.2:10, while men who pretend to fathom them, run up and down anywhere, to friends or enemies, all is one to them, saying, these mysteries of Christ, because they do not relish them with their carnal and prejudiced spirits, are heresy, blasphemy, delusion, and count our message damnable. {"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets." Acts 24:14.} Oh, but when it is found to be otherwise, what will become of men's tongues that have been set on fire of Hell! James 3:6. How will men be horribly afraid, who have let fly their passions against the Lord Himself, because He was Man before Adam! Fearfulness will surprise the hypocrites, {"the sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites," Isa.33:14,} that pretend to believe in a crucified and humbled Christ, and yet reject the doctrine of his condescension to the womb and cross from that high and exalted throne, where the Son of Man in the Lord from Heaven, or Man of the Right Hand, was set up of old, yea from everlasting! {"What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before?" Jn.6:62. "In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." Isa.6:1.} Besides, how many hypocrites have we in Zion that will not have this Man to reign over them! For ought I know, of five hundred pulpits, even of our Dissenters, there may not be five and thirty of them, that, in fulfilling their ministry, do ordinarily honour or call him the Man, or speak of him as this Man, God-Man Mediator.

How many cowards have we in Zion, who refuse to receive Christ joyfully, Lk.19:6, and take up all from this green fir tree alone, Hos.14:8, in whom our fruit is found! {"Being filled with the fruits of righteousness,

which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God." Phil.1:11.} Especially, when they have climbed up the sycamores of their own wisdom, with a wanton design from the top of their parts, to take their prospects of Christ for curiosity's sake. Have they ever in temptation, poverty of spirit, sense of sin dwelling in them, or true humbleness of mind, heard the voice of Christ {that bids every self-confident climber, whom he saves, Lk.19:9, to come down} calling them to make haste, and receive him as their own. How many faithless preachers, have we nowadays who dare not preach Christ according to the measure of their light? Oh! Such a rich man that I am most beholden to, will be offended if I speak out all that God shows me out of his counsel. But what do I think Christ will be, whose riches far exceed that of any poor rich man which you might fancy. Again, how many reproachers and despisers of a full Christ fill our pulpits; how many haters and dividers of a whole Christ; how many fighters and disputers against the Christ of God, have we. {"Where is the wise; where is the scribe; where is the disputer of this world; hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?" I Cor.1:20.} Indeed, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the Day of Judgment; and it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment, Mt.11:22, than for some of these, whom the Lord will surely make examples of.

How dreadful will their condition be for sinning against the doctrine, after all this light of the glorious Gospel which is broken forth! The doctrine of Christ breaks out more and more. And it's prophesied of Christ, who is the path of the just, that he shall, as their path, shine out more and more unto the perfect day. Prov.4:18. And no wonder, for Christ is the light of the world, Jn.8:12, and the path of the righteous too. {"I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Jn.14:6.} Howbeit, men grow angrier at the light, bitterer, more violent, more enraged, more subtle and cunning, nay, as the apostle says, more devilish, James 3:15, to supplant it than ever! And the most, even of whom we are ready to call the best, do

visibly prefer their theological blunders to a preaching of the Everlasting Gospel, and advance {dreadful to be spoken} a natural and powerless religion in mere external methods and forms of salvation, before and above what they will venture to say of the mighty Operations of God the Spirit, in Effectual Calling, whilst they speak of the things of God. And where there is one sermon preached to advance God's new creation in the soul, I fear there are twenty sermons read, uttered, and offered, merely to jog, beautify, and bolster up old corrupt fallen Adam.

Well then, having been helped to fix the distinction of the Gospel into Doctrine and Salvation; and to show that both are to be preached to the elect, and the former alone, as to visible interest, is preached to the non-elect. Some pains have been taken to show how we must preach the doctrine, and not offer it; preach Salvation, not propound it; how preaching becomes a sure means of reaching God's true end in the Gospel of Christ towards all men, wheresoever the Gospel comes, whether the hearers are the elect, or the non-elect. For that great end hath been declared, namely, the glorifying of God's Mercy and Justice; on the one hand, in the Saving, with a special Salvation, all the elect of God; and on the other hand, in securing the common advantages of Providence, which attend the doctrine in a way of common good, where there is a withholding of God's Grace unto Salvation. And thus, as the doctrine is taught the people, and the doctrine preached to the mixed multitude, Lk.20:1, we have a general resolving of the question, how must we preach the Gospel, if we do not offer the Gospel? Why we must preach the Righteousness of the Gospel Doctrinally, even the Righteousness of God. Rom.3:22. Thus Christ declares of his Ministry, as it's represented in the person of his type, "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation; lo, I have not refrained my lips, O LORD, thou knowest. I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation; I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation." Psal.40:9-10. And for proof that this is spoken of David in the Person of Christ, Lk.1:69, we may depend upon the witness of the Holy

Ghost in John 7:14 & Luke 20:1, where the very auditory, or great congregation is fixed, as to determine what great congregation was principally meant. The doctrine is to be preached to all, but still the Salvation of the Gospel is to be offered to none at all. An offer of Salvation being no means towards God's putting forth his power; no, not so much as upon the elect themselves. I have insisted so much upon the doctrine of Christ, as separate from the Salvation, that now the distinction is plain and incontrovertible to him that seeth the Son of God experimentally, and believeth on him, some having known the form of doctrine, before they have seen the mystery, or brought under its power. {"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." Jn.6:40.} For in regeneration the truth is said to be a form of doctrine whereto ye were delivered, as the Greek reads that text passively of the converted, into which type, or style of doctrine ye were delivered, Rom.6:17, though the translators, not seeing the mystery, were contended to read it passively of the form itself, as the form of doctrine which was delivered to you. He likewise, who hath the love of God dwelling in him, I Jn.3:17, hath far more than the orthodox doctrine of the love abiding in him; and this indwelling love, because of the Spirit of Christ who upholds it, Rom.5:5, is a strengthening experience in the soul concerning God's Grace, and so will cause a true believer faithfully to prefer God's honour in the Gospel to all other interests. God's thoughts and ways are honourable; even whilst they debase our own thoughts and ways. And he that is practically in his own heart led into the truth of God, will see a large field of the doctrine of Christ to preach at all times, faithfully, and will be contented to preach evangelically, and not trust in lying words that cannot profit, Jer.7:8, in the common flattery of offers and proposals of Salvation, to all men before whom he stands up to preach. We should take heed of a blind arrogance in the pulpit! We are to eye the fruits of our ministry under the Operations of the Spirit, and not entertain a fruitless philanthropy, or a love of all men to

Salvation in the gross. We ought to have a fervent love for Christ's body, but not a fond love for the members of a harlot. I Cor.6:15. We are to take heed to our spirit, lest, while we offer Salvation to all, we deal treacherously against the spouse of Christ, Mal.2:15, in not holding forth the blood and righteousness of Christ to her edification. {"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Eph.4:11-12.} We have field-room enough in doctrine to deliver all our holy errands, if the Lord be pleased to make us wise to know, and faithful to keep our own bounds. The Lord guide the steps of his ministers, so as they may not err in vision, nor stumble in judgment, Isa.28:7, by making the preaching of Doctrine and preaching of Salvation in the doctrine, to have both one object, and to be both of one latitude. The Lord enable all his ministers to preach discreetly; and while they preach the Gospel, not to propound it as an offer; but preach the Gospel doctrine to all, and preach the Salvation of the Gospel, with their hearts set Salvation-wise upon the elect of God alone. Finally, the Lord grant, that we may neither attempt to rob the Father's gift, nor the Spirit's power, by degrading God's faithfulness into man's flattery. Amen, Amen.

CHAPTER SIX

Some distinct resolutions of the puzzling question; how must we preach the Gospel to sinners, if we do not offer the Gospel to sinners?

I need not speak much by way of recapitulation, having so much to add by way of enlargement. And yet I shall not utterly reject all coincidence neither. Well then, we must preach the Gospel as the things of the Gospel are, and not as the things of the Gospel are not. We must preach the Gospel and lay open the things of God, to the glory of God in Christ, and to the glory of God by Christ, and to the glory of God through Christ. In Christ, in the deeds and settlements of God the Father. By Christ, in the purchase and conveyance by God the Mediator; and through Christ, in the springs of influences by God the Comforter; which influences through Christ, by the Spirit, are quite distinct from all manner of speculations concerning Christ.

We must preach the Gospel as the things of it are in Christ, by a Settlement of God the Father. We must preach the Gospel so as to honour and commend the Father's love, Matt.11:27, and that in his choosing the elect in Christ before the foundation of the world. {"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph.1:4.} Here is a special sort of union in God's act. Now preaching the Gospel is carrying the Gospel altogether, as it stands in all parts of it, fulfilling of our ministry, Acts 20:24, with this election-union. Offers agree not with election-union; for though men who talk of offers may hold election faintly, Jer.2:19, yet it is very little they hold, and none of it in the strength of Christ; neither do they live by the doctrine they pretend to hold, notwithstanding all their pretended temptations they have to drop it; as men so warped, did for forty years of the last century, who only prepared matters for this generation for men to deny

election, and hate it the more in the present day; and very few of these offering-men who pretend to hold election do seek heartily to take part with God therein, Rom.16:17; but men sleep and nod, till perhaps the noise of a book is got out among them, that lays the sleepy disease for a time, Matt.25:5, and in a few weeks it all wears off, and then to nodding again. Whatever it be, it's plain that some who pretend to hold election, do it half-heartedly; for they insist not upon election-union, or the election of Grace, as it stands in the Everlasting Covenant in Christ Jesus. And then as if a creature could be chosen in Christ before believing on Christ, and yet that there could be no Election-Union of that creature, nor Justification, and other Grace given him comprehensively in Christ, before his believing on him. {"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9.}

The term "in Christ" is used in scripture, under a diversity of comprehensive phrases, as in II Tim.2:1, "thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus." Eph.1:3, "blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." {Justification of the Elect is in Christ before believing.} We have, therefore, all spiritual blessings in heavenly places, conferred upon us in Christ our Covenant Head already. So II Cor.5:29, "to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

The second phrase of the Holy Ghost to express it is "in the Lord." Isa.45:24, "surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength." So, Isa.45:17, "but Israel shall be saved in the LORD with an everlasting salvation." Isa.61:10, "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Another phrase of the Holy Ghost is, "in

Him." The places are II Tim.1:9; Col.1:19; Jn.1:4; II Cor.1:20; Col.2:10; Eph.1:4, which speech "in Him" is meant in Christ; and in some of the places named it's meant of Election-Union, viz., II Tim.1:9; Eph.1:4 and Col.2:10, the phrase in those places implies a distinct mystery of the Union far beyond the mystery of it in the letter, or in respect of instrumental union, which we have sensibly in Christ, by the conveyance of the Life of Grace, when Faith comes. And that this Election-Union, the root of all the other unions, is so great and deep a Mystery of Grace, appears by what is said of it in the same phrase, "in Him" in two other places of Scripture, Colossians 3:3 & John 14:20. The phrase "in Him" in the other texts mentioned doth not strictly import the Election-Union of our persons in Christ, but something else in Christ. Yet it's still a comprehension of phrase, as I designed, that takes in the other Settlements of God the Father which he appointed in Christ, though they are distinct from the election of our persons in Him. Particularly, that place, John 1:4, "in him was life; and the life was the light of men," which discovers that all fulness of nature, and the common blessings of life, are all settled in Christ. The other place, Col.1:19, "for it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell," speaks more comprehensively, as the extensive fulness of Nature, Grace, and Glory which dwells in Christ by the Father's settlements. {"Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Heb.1:3.} Then lastly, that text, II Cor.1:20, "for all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us," comprehending the perfect unity, harmony, and stability of all the promises founded of God in Him. II Pet.1:4. Thus, as the Father's Settlements stand, all is sure in Christ. But now as to Electing-Grace, the Father's Settlement makes us one in Christ, as the Union is a root, or radical interest, that in time brings forth our conversion. II Cor.5:18. It is said, Proverbs 12:12, "the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit." Who is the root of the righteous but Christ? The true

Messiah is here distinguished from the wicked one. Matt.13:38. For its plain, that all the righteous ones are first comprehended as righteous in Christ, even as branches in a common root that bears them. {"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek; and his rest shall be glorious." Isa.11:10.} There is a notable comprehending phrase in Acts 26:18, "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." This goes deep into the mystery of the Pardon of Sin, for it takes in forgiveness, both as already prepared, without which it could not be forgiveness, and forgiveness bestowed, without which it could not be received. Receiving it implies clearly that the thing received was made ready in the fulness of Christ, and had a being in Christ, as ours by Free Grace, long before our receiving it. Besides, if things {as if all the blessings wherewith we are blessed in heavenly places} be in Christ before they by him and through him, then sure they must be in Christ, before there can be faith on Christ, or before what the Holy Ghost calls faith into Christ. As the same, Acts 26:18, hath it, "by faith that is in me," {or as it is in the original, "by faith into me,"} says Christ there to Paul, in giving him his commission to go and preach the Gospel successfully to the Gentiles. But now, when men have gone and preached against these eternal truths, and they know they have, to this day, sermons lying by them quite opposite to the doctrines of eternal election, or what we call the first truths; alas, here is their temptation, for though they may of their error be a little convinced, they do not find in their hearts {one of a score of them} to venture for Christ, and go and alter their tone! They had rather stick by their empty notions of offers, &c. {"Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, they do always err in their heart; and they have not known my ways." Heb.3:10.} They are run into offers of Christ, and there they think to keep. Now offers of Christ do stand directly with the anti-union doctrine, and the

anti-election doctrine, and the anti-comprehending doctrine; and all to give more honour to Faith, the creature's act, than they give to the Father's own act in Election-Grace. Men have got an anti-scriptural maxim about election. What is that? Why it is, say they, election neither gives, nor takes away anything; neither fixes a thing nor removes it; a pretty election indeed, but that is a mistake.

See what it is for men to leave the Holy Oracles of God, Acts 7:38, and to paddle in other streams where the muddy divinity swims down upon us. For the Scripture is as contrary to that notion as can be. Says the LORD, Psa.2:6, "yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Now is this setting of his King upon his holy hill of Zion no election, no bestowment? Was here nothing fixed do you think? Do men and systems that teach us the maxim, make nothing of this King elected, set, put, and bestowed, all the time of the Old Testament dispensation? Yet the next words are, concerning the Everlasting Decree of this King's election of God, {verse 7} "I will declare the decree; the LORD hath said unto me, thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." "Thou art my Son," says the LORD, this is the Father's decree towards Christ. Here is a regal Son and a filial King, and yet a King and a Son in decree, before the decree in David's time had openly brought forth Christ. If our wills, therefore, rightly bow to the truth as it is in Christ, we shall cheerfully own, even that which is clearly revealed, that God's Election-Decrees do put forth something, or bestow something in God's account. For putting or granting the thing is setting it, and setting it is settlement, which is God the Father's act, before it comes to any open and subordinate act of ours in believing. To be chosen in Christ implies a union in the choice answerable to the choice itself.

Now offers of Christ suit not with this doctrine of Eternal Union, but agree best with that doctrine of proud nature, which denies all sorts of Union before Faith. Offers stand not with any one Gospel-Mystery, as the truth is in Jesus, but stand with all as the things are only concerning Jesus. They stand not with the mystical quickening of the elect in their Head, much less of their being set down

together with Him in heavenly places. How shall we preach, you cry? How? Preach the Gospel as Christ hath commanded; as the Father hath absolutely declared, and hath raised us up together with Christ, even when we were dead in sins, as saith the Holy Ghost, Eph.2:5, which quickening and raising up was certain and sure even before we believed on Him. For Christ rose from the dead long before the Ephesians were converted; and they were quickened in him virtually, when they were unbelievers in themselves. Therefore offering of God's Grace, which was eternally settled in Christ, does wickedly and directly strike at these Covenant Settlements. Shall we then dare preach the Gospel against these settlements of the Gospel? If we do, after all our boasting of faith, and pressing of faith, and offering of Christ, it's plain that we have little or no faith in the foundation, or we should not want to lay another foundation. {"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." I Cor.3:11.} We must not preach the Gospel so as to suit the errors of the Anti-Unionists, for they give no testimony that they know the things of God savingly and experimentally by the power of the Holy Ghost in vital implantation of Gospel truth, but merely take them upon sport, one from another. {"Alas, master, for it was borrowed." II Kings 6:5.} Neither will they bear with any other union in Christ, than by a few dry notions, or a form of empty words! A mere sentimental and time union or a work of natural reason. But where is any mention of that Ancient and Eternal Union in Christ? "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered," Jn.15:6, here indeed is the branch-union, and we own it, because it's effected influentially by the Spirit, in faith and love, knitting us to Christ; but never as severed from Christ himself, in that Eternal Union which is the basis and impetus of all that the believer possesses in Christ. Beside this, where is their root-union? Is not that root of David a more ancient union than the branch-union, or than their husbandry? {"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." Rev.22:16.} Oh, how little does their doctrine of offers

acquaint sinners with the Ancient of Days, Dan.7:9, or with the ancient Settlements of Grace, given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began! {"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9.} For, to talk of a choice of persons in Christ, and a gift of the elect to Christ, or a gift of Grace to us in Christ, as this gift and choice are eccentrical {or moving at an unequal distance from the centre of relation in Election-Union} to an Election-Union in Christ, is empty talk indeed that tendeth to penury, but a sight of nothing of the true essence of Gospel Truth as it resides in Christ.

We must preach the Gospel as its essential elements are by Christ in the purchases of conveyance, as given into the hands of Christ, to be dispensed to whomsoever He will. {"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Col.1:19-20. "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." I Cor.8:6. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses." Acts 13:39.} Thus all is by Christ as he is our Redeemer.

We must preach the Gospel as the things of it are by a Redemption which the elect of God have in Christ that was accomplished and brought about by Him, even before they believed, or ever heard of His name. So we have the redemption fixed and invariable in Christ at all times the same, which redemption was brought about by him transiently, in the taking away the whole iniquity of a land {Emanuel's} in one day. {"For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes; behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." Zech.3:9.} And the full stock lies in Christ, in whom we have complete redemption, as Eph.1:7, Col.1:14, and "who of God is made unto us

wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." I Cor.1:30. There it lies in Christ, settled and fixed, whether we believe, or whether we believe not. For "if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself," II Tim.2:13, or lessen Himself of this Redemption wrought out once for all. Throw down the pretences of your offers then, ye ministers of the dead letter, and preach Christ thus! For instead of offers of Christ to sinners, its plain we should be opening of Christ to sinners, when we preach the Gospel to them. We must preach the Gospel to sinners, as the issues of it are by Christ, as the worker, procurer, and conveyer of redemption to and in their believing. This is the gift by Special Grace. Thus must we preach the Gospel, and not abuse the Lord our Righteousness, Jer.23:6, nor our Redeemer that is mighty, as his character is rendered, Prov.23:11, by sinning against the light, in hiding the conveyance of the purchase to God's elect. For if their Redeemer be entitled mighty to stand up for his people in defence of their own land-marks, and to plead against the oppressor, who enters the fields of the fatherless, Prov.23:10; how will he deal with those men, who do in the worst sense remove the old landmark which the LORD set up in the beginning of his way, Prov.8:22, before his works of old; hiding and razing out, as it were, the doctrine of his everlasting love, Jer.31:3, and making his love to begin with our believing in time? And then not content with this, instead of advancing the power and purchase of the conveyance, after sin had entered, dwindle the purchase and conveyance into the purchase of an offer of Grace! How will the Lord deal with men who corrupt the preaching of the Gospel, turning it into another thing? {"And they that escape of you shall remember me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols; and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations." Ezek.6:9.}

It's preaching the Good News of an Accomplished Salvation in Christ, which is appointed to make the heirs

of Salvation, Heb.1:14, meet for their inheritance of the saints of light or undefiled, I Pet.1:4, as Peter calls it. How doth the LORD now punish men by further degrees of blindness, hardness and sleepiness, who are agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord, Acts 5:9, in keeping back part of the price; which is no less than the purchase of conveyance, making it a mere offer of Grace. It must be a grievous and presumptuous offence of bold men to alter the Lord's own prerogative of redemption, into an offer of his grace! As if the sinners we preached to were now to take up a new right from a profferer, instead of taking up the only proper and ancient right from the Settler, and their present right from the Purchaser of its sure and certain conveyance. Oh, this is an impudent lessening of redeeming love, wherever it is persisted in! Offers abuse the Redeemer, for they insist upon the acceptance of a sinner, but not at all upon Christ's redemption, who hath procured the conveyance. For it is in this very conveyance purchased that the acceptance must come, and be wrought by the power of God.

A proffer of Christ operates not as a conveyance of Christ does; for in that, all obstacles are done away by Christ, but operates as the things are accepted by the sinner, and the last rub in the way taken out of it by the sinner's own acceptance. A tender of Salvation to all or any that come under the sound of the Gospel, advances the reception of it more as it comes in by the creature, than it advances the procurement, as the conveyance of the work of redemption was wrought out by Jesus Christ, which work is wrought out and brought home to the elect of God. God hath appointed the purchased and effectual conveyance of it to them, not in a casual propounding of an offer of Universal Grace, according to this doctrine of offers, teaching men to rest in an arm of flesh; no, but as a certain and free bestowal of Grace by Christ. Some certain men's labours would be more acceptable to God, if they made more noise about Christ, the means of acceptance, and less noise about men's performances in the act of acceptance. {"Thus saith the LORD; cursed be

the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the LORD." Jer.17:5.}

We must preach the Gospel as it is revealed and comes from the Father, to the elect of God, through Christ, and not preach the Gospel merely concerning Christ, or about Christ, as the common way is. We may say many pretty things about Christ, but if we do not set forth and advance the Holy Spirit's work, which is wrought through Christ, our preaching, if it may be so called, is vain, in point of usefulness, as it shuts out God the Spirit. So Rom.11:36, {"for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever,"} speaks of all things through Christ in the applicatory pursuits of Grace by Jehovah the Spirit, as well as all things of him, or from him, as Jehovah the Father, and all things to him as Jehovah the Mediator. For Christ and the Father are ONE, Jn.10:30, and "all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." Jn.5:23. When the Spirit is given in his effectual operations on the mind, as the working principle of our faith in Christ, then it is, that in believing we have life through his name. {"These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." Jn.20:31.} So, when it comes to believing by a work of the Spirit of God, it is a believing wherein we have life through his name. {"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43.} So that when it comes to be through Christ, it is brought about efficaciously to be unto the sinner's acceptance of Christ. The election accept of him, when the rest are blinded. {"What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Rom.11:7.} Offers do never exalt the Effectual Provision in, by, and through Christ for sinners acceptance of Gospel Salvation. Nevertheless, we must preach the Gospel thus, otherwise we abuse the Efficacious Gift of God to the elect. Now offers do but abuse the efficacious gift of God to the elect. For God hath appointed the Effectual gift of special Grace

to the elect, who cannot be seduced, Mk.13:22, though they may be abused by what falls too short of the special grant, that is by this common offer. And so much the more abused, by how much the more men sugar it, to make it go down as a free offer. We are to preach Grace as freely given, and Christ as given, and the Spirit as given, and all the benefits of Christ as freely given to poor sinners, and to be brought home by the Holy Spirit to a poor sinner's heart, under the preaching of the Gospel. This meets with the elect of God, because it comes to them through Christ, and converts them. Whereas your offers do but abuse them, by debasing God's gift into a proffer of your own, and his truth into a lie. {"It shall even be as when an hungry man dreameth, and, behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his soul is empty; or as when a thirsty man dreameth, and, behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and, behold, he is faint, and his soul hath appetite; so shall the multitude of all the nations be, that fight against mount Zion." Isa.29:8.}

The elect are to receive under our preaching, if we are ministers of Christ, the special gift of the Father, in bestowing his Christ and Salvation on them; yea, and all that accompanies the Salvation of God with Christ. Whereas, if ministers in their errand stand proffering the Grace of God to poor sinners, they do not preach in and through Christ, but only hold forth something in a general way concerning Christ. And so bring no more Salvation ministerially to the elect, than they bring or show to the non-elect, and what a gross abuse of the elect is this by them who seem to profess election! The non-elect have the common notion of Salvation already concerning Christ; that is, they have the common doctrine of the Gospel, that Jesus Christ died for sinners, that they are sinners, and the like. Therefore the common salvation concerning Christ in the Doctrine is theirs, that is, convenient, appointed number of the non-elect believe with a temporary faith, a rational faith, an external faith concerning Christ, which is faith made providentially serviceable, as a sort of barrier or external defence placed round about the inward glory of the Sanctuary, as to what is effectual through Christ, in the converted number of

the absolute elect of God. What is taught concerning Christ in externals is made of great use towards that which is taught through Christ in internals. Thus in all ages, especially since the times of Constantine the first Christian Emperor, God hath made use of men who have had but a name to live, Rev.3:1, and have been but notoriously and externally converted to the Faith, and to but some of it neither concerning Christ, to be a sort of earth to help the woman, Rev.12:16, and do a kindness to the Church, that hath been converted through him unto Himself. As for the Church, so far as made up of the true elect of God, {I mean such as were chosen in Christ to everlasting life before the foundation of the world, Eph.1:4, and not chosen merely to common faith and privileges, as the son of perdition, Jn.17:2, Judas was,} have comparatively in all ages been but a handful. Now such a small number could no ways have visibly subsisted by the common methods of Providence, if the Lord had not made use of others to help them, and render the external interest of the Gospel in the world in things concerning Christ, some ways capable of resisting the spiteful opposition of Jew and Pagan. Hence, the first preaching of the Gospel was attended with miracles, which were as a suitable means to work a common belief of the Gospel concerning Christ, upon the non-elect, as to work the same common belief upon the elect of God themselves. And most certainly this method was taken, next to the good pleasure of God, that there might be brought into the outworks a great company of outer-court people to believe the Gospel with a general faith concerning Christ, and such a faith as common education and general instruction hath kept up in the world ever since. Nevertheless at that day formally, the Spirit of God in a common way did make the general preaching of the Gospel concerning Christ, a means to work a general faith upon Jew and Pagan; and by a common work of the Spirit in all ages since, men have sprung up into the same common faith, partly by education and precept of men, partly by example and interest of the world, &c. For all the first prejudices to the Gospel concerning Christ in the lump are clean gone out of these parts of the world, which

yet were strong prejudices in that former day by a contrary education, example, preposition, &c., and so there was a greater common work of the Spirit upon men in that day as necessary to bring them up to the common faith in Christianity. This common and general faith and reception of the Gospel in the general lump concerning Christ was needful in all nations to carry on God's work more covertly under the fair show of the out-works, and more particularly within and under this general entertainment of the Gospel by Jew and Pagan. So that hereby Conversion Power in the glory of the Gospel, hid itself as under a veil, to another end, while the souls of the elect were so secretly discriminated, as that all the world should not be capable of judging about the mystery, since the elect of God as to their natural condition and external character were close fastened to all this lump and cluster of mankind, in matters concerning Christ. And hence the first preaching of the Gospel was answerable to the state of the Jewish and Pagan world, for both were set against the very notion of the Gospel. And as to the power, none knew it till they lay under the proper means of the notion, and the doctrine concerning Christ was then proposed to nature, reason, and the common intellect of mankind, and all to an outer-court serviceableness towards the hiding of the inner-court glory in a far less company than the outer court consisted of. Now whilst the doctrine of Salvation concerning Christ was first proposed unto all, the nature of Salvation through Christ was preached into the elect alone, who are the only saved number for whom the kernel was intended; though they were not to come by this kernel, but as others around about them accepted of the cluster and the shell inclosing it. Accordingly, in that day God having a visible professing people to be taken out of the two worlds, the Jewish world and the Pagan world, as the term 'world' is sometimes taken, we must needs suppose, that the preaching of the Apostles, and so the Scriptures we have from them about the common Salvation concerning Christ, are parallel to this design, and to this design only. This hath prepared a way for the future success of the Gospel in more discriminate operations of the Spirit by his power and

teachings; all which discriminate teachings effect a supernatural discerning within the compass of the form, when the form is spread to its full extent.

But now since the whole world {where our preaching at least comes} is in a manner brought to receive God's Grace, in Christ's blood, notionally, in creeds, catechisms and the common confessions of our faith, we are now in our preaching more confined as to matters concerning Christ. That is to say in showing some few doctrines concerning Christ that will not go down notionally with the Times. Now here Christ in such doctrinal points should be preached to all men, and we should look for common operations of the Spirit to make the common belief of those notions concerning Christ in some, serviceable to others who receive the power and life of them.

We are for the sweet loaf to our own children, not the parings separately. We are for the substance of Christ to be preached to elect sinners, through him by the Spirit of God {for this Comforter is the Conveyancer} that the elect of God may not be put off with ineffectual offers of Christ. A superficial offer of Christ in the notional and external part of the doctrine is enough perhaps to satisfy some preachers, but do they think it is the way to proclaim liberty to the captives? No, it is not the way. Now the question is this, do you offer the Gospel concerning Christ, or do you offer the Gospel through Christ? If it be but concerning Christ, pray do not think your ministerial free offer shall be a means to save men. It may serve externally to cultivate and dress up some of the non-elect, in a mere profession, for some external service of the church of God, as the elect may want assistance from the non-elect in some of their doctrinal notions of Gospel truths, that so by these notions of Christ in some of the non-elect without any Salvation-Interest in Christ, they may be some ways serviceable to the Gospel in its outworks. Preach concerning Christ absolutely, among all, to all, and before all, that hereby the doctrine may reach some of the elect, if it be possible, while Salvation goes forth in Operation to, and upon the elect of God. Indeed, an effectual knowledge of the Gospel, and the power of

the Gospel can never be separated, but they will, in Conversion-Season fall in life and sweetness on the elect alone, notwithstanding a knowledge of some parts of the Gospel, as the history and form of it, are separable from the power; so that the former may be in many of the non-elect, who are utterly destitute of the latter. Ministers of Christ therefore should preach the Gospel with clear distinctions between what they have to say concerning Christ, and what they have to say through Christ. But the evil is, that instead of this, men quite beside all rules of Scripture example, proffer Christ in the lump, either to those who have already received him in the lump, or proffer him so for Salvation to sinners; whereas, Christ was never so proffered by either apostles or prophets, in all the Scriptures, but Salvation was preached through Christ, to sinners, as therein Christ was put, formed by the Holy Ghost, in the hearts of the elect, and the elect alone, among numbers of them who perhaps partook of nothing but the cluster and shell of Christianity in the same Sermons.

Apostolic preaching aimed at Conversion among Jew and Pagan; and that conversion to be effected on some notionally concerning Christ, in others powerfully through Christ. But preaching at this Day runs altogether along different channels of conveyance. We are now to aim more for a Conversion to mere forms and parties, than conversion to Christ spiritually; or a Conversion to Christ spiritually out of such notional professions of Gospel Truth. And we want many such Conversions to be yet wrought both in ministers and in people. If so be then our preaching now runs all upon offers of Christ to sinners, and upon general and common invitation of sinners to Christ, we having no true scope at this Day for such a way of preaching of the Gospel, as the Apostles had, who were called to alter the Jewish and Pagan forms into the Christian Model; whereas these things are done {blessed be God} to our hands already. The Kingdom of Heaven hath been as a net that hath gathered of every kind, Matt.13:47, both good and bad. The foundation in the common draughts hath been laid. Our work is to bring men to receive these Doctrines of the Gospel which they

have not received, and so go on unto perfection, Heb.6:1, and that is to preach Christ with power, and so the Gospel through him may find out the elect, and distinguish them, from among others of all persuasions, who live and die in a form of godliness, II Tim.3:5, but either deny, or are destitute of the power thereof.

To preach the pure, though despised doctrines of the Gospel, both concerning Christ and his Kingdom to all, and through Christ to the elect; I mean such doctrines as the antiquity of the Human Nature of Christ, the root as well as the offspring of David, Rev.22:16, {root and branch in Christ and believers are both of one Human substance, so Eph.5:30, &c.,} and the incomprehensible glory of it, as the Alpha and Glory-Man, subsisting in the Son of God. Likewise, the everlasting love of the Father to the elect of God in Christ. Also, the Salvation of the elect in Christ, as the Representative Person, and the root of all election, before their Salvation, by influences and conveyances through Christ, as the living branches in Christ identify and discern their own Union in the Tree of Life. Further, the doctrine of the Righteousness of God through the obedience, sufferings and blood of Christ, imputed or reckoned, and put to and upon sinners as the true cause of their believing, {“to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,” II Pet.1:1,} through the Spirit of Christ, in the act of this Imputation, revealed within them to bring them under it, without any imputing either of trespasses, II Cor.5:19, or their deeds of the Law. {“Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the Law.” Rom.3:28.} Now herein lies the despised doctrine and that scriptural form of preaching which is everywhere spoken against.

Also, in preaching, if we go on unto perfection, Heb.6:1, the Scriptures must be opened out of themselves, and not out of any other book at random. {“To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.” Isa.8:20.} There must be a distinguishing between foundation and superstructure, or fundamental

texts and superstructure texts, that superstructure texts and the sense of them are to be carefully built upon the fundamental, and not the fundamental upon the superstructure, as the corrupt manner hath been. {"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." I Cor.3:11.} There must be also a right knowledge and use of the three distinct Offices of the Mediator, in their season and order. Without this, in no Sermon are we rightly led into the best and most profitable way of preaching, so as to show distinctly what pertains to Absolute Salvation, and what to the Absolute Providential Government of Christ, for His church's sake, for the service of it throughout the life of Grace, to the glory of the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, through Him by the Spirit of our God. {"For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us." Isa.33:22.} Hence there ought to be an exact altering of the entire form of our common applications, into an advancement of the work of God the Spirit, throughout all the practical parts of his Operations and Motions; such as believing, repenting, duties, and services, upon and under the Operations of Jehovah the Comforter, as these Operations are still deeper, working by and under the righteousness of Christ. Lastly, we should preach the congregational order of Christ in his church, and when we have done, take heed we do not practically pull it down, by steering under Presbytery and Synods. We should preach these points, and many such as these; and thus you have, in a few words, a draught of Gospel Preaching, since Preaching and the Scriptures have been so corrupted and neglected while we keep to a clear distinction of the Person of the One God, Father, Son, and Spirit, and their Operations in, by and through the Mediator in all his Offices. And while we keep to what else of the Gospel is most despised by worldly preachers and professors, we shall do well. {"Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned mine holy things; they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they showed difference between the unclean and the clean, and have hid their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them."}

Ezek.22:26.} I am persuaded, if more of our ministers of Christ were helped to preach these distinguishing points of the Gospel, {as a few of the ministers of Christ I hope do, though they labour against a strong tide of opposition,} they would in a few years find that the Holy Ghost had owned them, to the conversion of sinners, the edification and strengthening of the churches, against all opposition, beyond their expectations. For my own part, I declare I have graciously found it so; and I am confident others would, far beyond their own expectations in Christ, and far beyond what they ever met with in the ministry, both as to the life of Grace in their own souls, and the flourishing state of their churches. {"But the word of God grew and multiplied." Acts 12:24. "For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel; which is come unto you, as it is in all the world; and bringeth forth fruit, as it doth also in you, since the day ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth." Col.1:5-6.} Oh, what strength and succours, relief and a sweet presence of the Lord have I met with, {"God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son," Rom.1:9,} through these doctrines in temptations, fiery darts of the wicked, Eph.6:16, reproaches, envyings and evil speakings, such as men of fine, smooth, yielding and concealed principles never met with in their days!

If we preach now at this day the despised doctrines of the mysteries of the Gospel, we shall do most good; I mean such mysteries of the Gospel as are despised among those who call themselves Calvinistic; whether we preach concerning Christ, or through Christ; whether to plant the notion and doctrine, or promote the life of Grace. The common doctrine of Christ in the lump seems to be despised by none, even whilst that distinguishing "truth as it is in Jesus," Eph.4:21, is universally spoken against. {"And thou shalt know that I am the LORD, and that I have heard all thy blasphemies which thou hast spoken against the mountains of Israel, saying, they are laid desolate, they are given us to consume." Ezek.35:12.} Well then, our work in preaching, if we go on to perfection, is not to confine our

ministry to the common doctrine of the Gospel concerning Christ, for we are not to be ever laying the foundation, or to preach the Gospel in our congregations, as if we were beginning to preach the Gospel to every creature, and to every nation; or after the manner it should be first done, if we were just going forth to preach the Gospel in Turkey and India, where it is not at all received, even in the common notion, as the Apostles did in the Pagan and Gentile world. Neither should it suffice us to preach any doctrines concerning Christ, unless we preach them through His name, and therein preach the life of Christ, and Salvation by Christ through Him, which are wrapped up in these special doctrines that are taught concerning Him.

Now these things being to be preached, and preached thus, can by no means be proffered. The elect have their interest in them by another means, we see; and the non-elect have no right to them by any means whatsoever, except only to the cortex, the cluster, the shell and common rind of their life in the orthodox notion and doctrine, and that is all. He that receives the Salvation of God, even the life of Christ through Christ into his own soul, receives quite another thing than he that receives the mere doctrine concerning God and Christ; and what signify proposals concerning Christ and offers to natural men, in things were they are already general believers? Indeed it is much our mercy, that men and women have generally received Christ as they have received him, though it be but in their own natural way of Christianity after an old Adam's fashion, and though in many special points we are as it were to begin absolutely again; however, we fare the better for a natural religion that obtains and takes place in the world about Christ. We can here bring in men's principles and prayers against themselves, and strengthen the cause of Christ by turning man's own weapons against their own holding of the truth in unrighteousness, Rom.1:18, which hath been no little service to the Church of God in all Ages, that we can go everywhere to the Bible to condemn the professors of the Bible, and need not confine Heathenism to condemn amongst ourselves a generation of Pagans. It's our rich

mercy through the growth of a common Christianity, that we are not put to argue for truth in the lump, as a Justin Martyr was, who wrote his Apology for the Christians in the second century, about the year 163. Nor as a Tertullian was put to it, against the blasphemies and idolatries of the heathen, who wrote his Defence in the end of the second century, about the year 200. Nor as Origen was fain to do, who wrote his Disputations against Celsus in the year 230. Nor as Arnobius did, who vindicated Christianity at large against the Gentiles in the year 300. Nor as Lactantius was necessitated, who did it at the same time in a plainer style against the false religion of the Gentiles. Nor as Julius Firmicus Maternus was compelled, who wrote against the profane religion of Gentilism in the fourth century about the year 350, in a book he dedicated to two emperors, Constantine and Constans. No, all these were fain to vindicate the Christian doctrine in the lump, but we have the same advantages in defending particular doctrines of the Gospel against the corrupters of the Truth, where the general lump of it is received, as Tertullian had and used against Praxeas, the patripassian, a heretic who maintained there was but one Person in God, and that the Father suffered on the cross. And we have the same advantages as Cyprian had in his day about the year 250, against the Novatians from one Novatus, who affirmed that sins committed after adult baptism, or the baptism of believers, could never be repented of. And we have the same as Athanasius of Alexandria had, who had a notable advantage from that part of the Gospel which his opposites held, whilst he wrote against the Arians about the year 340. And as Gregory of Nazianzus had, when he drew his arrow out of the quiver of the Gospel which Julian had professed, when that acute pen-man wrote his invectives against the same apostate Emperor. And as the great Augustine of Hippo had, when he used his assistances from the Gospel only, in his being so effectual a maul to Pelagius and his followers, about the year 410. We fare the better, I say, who are the elect of God, for a natural and notional religion about Christ. It is the better for us who are the chosen of God of all persuasions; and

this also is for the elect's sake, Mk.13:20, for what had become of the Israel of God, Gal.6:16, among all believing persuasions {for the Lord hath some who are peculiarly his own among all tolerable persuasions} if they had dwelled in some country by themselves, and had had one hundred Turks or other Pagans to one believer dwelling round about them, Gen.34:30, and among them, and ready at every moment to break in upon them, and devour them! But now Divine Providence contempering one professor of Christianity with another in twenty, perhaps forty times the extent of the Christian world, to what the elect of God and the called by Grace may be, here's a balance made against Jew, Turk and Pagan of all sides. Why then the matter at present standing thus, if men will propose Christ to increase the outer surface of the Gospel, it must be either in truths of the Gospel not yet received by professing Christians, or by going out into the Pagan and Mahometan world, outside of the Christian bounds, there to offer Christ to sinners. Whereas here within the bounds of our preaching is best of all, when it is properly preaching of the Gospel to the elect of God through Christ, to sever one professor from another, and bring men to cease from their own wisdom, and from resting thereon; as also to bring them off from their own righteousness, holiness and moral goodness, in such a manner, and no otherwise than to depend upon no Salvation or Acceptance with God but through the Person and Righteousness of God in Christ. "The lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down, and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day. For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon every one that is proud and lofty, and upon every one that is lifted up; and he shall be brought low." Isa.2:11-12.}

Our preaching should be through Christ to exalt Christ and debase the creature. The elect shall find the life of this, as there are promises annexed to it. And others that take up peaceably and quietly with a bare notion of it shall be made serviceable, and rewarded in a greater stock of common blessings wherein it will be profitable to themselves. {"For bodily exercise profiteth

little; but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." I Tim.4:8.} The truth is, we who preach, want more sensibleness of our own insufficiency, and to be brought up more and more to a dependence upon Christ's all sufficiency. {"LORD, thou wilt ordain peace for us; for thou also hast wrought all our works in us." Isa.26:12.} Instead of this, how many profess to depend upon Christ, who yet proudly ramble forth from the proffer of confused notions of notes and outlines, and high presumption, and the way to not be put out, and esteemed by more ingenuous and topping sort of auditors, Jn.5:44, to depend but a quarter so much upon Christ for preaching the Gospel of God through him? {"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth; that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen." I Pet.4:11.} Alas, who of the book gifted amongst us, or the men of letters, as they love to call themselves, dare speak to men, though men have but their breath in their nostrils, Isa.2:22, with the same liberty and boldness which God commands them! This is every jot of it wrong, because it savours of the fear of man.

However, the elect of God shall never be deceived. The special Salvation bestowed, being wrapped up within the cover and outward extent of the common Salvation revealed, is safely settled upon the elect of God in Christ; whereas, offers of Grace are not appointed of God to effect the conversion of the elect. That is done by His own Operations.

The Operations of God are Divine Principles; your offers {if you make them} are nothing but promiscuous propositions. For which cause, the elect by meeting with no more under your ministry {so far as the LORD worketh by means} than what you bring to the non-elect, mere conditions, and empty sounds, are woefully wronged by what you call your Ministerial Free Offers. What! Must Special Grace to those souls who are given to Christ stand still, and be debarred, waiting upon common offers, which you propose to all men? Must the elect whose portion lies

in Special Grace, perish for lack of bread, while you propose Common Grace to sinners? You do no more than preach a Universal Grace when you offer Christ to all sinners. Proffers are made up of free will and human power. For Christ hath been already skilfully revealed in a common way to all, while the Common Salvation has been openly shown in the sight of the Heathen. {"The LORD hath made known his salvation; his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen." Psal.98:2.} The Grace of God that bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all men; 'tis not said, hath been offered to all men. And please to observe, that an offer or proffer of special Grace, is another special absurdity. Ministers of Christ are to preach special Salvation to the elect, that they may not be abused in having less than God's own gift faithfully declared under the declaration of the Lord's Counsel concerning Christ. Mere professors, or outward-court worshippers, have their share still, as to matters of form concerning Christ; that is, they have the common doctrine of Christ, testified in due time, I Tim.2:6, which is their share, and so, they cannot be abused while they have the lot they are best pleased with; even whilst, on the other hand, the Gospel is preached through Christ, the elect in all ages receive pardon and peace through Him, in that special Salvation which He alone bestows. Special Grace cannot be offered, as the nature of it is to be conveyed. 'Tis not merely what is received concerning Christ, but what is so received through Him by the Operation of JEHOVAH the Spirit. {"But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." Jer.31:33.} There may indeed be a moral persuasion wrought in men by words, or by arguments and reasons proposed to them, so as to gain an orthodox persuasion of truth, opposed to any heterodox persuasion of error in the mind. Yet such persuasion, such an empty, dead and corrupt faith, "cometh not of Him that calleth you." Gal.5:8. The Holy Ghost in Effectual Calling sanctifies the judgment, and works up the thoughts of the heart into principles of truth,

forming a sound mind. Howbeit, a mere moral persuasion of the truth falls very far short of the faith of God's elect, Tit.1:1, which by preaching the Gospel of Christ is conveyed through Christ. In a word, the Lord never offers Saving Grace to those whom He never intends to save, because he cannot act fallaciously; but yet the Lord will send the report faithfully unto them, and that to answer ends of another sort, even where he has never appointed nor intended men to believe unto Salvation. To the one the Gospel is "the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life, and who is sufficient for these things?" II Cor.2:16.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Twenty more particular resolutions of the question, in order to a removal of the doubt, as to how must we preach the Gospel to sinners, if we do not offer the Gospel to them? Enough to lay open the religious cheat and the nakedness of Free Grace offers, &c.

The First resolution of the question. We must preach the Gospel, as it agrees with the Reconciliation of God to sinners, and sinners to God, through the gift by Grace, Rom.5:15, in the Imputation of the Righteousness of God in Christ to them; for not as the offence, so also is the Free gift; it is a gift by Grace, and that by one Man, even by Jesus Christ, abounding unto many. Let me begin and make out the doctrine of Imputation from Rom.4:22-23. "And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him." It? What was this it? Abraham's act of faith say some. No; I answer, the "it" was the Object of that act of faith, called the promise, or the hope of Israel. Acts 26:6-7. {Gen.15:6, "and he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness," along with Gal.3:6, "even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness;" the "it" being the "faith" of verse 7, "faith" there being the Gospel, as verse 8, "foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham," and as in Gal.1:23, "but they had heard only, that he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith which once he destroyed," the faith of the Gospel being preached, "that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith," or the Gospel, or more particularly Christ, who is the Promise of Acts 26:6-7, or the ONE that is promised.} For, the Scriptures do everywhere in an analogy, lay the stress of the matter upon the Object; that is to say, upon Christ, upon his Righteousness and Blood to justify; and therefore that

Object must be the matter of the Imputation here meant.

If any will forcibly wrest it to mean faith, because of the coherence, verse 18, Abraham "who against hope believed in hope," also the context speaks, verse 19, of his being "not weak in faith," and verse 20, of his staggering not "at the promise of God through unbelief;" likewise, verse 20, of his being "strong in faith," and verse 21, of his being "fully persuaded," Heb.11:13, all which bespeaks faith, and that this faith is the "it" which was imputed; I must still answer and say, that faith was not the "it" which was imputed. One place must be expounded by many, not many places by one. Therefore, by the "it" is to be understood that the thing he had in his eye was imputed; as if I should say, my sight tells me, then the meaning is, these things seen tells me. {"But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." I Cor.1:30.} So if this faith, which is the spiritual eye-sight of the soul be interpreted to be the "it" which was imputed, it must be understood, according to sound doctrine, that it was the thing imputed to Abraham, which his faith, his spiritual eye-sight had discerned, which thing was the object Abraham believed in, namely, Christ and his righteousness. {"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." II Cor.5:21.} Besides, we have Scripture enough to justify us in this interpretation of it, to destroy any notion of a mere act of faith being imputed. This appears by the common instances of a catachresis, or a figure of speech which signifies the use of a word beyond the common acceptation. As, Jer.46:10, "the sword shall devour;" for here to devour, which is the property of a living creature with teeth, is catachrestically applied to the sword. So, Rev.1:12, "I turned to see the voice;" it is seeing the voice, which by this figure is used for seeing him that uttered it. And so, Psal.132:5, "let my right hand forget her cunning;" here forgetting is applied to the right hand, as in the same way of speech as it is put for the memory failing, to direct and employ the right hand in the skilful management of instruments in music. Likewise, Hos.4:8, "they eat up the sin of my people, and they set their heart on their iniquity." Sin properly cannot

be eaten with the natural mouth, but the meaning is, with their mind they feed upon wickedness, or they live at the idol's table, or that they eat the sacrifices that are offered to false gods. So, Prov.30:15, "the horseleech hath two daughters," i.e., hath two young ones of her own kind. So a ewe-lamb of the first year in the Levitical Sacrifices is called in the Hebrew phrase, a daughter, Lev.14:10; a kid of the goats is said to have a mother, "thou shalt not see the a kid in his mother's milk." Exod.23:19. By the same figure the ants are a people, and the conies a feeble folk. Prov.30:25-26. After this same manner, if faith be understood to be the "it" that is imputed for righteousness to Abraham, it is but metaphorically spoken, by ascribing the imputation to the Act which strictly belongs to the Object of that act; namely, the imputation of what faith discerned and laid hold on of a justifying nature in Christ. This is the "it" which in the faith of Abraham was imputed to him for righteousness.

Furthermore, it is expressly applied to the promise in the verse before, verse 20, "he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief," and what was contained in this promise but the seed, or Messiah, verse 18, "so shall thy seed be," which seed is Christ. "He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." Gal.3:16. Christ the Head, and all his numerous members, heirs of the faith of Abraham, more in number than the stars of Heaven, Gen.15:5, or the sand of the sea shore. All this was promised Abraham, as a type of Christ, which should come to pass in his seed, in, by, and through Christ the anti-type. The meaning then of those words, Rom.4:21, "and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform," must respect the promised righteousness of the seed, Christ, and so resolves what the "it" must mean, in verse 22. It was imputed or accounted to him, namely, the righteousness of God, II Pet.1:1, which had been promised in this seed; which plainly expounds that radical text in Gen.15:6, {"and he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness,"} from whence the other in the Romans is first derived. {"Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." Psal.32:2.}

And Abraham believed God {in his promise, at verse 5} and "it," the promised blessing in the Seed Christ, was counted to him for righteousness. It, not the faith, but what the faith beheld; for it is in the seed promised, Gen.3:15, "it shall bruise thy head," as Elohim threatened the serpent, respecting the victory to be obtained over him by Christ, who should bear our sins in his own body on the tree, I Pet.2:24, from which tree or cross we should fetch our spiritual food, and feast upon it as a sacrifice from the Altar, Heb.13:10, to be the fruit of the Tree of Life, Rev.22:2, in a better Eden than that wherein we lost our first righteousness; for it shall be in the Glorious Kingdom of Christ, which is said to be in the midst of the Paradise of God, Rev.2:7, where we shall better know him than now we do, both as Christ is Alpha in the upper, and Omega in the under-way. {"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." Rev.22:13.} Well, this "it" that's imputed is definitively Christ; and plainly meant of the Imputation of the righteousness of this promise, or the Righteousness of God in Christ, that is lodged in the bowels of this promise, and by comparing the place again with Rom.4:11, the thing is more plain, that it speaks of a righteousness imputed.

Further, whereas they lay so much stress upon an act of faith, the Scriptures, foreseeing the disorder in men's thoughts, have quite shut the mention of faith out, and ascribe the whole of Justification to the blood, where the virtue of the mystery lies. "Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." Rom.5:9. Here the Object of faith is expressly mentioned without the act of faith. The blood that paid our debt, while neither our eye beheld it, nor our hand received it. This now governs our construction of the matter, and well explains the "it" to be meant of the blood of Christ, I Pet.1:19, wherein his consummate righteousness, which paid our debt, lay. {"Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood." Rev.1:5.} It is Christ's blood that stamps all virtue upon our faith. No virtue or influence whatever can be

added by our faith, to or upon that blood. Observe, how in Rom.5:9, it is "justified by his blood," and faith not at all expressed.

Aye, but you will say, no doubt but it is implied, for the Romans were justified by faith. Rom.5:1. Well, be it so; then is not justification by the blood implied, notwithstanding it is in words expressed that we are justified by faith? And is not the blood again implied, where it is said that "it was imputed to him for righteousness." What is expressed of faith, verse 1, is but an open expression, and leads to the mystery of what is expressed in the blood, couched under it, and expressed elsewhere, and all is to signify that the Holy Ghost under the imputation of the Righteousness of God in Christ hath wrought faith in the blood of Christ, whereby, even by which blood we are justified. {"In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted." Psal.89:16.} That text, Isa.54:17, plainly discovers, and sweetly speaks of the Imputation of the Righteousness of God. "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord," of the LORD, consequently from the LORD, and so must come upon them by Imputation. And faith also comes in virtue of the blood of Christ, through the righteousness of God, witnessed by II Pet.1:1, to "them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," not that the Righteousness of God comes to us in virtue of, or for our faith; no; nor in virtue of, or for any thing we have, or can have, in ourselves. I shall now observe, that offers of Grace do not stand with this great truth of the Gospel, even the free gift by Grace, in the Imputation of the Righteousness of God.

Offers of the Gospel are no ways or means of bringing home the imputed righteousness of God in Christ, which is God's Free Gift of Grace to sinners. {"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom.3:24.} This Righteousness of God is imputed, never offered. Preach Imputation then, and not proposals of the righteousness of Christ. The doctrine of Imputation will always answer the name God calls the Gospel by, good news; but the notion of propounding Salvation upon an acceptance of

the offer, is ill news. For I find no heart to accept of Christ upon proposal, but to keep my sins rather, and walk in unbelief; because my sins are stronger than my resolutions; whereas, I sense my heart finds hope upon the view and virtue of Imputation, beholding the Righteousness of God in Christ imputed to me, which necessitates some power independent of my own, there the Spirit quickly makes sinners sensible as to where the remedy lies, and that there the virtue consists which is to deliver them from the power and condemnation of sin.

Offering the Gospel is no way of advancing the infinite value of Imputation. Now to preach up the fruits of imputed righteousness, advances the Grace of God, because it shows poor sinners how, Rom.8:33-34, one branch of Free Grace streams out of another branch of Free Grace; that being justified by his Grace {see, I am to lay all upon Grace} we are made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Tit.3:7. Offers do not advance the imputation of righteousness, so much as they advance the creature's supposed power in the acceptance. But, I am to preach and insist that where sin abounded, Grace did much more abound. Rom.5:20.

But offers cannot speak thus; no, you that barter the Gospel, who serve tabernacles, have no right to eat at this table. {"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils; ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's Table, and of the table of devils." I Cor.10:21.} It destroys the nature of offers to bring them into plain language, as nothing abounds towards guilty helpless sinners; when I come to my offers I lose sight of wisdom's enlarged views, because I leave instruction, and err from the way of understanding, therefore must remain in the congregation of the dead while the offer stands so darkly before me, like a curtain of the night; whereas Grace abounding to the chief of sinners, swallows me up; but there is nothing that abounds in an offer, so as to make the thing offered mine. What signifies the offer blow beating about my faculty? I want the view of a complete unconditional and advanced righteousness, to be applied to and put on my person. What do men mean, but to knock me on the head with their offers? 'Tis the blood that I want freely proclaiming salvation through Christ! They

tell me I must lay hold of their offers, but I want to hear of something that will lay hold on me; Christ's righteousness, when advanced, how sweetly it takes hold of a poor sinner, because it suits his case.

The preacher spurs me on, as he says that I must make no delay. But all this time he does not lift up this Righteousness of God high enough for me to see it. I want to find the Spirit of God in a Ministry causing me to perceive it, whilst Christ is exalted over my head, that I may see I am under the covert of his righteousness. {"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me." Jn.12:32.} This must be done for me, before I can set one step towards Heaven! {"In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jer.23:6.} The effect may be easily known, for the Imputation of Righteousness takes away all iniquity, and turns us to the LORD. {"Take with you words, and turn to the LORD; say unto him, take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips." Hos.14:2.} And to preach thus to sinners advances Imputed Righteousness and Free Grace; but he that offers Salvation to sinners upon their own acceptance, covers no iniquity with the mantle of Christ's righteousness, nor advances the Imputation of the righteousness of God, that does so. Offers in no wise serve to advance the virtue of imputed righteousness, as of a comprehending righteousness, that contains within it the grant of the Spirit, {the Spirit is given in the Righteousness of Christ,} as given in Office to work Regeneration, or the new creature; faith, the visual power of the new creature and repentance, the effect of both. This brings me now to answer you in another particular, how you must preach the Gospel to Sinners, if you do not offer the Gospel to sinners.

The second resolution of the question. We must preach the Gospel, as the Gospel is the way or means of God's bestowing the Holy Spirit on the elect, and the way and means of our exalting the Gift of God herein. It is God's gift of the Spirit must be exalted, but an offer exalts not the gift of God's Spirit. We must preach the Gospel in showing Glad Tidings to the people, namely, that God's

gift of the Spirit, or internal pre-operation on the faculty, that secures a sinner's acceptance of Christ in the preaching of the Gospel; whereas an external offer is a mere delusion, for offers are without men, not within men.

We preach the blessed gift of the Spirit of Grace, and not abuse it in pretending to turn it into an offer of Grace. What God hath granted freely, we should not go about to propose or bargain for. This is acting like Simon Magus's disciples. God pours out his Spirit, Zech.12:10, so what business have we to tender the Holy Ghost? Wherever the Righteousness of God is imputed, the Spirit of God is bestowed, to reveal and apply it. In this way Saving Grace is given to all the elect of God. It is of Special Grace when God gives men his Holy Spirit, but it is not of Special Grace when ministers offer grace to men. The Spirit is exalted in the bestowment of Himself upon us. But how is the rich Grace of God exalted, if you descend from a gift to a proffer of the Holy Ghost? How shall we preach, you say? I say preach down offers, and exalt the good news of what God has revealed in the Gospel, namely, that of bestowing His Free Spirit upon us. If God helps you by His Spirit, to preach the efficacy of His Spirit, under the righteousness of His Son, you will do this work faithfully. And you will tell sinners, that through your vain offers, the Lord has not given you an heart to perceive, nor eyes to see, or ears to hear to this day. Deut.29:4. Tell the elect of God that in their participation of the Holy Ghost put within them, {through and under the Righteousness of his Son put upon them,} all is a Free gift, and not one dram of it a Free offer. 'Tis no proposal, but an absolute power with and under God's appointment. {"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." Acts 10:44.}

Tell the elect, that by this gift of power they are experimentally differenced from all others in the world, upon whom this gift is not bestowed. This is to exalt the gift of God, and not to abuse it as an offer doth. For to presume to speak thereof as the Scripture doth not speak, is a plain abuse of the gift of God. We must preach the Gospel so as to honour the Spirit in preaching. {Rom.8:9; I Cor.6:11; I Cor.2:10-12.} We must be filled in exalting

the Spirit, and not speak one word for offers and proffers throughout our ministry. We ought not to preach at all in this form, since I have been helped to set before you the Scripture forms that alone are accompanied by God's power in giving the blind, eyes to discern the beauty of Christ. Offers do not honour the Spirit, but absolutely dishonour him. The Apostle's argument to the foolish Galatians is, "received ye the Spirit, by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Gal.3:1-2. So I argue, how is the Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven with the Gospel? I Pet.1:12. Is he given into the heart of a sinner by Gospel Efficacy or by Gospel offers, by Gospel Truth or by Gospel tenders of truth? That place, Tit.3:5-6, tells us that the Holy Ghost is shed on "us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour." Then exalt the shedding him on us, and not exalt the proposing and tendering him unto us. Mind what the Holy Ghost saith, Acts 4:33, "and with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all." Here was a pre-operation of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostle's ministry, and so that ministry became a witness with greater power, and wrought mightily with Grace upon all them that heard the witness, for "they were all of one heart and one mind." The Spirit came not on them by offers of Grace, but by the witness which the apostles gave of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Don't you see here how to preach the Gospel? {"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom.1:16.} Fall under the authority of the Spirit and give witness to these eminent truths of the Gospel struck at, as the Apostles did there to the Resurrection of the Lord Jesus that was struck at in that day, and I'm persuaded that the LORD will prosper in his time. {"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa.55:11.} The LORD will own his own word forty times more than whilst you stand fiddling with your offers. Don't you see how the Spirit is given? Exalt God's Free Grace then in the pouring out of the Spirit upon sinners. Exalt Grace in the putting of the

Spirit within sinners, and do not tamper with the Gospel in propositioning Christ or proposing of the Spirit to sinners. {"Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD." Jer.23:32.} We ought to preach the Spirit, {who is an undertaker in the work of Grace and Salvation of the elect,} as positively as we preach the Father, or the Son; whereas on the contrary, what a poor ineffectual Helper, do most men in their preaching make the Spirit of God appear to be.

The Third Resolution of the question is that we must preach the Gospel as it is most fitted unto Effectual Grace; and who is such an ill-informed one that will presume to talk of an effectual Offer? The LORD saith, "thou shalt not steal;" and again, "will a man rob God?" Yet he who dares give the attributes of the Gospel of God's Grace in Christ {which Gospel hath such a revelation of power therein, "for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance," I Thes.1:5,} to those of his own offers, {for they have no revelation of power at all in them,} steals from God to dress up his own idol, and robs God of the glory due to his name, Psal.29:2, by ill placing it; and notwithstanding the poor creatures boldness in his sinning, I know not how he will answer it at the judgment seat of Christ. Rom.14:10. For when light is come into the world, Jn.3:19, and men slight it, and would rather walk in darkness, and go on, not only as they have been accustomed to by oversight and mistake, but with a flaming zeal towards that which God's Word teacheth to have a holy indignation against, II Cor.7:11, it is plain that men's idols are set up in the room of God's glory; and I fear such an idol is made by some of the offers, since the time that men have taken notice of what was last {though briefly} written against it, according to the mind of Christ. The Gospel, because it is the Gospel of Power, is fitted to the creating of a capacity of Effectual Grace, before the Holy Ghost hath fitted it to effectual choice in a practical submission to its truths. The Gospel

of Christ is particularly fitted to the acceptance of the elect in the Salvation parts thereof, and fitted thereunto without any offer of Christ, as to what is done upon sinners, that comes down from God upon them.

As the sprinkling of clean water on them, in justifying them, and cleansing them from all iniquity, {"then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you," Ezek.36:25,} and proclaiming the forgiveness of sins through this Man {"be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins," Acts 13:38,} as the channel of Effectual Grace, as to what is also done within sinners, in the renewing of a right spirit within them, {"create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me," Psal.51:10,} even that same Effectual Faith which receives this proclamation of pardon in the forgiveness of sins through his name. I Thes.2:13. And is not this Good News! And doth it not do far more good than that ineffectual and incompetent phrase, "come, sinners, here I offer you Christ, accept him?" The Gospel must be preached as a proof of Christ speaking in you, II Cor.13:3, not as a proposal of Christ speaking through you. For an internal proposal either in speaker or hearer is a reckless impossibility! We must preach the Gospel whereof we are made ministers, according to the gift of Grace, the Grace of God given unto us, by the effectual working of his power, Eph.3:7, and this Effectual Grace must be preached by exalting the Operations of God the Spirit.

We must preach the Operations of Grace, and throw away from us, and put out of our mouths these vain offers, or what men are pleased to call evangelical offers. We are to preach the Spirit's efficacy, as absolutely as we preach the Father's Election and the Son's Redemption; all beside is delusion. For want of this the entire work of preaching hath been spoiled. {"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." I Cor.2:5.} Effectual Grace is to be held forth in passive phrases; and we must so preach the Gospel as it is most suited to the work of God, on helpless subjects. Nothing short of this is good news. Then preach thus, and away

with your offers.

In this branch of the discourse, may be further advanced the Operations of Free Grace, in the room and place of Grace offers. For Grace Conveyances may be proved effectual and operative, or prevalently by the Gospel in the hand, or office, of Jehovah the Spirit on all the elect of God. {"And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones; and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." Isa.58:11.} Operations of Grace are wise as well as efficacious; but offers of Grace are foolish, for an offer of Grace supposes immediately a practical acceptance upon a mere supposition of the creature's own ability, and not upon an advancement of the Spirit's work in creating a capacity for the sinner's relish of Christ and heavenly things, Jn.3:12, and for acceptance of Christ in Effectual Grace. If the preacher believed this, and saw it in its proper light as he ought, he would turn his old offers into thankful admirations of the Operations of the Grace of God! Whereas, instead of the effectual and attested Gospel of Christ, he brings Saul's unproved armour to put upon God's David, I Sam.17:39, but when they come to have more light in the Gospel, Prov.4:18, and clearer views of things, they will confess these empty offers are nothing to them, for they went to put on many things before they had proved them. If a sinner receives Christ, he will have some experience of the Effectual working of Him first in his own soul. For I am confident this doctrine of passiveness under the Gospel preached, or Effectual Grace to be wrought in the soul by the Spirit, will overturn their offers and proffers, according to the manner in which men now pretend to offer Christ, tendering him and eternal Salvation to the soul of men.

I shall next {if the Lord will} present such arguments against these devices of men's purblind reason, in behalf of their sermonizing, as may, if blessed of the Lord, advance the Effectual Operations of His own Grace upon the elect of God. Offers cannot stand before Effectual Grace, because they consist not in a close advancement of a passive submission in the sinner to stand still and see the Salvation of God; but consist partly

of an active work in what the preacher does; as, "here I offer you Christ," and partly of an active motion, required of the creature, and insisted on by its self to be done towards Christ by the sinner, and pressed upon him as to "accept Christ." Whereas, it is in the light and power of effectual and purifying Grace, Isa.4:4, bestowed and experienced, that a sinner believes in Christ unto Salvation, renouncing all that is his own; nor can he do otherwise in a real experience of Christ. But offers agree not with this doctrine of passive obedience, advanced in speaking the word of God to sinners. It is not suited, it does not agree, with an offer of Christ to advance, commend, praise, and set forth a distinguishing work of Grace upon the soul.

It pleased the Holy Ghost by Luke {in his history of the Acts of the Apostles} when he relates the conversion of Lydia, Acts 16:14, to extol the passive work, {"that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him," Eph.1:17, "then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures," Lk.24:45,} or that which was done upon her by the Lord. It is "whose heart the Lord opened," and it pleased the Holy Ghost to say no more of what Paul did towards it, but only that "the things" whereby the Lord did this work upon her soul, were spoken by him. "She attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul." It may be that Paul was telling her how effectual the Gospel of Grace had been upon his own soul in causing him to fall under its efficacious power. Whatever it be the Holy Ghost doth not say that Paul was offering Christ onto her. But now on the other hand, when men talk of offering Christ, propounding Salvation or tendering Grace to sinners, and the like, it sounds as if preacher and hearers were to think that now man made some contribution indeed towards his acceptance before the LORD. Something that was more than preaching Christ, and more than speaking of Christ, though the Lord knows, and oh, that I could say, Israel shall know, that the preacher doth a great deal less.

We must preach the new birth, the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. {"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; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Tit.3:5-7.} This is far beyond the tender, and far better than the doctrine of the offer. We are to preach this new birth, as men born from above, and therein born of the Spirit, Jn.3:5, and born of God. I Jn.5:1. We must preach that which is productive, not that which is fruitless. {"Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Jn.1:13.} An offer produces nothing towards Grace; but an Operation of the Spirit produces the new birth. Preach Operations then, and preach down offers. How can the new birth be offered men; and yet by the new birth Christ is formed in them, Gal.4:19; men's offers, therefore, are most inconsistent with the glory of the Spirit's work! We should preach the Gospel, which is consistent with the praise of the Spirit's work in Regenerating Grace as it is consistent with the praise of the Father's act in Election Grace; and yet I am sure the preaching of very few tends to this end.

We are to preach the new man, {"and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," Eph.4:24,} the hidden man of the heart, {"the hidden man of the heart," I Pet.3:4,} the inward man, {"though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day," II Cor.4:16,} of the inward parts and the hidden, {"behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom," Psal.51:6,} all which tells us it must be Operations, not offers of Grace, that are to be used of God and proclaimed by man. We must preach the circumcision of the heart, {"he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter," Rom.2:29,} the new nature {"that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," Jn.3:6,} the new heart, {"a new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh,"

Ezek.36:26,} a clean heart, {"create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me," Psal.51:10,} all which passive phrases show, that a great and effectual door is opened of the Lord, I Cor.16:9, in preaching; though there are many adversaries ready to cry out against Operations of Grace, in opposition to offers of Grace.

God's Grace is wrought effectually, and never tendered effectually. It's effectually conveyed, not effectually proposed. It's our work in the Ministry of Christ to preach the Efficacy of Divine Grace in begetting the soul in an Evangelical sense, and begetting a people to God above the work of nature. So, I Cor.4:15, "for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." 'Tis not, here I have offered you Christ, why won't you take him." The Holy Ghost doth not say thus, nor doth he tell you he means thus; but he speaks and means efficacy, and that no less a thing than Regeneration, which cannot be offered to a sinner, but is a blessing fitted only to the passive, to be wrought in him by that preaching which by the Spirit exalts the Spirit's work. "In Christ Jesus have I begotten you," says Paul; for here was the Apostle's closing act under the efficacy of God the Holy Ghost. The Apostle as God's instrument in the work, and as he was used of the Lord Jesus, came in upon their hearts, and so through the Gospel he witnessed, he spake, he preached, {which are the Holy Ghost's ordinary and usual words to set forth the ministry of the Gospel by,} and through the Gospel in Christ Jesus begat them, and not by and through offers of Grace, being set right in his ministry, and then helped to make homework thereof. Proposals stand-off ineffectually, and keep their distance, until a creature acceptance determines them; but an Operation of the Spirit is effectual apart from the consent of man. An offer always keeps aloof from the man, never closes him nor changes him, but clucks, "here I offer you Grace, I offer you Christ, I propose him to your acceptance," which never effects anything, never comes home upon him. Offers are not through the Gospel, and so can never be effectual as Operations are. Every offer act is an ineffectual act, because a distant act that stands off, never closes the faculty, but takes up its station and fixes

upon midway block; and so old Adam and the offer never join, but agree to keep asunder in the midst between preacher and hearer.

Preaching the Gospel is effectually honoured by the Holy Ghost to beget souls anew to God in Christ, and it's impossible to be done by offers of Grace, because they are distant acts. A home offer is an absurdity. The Everlasting Father makes use of ministers as his instruments to beget souls spiritually by preaching the Gospel, which is an Ordinance of the Lord Jesus, and so he honours it efficaciously, by working mightily in them that minister in the Word, or that serve our Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospel in opening it. Thereby to teach every man in all wisdom of the mystery of Revelation, that men may be presented of a perfect stature in Christ, Col.1:28, and not such dwarfs, as most preaching is but fitted to present the saints, in an under-growth. But now the Lord will not diminish the glory of his Grace at that rate, to come and do the same upon souls by offers of Grace. It never was done by the offer-part of a sermon since the Gospel was preached. Faith sees it by the Word, and there may be enough to show it in this treatise. For as to what saving good men have been owned in, to do upon sinners in Conversion work, it hath been always wrought as they have been enabled from above to preach Christ, and not as they have offered Christ to souls. And yet I know that men are ready to abuse the Gospel in confounding distinct things. Some are prone hereunto the rather, because it hath been all along their old way, {"can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots; then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil," Jer.13:23,} and so without mighty Grace to humble and lessen them in their own eyes {for that is the nature of God's Grace towards all his ministers, whatever their preaching had been} they will stand up for their own, and then think they stand up for the Gospel, and study and lay about them how to make it out in sermons to the people for the Gospel. Others take it up from an ill pattern in an author of credit, which presently through a defect of their own understanding swarms among themselves into an argument, and suffices them where the Scripture leaves them. {"Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of

God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools; for they consider not that they do evil." Eccl.5:1.} Others again see no harm in it; and some may fall into the offer language incogitantly, because they scarce give themselves time to weigh and examine the matter, and think from a due notation of the Word, what an offer or proposal of Grace is. {"And his breath, as an overflowing stream, shall reach to the midst of the neck, to sift the nations with the sieve of vanity; and there shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err." Isa.30:28.} Be sure, they do not allow a due time impartially to examine what they preach, whilst they lavish into their ineffectual offers.

Offers cannot stand before the test of Effectual Grace, which speaks in positive terms respecting the new creation, because offers are more fitted to man as a reasonable worker, than as a spiritual workmanship, or as clay in the hands of the potter. How can the Spirit's workmanship in the soul that is created be effected by proposals? We are said to be the workmanship of God. Eph.2:10. In the original it is the poem or epistle. Can such an epistle write? It is itself a piece of workmanship contrived and wrought by the manifold wisdom of God. Eph.3:19. For how is a poem made? Is it by proposing to pen, ink, and paper, or is it done by an Operation of the understanding? In the same manner, we also are the workmanship of God not by offers to us, to partake of the workmanship, but by Operations on us forming us into the workmanship or poem itself, "ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men." II Cor.3:2. For though in natural religion men's hearts and thoughts are not pen, ink, and paper, but unstable cogitations and dictions, yet respecting spiritual and supernatural things, they are so when made subject to them. Before the Spirit's workmanship antecedently men are not blank paper, but blotted nature, and can a blot accept of a proposal to become an epistle of Christ? What is there in nature that can bring men to Gospel compliance with Gospel offers? Offers cannot perform any of the Spirit's work. They cannot guide and lead the soul to Christ, or keep the soul in Him. And if there be something more than nature in Gospel believing, then the

work of the Spirit of Christ must be therein. If these are truths, why do we then stand offering, when we should be wonderfully exalting Christ, and the free gift of the Spirit, and his effectual operations? If it be necessary that the Spirit be efficaciously given to convince sinners before they can receive Christ, then offering of Christ is in vain, since Christ is the first gift of the Father to none but His elect. If Christ could be given in the offer, so might the Spirit of Christ; if not, how comes the glorious gift of God to be abused by a nickname? Do men think to cover it, saying by offer they mean gift? If so, let me ask, does an offer change the nature of a sinner, or create a new heart, which is the workmanship of God? The gift does, the gift of Christ, the gift of the Spirit, changes the nature of a sinner, and created a new heart, which is the workmanship of God.

Now let me question a little respecting this offer, for after a sinner has received the Holy Ghost, previous to the proposal and antecedently, is the proposal to be made to such an one? If you say Yes, I answer, if Effectual Grace came by the Spirit, without and before the offer, then what need any offer or proposal to be made? The Gospel preached in the power of God having the Holy Spirit descending on it will alone do the work of Conversion. You may venture to trust it; if God teaches you, you will never try your offers more; it will do very well without proposals, and carry all before it in the strength of the Holy One of Israel. The gift of the Holy Ghost with the Gospel is Effectual, but your proposals stand aloof, unnoticed by the Spirit, therefore they are ineffectual. How weak then is it to glory in proposals, to plead for proposals, in order to make a fair show in this poor piece of proud ineffectual flesh!

How are offers suited to a translation of men out of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son? Col.1:13. And out of darkness into marvellous light? I Pet.2:9. How do offers suit with a work that is above all created power? For so is Faith declared to be. {"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly

places." Eph.1:19-20.} The offer doctrine is in a style and way of preaching more fitted to things done by us as men in weakness and formal profession, than to things done upon us, by the infinite Grace and Power of Jehovah. It is not fitted at all to passive subjects, under the efficacy of the Holy Ghost therein. It agrees much better with the free agency of the old man, than the life and formation of the new creature. More with self-justification, than justification by Grace. It is suited more to a disposal of our own goods, upon a proposal made, than to the adoption of sons, by Grace. {"To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." Gal.4:5.} More to an ordering of our own faculties, than to a renewing of them, by the shedding of the Holy Spirit upon us. More to an act of natural morality, than to a Sanctification of the Spirit. {"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." II Thes.2:13.} More to a power of signing some personal treaty, than to a being written upon, as an epistle of Christ. Or than its fitted to the supernatural style of the Holy Ghost, in putting Christ's laws within our hearts, Jer.31:33, and giving them an heart to know the Lord, as in the same Prophet, Jer.24:7. In a word, man's offers are not fitted to exalt God's Operations.

This new creation and workmanship of God hath a personal Worker who is to be exalted, not an offer of Grace to be set up and defended. For the heart of a sinner is drawn to Christ in Effectual Grace, personally and by a Person; "and you that were sometimes alienated, and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled." Col.1:22. "Now hath he reconciled;" it is not, now has the offer reconciled; or, now has tendering the Salvation done it, notwithstanding some love to magnify the offer, more than they dare magnify the preaching of Christ. But it is, "now hath he reconciled;" that is, Christ hath, and an offer hath no part whatsoever in this matter. Paul exalts Christ, but he does not defend an offer. It is that the LORD himself that has reconciled you, and not your faith, as some tell us; but he by the Spirit has wrought your faith, never by an offer.

The Father too is to be exalted in effectually believing, not an offer of Grace. "No man can come to me," says Christ, "except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Jn.6:44. Christ inculcates the same, verse 65, "therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." And so Christ is to be exalted, but not the offer. "Draw me, we will run after thee." Song 1:4. Here Christ is exalted for faith, as the Worker of it, but not offers of Grace, that works nothing. The apostles exalted Christ when they said, Lord, increase our faith. Lk.17:5. We are to set forth the Lord, and not stand pleading for offers, if we would preach Effectual Grace. The issue of choosing Christ is in consequence of the application of Christ to the soul, and the Operation of the Spirit of Christ in Salvation, not by offers and tenders of Salvation. And you hath he quickened, Eph.2:1, Christ is our Quickener by the Holy Spirit. As God is our Father, and quickens us by Christ, so Christ quickens us from the Father by the Spirit. Thus God's gift of the Spirit quickens and converts to Christ savingly. I Jn.4:13; Rom.8:14; Jn.14:17.

We must therefore preach Effectual Grace. We must preach to sinners God's new creation by Christ Jesus. That it is not by the work of the offer, but independent of the offer, by Grace operating, that produces a new creation. We must not preach men's being new-born according to the will of the offerer or of the acceptor, but according to the will of God, "which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, but of the will of God." Jn.1:13. The Spirit commands this; waits for this, as he is the gift of the Father, to enter the sinner's nature, as the voice drops into sinner's ears. {"While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word." Acts 10:44.} When a sinner under any Preacher of the Gospel hath been made to hear the voice of the Son of God and live, as is effectually promised, Jn.5:25, it hath been as God hath used these words spoken under his authority, and by his power. God uses ministers' tongues as instruments in preaching, but they are not to use their own whims in offering. It has been by God the Spirit, applying as ministers of Christ have been directed to speak home, that any good has

been done; not while they have made offers and overtures, and stood aloof with propositions; as if the ministers themselves did not believe the efficacy of their own message to sinners, or Effectual Grace, by pre-Operation of the Spirit upon their own hearts. {We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." II Cor.4:13.} Regeneration out of which true Conversion arises as a motion from a principle of acting is brought about in the soul by Grace working through the Gospel, and so Free Grace is Effectual Grace, and never sinks on the Foundation into a free offer, or an effectual tender. This would be the way to debase the true Glory of the Spirit's Efficacy in his passive work on sinners. How then will it serve to propose to them a change?

We must preach in the passive style, as comes up unto a being planted together in the likeness of his death, Rom.6:5, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; and to a being turned, upon an Act of God's turning us. "Turn Thou me, and I shall be turned." Jer.31:18. In our being brought to preach thus, we may first hope God will own us, before we can groundlessly hope sinners will hear us. Remember, nothing is done to purpose without a new creation; then we ought to preach Christ's influencing, not Christ proffering to the soul, nor Christ proffered, nor ourselves proposing. Did God, when he would make the world, propose to the world, or did he create the world? Was the world consulted for co-operation, or was it formed by pure creation? Why then are proposals made to an old dead creation about making a new creature? Or to produce a new creation? Faith, repentance, regeneration, are of a new creation, and parts of a new creature. They are all distinguished in the soul, but they cannot be separated. Regeneration is the new creature stirring; repentance is the new creature made sensible of the evil of sin, darkness, unbelief, etc., and melted under Grace; faith is the new creature opening its eyes. Now in the first creation God said, "let there be light, and there was light." Gen.1:3. This was a command, and creation of light followed it. So in the new creation, God answers to his former work in the old

creation, by passives in Operation upon the human faculty. "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." II Cor.4:6. Christ breaks in upon the soul, and through the eye created, shines in the true nature of light, whilst the Gospel is freely and absolutely preached to all the elect of God. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Rom.5:5. Do we think a soft tongue breaketh the bones, Prov.25:15, and yet the love of God shed abroad in the heart breaketh not the heart? Love takes away the stony heart out of our flesh, and gives us an heart of flesh! {"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Ezek.36:26.} May the Lord humble preachers more, that they may lie in the dust, and never open their mouths again to tell sinners they offer them Christ, since there is such a large theme of Effectual Grace to preach the true God and eternal life, both to saints and sinners of the elect of God, by exalting the Saviour. Saving Conversion-work is wrought by exalting Christ in the face of sinners, not by offers and tenders of Christ to sinners; by the absolute Grace of renovation, to all the elect of God. For these sinners are the elect of God; neither hath his Grace singled out any one object in the whole world, except these. Suppose, as to a couple of men, the one chosen in Christ, the other not; the Spirit of God never mistakes the Father's choice, so as to sanctify the non-elect, or to pass by the chosen vessel. {"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Jn.6:37.} Nor hath the Third Person's Power ever gone beside the Father's Purpose, or the Son's Particular Purchase. Therefore, man's free will and power never superseded the Father's purpose, or the Son's particular purchase, however he may work and tug. Now preaching the Operations of the Spirit is fitted to exalt the Sovereignty of Grace, in singling out all our New Births according to the Settlements of Grace, by the will of God and our Father. {"Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to

the will of God and our Father." Gal.1:4.} But offers of Grace can never be thus Effectual, because they are not fitted to express or convey what the Operations of the Spirit in every way to perform. We should then under our own personal tastes of Effectual Grace, leave off these offers, and never talk more of proposals, Jer.16:19, but tell the people continually in every sermon, II Cor.1:12, by the very passive frame and style of our expressions, that man's heart is entirely under God's Operations, and that the best of us all in preaching the Gospel are but pens in his hand, and not Lord-dictators to make or utter our own proposals. We ought to tell the people with all becoming confidence, when we speak unto them in Christ's Name unto them, that our preaching the Gospel to them is God the Spirit's means of bringing it home to ourselves, and that as we have received this earnest of the Spirit in our own hearts, II Cor.1:22, so we graciously hope that he also may bring home the same word upon your hearts, sinners also too. He has taken room enough in the method of his Grace to do it! We wait therefore, upon our ministry, and trust the Lord with the rest, as to begetting power in your souls, Jam.1:18, and causing the word to abide upon you! Such a hint may be more effectual in knitting the heart to Christ, when Jehovah the Spirit has taught us to open a thing out of his own word, in a clear and lively manner, rather than by whole sermons shaped and contrived to make the most specious appearance in offers. Jer.2:8. It's a ministry that is always exalting the passive and effectual work of God the Spirit that's most likely by the LORD the Spirit to be set home, and so to find the way to poor sinners, and enter in through the direction of the LORD CHRIST. Oh! It's brave to preach the Father's Grace in the Operations of his Spirit! These give a seal of the Truths in ourselves, while we feel them to make every subject of the Grace of the Gospel Effectual. And this Effectual preaching is searching preaching; 'tis not daubing with un-tempered mortar. Ezek.13:12. Oh, I have known proud nature to be humbled under faithful preaching, whilst a poor sensible sinner has been broken down and melted under it! The ministers of Christ ought to preach what they effectually feel and soundly believe; if they do not, they are not

faithful, nor fit to preach Christ. I am sure of this, that when I do not feel what I preach, it is the grief and burden of my soul that I am obliged to stand before the people as if I were offering the Gospel instead of preaching the Gospel. Rom.7:18. Whereas preaching of the Gospel under the unction of the Holy Ghost is certain to work some change by the Gospel. Paul was effectually led by Christ to beget many; and of these Corinthians he writes sweetly, "in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the Gospel." I Cor.4:15. Herein he exalts the Gospel, but not offers of the Gospel, he lifts up Christ, and shows us that all his ministerial virtue lay entirely in Him. He knows nothing about offers, neither here nor elsewhere, nor of tenders and proposals, according to the degenerate and corrupt language of these latter days and perilous times. II Tim.3:1. Even whilst we are come to the cleansing of the sanctuary, Dan.8:14, it was under the apostle's preaching of Free and Absolute Grace {for in that day wherever Paul came, the conduits ran with new wine, Zech.9:17,} that the Holy Ghost gave to some a draught, and to every one of the elect, more or less, he gave a taste. Ah, there it was, under such preaching, as now we lack in most churches of the saints, that the Holy Spirit opened blind eyes, and showed to sinners through a clear eye of faith bestowed {whilst looking unto Jesus, Heb.12:2, in the glass of the Gospel,} that the very efficacy of the work in the new birth and its consequences, are all a free gift indeed! {"And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." Isa.42:16.} An offer produces nothing, but an Operation of the Spirit produces the whole workmanship of God. We must preach the Gospel so as it is an effectual means in the Spirit's hand to create and effect the Spirit's Workmanship.

We are to hold forth and preach that the Spirit works this workmanship-creation by his Operations in the discharge of his Office. He works it jointly from Christ's living Intercession and the Father's grant. These are Operations of the Spirit, and not offers of the Gospel, which answer in Regeneration to the Mystical Quickening

before spoken of, Eph.2:5, and how do they answer? By an implanting of sinners into the likeness of Christ's resurrection by the co-quickening pattern. {"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." Rom.6:5.} Operations of the Spirit do produce the whole workmanship of God in the soul. {"For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." II Cor.4:6.} Is this Good News? Yes, it is; then why do not you preach it? The inwrought part of religion, to wit, Christ formed in the soul, the hope of glory, Gal.4:19, and Salvation by Grace, written on the heart, are wrought by God the Spirit in the souls of all the elect of God. But in offers of the Gospel there is no preaching the Gospel, much less of the inwrought part thereof; no, not so much an acceptance of a good part of the notion, or the doctrine itself; as the Holy Ghost is the Author and Principle of working that doctrinal conformity to the truth of the Gospel upon all those whom he brings to Christ. {"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." I Jn.2:27.} Offers produce nothing, as they attempt a thing which they never accomplish, being so pathetically enfeebled above their own sphere to effect; and being conscious of their own weakness, they are obliged to call in pomp and parade, raving, sweating and boiling, as Baal's priests did; yet notwithstanding all their fits and rants, their noise and show, they produce nothing. An offer assays and assays, it promises and vows, stamps and stares, but being weak and unproved, it is above its own sphere to effect anything, till, like the snuff of a candle, it goes out with a stink. Now is this good news? No, you will say. Then where are your evangelical offers? Never preach them anymore. We are to exalt the Spirit in preaching the Gospel, and not offers, which are but windy conceptions, and untimely births at best. The Spirit is far above them, and checks man's assay when he will, as Acts 16:7, "after they were come to Mysia, they assayed

to go into Bithynia; but the Spirit suffered them not." The Israelites could prevail by faith of the Operation of God, Col.2:12, and go through the Red Sea which the Egyptians assaying to do, were drowned. Heb.11:29. But now hath God ever assayed, and not wrought? Is not the Spirit in an Operation efficacious? "Or hath God assayed to go and take him a nation from the midst of another nation, by temptations, by signs, and by wonders, and by war, and by a mighty hand, and by a stretched out arm, and by great terrors, according to all that the LORD your God did for you in Egypt before your eyes?" Deut.4:34. No, he never assayed for another nation what he undertook for Israel; and whatsoever he hath undertaken he hath accomplished, whether by his Grace or Providence. "What could have been done more to my vineyard that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" Isa.5:4. What could have been done? Answer, nothing could have been done more by another to the Lord's vineyard, Matt.21:33, that the LORD himself had not done. Nothing was done further by the Lord himself in such a general and common way of favour that the Lord had not done therein, by the general dispensation according to natural favour which was demonstrably shown. II Chron.36:15-16. For that Dispensation of God towards the Jews was a general and common dispensation of favour agreeable to nature, Matt.23:37, not a Gospel-dispensation {only as it related to Christ} which is above nature, and works a powerful change upon it, according to the nature of Effectual Grace. So that according to that common Dispensation he did not go further.

We must preach the word of Christ as it is most suited to God's husbandry. For so it is again expressed in the passive style, I Cor.3:9, "ye are God's husbandry." This is altogether against the doctrine of offers, in a way of the people's becoming so by the Gospel. We must preach the Gospel as it is suited to an engrafted word, as in James 1:21, "receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." As if he had said, do not fly out against the Gospel, when it's delivered in such passives as will make Old Adam suffer for it. As

suppose in sawing off an old member of the body of death, Rom.7:24, cleaving into the stock, piercing a heart of flesh; and all to let in the graft deep into the quick. {"A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." Ezek.36:26.} This is exactly suited, we see, to an evangelizing in the passive style. It's to preach according to passives, and effectual Grace. The evangelized word of the Gospel, Acts 15:7, being an engrafted word, can be no offered word, no proposed word of Grace. The word of faith being engrafted, is united to the heart, and rooted there, as the effect of God's Operations in his husbandry, and not so united from any offers of his Grace. {"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith." Rom.10:8.}

All propounding of an offer, and all language in the offer-form, do fall woefully short of a passive reception of Grace. And indeed, let it be considered, according to the energy of the similitude in husbandry. How are trees and orchards planted and grafted? How are fields and vineyards sown and husbanded? Is it done in the way some men pretend to preach the Gospel? Is a piece of husbandry upon an estate effected by the owner or husbandman's offering to graft trees and plant vines? Is it by proposing of grafts to the stock? Is it by tenders of his seed to the ploughed lands? Sure sowing is quite another act than what can be represented by an offer, or tender of the seed. Isaiah saith of the ploughman, "doth the ploughman plow all day to sow? Doth he open and break the clods of his ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rie in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him." Isa.28:24-26. How much do these acts of the husbandman transcend and put to shame the acts of many preachers of the word, who stand in their own natural strength and wisdom? For their natural wisdom is that which hath pitched upon this way of offering Christ to sinners, as the best way they can think of to preach the Gospel to sinners. But lo, here it is said of the

ploughman, {which carries along with it in the eye of the Holy Ghost by the pen-man, a spiritual analogy, or a re-speaking of something further in it than mere ploughing, and that is preaching of the Gospel,} that his God does instruct him to discretion. And being so instructed, he does not bring his seed forth to the ground, and stand over the ploughed lands, making overtures, motions, and offers of what he hath brought, nor propose any quality of the seed; nor tender the fitches, the cummin and the principal wheat. No, he doth not attempt this, for his God doth instruct him to discretion. And in that discretion of his God, what doth he do, if he doth not offer his seed to the ground, nor propose and tender it? Why, he doth cast it abroad, he doth scatter it, he does cast it into the mouldy earth. Now let any man search the Scriptures, and see if these three phrases in God's Word, casting abroad, scattering, and casting in, do not far outweigh the other three phrases, so frequently in the mouths of some spiritual seeds-men, viz., offering, proposing, and tendering the seed of the Gospel {for the Doctrines and Salvation they preach are the seed of the Gospel} which they profess to preach. Aye, aye, we see that Preaching the Gospel is quite another thing than offers of Grace. It's casting abroad the precious seed of the word; it is scattering it about, as near, among, and within our auditories, as we are enabled, letting it fall how the Lord pleases, either upon the stone of the heart, or upon the mouldy earth; so long as it is within the bounds of our convinced auditories, the ploughed lands. He that preacheth the Word faithfully lets the Word go; not stopping his hand, and saying, maybe the seed will fall upon the stones, and then my labour will be lost; but he throws it upon the ploughed lands; that is enough. It will fall well in the main part of it, though it may prove absolutely lost on some. "According to your faith," Matt.9:29, oh, ye seeds-men, so be it unto you. We must not keep back our hands in sowing the doctrine of Free Grace among the people who sit under our preaching constantly, who have, by the Lord's blessing on the other parts of our ministry, been ploughed up quite through the outside of their natural religion, natural duties, natural righteousness, and natural Grace, into a sensible

conviction of their sin and natural misery without Christ. When Christ's sowers have got thus far on ploughed land, it is time to sow the field with mercy, righteousness, and faith, of the Gospel kind, lest heavy tidings sink them too much into 'em, and make deeper impression on them than is meet; even whilst no impressions are made upon the common world, never ploughed up by the Doctrine of the Lord the Spirit. {"Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground; for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you." Hos.10:12.}

It's the Spirit put into men, under searching doctrine in the ministry of the true Gospel which rips them up, saint or sinner; and that Holy Spirit of God will thoroughly search their nature, and turns all in the main, like a plough that enters the lands, upside down; afterwards doctrine that drops as the rain, and more gracious words in Gospel speech, {"and all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth," Lk.4:22,} distils upon the heart as dew, whilst an increase of the word maketh it soft with showers, Psal.65:10, and when this is done, cast the seed abroad into such mellow earth among poor lost sinners, instead of misspending your precious time in offering of Christ to them. {"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." Deut.32:2.} Well, on the whole, we see by the light of the Scriptures, that God's husbandry lies in an actual planting, sowing, and engrafting, not in offering to sinners that they may do these things. The Lord Himself bestows his Grace, but doth not offer His Grace even to the elect of God. It is Grace bestowed, {not men's preaching short of this, mixing and blending it with fair shows in the flesh about an offer,} which makes the elect to be God's field, orchard, &c., in converting sinners, and planting them in his husbandry. We should preach therefore nothing but what is God's own appointed means for making them so. And these means are not offers, but Effectual Grace, which he hath brought home to his elect, into their very souls. The pure Gospel is of an operative nature in the hearts of the elect, because herein the Lord

the Spirit waits that he may be gracious, as under the Old Testament the Lord Christ waited till the fulness of time that He might be gracious. {"And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the LORD is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him." Isa.30:18.} How often hath Grace been sealed with the Effectual Operations of the love of God on the hearts of elect sinners, in the day that the Lord makes the elect his husbandry! {"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Psal.110:3.} Now then, if this be accomplished in Free-Grace preaching, which is the only Effectual Preaching, then the other is but an idle prating, a mere form. We may be satisfied that preaching the Gospel, and speaking these mysteries of Christ to souls effectually, by which this husbandry is wrought, is to be done by no offer of the Grace of God, no tender of Salvation to men; it must be by the doctrine of Free-Grace, scattered upon them in the preaching of the Gospel through the Spirit, and thereby is Salvation itself cast in upon them.

Again, as the husbandmen's seed, when his God doth teach him discretion, as how to use that seed, is scattered and cast into the ground, so should we, who are ministers of Christ, scatter abroad the Gospel liberally, through the whole ploughed auditory, even among a people whose fallow ground is not broken up by offers of the plough, but by the actual ploughing of the Spirit, by the truth of the Gospel breaking upon their very thoughts, and subjecting them unto Christ. When men were wholly at ease, it is he that has oft broken them asunder. {"I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder; he hath also taken me by my neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark." Job 16:12.} Thus should we cast in the principal wheat, by sowing the word of Christ among them, that the Spirit may root it in their hearts, who attends while the seed of the Gospel is cast in; but he minds not the seed which is held fast in your hands by parley-offers, whilst you refuse so boldly to let it go, and cast it into the ground beneath you. An offer produces not a graft, nor is instrumental towards the propagation of the seed in God's husbandry; as only an Operation of the

Spirit propagates God's husbandry.

We must preach Effectual Grace, it being most suited to further God's building. So the words are in I Cor.3:9, "ye are God's building." To this purpose, the Holy Ghost delights much to use the word instruction, which signifies a building upon. 'Tis instructing sinners, building up their principles, as grace, life and power upon Christ, which the Holy Ghost hath first laid into their hearts by the preaching of the Gospel. An Operation of the Spirit carries on God's building; but offers of Grace, proposals, or tenders of Salvation, neither instruct nor build up God's elect in the true mysteries of Grace and Salvation. Right preaching is a building of the new-born soul upon God's foundation, Christ. For why do I preach Grace, if God does not work by Grace? Better put on sackcloth and lie in the dust, and cry, Lord, show me thy truth, and let me not go on my own errand. {"Show me thy ways, O LORD; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me; for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do I wait all the day." Psal.25:4-5.} Howbeit, if I see my way before me, as Christ's minister, whom he sends with the sufficient furniture, both of spiritual and common gifts, then do I see preaching is a building upon his foundation of Grace in Christ, or a raising up something that must appear upon God's foundation. This is the nature of instructing, it is building up, and building upon Grace bestowed, the Grace which is in Christ; building upon the things of God and of Christ, which the Spirit shows the soul, agreeable to what I preach, {"he shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you," Jn.16:14,} as a beginning in knowledge, and that by my very preaching unto this soul, before me. This now is instructing a man in Christ. It is edifying him upon what he has seen of Christ from the Lord's own work upon him. Now this view of my ministry raises my own soul quite out of sight of men's carnal reason; and fetching the materials of my ministry far above short-sighted nature, even out of Jesus Christ, I can instruct through Grace, whilst I see what I do, by aiming in the Holy Spirit's light and strength, to break in upon poor souls with the glorious Gospel. What, if but one spot of ground receive a grain of seed, or but a corner of the building rises that

day, or even a handful of the auditors, here and there, whom Christ has chosen, Jn.15:16, be wrought upon, I shall rejoice, having nevertheless wrought with God that day, I Sam.14:45, by working upon God's foundation, both as the Spirit was given to be in me, and also as he was given to be in that corner of the building among the remnant, Rom.9:27, at laying in the materials of the building in the time of God's power. {"And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand; and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven." Rev.11:13.}

Furthermore, in preaching the Gospel I have good hope through Grace, among such a congregation of mixed souls, uncalled as well as called, that I preach the Gospel to the elect of God to purpose. I may expect that the Lord takes up my words, and seals my message upon their hearts to this or that man. But now offers of Christ are no instruction upon Christ, as a soul's bottom given it secretly in Free Grace already. They come far short of any such instruction into Christ. They carry on no instructing whatsoever or building act on the basis of Grace, God's foundation, which he hath laid before, because instructing in the truth of the Gospel, is building upon Christ the foundation, and is causing experience to abound where soul-tribulation has abounded, Rom.5:3-4, by an increase of something that is of the same piece of Grace with the foundation, as it is conveyed of the Lord, through our hands, towards raising up the structure upon the foundation already laid in Christ. Whereas, offers of Grace add nothing towards building upon the foundation that Grace has laid. Therefore, to offer Grace is not to instruct in Grace, nor in truth. It's not to build Grace, nor to build upon Grace, so as to bring it up to this pitch of efficacy, as here in I Cor.3:9, "ye are God's building." According to Paul, the building is made up all of Free Grace, from the first stone laid, and the first true stroke of work done. Thus he exalts Grace, not offers of Grace both in the way and success of preaching, and we should do it in the same way, whilst we are looking for the same success. We ought not to give any appearance of evil, I Thes.5:22, as if we carried it unto a people whom we were not desirous

of Instructing, nor of building them upon God's foundation laid in their souls, under all foregoing matter of the sermon. As to what men call offers of Christ to sinners, it is neither laying the foundation in the soul's view, nor Christ in the soul, nor yet building gold, silver, or precious stones. I Cor. 3:12. It neither instructs them to propose to them, nor does it raise them upon the Cornerstone, to commend Christ to them. The tendering of Christ is a treating poor sinners that hear, as if they had a will and power of their own to choose God; and it is a sort of preaching that is too nigh of kin to the Arminians, who freely tell us that man has a will and power for compliance with the tenders of Salvation; otherwise, we render him a mere machine, and cast a bad reflection upon his noble reason. Indeed, you may rationally propose natural duties to a natural man, duties of several ranks and sorts, whilst at the same time the man hath so much reason and free power of action, as that a proposal of these duties may, in a common way, work upon his thoughts, and persuade his mind to it. But I must not go and propose the mysteries of the Gospel to men in that way, making them tenders of Salvation, as if it were a mere creature's business that rested only between them and me! For proposals imply in a manner, equal terms on both sides; but in Effectual Grace God can and doth sovereignly impose Himself by the Gospel on his own, II Tim.2:19; and yet in that imposing act they are made a willing people. He puts his own Gospel on them, as afterwards Christ's yoke, Matt.11:30, but he puts not on them another Gospel, nor confounds the Law with the Gospel, but keeps them both distinct. He puts his Gospel on them, before they take any clear evangelical impression, {"that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter," Rom.7:6,} or serve in any evangelical duty. The image is before the yoke, and Christ is formed in them before the will of God is done by them. Now an offer suits not with God's sovereign act upon sinners in raising the building of his Grace; for in Effectual Grace this is the tenor of God's covenant promise and resolve, "I will and they shall." {"I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezek.36:27. "But this

shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." Jer.31:33.} Therefore our preaching unto sinners must not be a preaching of proposals, as to urge proposals of Grace, but the irresistible Operations and Power of God's Grace. A proposal is what stands to the courtesy of men to entertain or reject; at least, it is what approaches in all outward view towards it, though men wipe it off with their obligatory offer. But now the preaching of the Gospel is set home ministerially as it stands with the good pleasure of God to reveal, give, and work in us efficiently, touching his own love unto the elect in Christ, that hereby we may go and preach, having received it in good earnest. Well, "ye are God's building," says Paul; that is, ye are made up of Free Grace, and are not made what you are made by free offers. For is any building raised up by proposing to stone, brick, and timber, to accept of the offer to come together into a building? No; building is a passive work, not done by proposals. How can natural men accept of being a spiritual house, before a change be made? Can it be? Any more than brick, stone, timber, mortar, glass, and lead, etc., can be persuaded to present the form of a house, upon proposals made to the said materials, to come together into an architectural structure? Now, as a building is raised by laying the proper materials in their proper places, fitted and framed together, workman-like, and by erecting one thing upon another. {"In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord; in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." Eph.2:21-22.} So in preaching, which hath been effectual to the conversion of sinners, and raising them into God's building, there hath been a laying in proper materials, and an instructing or building up the elect upon God's Free Grace in Christ Jesus, as effectual preaching hath fitted them {under the grand operation of the Holy Ghost in the soul} and framed them together, to their use in the said building, without offers. Offers to sinners to turn and build themselves, never accomplish the desire of the offerer; but it is preaching which breaks in upon a sinner, turns

him and builds him up in Christ. And so much for this chapter in the fundamentals of Effectual Grace.

CHAPTER EIGHT

A Continuation to resolve the posing question, how must we preach the Gospel to Sinners, if we do not offer the Gospel to them?

Having beaten down the dream of an effectual offer, by setting against it the Effectual Operation of God, in producing the new creature, in effecting God's husbandry, and in raising God's building, I now come to the Fourth resolution of the question. Do you ask, how must we preach, if we do not offer Christ to sinners? I answer, we must preach the Gospel evangelically, so as, if possible, to stain the pride of all glory in the creature, for we are to "preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake," II Cor.4:5, and if you preach not yourselves, then these offers will certainly return from the pit from whence they were raised by men's clever misconstruction of God's free grace in Christ.

Offers always tend towards creature-glorifying, for when you should be evangelizing, how God is rich in mercy, and how full in Grace and Power through the Lord our Righteousness, Eph.2:4, you begin proposing some creature-act; and so Christ is now and then brought in, by the bye, only upon the courtesy of your offers. Here his name is made to stoop to your wickedness, and to serve with your sins. Thus offers are fitted to exalt the creature, for when you should be preaching all that exalts God, in contriving, preparing, sending, and revealing Salvation by Christ, also in bestowing and conveying these truths into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, men instead of it, depart from the truth, I Tim.4:1, giving heed to a seducing spirit that carries them away to glory in

offers; and when offers come to town, what do they do? Alas, they evidently lessen God and greaten man in the people's eyes that are open. I never saw an offer mentioned in any book, but therein is an evident debasing of God, even below the character of the creature. And I believe an experimental, enlightened Christian, led into the mystery of God, and having a living communion with God in his soul, could never hear the offer drop in a sermon, without lessening in his mind all which was said before.

Tenders of Salvation, i.e., offers of Grace are not calculated to exalt God in his Person, his covenant of Grace, or his Operation of Grace; and is this good news? No, then never preach thus, to follow the multitude, *Exod.23:2*, into their offer-language. Offers give God the lie by bringing glory to the creature, and so to make the creature boast of himself, {contrary to *Psal.32:11*, which commands the new creature to be glad in the Lord,} than they are fitted to Jehovah the Spirit, and to give thanks to God the Lord for Faith, as the Scriptures teach us to glory. Grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life. "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly." *II Thes.1:3*. So, *Col.1:3-4*, "we give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you, since we heard of your faith in Christ Jesus, and of the love which ye have to all the saints." And, *Rom.1:8*, "I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world." How was this faith wrought? By the direct power of God. Then which is to be exalted, God's power or men's offers? Thanks were rendered for Operations of the Spirit, whereby the faith that was spoken of, was freely bestowed. Then preach Operations, and down with your offers. But now there would be more thanks due to offers, than to the Spirit in his Operations, supposing a person could be converted truly to Christ under such offers. For offers are a bait to natural reason, to stir up a man to thank the preacher for his offer, rather than they do in revelation to thank the Grace of God for his gift. But, says Paul, "I thank my God always on your behalf," *I Cor.1:4*, "for the Grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ."

Besides, if the offer takes with the outer court, to let in some notion of Christ by a rational eye, {there being something in Christ fitted to the reasonable nature,} yet that soul still rebels; but if Christ be let into the soul by a renewed eye, the eye of faith, the soul is humbled and receives him, as he is fitted to God's Glory and our wants above reason. In, Lk.2:25, there is a glorying in the Holy Spirit, in a possession of Grace, and not in an offer, a mere phantom. For when Simeon was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was upon him, there was nothing ascribed to his accepting of an offer, as the reason of his waiting for the consolation of Israel, but to this, that the Holy Ghost was upon him. When men preach offers, their praise is not of God, nor will the Lord assist them; but their praise is of a creature's act, in accepting the offer made them. {"And thou say in thine heart, my power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth." Deut.8:17.} But, says Christ of God, and says a faithful minister of Christ, "my praise shall be of thee in the great congregation," Psal.22:25, and, "whom have I in heaven but thee; and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." Psal.73:25. Now suppose a man could be converted in revealed religion, by means which owed more to reason than it did to Revelation; would not that way of Conversion, if there were such a way, bring more glory to the creature and the reason of the creature, than it could bring to Jehovah the Spirit, by and according to the supernatural measures of Revelation? {"And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together; for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." Isa.40:5.}

True faith gives all the glory to God in passive work, never minds glorying in offers; for these are in no wise fitted to exalt Christ in the secret workings of his Power; as they insist but upon the opening part of the man's labour, but not upon the glory and hiding of God's power, which is wrought by an irresistible agent, so that none can turn it back, Isa.43:13, let, or hinder it, working in such secrecy, that none can behold it, unless it be made known and revealed. The way to convert the elect is not to offer a doctrine, but to exalt the power in the doctrine. What power went forth upon the heart of Matthew, when

Christ said unto him, "follow me; and he arose and followed Him!" Matt.9:9. It is the folly of ministers to insist upon a form of command, in their preaching, which command was peculiar in the supernatural energy of it, to none but the Son of God, and to his Apostles, who had received a special commission from himself; whilst, at the same time, they shun to declare His power. II Pet.1:16. Whereas it is our duty to preach the power and declare the way. We must do this if we are faithful servants, leaving the command in our Master's hand, to speak it within men, whilst we are exalting the power of his arm, and to put in the command by his own Spirit in the working it. Jer.31:33. It is our duty always to exalt and preach the power of effectual Grace, because that conveys the command from our powerful Lord therein, but it is not our duty to preach up the mere form of the command, for that never carries any power with it. If I were to preach believing, my duty now, where men have a general faith already, {which they had not in the Apostle's days,} is not to insist on a form of words to such as "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," Acts 16:31, but to open the pure Gospel, with which the power of God descends, and works faith that is effectual to the obtaining of its prize. I Cor.9:24. Men would be far more fruitful than they are, if God the Spirit led them more into the Mystery of his own Operations. For the Lord the Spirit will have the glory of the power in an applicatory way ascribed to Himself alone, or he will not drive home the essential truths of the Gospel. You think to bring sinners to the faith of the Operation of God by commanding them, saying, "believe," but I say, no; you will not do it; for you are neither Christ nor his Apostles. Whereas, with them when they said "believe," the power to effect it went along with open signs, Mk.16:17, which it does not now. Oh, the power of Christ, and the power of the Caller, is that which we should exalt, instead of a mere form of a call. You may call to dead sinners it is true, but not as Christ, who called James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who immediately left the ship and their father, and followed Him. Matt.4:21-22. The arm of the Lord is revealed, where a sinner is wrought on to the saving of the soul. {"Who hath believed our report; and to whom is the arm

of the LORD revealed?" Isa.53:1.} This should be insisted on, not an offer of Christ. Nevertheless, when the offer-speech is charged, a man thinks to come off with his ascent, or by declaring his ascent to a few orthodox notions, and by saying, "I believe it." Whereas the tree is known by its fruit, Lk.6:44, and the insisting so much upon offers openly declare they have no reliance on God's power; for else, all that a man has said of offers, would be turned into an exalting of the power, in the promise of the Father. {"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." Lk.24:49.}

The Fifth resolution of the question. Do you ask, how we must preach, if we do not offer Christ? I answer, we must preach the Gospel so as it is fitted, under the exalted Operations of the Spirit, to beat down the practical Arminianism of all our natures. We are ready to think Arminianism lies only in the book, or the apostate churches; and that if we protest against the open Acts Synodalia Remonstrantium, {a volume that contains a large body of Arminianism,} against the Canons of the Synod of Dort, all is well. This is simply another mistake. Arminianism is the universal nature of mankind. It is by nature everybody's innate principle, and there is no more religion in it than what springs from reasonable nature under corruption. It is our own case by nature, and I find it as natural in me to be an Arminian, as it is to breathe. I will own it, that every man before the power of Grace changes and overcomes him, hath free will, or rather a slavish will to be an Arminian by nature. We were all born so, and without the power of Grace we must die so. Now we that are ministers under Christ's power, must preach the Gospel so as to beat down Arminianism. But these offers of Grace are fitted to uphold Arminianism. Aye, forty times more than they are suited to the free gift of Effectual Grace, to and upon the elect of God alone. This appears, 1. By Van Hermione, or Arminius himself, who makes preaching to be proposing of the Law and the Gospel. Arminius, too near akin to Pelagius, likewise makes use of the offer to uphold the doctrine of General Redemption, urging, that "none can reasonably be blamed for rejecting the offer of redemption, unless

redemption be obtained for all." I may likewise add the plain evidence of Castellio or Castalio, who was his senior, though he lived about the times of Arminius, and is harping upon the same string, "God promises good things and offers the same," says he, {writing upon Predestination at the end of his Dialogues, pg.297.} And then instead of God's writing the Law in the heart in the passive language, he says no more than that, "God proposes his Law to man," {in his third dialogue about the will of man, pg.180.}

Again, that offers of grace are fitted far more to uphold Arminianism than they are suited to the Free Gift, appears by the professed followers of Arminius. For, when Dr. Ames had called preaching the Gospel to Sinners, a grant of means, not an offer of Grace in the means, his Arminian opposite, a proud and haughty free-willer by the name of Grevinchovious, takes him up for it, as I find under the Arminian's own hand, and tells him that in the instance he brought, he did not allow an offer of Grace; for he upbraids him in these words, "but you bring an instance," says he, "which doth not at all lay down an offer of Grace." Here is a downright Arminian who finds fault, because we admit not offers of Grace. Whereas had offers exalted the Operations of the Holy Ghost, the Arminian had never pleaded for them. Who then could have thought that after this spirit had been discovered in the Arminians almost a hundred years ago, yet now under the Gospel, after so long a time, it should have come to the turn of the Nonconformist, {or the trained and educated Calvinists in our midst,} to find fault that we strike at offers of Grace, while yet we show unto them a more excellent way? I Cor.12:31. And yet so it is. I will produce one instance more of this last follower of Arminius, "the price of redemption is offered to be accepted by the reprobate," says he, "if they will accept it." {Grevinch against Ames, pg.87.} You see now who an offer of Grace is most suited to. It is more to the spirit of the Arminians than to the spirit of the Gospel; and pray, what says the Arminian vindicator, Corvinus, in his censure of Pierre Du Moulin? "It is enough," says he, "that that price be offered to some of the reprobate, to prove that it was paid for all." {Censura Snatomes

Arminianismi, etc. 1614.} And saith their triumphing Simon Episcopius, a notable professor of the Arminian Chair once at Leiden, "God had offered Grace to the Jews a long time by his Son Jesus, and afterwards by the Apostles." Oh, 'tis the offer-divinity which gives these men their strong advantages in the matter, on which they build so many of their arguments. And still do you say, how must we preach? When as the Arminians stand gaping before you, and are ready to eat every word upon that side you say. Pray tell me, how Petrus Bertius, the subtle Arminian in his writings against the Orthodox Collectors at the Hague, labours to beat down the true Effectual Grace of God, doth he do it by upholding an Effectual Offer; and yet some men dream from them of effectual offers. "If to convert a man there needs an irresistible power, then from thence it follows that they who are not converted, are called in vain unto Salvation; since then no reason could be given why God should call them, and offer Salvation to them, nor could God otherwise offer them Grace and Salvation," says he, "to the end that they might be altogether inexcusable." So once again we see that an offer is altogether ineffectual as to the production of Grace. Thus I prove it evidently out of professed Arminian authors, that offers agree more with the Arminian doctrine than they agree with Paul's doctrine; yea, than they match with the Holy Ghost's doctrine of Effectual Grace. The effectual offer is an Arminian dream! It is absurd to ascribe it to God, that the Grace he offers lacks efficacy, otherwise God would fain a good will towards them whom he hates. {"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." II Cor.4:2.} Oh, if we lay down the Gospel in a Gospel way of truth, we are delivered from all the abominations of these Arminians; neither is there room for their subtleties to bring men into such labyrinths as they do. I must here profess my sorrow and burden for some of our present nonconformist ministers, who have lost so much ground, while they profess to serve the Gospel in their learning, and in their zeal for orthodoxy, that they seem at this day,

in their plea for offers, Rom.10:2, to be mere strangers to everything in the Arminian controversy, except the bare name of it. Otherwise, they would see that some of the most subtle of the Arminians have covered what ours do render bare-faced, without the covering; I mean their natural reasons have cast a veil over Effectual Offers of Grace.

Lastly, I might add Conrad Vorstius himself, for albeit Vorstianism is a collection of errors about the Nature and Attributes of God, yet in one book of his, I mean that work against Piscator, there Vorstius contends himself to be an Arminian, and neither were the old Arminians wont to find fault with his writings. In that same piece of his labours he expressly writes thus, "the offer of Salvation to men goes before their believing;" and then upon John 12:47 & 48, his gloss of Christ there speaking, is this, "I do in the word offer the Salvation of the Gospel to all, and will take care that it is to be offered." And on John 6:40, he saith that, "the offer of Salvation is extended unto all." Whence we see that it is no wonder, if other men nowadays to uphold their offers go to work in the Arminian and Vorstian ways upon such texts, as Rev.22:17; Isa.55:1; II Cor.5:20; Isa.27:5; Acts 13:46; Rom.3:25, and such like. So that as these texts are brought off from the Arminians by the other side in the debates, they may be all brought off from the doctrine of the offer, in the same way; and some of them with more advantage, by discovering that to be said in the Bible upon them which is not said in the debates. If any object, the Reformers practice in the use of this language was the same. I answer, that Reformers by nature are in no wise better than others, Rom.3:9, nor go further, but as they are taught of God the Spirit. For as to education, study and custom, they may help men sometimes to vary the first forms of nature, but presently notwithstanding these, without fresh supplies of Grace, Reformers have been prone to sink below the Reformation, as well as others, and build again what they have destroyed, Gal.2:18, and that with wood, hay and stubble, I Cor.3:12, in too many places of their voluminous writings. There is abundance of Reformation to be still found in the Holy Scriptures, which is copied out

fully into no other book or books in the world! By all it further appears, that offers and proffers suit Arminianism, in that they do secretly tend to support universal redemption, because they are said to be general, and to all, without troubling the head of the minister, or the ears of the congregation, to make any distinction; and this is just as the Arminians do. Perhaps it is for fear people should have hard thoughts of our doctrine. Thus are men ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; and why? Mk.8:38. Because they have not been persuaded in their own minds and thus do not feel it to be the power of God unto Salvation in their own souls. Paul had been ashamed of it among the Jews, as ministers now-a-days are ashamed of it, that it should come thus and thus from their mouths to be told among the Arminians, lest the Arminians being hardened should speak against them. They will therefore frame a plausible way of preaching, easy to nature, that which agrees with the Arminians. The truth is, men are ashamed of the cross of Christ. However, if you take them up in a corner, and talk with them where the Arminians cannot hear, they will deny universal redemption, Jn.19:38; but bring them forth upon the house-tops among the mixed auditors, and see if they do not preach after that fashion, which cherisheth a secret belief of, and regard to the universal doctrine of a general redemption. And what mean these general offers, if there be no general foundation, neither in universal Grace, nor in general Redemption to support them? Offers are suited to old Adam in the Arminian way, far beyond what any can pretend they are suited to in any one piece of the New Adam; though men are loath this should be known, because it disturbs them in their crafty way.

Offers are fitted to creature-power, to self-strength, as it were partly, if not purely, {or rather impurely,} our own strength. Offers do not clearly argue the necessity of a new birth, Jn.3:3, that except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God, but they argue a necessity of closing with Christ and accepting him, whether a man be born, or not born from above. What then is the offer fitted to but rank Arminianism? Offers to men in the flesh to accept of Christ unto Salvation, do more argue that they who are in the

flesh can please God, than they do argue that they who are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom.8:8. Is not this nothing short of plain Arminianism then? Ah, while men remain under such large pieces of the veil of Arminianism, they cannot see Arminianism in their principles nor propositions! How can men receive these offers spiritually, since sinners who have the benefits of Christ applied to them, are not only without the Spirit, but are such as cannot receive the Spirit? {"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Jn.14:17.} No, no, if you will put sinners to work without the Spirit, what is now above them, set them to fulfil the whole Law, for they were once able in Adam to keep the whole Law, and God may justly require of the children, what they were obliged to in their parents. But never let preachers set such as cannot receive the Spirit to believe spiritually, Jn.6:44, for they could never, as in the other instance, heretofore to it, neither they nor their grandfather Adam before them. Let them set an Infidel or a Jew to believe in Christ naturally, and they are right. There is ground enough to do so; and it is condemnation not to believe so, since men have not only a natural ground for the faculty of natural faith but they have all the common assistance of arguments. But to believe with the Holy Ghost new begetting the heart unto righteousness, men have no power; they can have no power; they shall have no power. The lack of natural faith will condemn men under the Ordinances of the Gospel, and yet the having a natural faith will not save men. {"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins; for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." Jn.8:24.} Now in short, either men do not believe this, or, to the greatest absurdity contrary to their own belief, they fall in closer with Arminianism, than they fall in with the true chain of the Gospel. Still I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; I can preach it through Grace among proud sinners and triumph over their insults against that Electing Love and Sovereign Grace, which is denied them. For the promise runs thus, "their hearts shall meditate terror," but thou shalt not be afraid. Isa.33:18. Thou shalt be neither afraid

that the terror shall be thy portion, says God, nor afraid when the world cries out fie upon thy belief. Where is the creature-power that makes any approaches to your offers? Where are your soft offers; your charming offers, your free offers, gospel offers, effectual offers, obligatory offers; of whatsoever sort and size you have them? Can a sinner make his approaches and come out as far as half-way block to meet any of these? A saint that has been under a work of Grace says, "I am shut up, and I cannot come forth." Psal.88:8. Aye, how does your preaching relieve such a soul, when you stand raving and offering, and Christ Himself does not help you to preach effectually, because you despise his Grace? "Behold, he breaketh down, and it cannot be built again; he shutteth up a man, and there can be no opening." Job 12:14. No opening indeed by creature power, no opening by serious proposals to the will! Go to a man under the sense of the wrath of God, and see if this will do. Whose understanding was ever opened by offers of Grace? Whose conscience washed? Whose will was ever unlocked by this rusty key that never fitted one word in God's book? God will be honoured; the reserve of power is in his own hands. "I am he that openeth, and none can shut," says Jesus Christ. Rev.3:7. You must preach Christ alone for strength to the will, not Christ for offers towards motion in the will. For "when he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble; and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him? Whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only." Job 34:29. You offer Christ, but the sinner sees him not through the dark veil of your offer. Where is the creature-power which these biased offers lean towards? No man can even say that Jesus is Lord, but by the Holy Ghost, I Cor.12:3, even saying it will cost him dear, except the Holy Ghost empower him. He cannot say it and stand to it if the times will not bear it, but he will eat his own words, and shake and tremble like an aspen-leaf, in times of persecution, if he is called to account before scarlet coats and great wigs, except the Holy Ghost work in him mightily.

What is it takes your hearts now; offers of Effectual Grace? Keep your offers to yourselves; and the Lord give me Effectual Grace! It is God that worketh in us

to will and to do of his good pleasure. Phil.2:13. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." Jn.6:44. Men have not strength to direct their own way to God by Christ; and when the LORD does give them one heart and one way, Jer.32:39, it is by such preaching as agrees with the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, Eph.4:3, and not by preaching offers of Grace, suited to nurse the haughty pride of the Arminians. Offers are suited to the assertion of a creature-power in all that is offered, and depend on the will of the receiver, or lean towards that dependence in the will of the flesh. You may talk what you will of God's working by Effectual Grace under an ineffectual offer, nevertheless, when you take up your offer, you do assuredly in an instant lay the stress towards the side of creature-dependence; and so, in the very act of delivering it, you presently run upon Arminian ground, while you take ground by offers of Grace, and turn upon creature-power directly. {"He feedeth on ashes; a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, is there not a lie in my right hand?" Isa.44:20.} Nevertheless, God's dispensation of his Grace carries in it no dependence on the creature's reception. He does not convey his Grace which then would be no Grace, Rom.11:6, if it were to be so conveyed by any dependence upon creature-acts.

Offers are fitted to creature-prevention of God in the motion-part of Grace, for as if the motion-part of Grace in being brought under subjection to Christ were all to depend on a discourse of doctrine taught or a careful mangling of an exhortation, for there the offer begins to show itself, which plainly supposes, that God, by his Grace, has not superseded the use of exhortation in the power of his Spirit and Presence through the fore-part of the discourse; but the offer which comes in at the latter end is as if the motion-part of Grace in the heart were there to begin, and the work of joining the heart to Christ were now to be done; whereas by Grace in the fore-part God prevents the offer which would prevent Him in the latter part. {The creature cannot come in so much as in the last part. II Thes.1:11; Phil.1:6; I Cor.1:8. How then can the creature come in to preventing grace which is first

of all?} Preach so as to exalt God's preventing Grace; for we see that he is the God of peace by preventing Grace, before he is the Spirit of sanctification by promoting Grace. The LORD is found of them that sought him not; made manifest unto them that asked not after him. Rom.10:20. This is purely preventing Grace, but offers of Grace are not so suited to this, as they are to Arminianism. Oh, therefore, preach them down, and when an offer lies moist upon the tip of your tongues, ready to fly out, let it sink in again, and in the room of it say, "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." Rom.5:6. It is nature's pride by offers to think to step in and prevent the blessings of goodness that are freely bestowed already. It may be that which hath been conveyed unto and sealed upon the heart of a sinner, in discourse, three quarters of an hour before the preacher came to his offers, which by-and-by is so knocked on the head with the offer phrases, that the poor sinner is presently thrust down from his faith to his former doubts, querying whether he has anything to do with Christ or no. The moment before he found strength to believe Christ, but now these offers come in, and he thinks he is all wrong in an instant! Grace is of God, and to God, but offers are neither of him, nor through him, nor to him. {"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen." Rom.11:36.} They are not of him, for they are not appointed. They are not through him, for they are not influenced by him. They are not to him, for they run away to creature acceptance, by the arm of flesh, instead of exalting the Divine conveyance.

Offers of Christ to unregenerate sinners are suited to creature-co-operation and creature-concurrence, which is rank Arminianism. They tend to form up the preacher's counsel, exhortations and persuasions into a con-cause, as the Arminians call it, with the Spirit of God. Thus the creation-work upon the soul which has no concurrence is tacitly denied, and all that is spoken suits Arminianism to a hair's breadth. Where is the Single and Effectual Operation of Irresistible Grace, as managed by God the Spirit, insisted on among men that offer Christ? I do not find it. Are offers more fitted to exalt God that

worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure, Phil.2:13, than they are fitted to exalt the concurrence of the creature with God's Grace to accept these offers? The Scripture speaks thus, "be thou exalted, LORD, in thine own strength; so will we sing and praise thy power." Psal.21:13. Here is no co-operation of strength; it is all God's own that he must and will be exalted in. But are offers purely cut out to exalt God in his own strength? No; but to represent God, standing by whilst proposing his Grace, and principally to exalt the free will and obligation of the creature and his power; or rather some broken fragments of imaginary power to accept offers. Ah, here lies the pride of all flesh which shall be stained when the LORD comes to rain down righteousness in the blood of Christ, {"it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you," Hos.10:12,} mercy and judgment, so as that the Lord alone shall be exalted! {"The LORD of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth." Isa.23:9.} Man's rotten righteousness that he has made such a flutter about, is stained, when God rains down his own righteousness, {"and the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day," Isa.2:17,} and man's wisdom is stained as soon as he comes to see it in the light of God's Spirit through his Son. But now, wherein is God exalted by your offers in his own strength, Christ, wherein and whereby he has been pleased to engage and oblige himself in an Everlasting Covenant, II Sam.23:5, to work Grace in the sinner independent of any creature-concurrence? Ah, blessed be God, that cuts down all your fleshly offers.

Offers are more fitted to creature casualty than to the Creator's own Unerring and Effectual Grace, as the sole and only cause and means of turning the will to Christ. Offers are more suited to contradict that of the Holy Ghost by the Apostles, "ye are saved by Grace, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." Eph.2:8. I stand amazed to see how some men in the face of that text dare bring in their offers! "Who maketh thee to differ from another; and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" I Cor.4:7. Offers are most suited to the doctrine

of Nicolaas Grevinckhoven, who said, "I have made myself to differ in accepting the proposal," than they suit with Discriminating Grace that causeth all the difference by Operations of Grace, without any offers at all. {"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." II Cor.10:5.} Alas, what a shame to hear wise men of understanding, who to an extent know what the will of the Lord is, Eph.5:17, speak in such detestable terms!

The sixth resolution of the question. How must we preach the Gospel to sinners, if we do not offer the Gospel to them? I answer that we ought to preach the Gospel discriminately, so as in the light of the Lord to define when Christ and Salvation are effectually given, and where, and in whose hands the gift of Salvation lies. But tenders are very unaccountable, when they come to be examined in the light of the Gospel, in any of these respects. The Gospel is to be preached accountably, so as to be able to give an account when Christ and Salvation are effectually given. Christ is given before the Spirit is given, and the Spirit is given before his work is begun. {"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come." Jn.16:13.} Here's some consistence fairly accounted for; but they who defend offers cannot tell consistently, whether the tender be made before the Holy Ghost is given, or after he is given. Therefore they cannot clearly and fairly make out their proposals at all; neither can they accountably resolve it, whether the offer is to be made before the Holy Ghost is given, for then they'll never reconcile it with preventing Grace, if they pretend it to be first; neither can they accountably resolve it, whether the offer be after the Holy Ghost is given; for if it be, then the main thing of all that is put within me, is put there by Grace without any tender at all; and if the main work be done without offers, then sure all the rest that is subordinate may be done in preaching the Gospel the same way.

Again, if the offer of Grace to a sinner is to be made before the Holy Ghost is given, then God the Spirit

hath not his due right to the glory of preventing Grace, as God the Father and God the Son in Christ have; and if after, then it is proposed in vain, because the thing is already bestowed and received. Christ is given, and by the Spirit formed in the heart, and the heart and will are wound up to Christ before the offer comes. But as a practical acceptance grows out of the ploughed up ground or fit soil, therefore proposals are unmet.

The Gospel ought to be preached accountably, so as to be able fairly to give an account, whether the offer be God's act, or the minister's; but they who defend offers of Christ cannot fairly account for them, whether they be God's act, or the minister's. They cannot be put to God's account, because God nowhere says that he offers Christ, nor offers Salvation; and so the dispensation of Grace can be no offer of God's. Besides, to proffer a thing shows that the matter is doubtful, therefore no means to open the heart to God in the certainty of God's Covenant towards his own in Christ. {"I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." Isa.55:3. "And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David." Acts 13:34.} It cannot therefore be ascribed to God to proffer, but to give, because of the certainty of his covenant. God's sending and giving Christ to his own are certain and unalterable acts of love in God's Covenant; God so acting towards them in the Salvation of the Gospel, as that they shall know the mysteries of the kingdom of God. {"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Matt.13:11.} Therefore the offer can be none of God's act, for he acts altogether above the sphere of any incapacitated and precarious means.

Again, it is not God's act, for God's act is within the heart, but the offer is an act without the heart, Mk.7:18, and before the man, and only in his presence at some distance removed. In God's work the object and the heart meet at one point within, and here is the first spiritual recognition and practical subjection to Christ himself. {"If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of

myself." Jn.7:17.}

Offers of Grace and Salvation surely cannot be put to the minister's account, because he brings but the doctrine, not the Salvation with him. Grace and Salvation descend from Heaven by a higher Operation than Ministerial labours. Ministers indeed are labourers together at the time when God works Grace, I Cor.3:9, because God works Grace while he enables his ministers to bring the doctrine from their hearts to their mouths. But Salvation is a secret power that comes from Heaven, working itself into the doctrine, and is quite distinct from the trumpet, or open sound of words, which fall from the ministerial agent.

The Gospel ought to be preached accountably, or preached so as to give some consistent account of the quality and properties of our preaching. But now if our preaching runs into the offer-speech, the quality and property of these offers are very unaccountable. For, an evangelical offer is unaccountable. Evangelical is that which belongs to good news, but an offer is a device, and a device carries a sinner no farther than he is already; and where is the good news in that? An offer talks much, but shows me nothing; it comes with no evidence; and where is the good news of that? No offer can be made of Absolute Grace that turns the heart and secures acceptance. Then where is the Good News? And is it not a very unaccountable thing for men to talk of an evangelical offer?

A Free offer is unaccountable. How can that be free that's lame, halts by the way, and cannot come home? How can that be free, as Grace is free, that can do nothing where the will is bound? A free offer has no other freedom in it than a resolute preacher's natural free will to stand by it. And when he is most serious, it is but his good word and fair speech to deceive the hearts of the simple, Rom.16:18, and make them believe it's Free Grace and Free Gift. There can be no free offer in the sense of Free Grace without very clear revelation in the Word, as all the Truths of Christ have.

An effectual offer {for the same reasons} must be very unaccountable. The truth of God is Effectual, and makes free indeed, Jn.8:36, but the free offer, though it

flows never so freely out of men's mouths, makes no sinner free thereby; therefore it has no Gospel efficacy.

An obligatory offer is very unaccountable. Obligatory is what obliges, ties, and binds a man, but no offer can oblige a sinner, except what is contrary to the loosening of a sinner, that he may take hold of Christ. Now a sinner is tied and bound with the cords of sin, Rom.7:21, and an obligatory offer, the nature of which still is to pretend to tie him, can do him no good. Why? The sinner is under bonds already, and do you think to bring him off with new obligations? Besides, if all men are bound to close with the Salvation of the Gospel, as well as the report and witness of the Gospel, or the doctrine of the Gospel, where the Gospel comes, then your obligatory offer is another Arminian device that plainly points to universal redemption; unless men will pretend that sinners may be saved who were never redeemed.

A ministerial offer is very unaccountable. Ministerial is that which lies at the will and pleasure of the Master in his minister or servant. Every minister of Christ is a steward of the mysteries of God, I Cor.4:1-2, moreover it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful. He must act according to his commission and no further. But when ministers come to offers, they take upon them to act unwarrantably and of their own heads. The commission runs no further than to preach, teach, and show glad tidings. What business have they than to run and offer what they have no right or authority to dispose of? They have no sufficiency of their own to think a good thought as of themselves, II Cor.3:5, though it runs within their commission; then what sufficiency can they have for that which was never put within their warrant? An offer or a proffer argues some right of disposal in one's self, or some authority to dispose of the thing offered from another. But ministers cannot dispose of Christ, nor of the Spirit, nor of Salvation, nor of any one saving benefit of the Gospel. He is a thief that would dispose of his goods without his Lord's consent. Where then is your Ministerial offer? A minister's work lies quite another way than to offer his Master's Grace without his Master's authority; he is only to wait upon his Master, while his Master himself, even Jesus Christ, who is God's

householder, Matt.20:1, dispenses God's Grace to the household. Jesus Christ is the Father's servant to communicate the benefit, not to propound the offer; and he never sends servants to rob him of his own High Office. God's gift of Salvation through Christ by the Spirit, is so high a piece of Grace, that it will not stand with the arrogance of the creature, as to put in and tell sinners to, "come, here I offer you Christ; here, take him." This does not advance Christ, but self-offers; nor does it advance God, but man. I offer you Christ! Is your "I" so big? Then get thee down to thy place, and lie in the dust, thou great, thou base, thou God-dishonouring "I!"

An offer of Grace to a sinner, and not an offer of Grace to a saint {my meaning is, an offer of Christ to the unconverted, and yet no offer of Christ for the increase of Grace to the converted} is an unaccountable thing indeed; and yet in all of men's talk of offering Christ to sinners, they never insist on offering him to saints. Now if I preach Christ thereby to fulfil my ministry, I must preach Him as he is, all in all to build up saints, as well as all in all to bring in sinners. I am to preach to saints and sinners in one invariable branch of Free Grace. I do not know two branches of Grace that differ, so as to say that one is Free, and the other is not Free. Then why do you not offer Christ to saints as well as you do to sinners? And why do you offer Christ for life and justification to sinners, when you do not offer Christ for nourishment of life and evidences of justification to saints? This is a very unaccountable thing. {"Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the people, according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the Law." Mal.2:9.}

The seventh resolution of the question. We must so preach the Gospel as to take a special care that we distinguish the Spirit's work from the creature's acts, and in most applicative and practical truths we preach. Men have a general notion in the church of God, that regeneration is to be ascribed to the Spirit, but they do not feel as new born souls, under the sensible stirrings of corruption, that the Holy Ghost must perform all the new creature-acts. There the Spirit's work is to be distinguished and cleared in the proclamation of the Gospel,

instead of muddied by these presumptuous offers. For it is there commonly, when men come to use applications, that they break the Second Commandment, and bow down to other gods before Him. Exod.20:5. Offers nod towards the creature, as a superstitious ceremony-monger bows toward his altar. Offers entangle and unravel the Spirit's work, in those parts of a discourse especially which they call Application. Now you should preach the Gospel just as the Spirit delights to do all the work within us himself, even in bringing us to our duty. Away then with your offers in putting men to repent, while you conceal the loving kindness of the Lord, and how the Holy Spirit delights to work this repentance from an exalted Jesus, Acts 5:31, making repentance sweet by Operations of Gospel Grace, and not bitter by offers. {"The LORD thy God in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." Zeph.3:17.} So again, offers put such a slight and neglect upon this delightful work of the Spirit, that you can scarcely imagine by offer-preaching, that the Spirit ever took any delight to create faith in you, or took any delight to work repentance in you; but only would delight in you after you are holy, provided you be but holy, though you don't know which way you are to be so. Thus do too many of these preachers by their offers eclipse and injure the Spirit's work.

The eighth resolution of the question is that we ought to preach the Gospel in the way of an Institution of Christ. The command runs thus, "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." II Tim.4:2. But there is no command for offers. Offers are no Institution of Christ, but debase an institution of Christ into the invention of the creature. Preaching is an appointed proclamation, Isa.61:2, not an un-commanded proposal. Now proclamations come forth in the name of the Sovereign with authority, but proposals creep forth like frogs, without any due advancements of the Son of God in the royalty of his Grace or Sceptre. Is not that preacher like to do a great deal of service by Christ, who, in the matters of Salvation, professes to come forth to sinners

in the Name of the Lord? To propose to them the acceptance of Christ for eternal life? No; but in Christ's name, preaching the Gospel so as to exalt the power of Christ to conquer sinners, not beating parleys in an offer of Christ to compound with sinners. What commandment have I received from the Lord to propose Christ to a dead sinner? I have an express word to preach Christ, as a proper means of conversion; but to propose Christ to a sinner is too low a means to quicken him. It is of mere human invention, and a means of the wrong kind, being nowhere instituted of God to that end. The ordinance is to preach Christ to dead sinners, and if they be elect objects of sovereign and discriminating love, they shall be quickened in the ordinance. Whereas, though a man be an elect object, and you go and propose Christ to him ever so much, it shall never benefit him, because offers and proposals are but man's devices. And though men are resolute and still bent upon their own way, yet the elect shall be preserved, and not miscarry; for God will call his elect from under man's device, to his own ordinance. I therefore must not offer Christ to the elect of God, but I must preach Christ, because God hath made it the means of conveying life into the dead souls amongst them. These sinners by means of the Christ of God preached into their souls do hear and live. {"Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Jn.5:25.}

The Ninth resolution of the question. We ought to preach the Gospel, as it has a special promise of triumph. Success of the Gospel is one thing, a promise of success is another thing. {"He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities." Isa.53:11. "And this is the promise that he hath promised us, even eternal life." I Jn.2:25.} Now as to the success of the Gospel, we should not preach so as to blast our own labours, and afterwards complain that our labours are not prospered. Offers blast our labours, as we see by experience, and makes a very discontented ministry, and full of complaints in the assembly, both as to preachers and hearers. As to preachers, their

complaints arise from this way of departing from the Effectual Grace of the Gospel, though they see it not. For while they should be keeping close to the Gospel, and the blessing of God for the Grace of the Gospel, they are generally complaining {such I mean that have some acquaintance therewith} and the work of conversion stops. But alas; it is our dead, formal, heavy preaching in a way of offering Christ that has stopped it. Men are angry at those parts of the Gospel which have been most experienced upon the souls of his own people; and they strike most at those parts of the Gospel where Christ gets most glory, and souls get most comfort; and then because the Lord does not prosper them in their opposite, dead, heavy, and mixed way of preaching by offers of Christ and offers of Salvation to many to whom there are no bestowments of Salvation at all; and so they are discontented and complain of the want of success. Ministers look mainly at some things that take off the edge of the Gospel, and seem to lodge and stick in their indiscriminate offers, whilst looking for a great deal of success, under a very little of God's truth and their own faithfulness, running wide off the bounds of Special Grace in preaching, or think to offer Special Grace to sinners which is a special contradiction; and are then discontented that no success comes their way, and wonder that the people are ready to leave them and go off to neighbouring ministers, whereas they bring these things upon themselves, by studying to uphold a way of preaching which God hath never promised to bless. {"And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, thus saith God, Why transgress ye the commandments of the LORD, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you." II Chron.24:20.} I have heard some ministers complain of their fruitless labours; and they will always have reason for it so long as they give any credence to offers of grace, and refuse to toss them aside, whilst exalting the Spirit's work. The Spirit of the LORD teaches the ministers of Christ to fall upon the inner parts of the Gospel for Conversion work; to preach up the glory thereof, and to magnify the great power of God in all their

sermons; which power works freely by Gift, and can by no means be offered. If you would succeed, magnify the Spirit's work, and show how the Gospel is hid to some, while it is freely given to others to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and to believe on Christ's name. {"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Matt.13:11.} Gifts of Grace are only to some, offers of Grace are promiscuous, but bestowments of Grace are discriminate. Then as to hearers, their complaints have been that they cannot profit under an offer ministry. It must be the Gospel exalted in the Spirit's hand, not offers and proposals in the ministry, as they tell me from their own experience, and of their own accord that their souls are losers thereby. And why must not I hear the cries which God has put into the mouths of poor souls, who have a work of Grace begun within them, and whose souls are as dear to Christ, as ours are as ministers, and so are by God the Spirit made able to judge of, or try and taste their own food, and also can to the comfort of a humble minister of Christ declare what does, and what does not edify them under men. Neither is this any more than a piece of their being brought out of darkness into marvellous light. {"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." I Pet.2:9.} For ministers and people ought to be very free together in soul matters. Jer.3:14. It is not enough that people hear us once or twice a week, but as they have opportunity they should often converse with us about their soul's concern, blessing of God for what they get, and bewailing of what they lose; and if we by any deviations from the pattern, are the cause of their losing, and not thriving in their souls, we ought not to take it amiss that we hear of it. {"And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue; whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." Acts 18:26.} Neither should we call it cavilling, or bitterness, or narrowness of spirit, neither should we deal with men in proud wrath for being faithful.

As to the promise of success, our preaching should not be in a way with where the promise has nothing to do. Rom.4:20. For as to this way of promise-less offering, it is what all men by nature will put off, and what they shall be all left to put off, and to get no spiritual good thereby. But now all things that the promises of God are made to run upon, are of a quite contrary strain, for the elect of God shall not be left to an inclination of their own, to put off the promises of God, for the Lord's people shall be willing in the day of his power. Psal.110:3. Wherefore the Gospel does not come to them in proffers, but in a declaration of the power of God. {"And I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the LORD." Hos.2:19-20.} Why then are not ministers of Christ more faithful to keep to God's promises of Grace? What need they to go and try their unscriptural experiments upon what is liable to be slighted, and disregarded by creature put-offs? Jer.23:27. Why then are men found so to sink in their preaching of the Grace of God, as if the Lord's Grace might be some sort of a naturalized Grace, the sinners accepting it from some innate ability, if they would accept thereof. Whereas this only shows them to be blind, as to things pertaining to God. Nevertheless, if they do accept, it is only because God brings them to accept his Grace; and whomsoever God brings to an acceptance thereof, it is in God's own appointed way and not in such nature's paths which the creature, who professes to go upon God's errands, has cut out for him. {"Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; and quicken thou me in thy way." Psal.119:37.} The promises that run to preaching, are as absolute as the first promise was, Gen.3:15, because they are made upon the same foundation, and are in the hands of Christ to pursue and to accomplish the same interests; so that they point as much to the Spirit and his work, as that first promise did to Christ and his seed. {"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth

forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Isa.55:10-11. "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass; because I will publish the name of the LORD; ascribe ye greatness unto our God." Deut.32:2-3.} Hence offers being without a promise are the dry and barren motions of the pulpit! They run from the promised way of the blessing, which is limited to the Gospel way of preaching; and therefore it is only just in the Lord to bring them unto destruction. {"But rise, and stand upon thy feet; for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Acts 26:16-18.}

The tenth resolution of the question. We should preach the Gospel so that the Gospel may boldly justify itself. For the Gospel being but of one piece of Grace, through all the parts thereof, is fitted so to do. But offers are self-condemned, Tit.3:11, being self-contradictory, being fain to palliate and excuse themselves with what is not their own, as appears by the vain jangling of some of the men who use them. Offers borrow from the truth and from the name of Grace, {Grace-offers, &c.,} to colour over their un-comely looks with excuses in robbery, as a specious varnish, not to be thought faulty or erroneous. Their palliating language is, that they do not mean as the Arminians mean, nor as the Neonomians profess; but some are too strait laced, and ready to stretch their honest meaning beyond the stable, &c. Also, they add, that doubtless there may be a very good meaning and an innocent sense put upon offers of Grace; and the like is commonly uttered by them in their offer-pleas. As a harlot would fain be thought a virtuous woman, while she seeks to conceal her shame in being a strumpet, so it is with

them. But I hope in the face of these and many other arguments laid together, that the mask will be taken off. For I know their cry, as they vehemently urge their plea that these offers are gifts, and that they are preaching Christ, that these are the invitations and exhortations of God's Word, that they are well founded on Holy Scripture, and, as a thief says that he is an honest man; who has anything to lay to his charge? So these offer-mongers would fain be heard to speak for themselves, as if they were very honest, innocent, harmless things, yea, the very Gospel itself, &c., but all is a delusional lie, all is so entirely false. Let offers be plain, let them pull the sheepskin off, and tell us from those pestilent Arminians, as Episcopius and Corvinus, what they really are, and not through the orthodox minded Nonconformists as to what they are not.

The eleventh resolution of the question. We should preach the Gospel, because it is sure and certain as applied to individual persons, or particular interests; it is personally for me or thee. But offers are all indeterminate as to anybody, and so indeed are fixed upon nobody, which must argue their uncertainty to me or thee; and then it is plain they are so, because of their personal and constant inefficacy. For whatsoever of the things of God are constantly ineffectual within me, they must be constantly uncertain in an application to me. Nevertheless, the gift by Grace argues a certainty to you or me, discriminated from ten thousands. The reason is, there is an effectual will in the Donor which makes his grant Effectual in the Operation to and upon an elect vessel of mercy. The gift works a certainty, but the offer evaporates in an uncertainty. The donation of Christ is from the love of the Father to certain individuals, but the offer of Christ is neither from the love of the Father, nor from the life of the Son, nor from the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus. Offer-preaching runs all its dependencies, on the fool's feast of windy expectations, and gets nothing but proffers, made only by creatures to creatures, liable to be frustrated, and being made in things that are above human reach, they must be so. It is certain, God, who does nothing in vain, offers not when

he sends the Gospel to them whom he knows will not accept either of the Salvation, or special Doctrine thereof. Because the end of sending it is not their acceptance, but God's Glory, by the Gospel as a means to judge the world of sinners where the Gospel comes; and that upon a higher footing than the light of nature or the law of works. For God will be more glorified when he comes to judge men by Christ's Gospel, for all their ill-will to the Gospel, II Thes.1:8, for their enmity to what is above nature, and for the preference of their own wisdom, and the wisdom of the schools, before a few plain simple words of the Bible, than if he judged them as mere heathens for sins against the light of nature.

To instance but in one thing for all, which God will most certainly contend against, when he comes to judge in righteousness; that is, for men's corrupting the doctrine of God and Christ by their school-divinity. What strange notions of eternity, and of God's acts towards the creature, are divers ministers tinctured with; what vain philosophy, and school-divinity of the contrary parties of Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus, are at this day ready to be taken up? Yea, it descends from one to another upon men who scarce ever heard their names. {"Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." Col.2:8.} Are not some of the notions such as tend to make God's Being in himself, and his acts, thoughts, purchases and his decrees, and those of the creature, co-eternal, and so co-equal? Not one word of which notion can be ever proved from the Bible. Who is it almost one from another without examining it, that doth not make the beginning of God's way most corruptly to mean some act of God within Himself, as eternal and necessary to his own Being? As if God's own infinite self-sufficiency and all-sufficiency within Himself could not have been enough for God in the Glory of enjoying Himself, and conversing with Himself in all his Persons; Father, Son, and Spirit, according to God's own self-sufficiency, millions and millions of ages, {as we may conceive, according to creature-capacity,} before ever he willed, purposed or decreed anything of the works of his hands; especially, since all that is made in Heaven

and Earth, of the six days work, is not yet of six thousand years standing. Whereas, the schools have made men expound those phrases of Scripture, before the foundation of the world, and before the world began, and from everlasting, to be as eternal as God's own Being. {The infinite Being of God cannot be defined in relation to created, finite man.} Here is now the mischief-making wisdom of man that hath not learned of the Lord the Spirit to take God at His word. But to acknowledge God, contrary to the scheme of Popish schoolmen, they think is to make God changeable; whereas, it no more argues a change in God to begin to purpose in Himself, to begin to settle respecting Christ and creatures, than it argues a change in God to begin to create what he had afore purposed, yea, afore prepared unto glory. Rom.9:23. Since in creation nothing could be made where God's Immensity in creation as well as in purpose of creation within Himself did not reach.

The twelfth resolution of the question. We should preach the Gospel as it is discovered to be an admirable contrivance of way and means to effect conversion. In that contrivance there is an aptness for conversion, a most sweet harmony between the remedy of corrupt nature and the disease thereof, the remedy in Christ and the disease in sinners. Also there is an admirable harmony between the principle of conversion in the Holy Ghost at the bottom of his own work, and the act of conversion in the heart of a sinner. But offers have no aptitude, no fitness in the means they propose for conversion. They are unapt means, to speak of them according to what men say of them that count them means. For, man is a stubborn creature. To whom he said, "this is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing; yet they would not hear." Isa.28:12. He hath a strong tide of corrupt nature, strong corruptions to be subdued. An old man to be crucified with him, and the body of sin to be destroyed. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Rom.6:6. Corruption hath not only an in-being, but a strong and active motion to carry sinners off from God and against God. This tide and mass of the

waters of wickedness will be too hard for all your offers; and, therefore, in the room of offers, you should preach Operations of the Spirit through the sinner's relation to God in Christ. For whatever false prophets, or errors, are gone forth into the world, I Jn.4:1, it is only as ye are of God, little children, vs.4, that you have overcome them. Oh, but now what meetness is there between an uncircumcised heart and the proposal of spiritual things, such as Salvation, Eternal Life, &c.? Also what meetness is there between an uncircumcised heart, and any agreeable action from such an uncircumcised heart, so as spiritually to embrace these, and holily to delight therein? Oh, there is no meetness between a proposal of spiritual things in the Mystery and Life, and an uncircumcised heart; but there is a meetness between an Operation of Grace and the uncircumcised heart of man, though it be enmity against God at the time. The natural mind can go no further than the history of a fact, and the letter of the precept, and just to the outer face and form of the doctrine; and to that neither without an Operation in the common work of the Spirit. The way of man is not in himself, it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps. Jer.10:23. The sinner under a law work may reach the notion; but then so long as the sinner is uncircumcised in the heart, Jer.9:26, he cannot attain the spirituality of the truth, veiled under that notion. He may understand a proposal of the form, but can never know the way of acceptance to receive the mystery and true glory of the Word, till sanctified by the Holy Ghost. Rom.15:16. Man's goings unto Christ are not of himself, nor is he able to delight in the beauty of holiness, or believe the mystery of sanctification, I Cor.1:2, in Christ Jesus. {"Man's goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?" Prov.20:24.} What can you propose then to the uncircumcision of the flesh? Can you offer a circumcision in the Spirit under any conceptions of meetness in the way of effecting a change? {"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." Col.2:13.} There is no meetness for proposals here, but rather a meetness to go and preach the conveyances of Christ

unto sinners by the Operations of Grace. Man is a captive in unbelief, a slave to himself, to sin and Satan. He has a chain of bondage, yea, many bonds, gates, and bars to be broken in pieces, which the Grace of God in the conveyance of Grace effects. {"He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder." Psal.107:14.} But what will your offers do? Can you bring the man off? No; but go preach the Effectual Ransom, and tell him 'tis for such sinners as he, and see if the Holy Ghost will fly in your face, as a man will, and tell you, you lie. We must preach so as to direct wounded sinners to Christ, and not stand in the way by merely offering help.

When you see sinners perishing, will you propose in the pulpit to stand by to see if you can help? And what when you see all this, do you carry it loftily and impertinently? Do you still insist upon offers, and conceal the Efficacy of God? Do you hide the strength of the Lord's Almighty Arm, the covenant and oath of God that cannot lie; the two immutable things by which it is impossible for God to lie? And instead of this, do you preach God's willingness if the sinner be willing? I tell you, God is willing when the sinner is unwilling. Ah, away with such an offer of Grace as never did, nor ever can do good to souls, for it brings a dishonour upon Jehovah! {"Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD." Jer.23:32.} Ah, troubled souls, I pity you! My bowels yearn for you! I could sometimes wish that you and your hard-hearted preachers were separated! {"Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life; therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations; for I will deliver my people out of your hand; and ye shall know that I am the LORD." Ezek.13:22-23.} But are any preachers willing to alter the uncertain sounds of the pulpit, that troubled souls may find relief? Then I say to such, preach election and non-

election, and do not call it harsh doctrine. This will be the way to bring sinners into right trouble by a right work, and to bring them out of that trouble by a higher work, effectually and clearly, by preaching the Efficacy of Grace in the Spirit's hand or office, I Cor.2:10, to back what is begun by the Father, and what is carried on by the Son. Preach thus, and there is an apt means for God's Glory both in soul trouble and in peace, and for the Salvation of the elect to combine with the Glory of God. {"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." II Cor.1:20.} Preach the saving efficacy of the Spirit's work in the Gospel, by such vital application of the precious blood of Christ to hearts smitten by sin, being slaughtered by the Law, Rom.5:11, and when you see their life running out, don't think to clasp your thumb upon their wound, and cry to perishing sinners, "here I offer you Christ." What relief is this? It's to no purpose. The Lord open your eyes! This is not to be done by offers; but by an emptying the soul of that conceit it had been filled with in common religion touching its own righteousness, duties, and notions of acceptance of Christ, which the soul had taken up under offers, by legal strivings. Hereby a soul is sweetly relieved from its burden and bondage, weighed down under legality, against coming to Christ. For soul burdens and spiritual weariness are consistent with coming to Christ, Matt.11:28, but such burdens and such weariness is oft a preamble of the Spirit's work in ploughing up the legality and self-righteousness which entangles our thoughts and hardens our hearts. {"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Jn.6:44.} And this is my own experience, {"I am shut up, and I cannot come forth," Psal.88:8,} and must be every other man's, who hath been under true soul bondage, weary and heavy laden, and yet could not get up so much as to crawl under it. Oh, how sweetly then did the Lord put in his hand of power, oiled with fragrant love! And the first thing that I found towards {motion} was soul-ease upon the spot, Job 34:29, and love conquest that brought me into Christ by Almighty Grace, as not to feel my burden; but plainly as ever a man felt a cure in his body, so I experienced health and cure in my soul, in the day when the Lord revealed

abundance of peace and truth, Jer.33:6, in order to my being brought unto Jesus Christ. I went not for his balm, Jer.8:22, but his balm came in to me! I was found of Him, even whilst I was one who sought him not. {"I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name." Isa.65:1.} His coming made me to come, his believing made me to believe, his willingness made me willing. {"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." II Tim.2:19.} {It is consistent enough for people under natural infirmities to come to Christ, but under spiritual infirmities Christ must come to them.} I was carried out of my heart prison upon everlasting arms of love, Deut.33:27, and upon wings of healing, to that blessed Redeemer of mine, from whence the healing issued forth. Nevertheless, we who have believed, have clouds return after the rain, Eccles.12:2, and burdens renew again. Gospel preachers have their weighty burdens to press them down, as Paul had, Rom.7:14-15, but I know that offers of Grace do never take off burdens, neither at first nor at last. So believers do groan, being burdened in this tabernacle of flesh, II Cor.5:4, but offers never ease or alter one groan. How then will they do to relieve such as have not passed from death unto life? I Jn.3:14. I know therefore, through Grace, how to preach to sinners. I preach to them as Christ preached to me, and as he still continues to preach the Gospel to my soul. For my part, I wonder not that men are so much at a loss to preach! They preach and preach, but the people justly complain they do not hear the preaching. My meaning is, they do not hear Christ preached to their souls; the only Preacher in the world to instruct us how to preach to others. {"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you." I Cor.11:23.}

Alas, what can an old Adam say in the pulpit? He stints with his offered Christ presently! He sets his bounds, limits, and his "ne plus ultra" round about the mercy-seat presently, if he thinks sinners come too near, and too soon! He puts on their shackles, where yet without them they must have stuck in the miry clay. He

clogs them with terms, awes them with conditions, holds them in from Christ by the Law, and when he thinks after this fashion that he has made sure work of it, he salves it up with a smooth pretence, {what sinner means to convert a sinner, or to raise the dead,} "come, soul, come to Christ, I have been preaching of Christ, here, I offer thee Christ, I will tell thee he is a free offer; come, come, and close with Him." Jer.23:26. Oh, how fit a means is this to convert an ungodly man, when it is a means that damps a godly man's heart, till he feels the very strengthening comforts of God by this means bursting his heart! {"Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life." Ezek.12:22.} It may work affection indeed in some ignorant hearers, who never had their understandings opened about sin or Christ, Jn.16:9-10, nor their hearts burdened with the weight of sin; but it hath produced, and will certainly produce burdens in godly hearts; not being attended with the seal and impression of the Holy Spirit. God is always so tender of the Spirit's glory, that such perverse ways never did, nor ever shall be blessed {as the Gospel is} to do good in the true knitting of sinner's hearts to Christ. Oh, but let Christ be exalted as the gift of God to sinners, according to the Word, and he will make his own way, {under such preaching,} through the head, heart, and bowels of old Adam; yea, through all the devil's stumbling blocks which Satan has put in the way by old Adam, in good men and bad men alike; and Christ will set up his throne in our hearts sweetly, in spite of all the corruptions of our nature. Ezek.36:26-27. Oh, the power of Divine Grace, the inner part, the glory part of the Gospel conveyed, that is, which exalts Christ. This is the Gospel that runs like the lightnings, searching the deep things of God, I Cor.2:10, dives into the mystical union, and apprehends of Christ Jesus the Given, and the Giver.

This is Gospel truth, that by a special gift conveyed, set foot upon Electing-Grace, and immediately finds out who, and who have not, their names written in Heaven. {"Rejoice, because your names are written in

heaven." Lk.10:20.} God sends his Spirit secretly in Election and Redemption Unions, beginning the regeneration-union of mere Free Grace by the Spirit, sent into their hearts, because they are sons. {"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal.4:6.} Thus the Spirit works and waits to take up that Free Salvation settled on the elect in the Person of Christ; he waits on purpose to receive it as that Salvation drops from the mouths of Gospel preachers, whose hearts the Holy Ghost hath filled therewith from Christ. {"And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the LORD is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him." Isa.30:18.} And then upon further Operation, he points the soul unto it, by capacitating and elevating the faculty, and making room in the soul for this glorious Gospel to enter in. {"He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Jn.16:14.} Accordingly, Acts 13:26, "men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent." It is a sending of Salvation to them that fear God; which same Salvation in the fear of God is wrought in the soul by God the Holy Ghost; and arises out of no such low things as offering or proffering of Christ; but from a free, thorough, and home-bestowing of the Spirit in light, joy and consolation, according to the fitness of the Spirit's own work, begun and preparatorily managed, before clear discoveries follow. The fear is that in the soul which the Holy Spirit stirs up under a legal work, Rom.8:15, so that sending of Salvation to them that fear God, is not a promiscuous offer, but a discriminate bestowment of Jesus Christ in Salvation upon the elect of God alone.

The thirteenth resolution of the question. How must we preach the Gospel if we do not offer the Gospel? We ought to preach the Gospel so as it rises higher than any natural and notional ability by a fleshly arm to receive it, or carry it in the pulpit towards such a reception of it as will most certainty rend asunder and divide the hearers. Offers rise no higher than the light of nature, or

old Adam's notion of preaching revealed truths. They are very agreeable to the light of an unconverted man; they may grow in our apprehension and grasp out of the very form of education, and can very well agree with the scheme of Christian Religion naturalized. Acts 18:25. And this appears too obvious as to preachers, who discover by these offers that they rise no higher than the light of nature may attain unto. For, they cannot own the success of their ministry, {if they have any,} to be of mere Grace and Righteousness, but needs lay a stress upon human proposals, which are neither the Grace of God, nor the righteousness of Christ. They cannot commit the success of their ministry to Grace and Righteousness, in the hands of Father, Son and Spirit, through the Man Christ Jesus. I Tim.2:5. They cannot wait for success on the mere Grace and Righteousness of Another, but do please and buoy up themselves with their offers, their pains in the ministry, their frequent proposals and their free tenders, their studying hard, and their preaching much in the ministry, and on these sandy bottoms they generally build their expectations. I know all these things by experience, Jer.6:27, for it was long ere I was brought off, {so far as through Grace I am brought off from creature-wisdom, creature-confidence and creature-expectation,} to an entire dependence upon Christ, and his fulness from the Father, to fill and bless me in all! {"All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." Matt.11:27.} But to argue this particular further still, above the light of nature.

Offers are either to sinners promiscuously, exclusive of regeneration-union, or to sinners discriminately, in consequence of the said union in Christ. If to sinners out of that union, then what springs of life can you find out of the union to enable them to comply {suppose as profferers must suppose} with a spiritual offer of Grace and Christ, or a tender of a special Salvation, or a proposal of Everlasting Life? Can old Adam's life close in with Christ's spiritual life? No; 'tis Christ's life must break in upon Adam's, and mortify it, by discovering how our old man is crucified with Christ,

Rom.6:6, discovering it after the Spirit's act, in begetting the new nature. Moreover, in a sinner embracing Christ in faith, it is the new creature closing the soul with the new Adam, who has begotten it by the Holy Ghost. If God the Spirit regenerates sinners, whilst you blindly suppose that you have offered Christ, yet 'tis no such thing as Regeneration by offers according to what you suppose, but by Divine Operation exclusively. 'Tis by deed of Gift and Efficacy. Then why do you talk of offering or proffering Christ? He is a gift of God to the conversion of the will in a Union to his Person. {"I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles; to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Isa.42:6-7.} Therefore why do not you rather look to bring up the form of preaching to God's work, than to bring down the power of God's work to your form of preaching? If we believe God's way and method, we are not to fall in with a way that upon strict and clear examination plainly thwarts it. Suppose special Grace was proffered to dead nature, as if it be proffered out of the regeneration-union, what can dead nature do with such a proffer? But now let special Grace be exalted in preaching Christ as a gift to honour God the Spirit in his work of bestowing the Gift in the nature of a sinner, the Spirit then according to his own covenant-obligation with Father and Son, strikes in with the gift, in which act he both quickens and supplies the quickened with the benefit of Christ together at once. And if so, it will not be long ere this new life feeds on Christ, and sweetly shows itself to be the fruit of such preaching. {"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." Jn.6:53-56.}

Men pretend to defend one side of truth, whilst they injure another side. As that God is sovereign and converts whom he will; but still let men know God is also

just when he comes directly to the work of it, Isa.53:11, in bowing the soul to Christ. It's certainly thus, although his immediate Justice be founded upon his original sovereignty, which sovereignty never thwarts his justice, but reconciles it according to his own way appointed. Now is it a righteous thing with God, in a Gospel-day of discriminating light, to convert the elect to Christ, by means which do exalt the creature more than Christ, Phil.2:9, and more than the Father, and more than the Spirit, as the common way offers do? {"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." II Cor.10:5.} No, but it is a righteous thing for God to convert the elect by that very means which hath bought them, because it is the strain of preaching which the covenant of God and the promise of Effectual Grace run along with. {"Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise, princes also shall worship, because of the LORD that is faithful, and the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee. Thus saith the LORD, in an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee; and I will preserve thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, to establish the earth, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages." Isa.49:7-8.} Soul, oh precious soul, I tell thee in Christ's name, when Special Grace is given thee by a work of Jehovah the Spirit, and Grace by Him is put within thee, {which is God's Free and gracious way,} then thou hast it directly and effectually, and perhaps much sooner than some preachers that offer Christ are willing. And blessed be God, other preachers again are helped to preach thus, without trying experiments in the common practice of proposals, proffers, tenders, and offers. Let us now suppose {according to a fancied latitude of the word offers} that it had its eye upon an outer range of buildings, or upon outworks, and that common Grace was there offered to the common nature of man, and that sinners accepted of this common Grace, still, when accepted, this common Grace would work no change, nor can it do so. It is

possible that some of the non-elect may accept of the notion of the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ, who are not under that Imputation in the true and saving virtue thereof, so as to believe by a work of God the Spirit unto the saving of the soul. Heb.10:39. Therefore, we have distinguished between the outer part of the Gospel to maintain profession, and the inner part of the Gospel to beget life, and promote communion. Oh, 'tis the inner part of the Gospel which does the main work! Preachers too generally stand aloof from everlasting concernments of the soul, and walk at a distance from the golden candlesticks in the outward court. Such labour of theirs may do good to some for a time, but upon none for eternity. Matt.13:20-21. It may serve the passage, but assure yourselves that it will never reach the port. {"He that endureth to the end shall be saved." Matt.10:22.} The form of the Gospel may be displayed, and it will serve some temporal end which the Lord hath ordained and aimed to secure in his out-works. It may increase a sober party, restrain nature, shame the wicked, train up moral, sober, and virtuous professors that join in supporting some visible Gospel ordinances, and carrying on a ministry, and providing for the benefit of common hearers. All which are useful in their season, and desirable mercies belonging to the out-works, and carry with them an ornamental excellency, but still all these are no foundation to build on for eternity. Preachers and people too will be deceived at last, and go to hell if they have nothing more than this. It's no building of God, no covering, no hiding place to be found in. Isa.32:2. This will not keep out rain, judgments, wrath, fire and brimstone from the conscience, Psal.11:6, nor have they any power to spiritualize one performance. What can an offer do for me here? What can it bring either the preacher or people up to, as to any evangelical and meet part of the Superstructure? Well, the Gospel must be preached beyond what a natural man can receive of it; but he can easily receive this way of offers and proffers, and approve of it quite well.

The fourteenth resolution of the question. We should preach the Gospel singularly; as the greatest part of professing ministers do not preach it. For till God pours

down more of his Spirit, this will be our glory. {"Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness be a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest." Isa.32:15.} Notwithstanding, offers are so universally espoused by all men who have but the common tincture, under one denomination and another, as it renders them suspicious to men who hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Rev.3:22. The general consent of preachers and of general hearers at present, is enough to make a good man suspect them. For if we had nothing else by Grace beside a gracious capacity to judge of `em from what we see by the baseness of their conduct, we would even conclude that these offers can never be right. {"Thou shalt not follow a multitude to do evil; neither shalt thou speak in a cause to decline after many to wrest judgment." Exod.23:2.} Nevertheless, as for preaching, it is suited only to the light of the Gospel, in the Kingdom of God, and the authority of Jesus Christ, which I fear there be few that actually see it. For as to preaching, so far as men have all along beheld it in the general light of the world, they have not known how to express it by anything that signifies preaching of the Gospel. {"How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" Rom.10:15.} We may see that it was from the peculiar way and arguments of the Gospel, which the Apostles were first enlightened in, that the times called their message and manner of delivery, the foolishness of Preaching. I Cor.1:21. Whereas proposing hath been always extended to the common theme, and therein suited to the general consent of mankind. The same continues so everywhere at this day under a cultivated light of nature.

But now the words which the Holy Ghost hath used in the New Testament for preaching are quite of another import, and do not at all agree with the way of dispensing the word by offers, but by glad tidings and crying of glad tidings, or a solemn publishing of what is to be sold without money and without price, Isa.55:1, according to the radical signification of the verb from whence the noun is derived, so that the minister is to cry, or publish his message from the Lord. This speaks the full power and

absolute authority of God in our messages that we bring from Christ; and this honour seems to be given but unto a very few men. {"I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran; I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied." Jer.23:21.} Whereas, multitudes take in hand to sermonize or predicate, {which is a way of preaching whereunto offers and proposals are suited,} as it seems to be only that which has been formulated according to their particular persuasion, and not of Christ's ordering whatsoever; which we see is done in an absolute way of declaring and publishing, but not offering, proposal-wise, for that is a base compromise and an entirely unworthy diminutive in delivering of the Lord's messages, and is a plain consulting with flesh and blood. Gal.1:16. Hence we see it comes to pass that generally preachers in this day artfully stick in a natural way of preaching to fallen nature, which more universally obtains, because it comes not up to the Mysteries of the Gospel. Eph.3:3-4. Therefore it is why we have so few who evangelize; the most predicate as logicians in the school, and orators in the desk. But as to what the Holy Ghost calls preaching, there is generally little of it throughout the world. Besides, men do call preaching by a name that cuts off all its relation to the Gospel, viz., proposing a matter to the people; and so you may see in the dictionary and the concordance how the term used for preaching came to be spoiled. For proposing is fitted to an oration to the people, but it is not fitted to an opening the mysteries of the kingdom of God, and opening the oracles of God, Rom.3:2, and therein bringing forth glad tidings. The general way of perverted preaching is proposing, or that which is similar to it. Why? Because the general way is to preach all beneath and beside the mystery; so that the depravity of the times have fitted the apostasy, with a word they have got for preaching, which shuts out all the mysteries of the Gospel, that is, proposing. If you come to propose glad tidings, it argues that the tidings you bring are not as good as they appear to be, but true Gospel preaching conveys them in the unction of the Spirit, and evident authority. Therefore, cry and faithfully publish the Gospel; it is a singular way of preaching by instructing, and it is all done without offers.

The gospel is a message above the light of nature. Well, bring the matter lowest, and that is to the instance of John the Baptist's preaching, Matt.3:3, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." 'Tis not meant that the message of the Gospel is to show that we begin in spiritual things, and Christ then follows. No, that's but agreeable to the common mistaken notion that we must do our endeavours, and God will do the rest. Almost all mankind agree in this, even where the Gospel comes; but the meaning of the wilderness voice is this, "Come out you Citizens, you that dwell at ease in Zion, Amos 6:1; come out into the wilderness, leave the splendid temple and its ceremonial worship at Jerusalem; it will quickly be all put down anyway; come away to find and follow Christ in a wilderness, that hereby following him into the Wilderness of Judea, Hos.2:14, as you now come out into the wilderness to hear and see me; a way may be prepared for the elect amongst the Jews to follow Messiah into the lost world amongst the blindfolded Gentiles, whither he will be shortly going. {"Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." Heb.13:13.} I come to prepare a little beforehand, by some outward demonstrations of the Spirit, bearing record, Jn.1:34, to the Son of God. {"And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him." Jn.1:32.} Leave this great temple at Jerusalem; come with Christ into the highways and byways, and do not tie up yourselves to yonder structure; for Christ when he comes will be found in the wilderness, and will desert your stately fabric, and then down it must quickly come. {"As Paul was accused, "this is the man, that teacheth all men everywhere against the people, and the law, and this place; and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place." Acts 21:28.} So prepare ye his way now, come into the wilderness, and bring his cross thither, which will lay quite cross-ways to these times of ease; come beforehand therefore into the wilderness, under John's ministry, who is the forerunner; and while his followers shall be ready at call to do the same, and come forth into the wilderness, both in Judea's wilderness under the ministry of the Lord,

and into the wilderness condition of the Gentiles, Rom.15:9, after his resurrection in the preaching of Christ's ministers, you shall be those, who in preaching shall prepare the way, and make his paths straight, to discover that he hath not gone about, but hath taken the direct way to sinners." This is a way which directs sinners to look to Christ, which all these offers never could.

The fifteenth resolution of the question. Do you ask how you must preach the Gospel, if you are driven from your offers? I answer, you ought to preach the Gospel in sincerity and in truth, which if you do, it will not give that open scandal and offence, Matt.13:41, to such as are most led by God the Spirit respecting his own work, which offers do. Offers are contrary to the preaching of the Gospel; therefore they offend such, Matt.18:6, as are most led into the Spirit's work. We must preach the Gospel so as its reputation may be advanced every day more and more agreeable to and consistent with itself, and so as that the glory of the Gospel may get the visible ascendant and pre-eminence in the eyes of them that are taught of God. {"It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Jn.6:45.} They who have got farthest in Christ's school, can at any time see that when you preach the Gospel, you are actually spiritually advanced beyond all external and vain flourishes, whereas learned arguments, borrowed from the schools, promoting offers instead of Operations, have no small part in making a fair show in the flesh, Gal.6:12, and yet when examined, are full of rottenness, dead men's bones, and all uncleanness. Matt.23:27-28. Therefore preach the Gospel honourably, for offers are scandalous. For, they are thievish, stealing the children's bread to cast it unto dogs. Matt.15:26. They steal from God's Grace given only unto the elect, to go and proffer it to all within the sound. They rob God's Grace to set up man's nature and pride, with a notion of his acceptance of that Grace which is not theirs to offer. Whereas man's nature cannot cordially accept the proposition, the saying worthy of all acceptation, the declarative truth that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, I Tim.1:15, and that he actually accomplished this work. {"And she

shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt.1:21.} What have these thievish offers to do but to rob the treasurers of wisdom, and tender Salvation itself to the universal acceptance and contempt of fallen rebellious human nature. Offers are scandalous and dangerous, because they are stumbling blocks, Isa.57:14, to many of the godly and judicious. And why will not you do that with your offers, which you would have others do with their ceremonies? That is, throw them away, and let there be no more heard of them in your sermons than there is in God's Word? For now as things are brought to pass, and wilfully maintained in some pulpits, Hos.11:7, many stumble at the ministers, because instead of delivering their message, they hear them offer it, and propose offensively what they ought to preach honourably and freely. The truth is, offences will come of all sides; but still we ought so to preach, by preaching the Spirit and his Work unto all subjects, even while we are upon all doctrines of the Gospel, as that while we do give offense therein eventually to any, it should appear to be to none, whether ministers or people, except those who are rebels, not led by the word of God, and the Spirit's work in their way of preaching or professing. I mean such as when they come to the use of a doctrine, make practicals to shut out experimentals, and build and run upon creature-acts where they ought to build upon Creating Operations of Grace. How many are there in the offer-way, who tell sinners that they must get Christ, instead of telling them that Christ is gotten into their very hearts and natures for them by the Lord who is that Spirit, II Cor.3:17, if ever they are saved by Christ? How many insist upon the act of a sinner's acceptance, where they should magnify the Spirit's Operation, in working up their hearts unto this acceptance, if they are ever brought unto it? Accordingly, they insist upon other acts, but never upon the Spirit for these acts. Such as these should be withstood to the face and resisted; such as these shall and must be offended.

The sixteenth resolution of the question. Do you again ask how? I answer again, if you are commissioned of Christ to the work and office of a minister, you ought

to preach the Gospel in the encouragements of it unto conversion; but offers are no encouragements to conversion. Encouragements are what enlarges the heart. "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou hast enlarged my heart." Psal.119:32. A man feels when he gets courage. Encouragements are qualities, and these must have a proper subject. Courage is for the soul; argument is for the head. 'Tis in the man, not in the book. 'Tis in living epistles of saints, not in dead letters of offers. Offers lie without my heart, but encouragements come and lodge within my heart, or they are not encouragements. The offer is but the preacher's sound ill managed, but true encouragement is the Holy Ghost's work well marked. An offer is a man's notion, but an encouragement is a man's experience. There are God's Operations of His Grace, but there are no offers of his Grace.

The seventeenth resolution of the question. We should preach the Gospel so spiritually and discerningly, that the more our preaching is examined, cavilled at, despised, struck at, and hated, the more it should discover, {both from the pulpit and the press,} how sweetly it accords with the Spirit's work. But offers, the more they are examined, struck at, opposed, and argued down, the more injurious and unscriptural they are still found to the Spirit's work. We must preach the Gospel spiritually in an exalting of spiritual enlivenings. But offers are dead preaching; and is it good news to come to the sinner with a heavy, dead offer? If this then be no good news, where is the evangelical offer? Preaching the Gospel is a lively Ordinance of Jesus Christ, preachers ought then preach livelily, which accords with the Spirit's Work, and is a certain effect of his own work stamped on the Ministration. Whereas offers are dead, and proffers of Christ for the most part do argue a dead faith in the preacher. The offer part is the dead part of the sermon, a mere carcass in grave-clothes, and not the glorified Christ of an exhortation. Let us maintain and stand up for a lively preaching of Grace to sinners, to overthrow these dead offers.

What are dead works? Are they fit for the living God, or to be found within the ranges of his living temple?

II Cor.6:16. When the apostle argued against dead works, Heb.9:14, he meant to the Jews the dead bodies of those beasts, dead performances, which the consciences of Gospel-worshippers are purged from, never to use them in their worship more; though some would fain have returned to them again. {"How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Heb.9:14.} But we need not these dead works in the slain beasts of the house of Israel. Acts 7:42. Dead sacrifices are gone, since we have a Living Advocate in Heaven, I Jn.2:1, who was once the consummate sacrifice on Earth. {"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." - "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Heb.10:10,14.} So I may say of your offers, as he of the dead bodies in abolished sacrifices, they are but dead works of the pulpit, as the others were their dead works of the altar. Lively preachers of the power do far more exalt the Spirit's work at their worst, than dead preachers of the offer do, when they do their best. {"O priests that despise my name; and ye say, wherein have we despised thy name?" Mal.1:6.} We may be sure of this, that whilst they are offering Christ to sinners, Christ is not being honoured in the pulpit. If he were, we should be as earthen vessels in Christ's hand, II Cor.4:7, to carry the treasure further than an offer. Oh, 'tis must be very low water in our own souls, when the conduits of Grace, that should flow out from a sanctified treasure of the heart, stop at offers in our mouths! Jer.13:25.

Again, to preach so as to exalt the Spirit's work we ought to preach experimentally. Ministers, by harping on their offers, do seem to drop all experience; whereas, if the preacher saw clearly, and was affected deeply to see how himself came by Christ, through the great power of God, he would be a lively preacher of that power, which attends the small still voice of Christ in the heart, I Kings 19:12, and he would no longer be a preacher of the offer. For if he viewed Christ through all preaching, he ought to preach sights of Christ in all preaching too. {"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also

may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." I Jn.1:3.} If he had tasted and savoured Christ, it's strange that he doth not preach distinct and high evaluations of Christ. I should be starved for my own part, I profess, in the very pulpit, if I were to preach these offers, and not to preach just as I do. And it is such a riddle to me, how the people can feed upon that which would starve the preacher himself? Let Oedipus resolve it in a treatise of the problems of the offer, for I certainly cannot. Alas, if we are Christ's Ministers, we do not only see for ourselves, handle for ourselves, and taste for ourselves, when we are in the pulpit, but for fellow petitioners to the throne of Grace, poor sinners, that is, just like ourselves, who are brought in, under the true sights and tastes of the glory of Christ, to see and feel with us. Let us not run then to offer-forms that kill all sound experience both in ourselves and others too. The more I see and taste in my own experience that the Lord is gracious in my opening of the word, Psal.34:8, the more have I a proof of Christ speaking in me, II Cor.13:3, and that the true interpretation of every text are written in the very spirit of the text on my own soul. We ought to preach the Gospel clearly, discerningly, and understandingly, but offers are blind and dark; no evidences are in them, whereby we can discern the Spirit's work experimentally on our own souls.

We must preach to sinners according to the discoveries that God hath made of Christ to ourselves, for this is the way to direct them, and not to go on darkly, whilst offering Christ. {"I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation; I have not concealed thy loving kindness and thy truth from the great congregation." Psal.40:10.} Let us preach forth that glorious Operation of the Spirit, which lay in the discovery of Christ as ours, and as ours, not in offers of Christ to be made ours, if we accept. We are Christ's, if we can see that his desire is towards us, and ours towards Him. {"I am my beloved's, and his desire is toward me." Song.7:10.} We should preach the discoveries of the Gospel so as to clear it up to poor sinners under this very head of self-experience. {"We will

not hide them from their children, showing to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and his strength, and his wonderful works that he hath done." Psal.78:4.} Preach up Operations of the Holy Ghost, which make these discoveries; labouring to open the Object of faith clearly, as the Spirit hath opened the Object of faith to you. {"My soul shall make her boast in the LORD; the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad." Psal.34:2.} This is the only way the Lord hath enabled me to do, in the conversion of sinners, in all the seals of my ministry. But offers of Christ are blind; they only darken the Spirit's work; and can this be good news? Then never preach offers more, which run upon proposals, but forget the discoveries of a soul's interest under Operations of establishing a sensible union and communion with Christ, which is far above all proposals of compliance with Him. A man complies in his thoughts, upon the discovery of an object which his nature is suited to, so that his heart complies with his interest wherever he sees it. The soul that hath supernatural discoveries of a supernatural interest, must in his thoughts and soul perceive a supernatural compliance, with the same interest discoveries, Jn.16:14-15, because these supernatural discoveries are attended with the same sort of power put forth for discovery. Exalt therefore the power that breaks in and discovers. Offers, I can confidently say, are blind. Offer-preaching leaves men altogether in the dark, as to God the Spirit's work. I have never heard a sermon wherein offers of Christ and proposals and tenders of Salvation, have been much talked of, as to say, "here, we offer you Christ, sinners, come; how do you like him? Here we propose Christ for your acceptance, pray do not slight Him; take Him for your Salvation, now or never, &c.," that ever in any part of the message discovered a clear advancement of God's work in the soul. {"Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness." Psal.29:2.} For it plainly appears that all the stress is laid upon the creature for his conversion, as appears by the very form of this offer. Is it not an evidence of men's blindness, when they make such offers, whereas, the way lies open in a Heavenly Object and Divine Operations? How blind is it in offers to

expect that the Spirit should be given to convert a sinner in the very way that robs the Spirit of the glory thereof! It hath been often dreadful to my thoughts, and I fear the sad issues of it under the present formality of standing up for these proposals. How blindly do men run against the Holy Ghost, not considering that his glory is equal in the work of Salvation, with the glory of the Father and the Son, especially in the work of regeneration, by the efficacy of his applicatory works alone? It is inconsistent and blind to think that the Spirit and the creature can be advanced together in a sinner's acceptance of Christ. I am also sure, that if the Spirit was duly honoured by us under a lively faith, as we walked by the light of Christ, the proposal would never be talked of, but God the Holy Ghost working in us from the Father and Christ, of God's own good pleasure. The light, if we walked in the light, as he is in the light, we should be preserved from such blindness, and have fellowship one with another. {"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." I Jn.1:7.} That is, {as the plain coherence lies,} God with us, and we with God; God with us by virtue of the imputed righteousness of Christ, Rom.5:19, or through it, and the communion of his Spirit under it; and we with God, under that same righteousness of God, in a holy delighting in God, setting up the glory of his Grace, and with the small rain of his blessing in the dews of his Spirit, would lay the dust which proud flesh has raised before our eyes, by using men's mouths for offers of Christ, which should be filled with the praises of Christ's Operations. I am certain it is not my carnal judgment, it is not my dead opinion, but it is my life, my living experience, {as God's word and God's work hath met together in my soul,} that the mighty Operations of God, renewing the faculty, elevating the understanding, strengthening the will, purifying the conscience with the blood of Christ, {with which the heart is sanctified; even by a gracious touch of the Object, as the Object breaks in upon it, and draws out the heart towards it in the Person of Christ,} do leave no room in our thoughts to offer Christ to anyone. {"Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will

reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth." Jer.33:6.} Why should we not employ all our light, influence and clearest experience to speak of the things of God, as we have found them upon our own souls under the Spirit's work? {"But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works." Psal.73:28.} So that if I go forth upon my Master's work, under the Operations of this glorious Spirit, and in his work to believe that Christ's Spirit is with me, {having both his infallible word and efficacious work meeting in my heart, Jer.15:16,} to what purpose should I, in seeking to reach the souls of the elect, and using such means to build them up, and instruct them in Christ, to pitch so low and poorly in the dark, blundering so upon nature, as to talk of offers of Christ, when as I come forth and preach Christ crucified, I Cor.1:23, in the light and operations of the Everlasting Gospel, Rev.14:6, from my own experience of its power and authority upon my own heart, and do thereby, through this Effectual Grace, see which way I must proceed to win souls, and where I must pitch and anchor my hope in God's power, that I may prevail, and see the elect from the Spirit's work begun in the new birth, converted believingly, and their hearts drawn to Christ? {"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus." Heb.6:19-20.} Ah, but offers are blind, they stand in the way between the heart and the Object, but cannot see it. Isa.59:2. They keep up a wall of separation which cuts off all prospects between the sinner's receiving Christ, and the preachers proposing Him. Oh, sheer blindness! As if the Spirit which reaches the heart by gift, was less than the offer, than can only stand before the heart with an empty call. Well, we clearly see that an offer of Grace is but the good will of a poor dark preacher, who is at a loss to manage the practical or experimental part of divinity.

I shall therefore give one instance more of the blindness of offering Christ to sinners, and that is, that it tends to make natural men, who are under no trouble about their souls, readily reply within themselves, "Aye, I have accepted Christ, God forbid I should reject Him.

What! Me put away the Grace of God! No, never." I Sam.15:20. And this is the case with the majority of professors, in most of the mixed congregations in England. They all generally conclude that they have accepted the offer, though they be almost as ignorant of Christ as the wood of their preacher's pulpit! {"And my people are bent to backsliding from me; though they called them to the Most High, none at all would exalt him." Hos.11:7.} They are prodigiously zealous for they know not what. But the worst of it all is, when you ask them if they know what it is about, they will tell you they dare not withstand the offer of Christ. {"Wherefore the Lord said, forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men." Isa.29:13.} Oh no; God forbid. On the other hand, some new-born souls who want to be led clearly into the mystery of Christ, and some new-born babes that desire the sincere milk of the word, I Pet.2:2, to satisfy their new-born appetites, these under such dark preaching as at this day, are starving for lack of knowledge; they find they want something, but they do not know what to call it, poor hearts; they hear and they hear, but they are not refreshed; they come in the dark, and they go in the dark, and are ready to conclude all is dark under these dark offers. {"The night is far spent, the day is at hand; let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." Rom.13:12.} "Well," says the poor drooping soul, "the preacher hath done his part faithfully; he offers me Christ, and bids me come and get an interest in Him. Oh, that is what I want! But the Lord knows I have not done my part therein; for I cannot do mine! He has been tendering me Christ bravely," says the soul. "Oh, but still how shall I come at Him, and how shall I come at faith? Oh, I am hardened, and I cannot believe, I cannot venture, and I cannot depend. Oh! What will become of me forever! He hath been offering me Christ, but I have not once accepted him all this time. Oh! I have slighted Him. I have sinned against the love of Christ, and against all these free offers. I have sinned away my day of Grace. Thus, it is all over with me, &c."

Thus the best of God's children, accustomed to such dark preaching, go away ordinarily in a cloud of dark unbelief, sadness, and desponding. Whereas, some of the worst of the congregation, who have got a few head-notions, never spiritually digested in a new-born heart, but are the religious talkatives of the age, not understanding the meaning of what they talk of. They are flushed up, buoyed up, maintain the party-form, rely upon their accepting of the offer; and do count all is well, Isa.36:6, if the Antinomians {as they call them} would be quiet, and did not come and spoil their pride, disturb their peace, and tear their nest to pieces.

We must preach the Gospel in a Gospel way. Offers are legal; and is legal preaching good news? Heb.12:19. No! Then preach Christ, and do not offer Christ. Preach the Object evangelically. Preach Christ's interest, as the glass in which reflexively the soul may behold its own interest. {"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." II Cor.3:18.} Divert not into offers of Christ, they are legal, not evangelical; then where is your evangelical offer? How are offers legal, you will say? Why they press sinners who never felt a work of Grace, to serve or accept of Christ in the oldness of the letter, {which old letter or Law administration commanded the old man to do as much as it commanded the new man; and this is to propose the Gospel as the Law was proposed at Mount Sinai, and promiscuously to command every man alike,} while they instruct not sinners to serve in the newness of the Spirit. {"But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Rom.7:6.} It is legal to preach the Gospel to sinners as proposed; it is only evangelical to preach it as imposed or poured forth upon them, put upon them by Grace, Heb.8:10, irresistibly, in defiance of corruption, but with an experience of freeness and spontaneousness in the faculty, under the Operation of Grace, and thereby discharged of Sin, so as to have no more dominion over them, to hold them in bondage to the Law, and to any work or act as a legal piece of service. {"For sin shall not

have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom.6:14.} So long as you are offer-men, you are not able ministers of the New Testament. Your proposals are legal in the form, though you think them evangelical in the matter. Whereas, you should be ministers not of the letter, but of the Spirit, for the letter killeth, {and you may see, as I have instanced before, what a killing stroke your offer carries with it to the new-born soul,} whereas the Spirit gives life. II Cor.3:6. Offers run in the form of ministration, which is called the ministration of death. II Cor.3:7. Do this and live, neglect this and die. Accept the proposal and be saved, refuse Christ and perish. This is legal stuff; for take a man that is thoroughly convinced of sin and moral impotency, to fit under this, and there will not be one word of good news in it to his soul. Where then is your evangelical offer? How have you shut out the ministration of the Spirit? And by mere shifts of proposals turned from the Gospel, into the very ministration of death and condemnation. What is an offer of Grace to a saint under trouble, then pray what is it to a sinner under terror, in one that never saw his interest? The Gospel shows a sinner as in a glass, that by God's Operations of Grace all his bolts are taken off, and under the power of the Gospel he feels that he is free indeed. But your offer is a mere legal bar in the way.

Again, we must preach the Gospel substantially, but offers are noisy and quite empty of the benefit. And is this good news? Then you ought to be ashamed of your free offers. Sinners want to receive of Christ's fullness by conveyance, Jn.1:16, and you starve them with empty tenders that propose acceptance. You lead them to rest on external signs, and neglect the advancement of Operations in God's internal grace, making it impossible to distinguish between the children and dogs, Phil.3:2, under your common offers. And indeed, when I consider that men will extend the noisy offer, and the empty shell of preaching to all within the sound, I must confess, that a bare bone may be sufficient for dogs, but it is a pity that the children of the kingdom were not under a substantial distribution of the Gift of God, because unto these Christ has given His flesh to be meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed. Jn.6:55.

We must, in exalting the Spirit's work, be found to preach the Gospel closely as to its own points. But offers being wide and wandering, and wholly destitute of the Spirit's guidance, wander into blind paths besides, to reach all souls, inasmuch that they never effectually reach any lost sheep of the house of Israel. They occasion man's thoughts to roam up and down so loosely upon everybody, till the heart is kept close upon nobody to gain them. Whereas, when God the Spirit teaches me to preach home to the case of one soul, the Lord thereby reaches the case of many individuals, with the same efficacy of power. The man does not keep close to the foundation of God, when he holds forth his offers. He doth not lie close to Election in the Building. {"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his; and, let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." II Tim.2:19.} No, for he ever wanders about aimlessly. Nor is the offer fitted indeed to be laid upon the One Foundation, for it is but wood, hay, and stubble. I Cor.3:12.

We must in exalting the Spirit's work preach the Gospel faithfully. But offers are deceitful. They speak much from the minister's lips, but they perform nothing in the sinner's heart. Offers could not help Paul after conversion, "for the good that I would," says he, "I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." Rom.7:19. How then can offers help a sinner to Conversion? It was a communication of the Spirit which Paul looked for. He found no relief by proposals. How then do we think that poor sinners should be relieved and brought to Christ by them? {"For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes; the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered." Isa.29:10.} Men in the very act of offering, pretend to reach out the golden sceptre of mercy to a poor sinner, {nothing less,} and this is spiritual wickedness in high places. Whereas, it is God's prerogative and none other's, an act of the King, not an act of the minister to do so. It is to be done by God Himself, through Jehovah our Righteousness, and by Jehovah the Spirit, not by God's servants. So that it is deceitful to put these offers in the place of God's Operations of His Grace. II Cor.4:2. Besides, coming to

the golden sceptre in that act of Esther, is no fit parallel to resemble this case of proposing Christ to sinners, who have not so much as the life of Grace to move, nor the light of Grace to discern, nor indeed any eye of faith, to behold their marriage relation, as Esther saw it, and in which she stood to Ahasuerus. Est.2:17. Once more, they propose what is never decreed of God, Eph.1:11, and what was never intended to be given from above.

We must, in exalting the Spirit's work, preach the Gospel powerfully, but offers are weak and impotent. They strengthen not the soul, and is this good news? Where then be your grace offers and evangelical offers? A poor sinner is never the better for your impotent remedies; for he must have the power of God unto Salvation. Offers are not so, because they can never close with the man; the man must, {that is, if he can,} first close with the offer, and indeed when he does close with the offer, it is but a natural closure, a rational choice; and the offer closed with, being nothing more than letter, doctrine, forms, and words, can neither strengthen his soul, nor supply his wants. The man is but where he was, and what he was, as to his condition and state; only you have brought him to change his opinion, and somebody else may change it again for him. He is of another judgment, but the same creature that ever he was. Now what mighty thing have your proposals done towards the conversion of this man, who is a natural man still, and still to be converted to the Christ of God in Gift and Power, though he be already converted to the Christ in form and offer? For this is certain, consistently with an impotency to Salvation, that if the offer takes with some in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity, to let in some notion of Christ into the soul by a rational eye {there being something in Christ fitted to the reasonable nature} yet that soul still rebels; but when he is let in by a renewed eye, the soul otherwise receives him with desire, even as he is fitted to God's Glory, and to our wants above reason. In essence, if ever saved, he will be saved by power, from your bastard {both false and illegitimate} conversion and forms of reformation.

The eighteenth resolution of the question. Do you still ask how must we preach the Gospel of Christ, if we

do not offer the Gospel? Or how must we preach Christ, if we do not offer Him? I answer, preach the Gospel so as Christ may see in it the travail of his soul, and be satisfied. Isa.53:11. Men that deceive with a show of offers do therein drop the Gospel-Satisfaction, or seem to forget what they profess, and have undertaken to preach, even Christ and him crucified. I Cor.2:2. For as upon the cross there was a pouring out of his blood, so in our preaching of the cross, we must preach the certain communication of it to the soul, and that communication works acceptance, works consideration, works recollection; and we must not tell a soul, here you may have it if you will accept it. {"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." I Pet.1:2.} Doth Christ see of the travail of his soul by such language? No, and I am abundantly persuaded, that because men preach so little of the fruitfulness of the blood of Christ, Zech.9:11, and that he shall see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied, that therefore the Lord in his Justice does not honour those individual instruments with seals to their ministry; and from his Justice towards them on this account, they find so little success. {"Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins. Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God; they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God." Isa.58:1-2.} His justice, I say, is the immediate cause of executing the decree, because ministers in the preaching part have left God, and have refused to exalt his Grace to the utmost. They exchange preaching for proposing, and offering Christ for opening Christ; and so God's justice executes his wise decree, Job 23:13, in their unprofitable ministry; though yet it was his Sovereignty which fixed the Decree, Psal.33:11, and originally appointed that their ministry should be brought to desolation. {"And the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, which stood above the people, and said unto them, thus saith God, why transgress ye the commandments of the

LORD, that ye cannot prosper? Because ye have forsaken the LORD, he hath also forsaken you." II Chron.24:20.}

The nineteenth resolution of the question. We should preach the Gospel so as the ministers of Satan do not, nay, cannot. That is, we should exalt Operations of Grace, which have from God an irresistible influence to overpower our corruptions, Ezek.36:26, and free our wills of slavery and bondage to sin; whereas Satan can work so in none towards the conceiving of lust and bringing forth of sin. Offers are Satan's way of pleasure, profit, and worldly friendship to ensnare the non-elect; therefore they can be none of God's ways in bringing deliverance to the elect, though you sugar the lure with the name of Gospel-offers. No, no; God carries on all his work by Gospel Operations. Offers and proposals are Satan's way to bring poor souls unto utter destruction. {"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Rev.20:10.} Therefore, offers and proposals of truth are none of God's way to save the elect among sinners; and as God in using of truth will not take the devil's way in using a temptation, II Tim.2:26, so the devil shall not, cannot take God's way to approach the heart.

The twentieth and last resolution of the question. We are to preach the Gospel with a humble confidence in Christ, and a holy cautionary fear as to ourselves, that we do not lean with too much stress upon the creature, but express the whole of our confidence, as to the success of our preaching, in the Lord alone. {"Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD." Psal.25:15.} But offers are presumptuous, as they do rob the Gospel of Christ of its properties, privileges, and glory; and that is in its freeness and effectualness to clothe itself in its elevation of Christ. Again, they usurp Christ's authority and prerogative, affecting to say to dead Lazarus, "Come forth." Jn.11:43. Whereas, we have no authority from the word to say this to any, except we really believe it shall be done. Mt.21:21. Our work is absolutely to sow the seed of good doctrine, and leave it in Christ's hands to bring it forth in his own time. Further, it is a presumptuous thing to alter an ordinance into an offer, for this is to turn God's

Institution into man's invention. {"The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant." Isa.24:5.} The Lord's ordinance and institution is preaching salvation by Jesus Christ alone; their invention is a proposal for acceptance. Ezek.13:6-12. His is a gift, theirs is but a tender; his is Effectual, theirs altered into a weak device that can effect nothing. It is therefore presumption to propose a less means of conversion to sinners, than what would become effectual to edification and increase of faith in saints. For saints stand, grow, and increase, and sin is trodden down, by power, and not by proposals. Saints are acted on by one that is able to keep them from falling. Jude 24. Then how presumptuous is it to imagine that sinners are converted by a proposal of Grace? The Spirit of the Lord Jesus Christ is of power to establish saints, according to the institution of preaching Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery, which was kept secret since the world began. Rom.16:25. What a vain presumption is it then to go and offer Christ to sinners, and think God will bless this useless means to convert them! Saints have to do with Christ, who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that they ask or think, according to the power that worketh in them. Eph.3:20. How then can sinners be converted to Christ by offers; which God hath nowhere revealed to be the means of putting forth this power of God upon them? Saints are kept by the power of God through faith unto Salvation. I Pet.1:5. How can sinners then be expected to be brought to God by proposals, without great presumption in substituting such offers in room of God's Operations of his Grace? And so much in Answer to the Question.

CHAPTER NINE

Some Texts of scripture that are evidently mis-applied to uphold offer preaching, set right to confute the offer-way.

The first text mistaken is Rev.22:17, "and the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." This text is of another tendency than that in John 7:37, "if any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink," which text I have opened in my last book. "Let him that is athirst come." Athirst for what? It's plain, for the "pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb." Rev.22:1. Athirst, when? Why, this is also plain, 'tis when that pure river of the water of life runs. {"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Rev.21:6.} Nothing is said of it now so distinctly, so as to make the children of God {set in opposition to the dogs, verse 15, &c.,} to thirst for it. No. Such drink under muddy preachers, and are almost everywhere satisfied with mingled streams. But, when the day spoken of comes, it will be otherwise. Then men will find all sermons and waters they have hitherto had, did not satisfy their thirst. And the reason is, they will know that the New Jerusalem Glory is come, all old things and mixtures are passed away, and behold all things are become new, Rev.21:5, and eminently this same pure river of the water of life in the paradise of God, is ever new; but there is a time coming when the church of God will drink more largely of the waters of life without mixture, than ever she has done yet. The waters that now make glad the city of our God, Psal.46:4, have some mixtures of our own in them, and the River is not yet seen that's to be as clear as a crystal. John was here shown such a pure river as had never yet flowed. No; not in the days of the Apostles themselves. It is therefore no offer of Grace in our sermons to sinners to believe on Jesus

Christ, but it is an invitation of the glorious church at the later day, to the members of the gracious church; and so is spoken of glorified saints with the Holy Ghost to invite believers to come and drink of the New Jerusalem Waters they thirst after, which then will be in the Land of Promise, Heb.11:9, but now are not yet set abroad. The arguments for this interpretation are these that follow: 1. The tree of life, verse 2, shows us that it must be in the midst of the paradise of God. Revelation 2:7 is a parallel text that helps clear it, "he that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; to him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God." This paradise can be no other than the New Adam's paradise, in the purified land of promise, given to Christ's seed for an everlasting possession, Gen.17:8, wherein dwells righteousness, where the church will be brought to Christ and married to him, Matt.24:31, as Eve was brought to Adam and joined to him in marriage, Gen.2:22, which was done in old Adam's paradise, a type and shadow thereof. The elect of God had their death there, by eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Gen.2:9, but they shall have life and immortality in their bodies from Christ, in his new paradise, limited to the glorious church for a thousand years on earth, as well as they had life in their souls and immortality from Christ, when their souls departed from their bodies, and went to Christ to be prepared for the Bride's dressing, Rev.19:7, and making herself ready against this time. 2. The thirsting for this pure river of the water of life, is in a day when there shall be no more curse, 22:3. {"And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited." Zech.14:11.} The Spirit and the bride then will say, Come, &c. 3. This time is when risen saints in their bodies shall behold his face, I Jn.3:2, and his name is written in their foreheads, 22:4; then these saints shall make the invitation to the eminent thirsters for Christ, for these gracious thirsters are the children of the glorious church in the Land of Promise, over whom she shall then have power to make them princes in all the earth. {"I am Alpha and Omega, the

beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Rev.21:6.} 4. It is when there shall be no night in this land of promise, where the Jews dwelt once at night, Isa.26:9, and their souls had desired him in the night. {"Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee." Isa.60:1.} And when there shall be no candle, no light of the sun, but the Lamb shall be the light thereof. Rev.21:23. 5. It is at a time when the Lord God of the holy prophets sends his messengers to show unto his servants the things, which, under their ministry in gathering the elect "from the four winds, from the uttermost part of the earth to the uttermost part of heaven," Mk.13:27, must shortly be accomplished, 22:6, so that it is when he cometh in the clouds, and every eye shall see him. {"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen." Rev.1:7.} 6. It is at a time when the Lord comes with this clear water, and the fruits of the Tree of Life together, as the rewards of the risen saints, Zech.14:5, which he brings with him for his Kingdom. The thirst and invitation to the waters is plainly spoken of to be in the same glorious day, when the contexture of the chapter is made good; for then it is they do gloriously, upon the gathering of them by the angels, even more abundantly, through the gates into this city. {"For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." II Pet.1:11.} 7. It's at a time too when all the wicked that rise to everlasting shame and contempt, Dan.12:2, are without this glorious palace, where the carcasses of the men shall be looked upon that have sinned against God, and made the monumental spectacles of Justice, in their appearance in "dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie." 22:15. {"And they shall go forth, and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." Isa.66:24.} 8. Lastly, it is

only after men have had a greater discovery of the Person and Kingdom of Jesus Christ in the ministry of the Word, than what is now received in the churches; for Christ hath many things to say to the churches, but the churches under the present measure of the Spirit cannot yet bear them; yet some churches now to their everlasting honour can bear a great deal more than others. However, a great deal of light which shall be received about the Kingdom of Christ will be first relinquished and neglected, as it hath been with other truths, and lo, then he appears the second time without sin unto Salvation. {"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." Heb.9:28.} And then comes the invitation when the church is completely made the bride, and fitted to join with the Holy Spirit, and to say, "come." But is the church got to this glorious pitch and height yet? Is the New Jerusalem come down from Heaven? For as Revelation Chapter 21 describes her state and structure, {her bridal state and her triumphant state,} so likewise, Revelation Chapter 22 sets forth her entertainment and joyfulness in Christ.

Do men indeed pretend to justify their offers from the word of the Spirit; then hear what He says in the same chapter, "he that is unjust, let him be unjust still. He that is filthy, let him be filthy still." If these Scriptures are taken in the gross literal sense, they contradict one another. Neither offers nor invitations can be justified from the one, any more than an encouragement to sin can be inferred from the other. Do ministers indeed now tell sinners from Matthew 11:28, that they must come to Christ weary and heavy laden, believe that the church will be thus in her old clothes, with dust and worldly business, and bear burdens upon her wedding day? No, no, Jesus Christ's bride when she says, come, will not be up to the ears in muck, nor cumbered, as she is now, with much serving. Lk.10:40. For burdens, toil, trade, worldly business, and such as produces the weariness spoken of in Matt.11:28, that where she is most spiritual makes her even weary of the toil, will all be ended, {which is part of Adam's curse,} and shall be no more, when her Lord is

come to take her home into this matrimonial joy and marriage glory of his Kingdom! It is plain then to me, that this verse, Rev.22:17, is no more a proof of the offers of Grace to sinners, as men now make use of it, as Genesis 1:1 is a proof that any of us in the ministry have been brought up at the feet of Gamaliel. Acts 22:3.

Some henchmen run to a second text, "ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price," Isa.55:1, to justify their offers and proposals of Grace to sinners. But the answer is plain. On the contrary, for it appears by plain interpretation, Acts 28:23, that the text falls under two branches of matter, according to the distinct time and way of revealing a Divine Message. A prophecy, and so it concerned Isaiah's time, and is lodged as a prophecy upon record, throughout the remainder of the Old Testament Dispensation, till Christ came. An accomplishment of the prophecy, or waiting upon Gospel ordinances, by Christ's coming into the Ministry of the Gospel in Person, and his continuing to be with Gospel Ministers by the Holy Ghost, to the end of the world. Matt.28:20. Now in the accomplishment, three things more are to be considered, which take in the whole meaning of the text; all which are evidently against their exposition who labour to carry the place to justify offers and proposals. For I look upon this to be a text that fully disproves them. The first is a proclamation, "ho! every one that thirsteth," the second is invitation, "Come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk without money, and without price." The third thing is, ministration of the commodities, I Pet.4:10-11, called selling them to the heavenly merchant-men without money and without price. Now there is not one of these things can justify an offer of Grace; for, the proclamation of Grace can be no offer, because that is only a voice crying and declaring the will of the Superior, Isa.40:3, by a person in authority under him. So John the Baptist cried or proclaimed the Ministry of Christ, Lk.3:4, by giving notice that he was to come after him into the wilderness. The invitation can be

no offer, for an invitation is of persons, that are absent from the entertainment, and spoken to in order to a future treating them with provisions made ready in another place; yea provisions killed and prepared to entertain them; for it not only says, come to the waters, but come and eat. {"Tell them which are bidden, behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come unto the marriage." Matt.22:4.} The invitation of them to the Gospel treat is not to entertain them on the spot where invited, but elsewhere. {"And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, come; for all things are now ready." Lk.14:17.} Of this nature is that common invitation to hear the preaching of the Gospel, when notice is given that the Gospel will be preached at such a time, and in such a place, to which any that are desirous, may repair and find the means freely. The invitation is to them that are scattered about in places, either where Jesus Christ never met with their souls, or that desire still to meet with fresh entertainment of his love, I Pet.2:3-4, would come locally to the place where Christ is to be found occasionally, and come often, to the place where he dwells constantly, after present refreshment in the means and ordinances of the Lord's own appointment. These means and ordinances and Gospel doctrines, through which are communications of spiritual life, set forth by waters, wine, milk, &c. Men comply then with the Invitation, and are come to the waters, when of absent from the means they are come unto the means. {Invitation supposes a local distance of guests. Men present cannot be called to come, though they may be called to buy.} Whereas, an offer can be no Invitation. An offer {where offers take place} is where the person is come, and spoken with upon the spot, but an invitation is by a message sent forth, where Christ in the Gospel is absent, or a call to go where he is not yet present. There is a ministration which must be understood to be in this text which is beyond the invitation. For when sinners are come to the waters, and are present at them as the conduits of God's Grace in Christ, are they still to be invited or to be entertained? Our work therefore, when

men are come together now, is to open the Mysteries of Salvation, and set that these living waters abroad. Proclamation and Invitation now have found out the thirsty, and the thirsty are come, what do you now for that time? Do you minister the provisions Jesus Christ has prepared, the fatted calf and the paschal lamb; or do you stand inviting yet? O foolish generation! O foolish people and unwise! Deut.32:6. {"The children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light." Lk.16:8.} For when men are thirsty and ready to perish for drink, and they are invited where it is, and stand round the vessel, doth the drawer instead of broaching the vessel and giving to every one drink, stand impertinently and invite them to this vessel of liqueur to which they are come already? No; he that ministers draws it out, he gives it round to the company. So should we when we preach the Gospel, in such case, minister it, not offer it; for the ministration can be no offer. Because a ministration is the Lord's communication of the benefit by his servant, his conveyance of the Grace by the minister he employs and blesses. For the ordinances of Christ are as vessels of water, so Scriptures are vessels of this water; promises are vessels of water, wine, and milk; so are experiences of God's ministers themselves who have believed, and they should tell their experiences in the pulpit, because they have believed, that out of the abundance of the heart the mouth may speak, Matt.12:34, and out of their belly may flow rivers of living water. Jn.7:38. {"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." I Jn.1:3.} All these should be broached that souls who are come to drink may be refreshed with the waters, the wine and milk of the Gospel. Milk is drawn out of the breasts; the mother feels it before she parts with it to the infant; so the church of Christ that gives her breasts to poor sinners, I Pet.2:2, and to young converts by the ministers of Christ, must have ministers that can speak from experience, Rom.1:11; and these ministers of Christ in the churches must impart their experiences, by setting inward truths abroad, that poor sinners may see how God's Word and

his work meets. {"That ye may suck, and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory." Isa.66:11.}

Our ministration must lie in opening Scriptures, pouring forth the liqueur of life from them, and preaching the Grace of God so freely, that we should give the cup of Salvation into every thirsty man's hand. For the hand and the thirst do radically go together. {"They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures." Psal.36:8.} For the hand that I am speaking of is the new creature's faith formed by the Holy Ghost. We should not offer Christ, thinking under the offer he will work Grace; but we should minister Christ, knowing by what we have experienced in our ministry upon our own souls, that the hand is formed and prepared of the Holy Ghost, and that he doth work Grace. Therefore, let us put the cup, the water, the wine, and milk, into the hand of faith created, and tell the elect roundly, it's for thee, for thee, and thee! For the thirsty groan and complain; you hear their cries and their calls, and may know their election of God by their spiritual appetites. {"Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God. For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake." I Thes.1:4-5.} I shall only further note, that this text, Isa.55:1, is a restrained and restricted invitation of the grace of God to the whosoever that thirst by Grace, for Grace. But offers are made to men, whether they thirst, or thirst not. Otherwise, what means the indiscrimination of them to all within the sound? Now if souls do thirst, give them drink, do not offer them drink that you cannot give; and if they do not thirst, why do you offer them the waters? {"It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs." Matt.15:26.} What though good, great and learned Mr. Obadiah Sedgwick upon this text may speak so much in the language of offers; he hath not attempted to give one word of proof for offers in all his treatise of

the Fountain Opened⁹ upon this text, and plainly it makes nothing for them. How then can men confound the offer with this invitation! Because their silver is become dross, and their wine is mixed with water. Isa.1:22.

The third text is II Cor.5:20, "now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." It is plain, by the first verse of the next chapter, how we are to understand this, and by this text how we must understand the same, II Cor.6:1, "we then, as workers together with him, {not workers together with Him, as is corruptly added to the original, but workers together, i.e., Paul with Timothy, and Timothy with Paul, &c.,} beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." It is plainly meant, that you honour not Christ's blood, if you despise his governmental sceptre. {"The government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." Isa.9"6-7.} We expose the Gospel to grievous reproaches, making many question whether we have the truth of faith, if we are not reconciled to God's in the points of Church Government. The text, II Cor.5:20, speaks evidently of the new creature's act, in reference to Christ as King in his own throne at Zion, and to be the absolute Master of Church Government and Gospel Holiness, requiring good order in his house, which {is plainly known} these Corinthians, when Paul wrote to them, needed enough. {"For the LORD is our judge, the LORD is our lawgiver, the LORD is our king; he will save us." Isa.33:22.} To be reconciled to God in this matter of Christ's Government, is effected by God's Grace through Christ's blood, as he is the High Priest forever, Psal.110:4, who hath once made atonement by it, and always pleads the virtue of it. And

⁹ Obadiah Sedgwick, Fountain Opened, 1657.

as this can never be disproved, so nothing else that is substantial can be proved out of these texts. There is a great deal of Christ suited to believers as Christ is King, upon the Foundation of his being Priest in Zion; and this is the true order of the Gospel, which many believers may not be reconciled to presently, who yet at bottom may have a true work of Grace. Now Faith and Order must not be parted; and if souls are under the blood of Christ, and yet do not honour the sceptre, we must speak to these as new-born babes, after another manner than we must speak to such sinners as are not begotten by his blood, and with the Apostle must say to saints, be you reconciled to Christ. But how to Christ? To Christ as Lord, Psal.45:11, as well as reconciled to Christ as Priest. Hence the ministers, Paul and Timothy, are not here considered as dealing in the message of the blood to sinners who were not at all converted; for that had been already effected, and the end answered, as they were saints in Corinth, I Cor.1:2, under the sprinklings of that blood by Jehovah the Spirit. But those ministers are considered as dealing in the message of the sceptre, and so are pleading for church-order among the saints, which they were not so reconciled in to God from their hearts, by embracing it, as they were reconciled to God in Gospel-faith and Gospel-gifts; whence they {Paul and Timothy} are called ambassadors, as coming from Christ their King with his positive orders, how he would have things through the external parts of profession, worship, and ordinances among the saints, better managed in his Kingdom. But what has any of this to do with offers of Grace to sinners? The words of the Apostle are spoken as a part of the Epistle, and that under the same style as it was in the salutation directed; but the style of salutation was not unto sinners; it was unto the church of God at Corinth, with all the saints in all Achaia. II Cor.1:1. Now he continues to speak of these saints, and of these church-members, still as a new creation, II Cor.5:17, so putting in himself and Timothy, and these saints, and lays all together in an "us." All things are of God, I Cor.8:6, who hath reconciled "us" to himself by Jesus Christ, II Cor.5:18; whereas, if this had been an offer of Grace to

sinner, and had meant their first coming to Christ, it had been utterly beside the apostle's contexture, to run it all along thus without any difference in the style, as to say "us," and yet not mean it of the Church of God. He hath reconciled us, and, he hath made Christ to be sin for us, vs.21; for he doth not say, "you sinners, here I offer you Christ, come to Christ, lay hold of him, that so what God hath made Christ, it may be for you." The Apostle doth not argue thus, as some Nonconformists do to sinners. But positively God hath made Christ to be sin for us and hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, Isa.53:10, and shall we not then, as the saints of God, be reconciled to God in his government also by Jesus Christ? Here is the plain force of the argument.

The fourth text of Scripture is Isaiah 27:5, "or let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me; and he shall make peace with me." This also has been brought to uphold offers of Grace, but there is no hold in it, for any such purpose, as a proffer of grace to a sinner to accept of Christ, and be justified. The truth of this text will appear by seeing more into the foundation of all peace with God, and of that peace brought in to the soul in the strength of God. {"But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." Isa.53:5.} The words inserted in another character, and put into the translation of the Original have but as a superfluous amplification, interrupted the text, and troubled it. For as "or" may be changed into "oh" so "that" and "and" have nothing to do in the verse, nor ought to have any place in the verse; it being spoken divisively and separately of two persons, not of one alone. It's spoken of a sinner who wants peace, and the rest is spoken of Christ the strength of God who makes his peace. {"Therefore being justified, by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Rom.5:1-2.} And so the words ought to be read thus, "Oh, let him take hold of my strength; he may make peace with me, he shall make peace with me." And this

reading which makes the former part of the verse is an Instruction to the sinner, {by the effectual ministry of the Gospel, not an offer of Grace,} as likewise the latter part of the verse is a Covenant Declaration of the undertaking of Christ, the Days-Man and the Surety-Man, who in God makes up the controversy between God and the sinner, and is exactly according to the contexture of the place, agreeable to what goes before and what follows after. The sense must be carried thus, of advice to the sinner, in the former part of the verse, because it's according to the scope of verse the 4th, "fury is not in me; who would set the briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Oh, let him take hold of my strength, &c.," and so the sense runs thus. Let him {the sinner} says the Lord, who would set the thorns against me in battle, consider again, as a reasonable man, that I am far above his match, and that he will find it ruinous to pitch upon a resolution of siding with his briars against me, his Maker. For says God, "I am a consuming fire," Heb.12:29; I shall go through the opposition, and shall burn up all his thorns. Does he think that the bands of the wicked set against me will save him? What's all the strength he can trust to, if he takes it up of the world's side against me, and the interest of my right hand? I shall be too hard for it all. {"He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail." I Sam.2:9.} Thus the sense is plain, as I have rendered it with the contexture of the verse preceding. "Who would set the briars and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Oh, let him take hold of my strength," &c., or rather, let that sinner be wiser, and take hold of Christ who is my strength, and in that Salvation is revealed to be the strength of God. Let him take hold of God in Christ who speaketh in Righteousness through all his pleas for sinners, and is mighty to save. {"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Isa.63:1.} Then it follows without a that, which entangles and corrupts the sense,

he may make peace, {he, my strength, may make peace,} with me. It is not an attribute of strength in God spoken of, but a Person of Strength in God, a personal strength. {"O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer." Psal.19:14.} Even he who is my Christ, says the Father, on whom I have laid help. Psal.89:19. This strength of mine, says he, in the very battle when I am fighting against sin by my Wrath and Justice in the conscience of a sinner, is what I look at. This engagement of my Son, who is my strength in Christ, and that even as he lay under the legal imputation of sin unto him, Isa.53:6, is something indeed, that shall stop the outgoings of my wrath in the sinner's conscience; for upon the account of this atonement made, "fury is not in me." Isa.27:4. He shall make peace by the efficacy of his blood, because, by covenant from everlasting he is my strength. "He, {says the Father,} my Christ, the strength of God, engaged his heart, as God-Man to approach unto me, and so he shall make peace." Jer.30:21. Accordingly, he ever lives, being God's strength, to make intercession to the uttermost for all that come unto God by Him. {"This man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb.7:24-25.} The Old Testament language was thus, he may make peace, he shall make peace. For having received a special commandment of the Father to go and lay down his life, Jn.10:18, he stands engaged, says God, as Surety of the better covenant in my strength, Heb.7:22, that cannot lie, Tit.1:2, to do so, and confirm the Everlasting Compact; and it shall become unto all intents and purposes, through the laying down of this life in the greatness of my strength, Isa.63:1, a full, a clear, and a most Effectual ransom in the very face of times. {"Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, deliver him from going down to the pit; I have found a ransom." Job 33:24.} He shall make peace. Oh, precious language to stay the heart of a mad and desperate sinner, whom, nevertheless, still in God's eye as his own, being among the election of his Grace, while he is thinking, poor creature, to come off in sin, by having a thorny world and

the briars of the earth, of his side against God. No, thorns and briars of our side will not do; for neither the world nor sin shall hold God's chosen; they going from faith to faith, Rom.1:17, from the faith of reason to the faith of gracious evidence, now at last by a supernatural power, the sinner having had a sight of armed justice in his conscience, and next, on a view of Christ, engaging that justice for the sinner, till the sinner feels an Effectual Grace that engages and turns his heart in upon this strength, Jer.30:21, and so he is sweetly brought by an act of Omnipotent Grace to an act of holy believing, in taking hold of this Divine Strength in the Person of a Crucified Jesus, I Cor.1:23, and he finds the promise of his peace sure, that this strength hath made his peace with God in a way of sprinkling his conscience sensibly, I Pet.1:2, even as Christ hath made his peace, Heb.12:24, and an atonement with God in a way of Justice federally. {"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." Eph.1:13.}

Hence it is the poor soul now can sing, "my mouth shall show forth thy righteousness and thy salvation all the day; for I know not the numbers thereof. I will go in the strength of the Lord GOD; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only," Psal.71:15-16, "not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake." Psal.115:1. Now this interpretation of Isa.27:5, is the clear Gospel, free of the Arminian muddying, and agrees with the whole scope and analogy of the Faith, as well as with the coherence of the place; but the translation by a "that" an "and" hath so muddied the stream, and preachers still going over it one after another in the Arminian footsteps, to uphold offers of Grace from it, have kept it muddy, that a man could not see the Gospel therein, till he went up higher in the stream nearer the Hebrew fountain; yea, the Gospel fountain in conjunction, without which by the Spirit of the Lord, the Hebrew would not do it, as is evident by the error of the Hebrician Translator and Supervisors. From hence it hath come to pass, that

instead of the true Gospel in the text, many a poor sinner has thought, under some natural convictions, to clap in themselves believing and repenting, as their own mediators between God and them, so to make peace. {"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." I Tim.2:5.} From hence, likewise, hath sprung that ignorant and common question out of the natural Popery and Arminianism of men's hearts amongst us, "have you made your peace with God?" By which the Mediator is thrown out and made to stand for a mere cypher. And no wonder the people throw him out of their thoughts, when the preacher so often throws Christ out of the text.

The sense must be carried thus, of a Covenant declaration of the undertakings of Christ in the latter part of the verse, as I have also opened; because it's according to the scope of what follows in verse six, "he shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root." A glorious promise! Now what connects this, except the foregoing "he" that may and shall make peace. And where shall this promise have its yea and amen? Shall it be in the creature or in Jesus Christ? {"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." II Cor.1:20.} Who shall cause of them that come of Jacob to take root? Is it he that believes, or he that is believed upon? Is it he who is directed in Effectual Grace to take hold of God's strength? Or is it not rather this Strength himself, who may, who shall, God says, make the peace? {"Trust ye in the LORD for ever; for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength." Isa.26:4.} Thus we see how wrongfully our Lord Christ hath been thrown out of this text, and surely it's a just interpretation of a text which restores Jesus Christ to his own, though perhaps some will not be aware of their idle words, Matt.12:36, but say it is new and extravagant; as they have unjustly done upon the other Scriptures in my former book, not proving their assertion.

The fifth text of Scripture they may be beaten out of is, what they pretend can warrant them to think, that if men have not Grace offered them, they cannot be justly condemned for unbelief. The text is II Thes.2:10, "and

with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." Upon this matter some adventure to go without any distinction so far as to say, here you see there are some that perish who might have been saved if they had had a love to the truth. And this they look upon to the unanswerable and direct meaning of the text. Others will make this to comport with it, that if an offer of Grace be not made to a sinner, that sinner cannot be guilty of, nor condemned for unbelief; as if Grace could be no otherwise affronted, opposed and abused, but where it was rejected under the offer, a notion that has been confuted enough in this treatise already. I shall only take notice further upon this erroneous and unhappy notion of theirs, that it is founded in Arminianism Calvinistically dressed up, but not in the Holy Scriptures. I will make good my assertion by this proof out of the Arminians who use the like plea. Say they, "where no Grace is, there no contempt of Grace can follow." The Arminians mean, where no Grace is given, where no Grace is offered, {for they all along in that book erroneously make a gift of Grace and an offer of Grace both one,} there men can't be guilty of rejecting it. So that when the offer-men say that a sinner that hath not Grace offered him cannot be condemned for unbelief, amounts to what the Arminians say, "he that hath no Grace can condemn none," for be sure that unbelief is a contempt of Grace, Psal.106:24, and the contempt of Grace lies in an unbelief thereof. Then unbelief is condemned because it's a sinning against the evidences of what is taught about Christ. But to open this text in the Thessalonians, "because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved." Here was a possibility, {say they,} of the Salvation of these sinners that perished, if they had accepted the offer of Grace, and had not refused the tender of Salvation. For Salvation at the 10th verse is set in opposition to damnation at the 12th verse, they tell you. God never intended to bestow eternal Salvation on them; for, if he had, he would have revealed to them that Salvation through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth, as he did to those in the 10th verse.

But the answer is plain, for it is evident that the saving there spoken of is a temporal Salvation, Acts 2:40, it is to be freed from the particular plague or judgment, Isa.1:19, which the Apostle there specifies. And what that was he tells you; the mystery of iniquity coming after the working of Satan, with all power and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish. II Thes.2:8-10. These were to be the agents and factors of that wicked one to be revealed, as a punishment of the Roman Empire, after Constantine's time, for men not receiving the love of the truth, or the true Glory and Mystery of the Object of Faith, but loving a lie rather. For as to subjective love in the faculty it's not received from without, as the love of God is, but is wrought within and begins there. The love of the truth they received not, was the doctrine of God's everlasting love, Jer.31:3; which is the top and quintessence of the truth of Christ. The love of that truth {in which Christ in the whole revelation of the Gospel is manifested, is love itself, and the image of the invisible God, Col.1:15,} thus they throw off, and would not hear, the doctrine of Election and Everlasting Settlements. For as Election is the great article of God's love, Mal.1:2, and to receive Election is to receive the love of the truth. And this very point steadfastly believed amongst them, would have been a security of their other principles from the common inundation of Popery, which strikes at Election, or the love of the truth objectively, in all deceivableness of unrighteousness. A doctrinal principling them in the truth of God's Absolute Sovereignty in Electing Grace would have protected them from Popery, and have given them an insight into the cheats which occurred to propagate and establish the doctrine of this mystery of iniquity in the world. {"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Rev.13:8.}

Now to be outwardly and temporally saved from this deceivableness of unrighteousness, &c., which was to run along in the stream of Popery, was a great saving, though not that great Salvation, as mentioned in Hebrews

2:3. And that it's plainly meant thus, appears further, because the damnation spoken of, verse 12, is not set in opposition to the saving at verse 10, but only in distinction from it. It is not a contrary salvation to it, but a diverse salvation from it. Because the executing of the Decree of Damnation comes in upon another score than a mere not receiving the love of the truth, that they might be saved from this same all-deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perished, viz., as the instruments of that wicked one to be revealed, 2:8, in their bringing in Popery into the world. And this other score or reason rendered, upon which their damnation is executed, 2:12, is their believing a lie, and having pleasure in the unrighteousness that promoted it. Now this is quite another thing than their not receiving the love of the truth, in the doctrine of God's special favour towards his own chosen in Christ. Nevertheless, their not receiving the love of the truth, in the orthodoxy and sweetness of that doctrine of the love of God, is the cause and reason of God's sending them strong delusions to believe this lie of Popery, which plague and judgment of Popery {from which the elect are saved from} God was righteously provoked to send, as a punishment for their entertaining the truth by halves; the truth in some superficial branches, yet apostatizing from the truth in the fundamental doctrines thereof; so that the only things to be gathered out of the 10th verse set in the face of the light, are: 1. That the Love of the Truth distinct from the notion of the love, is God's Everlasting Love to the persons of his elect chosen in Christ Jesus; and that God's own elect shall never come short of this love of the truth experimentally made known in the unction of the Holy Ghost. 2. That many men professing the out-parts of truth, and receiving the notion of some parts of it, have never yet received the love of it, which is the foundation of all; which is evident by their still shutting out the love of the Father, towards the elect in Christ Jesus. 3. That a sound orthodox notion of the love of the truth is God's appointed fence against error and deceit; and particularly against Popish or Arminian cheats, though they come to us with signs and lying wonders, and with all

deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, by the bringing of it in, to eclipse, and then in the dark to alter, corrupt and destroy the glorious Gospel, founded in Christ who is the Truth, as Christ the Truth is founded in the Love of God. 4. That the believing of a lie and the having pleasure in unrighteousness is a farther sinning into other kinds of unrighteousness, than a not receiving the love of the truth which made way for it. 5. That the supreme cause of men's further sinning in their believing of a lie, and having pleasure in unrighteousness, than they had first sinned in their not receiving the truth of the Gospel in the love of it, is God's sending strong delusions towards this latter sin, as a just judgment to punish, the commission of their former sin. "Therefore thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will lay stumblingblocks before this people, and the fathers and the sons together shall fall upon them; the neighbour and his friend shall perish." Jer.6:21. 6. That the decree of damnation is not executed till sin be finished which bringeth forth death, Gen.15:16, Rom.1:28, as we of the Supra-lapsarian side {for absolute Election and Non-Election of persons in fixing the Decree, as to Love and Hatred of the persons; and yet too of the Sub-Lapsarian side for Absolute ways and means of executing the Decree, as to Salvation and Punishments} do hold; though we are slanderously reported, Rom.3:8, by one of the Sub-Lapsarian way, as if the Supra-lapsarian theology {in Gomarus, Voet, Piscator, Perkins, Twisse, &c.,} held, that God from Eternity sentenced the greatest part of mankind to Eternal Flames not for any prescience of their future ill behaviour, but because he would have it so, and to show forth his Absolute Dominion over his creatures, and to manifest his Unlimited Power. Wherein now doth this text appear to propose the notion concerning offers of Grace?

The last text I shall mention as an objection against what I have written, and as brought in defence of offers, is that noted place, Rom.3:25, "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." If upon this text I have at any time used the word proposed, it is because my thoughts were not directed to consult the Original; for we are prone to bring in

abundance of errors into our work through laziness, in not carefully consulting the Scriptures in their Originals. There the word is fore-ordained or fore-appointed, and not proposed. Indeed, the original word which is *proetheto* in that text, as much as to say fore-appointed, is not to be read "set forth." Much less is it setting forth in the nature of an offer or a proposal. Besides, supposing it was the sense of the original, yet setting forth here could even then be nothing else but God's Demonstration of Christ to the soul. What has this to do with the common way of these offers; after this unwarranted form, "come, poor sinner, I have been setting forth Christ; come and take Him, &c.," whereas, suppose the form of translation was right in the text, it should have run after this manner, "well, poor sinner, how hath God been setting forth Christ in the eye of thy soul? How has God struck in and quickened, encouraged, raised thy poor soul by his own arm, the Holy Spirit of the Lord." Nevertheless, as the original word signifies fore-appointed, we are not to alter the efficacy of the word, since the Holy Ghost's own work upon the soul absolutely depends upon what is signified thereby unto us, sanctification of the Spirit unto belief of the truth, II Thes.2:13, being wholly built upon the fore-appointments of the Father. Note, that all other texts, which are by men brought to uphold Grace-offers, are misunderstood, when they are not opened in the same Gospel-way with the texts in this chapter.

CHAPTER TEN

A Reply made unto sundry pleas urged against what is written.

Plea#1. "This point in your book of Offers, Invitations and Exhortations, I must take some notice of, having prepared some manuscripts which I know not but I may publish, to justify my own and the practice of others, or rather the Gospel itself."

Reply. It's a pity that it was not thought on by this writer, that neither he nor his practice should have been taken notice of to be justified, but that the Lord alone was to be exalted. For it is plain he brings down the Gospel to himself and his practice, who should have brought up himself and his practice to the Gospel, had he pleaded in the light and teachings of the Lord the Spirit. It is certain that our own and other men's practices without the Spirit of Christ, is none of the Gospel, call it what we will; but an eclipse of the Gospel that darkens the sun at noonday. It's a veil hung up before the Gospel; and if ever the holy of holies be made manifest, this veil must antecedently be rent, and the pieces of it, like the curtains of the Jewish night, must be all laid by, when we come to see that every veil is done away in Christ. {"But their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ." II Cor.3:14.} We are poor things in preparing manuscripts before the Holy Ghost hath prepared our hearts; and what evidence is it that he hath prepared our hearts, where the preaching of Election and of God's Effectual Grace, God's Choice and God's Power, are made so slight of through all these pleas?

Plea#2. "We ought to preach Christ without concerning ourselves whether we preach him to the elect or the non-elect."

Reply. Marvellous darkness! Who would not think that this man was pleading for Christ under an eclipse of the sun? Do not the Scriptures tell us of Christ, that God hath made a Covenant with his chosen, Psal.89:3, that Christ is the living stone, chosen of God and precious, I

Pet.2:4, that Christ is his servant whom he hath chosen, Isa.43:10, Matt.12:18, that Christ is his elect in whom his soul delighteth, Isa.42:1; all which was very eminently shadowed out in the choice of David, in opposition to Saul. The Lord chose me before thy Father, II Sam.6:21, says David to Michal, when she despised him for dancing before the ark, verse 16; and says the LORD, "I chose David to be over my people," II Chron.6:5,6, and again, "David whom I chose;" and "he chose David his servant." Psal.78:70. Well now, is all this spoken of the Head, and hath our profession and learning of Christ brought us no further among the members, than to plead that we ought to preach him without concerning ourselves whether we preach Christ to the elect or the non-elect? Are not Christ {chosen} and they that are chosen in Christ, both of one piece of Free Grace? Is it not the Father's Free Grace to choose Christ the Head of the members, and to choose the elect the members of Christ? Sure then, if we believe that God hath chosen the Christ of Israel, is it nothing so to preach him, whether we preach him to the Israel whom he hath chosen or no? Ezek.20:5. Is not the plea but remnants of a carnal mind which is enmity with God? Rom.8:7. The heart doth plainly rise against God, being hardened through the deceitfulness of sin, Heb.3:13, though men may try to bring off their notion with palliations and pretensions. Suppose Election had been in the heart of God after the manner it appears in the plea laid down, do we think we should have ever seen what we do see of it {blessed be God} in the Holy Scriptures? Ah, how can the building prosper that hath no regard to the Foundation? Christ is not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, Matt.15:24; and must we still preach him without concerning ourselves, whether we preach him to the elect or the non-elect? "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." II Cor.4:3. Then surely we are to concern ourselves with the matter of whom we preach it to. There is enough for us to guide our ministry in God's Word; and the Spirit where he works upon the understanding of the preacher, Acts 20:20, will never depart from his own work which he hath begun with in the Scriptures.

Plea#3. "When you pray for the conversion of

hearers, of children, of servants, how do you consider them? Doubtless this may be, abstracting from the consideration of them as elect, or otherwise. Oh that Ishmael might live! Doth this suppose that the elect may not, or that others besides them may be saved? And if we may use arguments with God without prejudice to the doctrines of Election and Non-Election, doubtless we may use arguments with men, to whom God works upon as reasonable creatures."

Reply. If I consider the objects mentioned under the work of the Spirit, which is a principle of new-born strength in the faculty for conversion, I must consider them likewise in the Father's Grace which is Election, Jn.6:27; for none are converted by the Spirit, who are not chosen of the Father. {"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Jn.6:37.} And why should I pray with a peculiar eye to the glory of God the Spirit for conversion of hearers, children and servants, and yet think I am not bound to consider Grace from God our Father in Election Grace, II Cor.1:2, whilst praying for their Conversion? Let another reconcile this with the foundations of the Christian Religion, for I cannot. I do not look upon one unconverted hearer, child or servant, but I see as a great reason to judge he is elected, as to judge that he will be converted. Rom.8:29. For can any be converted who are not elected; and again, can any be elected, who never were, are, or shall be converted? What, if I pray naturally in my own spirit, do I think now under the Gospel that in my natural praying the Spirit maketh intercession in me? Rom.8:26. No, then how can I think that in spiritual praying the Holy Ghost should teach me, and yet not lead me to honour the Father in his works distinctly? Conversion is a Supernatural Mercy, and the question is not how I pray for it naturally, but how I pray for conversion, when I pray supernaturally. If I pray under nature, I say, "oh, that Ishmael might live before thee!" If I pray under the unction of Spirit, mine eye is graciously cast towards God's Choice and God's Covenant; and the Spirit which lays children upon my heart, lays them there under the Father's work, and under Christ's work. "I can do nothing of myself," says Christ, "but what I see the

Father do." Jn.5:19. So the Spirit is to act from Another, he is to take of Christ's, and show it unto us, Jn.16:14; and who is he that can experience a spirit of Gospel praying, and yet finds not that Holy Spirit of the Lord carrying him out to eye Election, as the bottom of all the conversions he asks of God, even whilst he asks Conversion of God for hearers, children and servants in Christ's name? I could not conscientiously join with that man in prayer that asks Conversion at the hands of God, and did not ask it of God with an eye cast towards the foundation of it in Electing Love. I have the same grounds to believe the Election of everyone whose conversion I pray for, as I have grounds to pray for that conversion; for they are both of one pure piece of Grace, as the Father and the Spirit are one in one God. Abraham's praying for Ishmael seemed not at all to be praying for his conversion, but for his life under God's providence. {"And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee!" Gen.17:18.}

1. For Abraham seemed at that time to be under questionings and disbelief of the promise made unto him of another seed by Sarah, verse 17, "then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old, and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" I know that some interpreters here distinguish of a laugh of faith in admiration piously to Abraham's praise, from Sarah's laugh of unbelief; yet I see no solid reason for the conjecture, for it is certain that Abraham had sinned by unbelief in the unlawful way of his begetting Ishmael upon his maid Hagar as appears, Gen.16:2,3, and it is clear to me that he sinned by unbelief again, touching the same promise; and so wishes he might have Ishmael continued, of whom he thought there was a clear way made for the promise to take effect; whereas he seems to have lost the noble spirit of his faith, and knew not in this chapter how to depend upon the sure accomplishment of the Promise in any other way. This is the more probable, because at verse 19, the LORD said, "Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac; and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him;" or in other words,

thou thinkest that I will not be as good as my word, but laughing as it is a thing not likely to come to pass, because so long deferred; but I will tell thee, the thing shall be done, after all thy laughing; and besides, thou shalt call his name Laughter too; a name that shall comport well enough with joy at the mercy, shall be the name which shall take in with it a remembrance of thy sinful laughter, when thou saidst in thy heart, shall it be so and so done to one that's a hundred, and to another that's ninety years old? As to Abraham's staggering not at the promise of God through unbelief, Rom.4:20, it refers manifestly to his faith in the Promise, at Genesis 15, and not to this latter carriage of his in Genesis 17, where his faith failed him after his sin in chapter 16; and indeed nothing is more common with the children of Abraham, who know anything in their souls of a bright communion with the Persons of God through Christ, than to be up in faith today, and especially after sinning down in faith tomorrow, as faith ebbs and flows. It was spring-tide with Abraham in the 15th chapter, and ebb-tide in the 17th. He that staggered not just before, although he looked up to Heaven and told the stars, Gen.15:5, as a sign of multiplying his seed by Sarah, now falls down, and upon the ground laughs within himself, as much as to say, nature is quite exhausted in me and in my wife; and how can this thing be? This set his mind more a hankering after the life of Ishmael, and posterity by him who was the son of the bondwoman. Gal.4:30.

2. God answers Abraham touching Ishmael with temporal blessings upon Ishmael and his offspring, and tells Abraham in verse 20, that he had heard him, which could not be, if Abraham had prayed for his Conversion. Because the words that God saith are only these, "and as for Ishmael, I have heard thee; behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." This was God's hearing of Abraham, when Abraham said to God, "O that Ishmael might live before thee;" so that Abraham prayed for Ishmael's life, and the seed of the Covenant by him in the face of Divine Providence, and not for the conversion of his person according to what the light of the Gospel now

reveals to be Conversion. But suppose that Abraham had prayed for the Conversion and Salvation of Ishmael, or suppose that he did so pray, {which however appears not,} this argument nevertheless is very improper to urge against our eying of Election, in praying for the Conversion of our children, &c., because at this day we see things in the face of the New Testament; and there we see that Election from Everlasting is settled, as the foundation of all, in a clearer light than Abraham could see it in his day, especially at the time of this prayer, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" How then is this an argument to ask things of God for the eternal state of our hearers, children and servants, without an eye upon the Election of their persons in Christ, and upon an Election of their Conversion to him? And how doth this prove offers of saving Grace and tenders of eternal Salvation to the non-elect, in our using arguments with them as reasonable creatures? Effectual Grace doth not work upon men as reasonable creatures, though upon men who are reasonable creatures, but upon men as the elect of God. Grace comes not upon men as qualified with reason, &c., but as chosen of God in Christ. The Gospel of Christ is not preached to men's reason, for then it should come in the excellency of words, and of man's wisdom, but it is preached to the wants of the men, as those wants are discovered to be wants above nature. In one word, if I pray for conversion, I pray for none but such as are chosen to conversion.

Plea#4. "Those texts as Gal.3:1 & Phil.2:16, will justify the expression of setting forth, or holding forth of Christ and preaching the Gospel."

Reply. As to Gal.3:1, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?" The word for "set forth" is not a word that signifies offered or proposed, but rather fore-written, and graphically described in the doctrine of Christ's blood and suffering. This was no offer of Christ, but an emblem of Christ, as we also behold it lively represented in the ordinance of our Lord's Supper. However, Christ may in a good sense that will bear it, far enough removed from offers and proposals in Gal.3:1, be

set forth according to the sense of such texts of Scripture as speak of showing Christ for mercy, for communion, for entertainment in his relation to the souls of the elect; that he may be looked upon, conversed with, fed on, delighted in, and enjoyed in his Word and Ordinances, as the great Gospel Object of Faith unto those souls who have the Spirit of God working in them from and towards this Object. {"Sing unto the LORD, bless his name; show forth his salvation from day to day." Psal.96:2.} But what is this to offers of Christ or proposals of Christ to sinners and strangers for their acceptance, as urged from this text.

As to Phil.2:16, "holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." It is not spoken of the minister's holding forth the word of life by preaching, but it is meant of the people's holding it forth by promoting the credit of it, in their walking as became the Gospel, I Pet.2:12, and this is easily proved, by the duty inculcated upon these Philippians, verse 14, "do all things without murmurings and disputings." 2. By the plural contexture, verse 15, "that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world," which brings it again into the plural at this 16th verse, holding forth the word of life. {"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt.5:16.} So that it's plainly spoken of the whole body of the Philippian Church to whom the Apostle wrote. 3. It appears more discernibly in the Greek word to him that understands the original, for albeit the phrase in English at the 16th verse doth not so obviously explain itself without a dependence of construction upon the coherence, as to determine from itself whether the phrase "holding forth" be of the singular or plural number, yet the Greek word doth from itself determine that matter to be plural. 4. This plurality cannot be spoken of an act in Gospel preachers to offer Christ, as is supposed to be in the plea, but of an act of holding forth the word of life in Gospel professors, having their behaviour among men suitable to that light they have of Christ, and were to

shine with before men. And what is this to justify Grace-offers in the speech they go about to build upon this text? 5. That it is spoken of the people's holding forth the Word of Life, and not of the preachers offering Christ to sinners, as is insinuated, maybe easily proved by the scope of the Apostle in this place. For it is no more than a duty which was meet for him to inculcate upon them all, one as well as another, in that Philippian fellowship. For church members {and the Philippians there were such} having taken upon them {in the yoke of Christ} a professed subjection to the Gospel, II Cor.9:13, are under rules as well as obligations to demonstrate by their life and conversation before the unbelievers, that the hearing of faith, Gal.3:2, hath not been in vain, as is plain in the residue of the verse. Let it be seen that your separation from the world is a fruit of the Gospel, "that I may rejoice," says he, "in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain." Phil.2:16. Hold forth the Word of Life, says he, in your own lives, that it may be discerned that you have not embraced a powerless Gospel, but that the kingdom of God hath come upon you efficaciously; and not only in word, but in power. {"For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." I Cor.4:20.} And especially, believers are counselled herein, as to the world, because the world, to wit, our carnal neighbours, kindred, acquaintances, &c., cannot see the secret power of God, nor believe there is such a power any other way but this. Therefore they must have a living copy and open, undeniable proofs before them of some power in the Gospel, by shining with the light and truth thereof before them. {"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." Matt.5:16.} This may convince some of them that your separation from the world hath been to embrace the truths of Christ. {"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles; that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." I Pet.2:12.} For the truth of God works in the lives of believers, as the Lord the Spirit uses it by a working power upon the heart. The children of God should be as bright lanterns in a dark world to hold forth

the candle of the Lord, Prov.20:27, or the understanding that he hath given them to know him that is true, and to know that they are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. I Jn.5:20. For being lights, says the Apostle, any small matter will darken and eclipse you in the world, if your light be not held forth; for inasmuch as the Gospel hath made you so bright and observable to every eye that beholds you, you should be always shining with some of that lustre holding forth the Word of Life. I hope that by this time, none can argue rightly for their offers of Grace to be preached to sinners from this text.

Plea#5. "Offers of Christ is a phrase that is directed to sinners by those who were very far from Arminianism, you are well aware, as Mr. Cole of Faith and Repentance¹⁰, pg.105, and so tenders of Grace, pg.108."

Reply. We are not to follow the Apostle Paul himself further than he hath followed Christ, "be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ." I Cor.11:1. {"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children." Eph.5:1.} Besides, the further men have been from Arminianism, the further they should have been from Arminian phrases that eclipse the effectual Grace of God. Neither do I think the Gospel shines at all so brightly in those two pages, as it shines in the book everywhere else. Whatever it be, I'll suppose a man was to argue with those of our Congregational brethren, {who use offers of Christ and tenders of Salvation to sinners, and who plead for the Congregational way,} and should argue thus, "Mr. Calvin who was very far from Popery, as you are well persuaded, hath set up a Presbyterian model of church government at Geneva, and there practiced it accordingly." Now the question is, whether our Congregational brethren would look upon this plea, as a substantial argument for the introduction of Calvin's model into the churches of Christ? I assume not; and yet the exemplariness is every jot as pledable a form of practicing from human authority, as the other, that we may use offers of Christ and tenders of Grace, for they are so used by Mr. Cole in his book of Faith.

¹⁰ Thomas Cole, Discourses on Regeneration, Faith, and Repentance, London, 1689.

Plea#6. "The use of the word should not be an offense, on account of some impropriety which may be in it."

Reply. This is just what they have said in defence of their words "sacrament" which I have largely answered in my greater volume. Howbeit, I will give you a few distinct answers to it in this place. 1. When a thing is proved erroneous by clear arguments, there is a great deal more in it than impropriety in the word or phrase. 2. The use of the word, or phrase, contended against, should be an offense, on account of a great deal of impertinence in it as it appertains not to the way of honouring the Holy Ghost in speaking of Divine Mysteries. 3. We should be offended at what covers over so ill a thing at the bottom, and that is Arminianism {offers of Grace to sinners} which doth look naturally all like gold, but search it, and its rank Arminianism, dross carefully covered over. 4. We are justly offended at what argues a very great corruption of manners, but so doth the use of this phrase; for whilst men believe that the Scripture abounds with phrases of an equipollent nature, and in their reckoning expresses it variously with what they esteem tantamount to offers of Grace, tenders of Salvation, &c., {though indeed the Scriptures are of a powerful and prevailing nature, or in phrases quite above it,} yet they will bring in these unscriptural phrases, rather than adhere to the light of the Spirit which discovers so much of their darkness. Oh, it is a gross sign of obstinacy, sleepiness, and heedlessness in some, as it is of obstinacy and human veneration in others.

Plea#7. "Though not all, yet many things intended by offers amongst men, may agree thereto as used in this matter."

Reply. I have proved in this treatise, that no offer of Grace, as used amongst men, agrees unto the pure Gospel of Effectual Grace, but falls in with Arminianism, though men talk and protest never so much against it.

Plea#8. "That the preaching of Christ in the Gospel has something of the nature of an offer, and that it is truly so, appears from the following particulars. Where God sets forth and proposes Jesus Christ, and that for acceptance; or in other words, where it is his revealed will

that men should accept him and believe upon him, there is an offer of Christ or something so very like it that it is not easy to distinguish therefrom. Christ is proposed and set forth in the Gospel, as appears, Rom.3:25, "whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, &c."

Reply. The Spirit's breaking in upon the souls of the elect by the preaching of the Gospel can never be sunk into an offer of Grace, by any solid proof of the matter in this text. Neither doth the text speak of the revealed will of God, but of the purposing will of God. The word is not "set forth" but it is "fore-ordained," as the fountain language tells you. Now fore-ordained or fore-appointing is an act of God purposing, fixing, setting and settling it in Christ the Mercy Seat, how and after what manner the doctrine and preaching of Christ should be made effectual; namely, as God's foreordination of Christ, I Pet.1:20, is an Object of truth spiritually conveyed into the soul through the eye of the new creature, faith, faith in his blood. So that the original makes it far enough from encouraging any offers of Grace held forth in this word. Let me here make an observation or two upon this text. I observe, that in all the variety of learned authors in the greater critics, there is but one man of them, and that is Vatablus¹¹, who takes notice of the original word, so as to render it decreed; whom God hath decreed; far enough from this conceit, whom God hath offered. Nor have I seen any author amongst the multitude of our English writers who touches upon it, except Dr. Owen, who hath this note on the force of the word, "the Eternal Purpose of making way by the blood of Christ to the dispensation of pardon," on Psalm 130¹², page 93. I observe that in all my hearing of sermons and conversing with practical writers, that I have never met with one man that has preached upon this text; whereas undoubtedly if Election had not been concerned in it, but the Greek had run as clear for offers of Grace, I might have seen treatises and

¹¹ Francois Vatablus, who died in 1547, was an eminent Hebrew and Greek scholar, who translated some parts of Aristotle's works.

¹² John Owen, Exposition of Psalm 130, 1668.

sermons in abundance upon it, as well as upon other common texts. I also observe that the next word translated "propitiation" is not the word used for propitiation in I Jn.4:10 & I Jn.2:2, where in both places it signifies a thing accomplished in the death of Christ. But the word here is a mercy-seat, which the Apostle likewise calls it in Hebrews 9:5, "and over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercy-seat; of which we cannot now speak particularly;" and which signifies the mysterious way of accomplishing Salvation in the sufferings of Christ through the Human Nature of God-Man; and so is a close allusion to the typical figure of the Human Nature of Christ in the mercy-seat. {"And thou shalt make a mercy seat of pure gold; two cubits and a half shall be the length thereof, and a cubit and a half the breadth thereof." Ex.25:17.} For indeed the Holy Ghost in this text of the Romans hath used the same word which the Septuagint has used to express the mercy-seat by, they in Exodus 25, in their translating of the Hebrew word "kapporeth." Now the mercy-seat in Exodus was not an offer of Grace amongst the Jews, but was an effectual gift of God's love, so far as then to be a positive type of a greater Mercy-Seat, which God had within himself {long before} in his certain preordination of the sufferings of the Human Nature of Christ, as the way of our Justification by Grace.

Plea#9. "And here is the testimony of all the Three in Heaven, thus and thus hath Christ done, obeyed, suffered, &c., I Jn.5:6-11, a Saviour, a Saviour is the loud proclamation of the Gospel. My Son, &c., Matt.17:5, saith the Father; behold me, behold me, saith Christ, Isa.65:1; the Spirit also bearing witness."

Reply. Who would think that any man was so void of sense as to plead that any of this made for offers of Grace? Every word is an effectual Constitution of Grace that secures Salvation and effects it without offers. The witness of the Apostle John is a demonstration of the Grace of God to establish our faith, and not to propose to our acceptance. It is to strengthen us in our souls against heretics, such as Ebion and Cerinthus were, against whom the Apostle John wrote about the year 96, and it is not otherwise, to lie before our thoughts, and wait for our acceptance. This was not the design of that testimony,

nor of John's writing it; but it was to decide a controversy made of it in the world, not to tender Salvation by it to the world; for says he, in the same epistle, "we are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness." I Jn.5:19. He did not go and offer them Salvation, but wrote it strenuously to confirm the elect in the joy of their faith, and to preserve the truth of the things with all authority, for their use to whom they belonged. {"And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." I Jn.1:4.} Here is nothing at all in this testimony of the Three in Heaven like a tender of Salvation to the elect or non-elect. Furthermore, the truth of that relation in Christ, a Saviour, a Saviour to the elect, we own it in full authority, but yet not to exclude Christ Headship, as he is Alpha to the elect of God, upon which his Saviour-ship, as Omega, is built. {"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Rev.1:8.} Is a king or queen that is proclaimed in the Government, offered to the crown or tendered to its subjects? Is Christ proclaimed in his blood as well is in his sceptre, and still must he be offered do we think to cleanse sinners of their sin and to reign in Zion? What can be a blinding conceit or a more ignorant thought amongst us? And then as to that text in Matthew 17:5, "this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him," it is not the Father's offer of his Son, but the Father's attestation to him. {"And lo a voice from heaven, saying, this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt.3:17.} God witnessed of him, that he was delighted and well pleased in him. 'Tis not Grace proposed for acceptance, but Grace proclaimed in acceptance. It's a testimony of Grace, but in no wise a tender thereof. Lastly, Isaiah 65:1, "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, Behold me, behold me, unto a nation that was not called by my name," is so far from a blind offer, that it's a proof of Effectual Grace how Christ's Spirit puts an eye in the soul, and how he stands in the Mount before this eye of faith in the preaching of the Gospel, with this encouragement, with this assurance, that the soul shall not be left to seek Salvation in another, Matt.18:11, but must take notice

that here it's all his own in Him, "behold me, behold me!" Art thou a sinner all over? See I am a Saviour all over! A greater Saviour than thou canst be a sinner! {"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb.7:25.} And so he strikes in upon the heart immediately, and gathers up the heart unto Himself, by presenting himself thus prevailing in the prospects of his Suretyship engagements; and what is this at all of the kin to an offer? {"My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. For, lo, they that are far from thee shall perish; thou hast destroyed all them that go a whoring from thee. But it is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all thy works." Psa.73:26-28.}

Plea#10. "In the Gospel Christ is set forth as the brazen serpent was lifted up upon the pole, Jn.3:14, and what is it which answers to that lifting up in type; but that whosoever believeth upon him shall not perish, &c., verse 16, and so did not God offer healing to the Israelites by the institution and ordinance of the brazen serpent lifted up amongst them?"

Reply. How can this doctrine of a crucified Christ, or that of the brazen serpent that typified it in the wilderness be an offer of Grace, since in all offers and proposals there is a consulting the will of the party to whom the offer and proposal is made; but God consulted not with man in the matter of his Son's death; for he was delivered up "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Acts 2:23. So in the brazen serpent that typified him, God consulted not with the Israelites about the type, but positively told Moses what he would do, and bid him go to work upon it presently. {"And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole; and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." Num.21:8.} And as the type was positively and absolutely set up to be looked upon, so the anti-type is positively and absolutely prepared for sinners to be eyed believingly, whilst the Holy Ghost works in them a freed will to cast the eye of their faith upon Christ crucified.

{“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” Jn.3:14-15.} What is here of an offer? ‘Tis all Sovereign and Effectual Grace closing with the remedy, and joining the heart unto it. It’s truth overcoming, and no tender to consult with flesh and blood.

Plea#11. “How did Peter wind up his teachings to Cornelius, and his neighbours and kindred. Acts 10:43?”

Reply. Far enough I am sure from offers in that passage of Scripture, “to him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” It’s strange that places of Scripture which plainly demonstrate a truth of the Gospel, and bear witness to the truth of the Gospel, should be so perverted into so distant a meaning, as to interpret them about offers of Grace and tenders of Salvation! The words are an establishment of the doctrine and a testifying of the great Name of Christ, Acts 20:21, not a proposal of tenders. Also, they are the conveyance part of the Gospel in bringing home the remission of sins as a clear thing in Christ, and let in upon the soul from Christ through the eye of the new creature, even faith of the Operation of God. All this still is Effectual Grace working all for them and in them, according to the good pleasure of God, far above tenders and proposals of any sorts. Peter wound up his teachings to Cornelius bravely, and to his neighbours and kindred, making all the Gospel to be one piece of Grace; he making the delivery of his report to be preaching to the people, Isa.53:1, and testifying the truth of the Gospel. {“And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.” Acts 10:42-43.} Peter did not wind up or lace his discourse of Christ with offers. He made faith to be of Grace, as well as remission of sins to be of Grace; and that faith, being wrought of the Spirit, who cannot work it evangelically in the soul, but through and under “the righteousness of God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ,” II Pet.1:1, receives a thing which hath a mystical being in

Christ, and doth not make a thing to have an existence towards me out of the creature which had no pattern being of it before in Christ. {"So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom.9:16.} Peter wound up his doctrine thus, but the evil is, there have come preachers since who wind up their teachings in a way of free-will application, or what too much looks that way, that as much exalts the creature for believing, as their way exalts the blood of Christ for remission. The frame of their discourse doth, and all the contexture of that kind of exhortations which they effect, do only exalt a man's self in the business of faith, which kind and way of preaching, Jehovah the Spirit will more effectually pull down in time to come, and will not lose the things which he hath wrought. The Spirit is Jehovah, as appears Isaiah 48:17 compared with I Corinthians 2:13; he is God, Acts 5:3-4; he is the Lord the Spirit, as the original of II Cor.3:18 testifies. Consequently, his glory he will not give to another in the winding up of doctrinals by a company of dead, blind and ineffectual offers. {"I am the LORD; that is my name; and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Isa.42:8.}

Plea#12. "So Paul issues his sermon, Acts 13:38-39, which also he enforces with awakening motives, verses 40-41."

Reply. So Paul? Why, if he issues it so as Peter did, we have seen it's far enough from the device I oppose. It's evident he issues not his sermon in the place cited with the fault I have been complaining of; for when the Apostle winds up his doctrinals with application, {as you call it,} he makes the latter to be of one piece of Grace with the former; that as he had preached the doctrine of Christ to the Jews, so he continued to preach the doctrine of the forgiveness of sin through the same Man, Christ Jesus, to the Jews. What else can be gathered out of his application, "be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Acts 13:38-39. Until the elect believe they are not justified in their own

consciences, as they are, when under the same righteousness by a work of the Holy Ghost they do believe. This is far from offering them the forgiveness of their sins. The doctrine of forgiveness preached to a mixed auditory is one thing, and the benefit of forgiveness which the elect obtain in their own consciences at believing, is quite another thing. {"And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." I Cor.6:11.} He preached the doctrine of Christ, Acts 20:21, witnessing to the ears, but never offering any aspect of that Salvation for their acceptance. Besides, it is manifest that his awakening motives, verses 40-41, were not because the Jews were in danger of not receiving the blessings of the Gospel, to which the non-elect were never appointed; but because they were in danger of aggravating their sin and account, by rejecting the doctrines and miracles of the Gospel, as the truth of God, to the preaching of which doctrine they were appointed, and to the accepting of which doctrine they were commanded. And so his awakening motives were to prevent the judgments of God upon the Jews, by accrediting the doctrine of everlasting life, before he carried all away unto the Gentiles, and left them under greater hardness and condemnation; as is plain in those words at verses 40-41, "beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish; for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you," at Antioch, as Paul afterwards declared it to the others of the Jews at Rome, which they would not believe when it was told them, Acts 28:26-28, viz., what invincible and judicial hardness God would give them up unto, Rom.11:8, for despising the doctrines in which others found that Salvation which resided in Christ. {"And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive;

for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." Acts 28:24-28.} Oh, that preachers now could distinguish in winding up their doctrines with awakening motives to believe the doctrine and report of Christ which men so despise, and not so unskilfully to wind up what ought to be again unravelled.

Plea#13. "This is as essential to our work and the message we have to deliver as the doctrine of Election, and to be first proposed."

Reply. We see what is essential to our work and message which we have to deliver; and it is to deliver the apostolic doctrine in the apostolic spirit, Acts 2:42; and we should then never wind up our doctrinal messages so unskilfully or forwardly, as to overthrow the doctrine of Election, and then go about to convert a people to God besides his own foundation, and without any regard thereto; and that as the offense which I am striking at evermore doth. {"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." II Tim.2:19.}

Plea#14. "What did Paul mean, when he declared, that to you is preached forgiveness? Did he mean that you are forgiven? Or that it was held forth and proposed for their acceptance?"

Reply. I have shown that he meant neither, but preached the doctrine of Christ to them, without offering the blessing of forgiveness at all. This was conveyed to the elect under the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, and the rest simply heard the doctrine preached and were blinded. {"The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Rom.11:7.}

Plea#15. "I cannot think but that the denying of such a necessary, applicatory way of preaching tends to harden the Arminians in their disbelief of the Gospel, while we shall own the absurdities they use to fasten, as indeed flowing from the doctrine we hold."

Reply. Suppose that it doth. Is the Gospel the

worst for that? Is the sun worse for hardening the clay? Read those places of Scripture, Rom.11:8, Jn.12:40, Matt.13:14, Isa.6:9, Mk.4:12, Acts 28:26, Lk.8:10, &c., and see if the Bible doth not hold as severe doctrine {which without a work from the Lord the Spirit tends to harden the Arminians in their disbelief of Effectual Grace} as we profess to hold. Ah, this cowardice is a stain upon our character, and is like to be one upon all our profession! Where are the men upon earth that should be valiant for the truth? {"And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies; but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth; for they proceed from evil to evil, and they know not me, saith the LORD." Jer.9:3.} Even for that truth of God which most stumbles and hardens the Arminians. Shall we trim it, conceal our principles, give up truths, and alter them to gain a better esteem of our doctrine amongst the Arminians? Away, away with such suggestions! The Lord help me to stand fast in those glorious liberties wherewith Christ hath made me free. Gal.5:1. I have heard hundreds of choice and free experiences told in Zion, {for though we desire the saints to make a profession of Christ, Isa.43:21, Rom.10:10, we force none to declare the work of God upon their souls,} yet I have never heard of one soul that had received any benefit by the corrupt human forms of application in offering and tendering them Christ; but I have heard many bewail how this preaching has entangled them, puzzled them, darkened the work of Grace, thrown them down from steadfastness in attending upon the true Gospel, and hath made them lose all the sensible benefits they had received under the preaching of Christ; and merely because the Holy Ghost that hath been accredited in their doctrine of Christ, hath been grieved by their mangling way of application; and since Arminians will be hardened at the doctrine of God's Grace, let it be so; for if our Gospel be hid, it is hidden to them that are lost, II Cor.4:3; and better all the Arminians in the world were hardened, who strike at God's Grace and Christ's Righteousness, and plainly declare they have no work of God's Spirit upon them above nature, and wrought in them to bow to God's Sovereign Grace, then that one of God's little ones, under the Imputation of that

Righteousness, should be made sad, offended, injured, entangled and bewildered, Ezek.13:22, in whose souls God hath wrought Effectual Grace to begin to detect the deceit, though he has not bestowed upon them such a discerning measure of the Holy Spirit, to fully discern and recognize that the fault lies in this mangling of the Truth of the Gospel, and in these unskilful applications and dark offers, as well as in their dark selves!

Plea#16. "An invitation suppose to a dinner or supper, is an offer of a participation of the provision there made; and the Gospel is such an invitation, to whosoever will come to this marriage feast, and thus feed upon Christ."

Reply. This argument to uphold offers of Grace is wide from the cause, Jer.2:18, for an offer of Grace is no invitation, nor is an invitation any offer of Grace. I defer the proof till the next chapter, where the full answer comes in upon the head of invitations.

Plea#17. "The Gospel proposes the heavenly Canaan to souls, in such sort as the earthly Canaan was proposed to the people of Israel. I speak not of the terms, but of the nature of the proposal itself. Heb.3:18-19; 4:1-3. The Divine Determination was according as we see the event to have been; yet they had an offer of Canaan, which their unbelief prevented; and so here, a promise is left us, the Gospel is preached concerning the spiritual rest, as to them in type concerning the literal Canaan rest."

Reply. Under these good words this writer hath very corruptly shrouded a most woeful parcel of Arminianism; which whoever doth take up, as this scheme {in a notorious perverting the things spoken of in the Hebrews} frames them, I will be bold to say of him, he doth by none of this doctrine so perverted enter into rest. I will be particular in my reply.

First. Those sweet phrases, the Heavenly Canaan and the Spiritual Rest, so far as this writer means them of the saints Everlasting Rest in Heaven, do no ways match the design of the Holy Ghost in the texts that are brought out of the Hebrews, nor do they at all bear up the supposition they are made in the plea to serve; and if so, where is the proof in producing the said texts for the

nature of a proposal of Heaven to men, in such sort as the earthly Canaan was proposed {for so saith this writer} to the people of Israel? What will become of the offer of the spiritual rest if Heaven, or the rest of Glory, be that same rest? Or, how will it comport with the promise of Canaan, supposing that both these texts be proved to be nothing to the purpose, to set forth offers of Grace and propose Eternal Life to sinners? For, God's Canaan rest which he sware the Israelites should not enter into, Heb.3:18, and which we see they could not enter into, because of unbelief, verse 19, could not be that earthly Canaan rest, as a type of Heaven, and therefore was not so proposed, because such Israelites as did enter into Canaan by faith in the promise of that land, whence it is called the land of promise, Heb.11:9, entered not into it by the blood of the legal sacrifices, a type of the blood of Christ; whereas all that enter into Heaven, the holiest of all, do enter in by the blood of Jesus, the Gospel Sacrifice, whether they enter by faith, or by fruition at the souls putting off its earthly tabernacle, II Pet.1:14, its body of flesh and blood. {"Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith." Heb.10:19-22.} So that the Canaan rest could be no type of the Gospel rest in Heaven; it must therefore be a type of some other rest besides. The rest which is spoken of, Heb.4:1, is a glorious rest, yet not the glory rest neither which will be in Heaven, and that to all eternity. Howbeit it is a glorious rest! What glorious rest you'll say? I answer, the glorious rest at the latter day in Christ's Kingdom¹³. It's the promise rest of soul and body

¹³ It will be observed throughout this volume that Joseph Hussey, in his views of end-times theology {eschatology} was a postmillennialist, or in other words, one that held to the view that the millennium, spoken of in Revelation 20, is an era {not necessarily a literal thousand years} during which Christ will reign over the earth, not from a literal and earthly throne, but through the gradual increase of the Gospel and its power to

in a glorious kingdom, when the Saints that now have bodies resting in their graves, shall be raised in the same bodies, fashioned like unto his glorious body, Phil.3:21, who is their Head, and shall enter with their souls into this promise rest in that latter day. Now the land of Promise and the Israelite's entering into the land of Canaan, were a type of this paradise, and fruition of the promise rest in Christ's glorious kingdom, that great Sabbath of the thousand years, even that long Lord's Day rest upon earth, wherein the earthly Canaan will be turned into heavenly Canaan, II Pet.3:13, Isa.65:17-18, a heavenly Canaan indeed! Yet though heavenly it will be but a Canaan upon earth, and not the eternal rest in Heaven. Now inasmuch as this thousand years Rest, or glorious Sabbath, is what Christ in the New Heavens and his saints in the New Earth, will openly enter into, after the week of labours, or of six thousand years toil {now almost ended from the Creation} is completely over. Therefore this fourth chapter of the Hebrews doth reveal to us that the Lord's day {our present Christian Sabbath} is a sacred

transform lives. After this gradual Christianization of the world, {according to this view,} Jesus Christ would return visibly, bodily, and gloriously, to end history with the general resurrection and the final judgment after which the eternal order follows. This comes as no surprise, for we must remember that Hussey was a Congregationalist in regards to Church Order; and that the Savory Declaration of 1658, {in essence a Congregational modification of the Westminster Confession of Faith of 1646,} contained one of the earliest creedal statements of a postmillennial eschatology: "As the Lord in his care and love towards his Church, hath in his infinite wise providence exercised it with great variety in all ages, for the good of them that love him, and his own glory; so according to his promise, we expect that in the latter days, antichrist being destroyed, the Jews called, and the adversaries of the kingdom of his dear Son broken, the churches of Christ being enlarged, and edified through a free and plentiful communication of light and grace, shall enjoy in this world a more quiet, peaceable and glorious condition than they have enjoyed." Thomas Goodwin and John Owen were the leaders in a committee of six appointed to draw up this confession; and Hussey true to his Congregational inclinations held to this view.

day of communion rest with Christ in Ordinances, as an earnest of the other great Sabbath to come at last; and this earnest, or earnest rest is the spiritual rest of the Gospel, and ought to be a bodily rest from labour too, since our bodies are bought with a price, I Cor.6:20, as much as is consistent with our present imperfect state and circumstances. The spiritual rest of the Sabbath, as it's made up of spiritual refreshments with Christ, in Worship and Ordinances of his own Appointment, is that rest which is spoken of in verse 3, that we which have believed do enter into, Heb.4:3, as an earnest of that Kingdom rest laid down as the main text, verse 1, which he illustrates by the Sabbath, and proves by the sacred Day of Rest, till he issues it in the same Kingdom Rest of verse 11, which he began with, verse 1, so that the Apostle here is not at all speaking of Heaven's Rest. Once more observe, that this Sabbath Rest of church communion with Christ, in the worship and ordinances of Christ, which we that have believed do enter into, is made out substantially for the Lord's Day, and founded by Christ upon his ceasing from the works of Redemption, and entering into his rest, or Sabbath, by keeping this First Day Sabbath with his disciples, after he was risen from the dead, Jn.20:19; as God ceased from the works of Creation and entered into Rest, or a Sabbath, upon the Seventh Day; by the same patterns and after the same manner, will it be in the end of our labour in the Lord, I Cor.15:58; to wit, when the Great Week is ended, and all the saints have done their weekly toil, then comes the great keeping of a Sabbath in that Rest which remaineth for the people of God. Heb.4:9. And how shall we enter into it? Why, as God entered into his rest, and as Christ entered into his rest. 1. As God entered into his rest at the end of six days work, so we shall enter into our rest at the end of the Great Week, the Millenary Week, after all the saints in all ages have finished their six thousand years of labour. 2. As Christ entered into his rest on the morning of the Sabbath by rising from the dead, after finishing his work, Jn.19:30, so we shall enter into his rest who have the promise made us, Heb.4:1, when we rise from the dead in the morning of the latter day, or very early on the last Sabbath to be enjoyed in time; and then

we shall be all Seventh Day's Men, when the date of our First Day is ended, and the latter Sabbath is fully come. This glorious rest now is so far from being proposed, as the offer-plea urges on the behalf of the Heavenly Canaan, that it's plainly made known in the Old Testament by a promise, compare Hebrews 4:1 with Genesis 17:8, which promise is made good under the New Testament in an earnest of the Promise by enjoying the blessings of the Sabbath, and shall be made good in the final culmination of all things at the Coming of Christ in the latter day. So that the good words being opened, which this writer has urged, his mask will be quickly taken off, and the Arminianism underneath disclosed, though I cannot warrant you, but some Anti-Kingdom Men may be offended at the Report of this Promise Rest.

Secondly. What a grand mistake is it to make an offer and a promise to be both one! As if Canaan of old was offered to Israel and so the promise was to be overlooked. Yet 'tis called the land of promise, Heb.11:9, and not the land of proposal. If Canaan was not offered to them of old in the type, how can Heaven and Glory {supposing Canaan typified Heaven, which yet I have proved did not} be now offered in the preaching of the Gospel to sinners in the truth of the type?

Thirdly. Here is a woeful parcel of Arminianism sugared over. {"Thine habitation is in the midst of deceit; through deceit they refuse to know me, saith the LORD." Heb.9:6.} To evince it I need only go over the parts. The Gospel {saith the offer-plea} proposes the heavenly Canaan to souls, in such sort as the earthly Canaan was proposed to the people of Israel, as to the nature of the proposal. Now the nature there of the proposal lay in a promise of Canaan to the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; also the nature of that promise lay in the terms of it. For strip it of the terms of the Canaan promise, and you strip it of the nature of the Canaan promise. Therefore it was a caution without any foundation for itself in this writer, to say, that I speak not of the terms, but of the nature of the proposal; for this is a plain Arminian gloss foisted in upon the place of the Hebrews, lest indeed we should harden the Arminians. {"Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in

Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against." Lk.2:34.} For as they call it terms, so we must put on something that apes the fashion, and colour over the whole Gospel of Christ in the nature of a proposal, and in such a nature too as supposes an offer of the land of Canaan. Zech.10:2. Now, this confounds the Law and the Gospel state in a New Law, as the Arminians from the Papists do. For in the Law state they had no Grace or Strength given them from Sinai's Law to be obedient to the Commandment in the wilderness, but they were only commanded to be obedient, and so enter the promise after their obedience, and were punished if they were not so, Psal.78:21, both with an exclusion from Canaan, and with death in the wilderness. Well then, if Hebrews 4:1-3, built upon chapter 3:18-19, {as made a type of Heaven} be supposed to speak of an offer of Heaven and Glory to us, in the nature of the transactions of God towards Israel, Isa.24:5, you do therewith cut off all the Grace, Springs, Influences and Secret Causes of Gospel Faith and Obedience, and level our state with the Law, in point of all these, as the Arminians do. {"Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Gal.5:4.}

So, you likewise make the enjoyment of Heaven to depend as nearly upon the sinner's acceptance of a proposal of Heaven in Faith and Obedience, as the enjoyment of the earthly Canaan depended upon what you call a proposal of Canaan to them upon their behaviour in the wilderness. For this was the very nature of their entering Canaan, viz., upon "ifs" and suppositions of personal obedience. {Note: Romans 4:24, "but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead," in which text the "if" is absolutely excluded by the original; so that Gospel blessings are not, as Canaan's blessings were, upon any "ifs", but are the sure mercies of David. Imputation of the righteousness of God depends upon no "if." "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us." II Cor.1:20.} Hence their terms and your proposals are {in matters of the Gospel} grown out of one rank stalk of Arminianism.

More so, they all failed in the Wilderness after their

coming out of the land of Egypt, except two, Num.32:11, and never entered Canaan, so would thousands and ten thousands, and all under Heaven, miss of Heaven, if we and they were to enter Heaven, as the Israelites entered Canaan. For who is there that ever came up to acceptance upon the nature of a proposal, if you strip Heaven of the Pure Gift and the Deed of Settlement? The gift of God is eternal life, Rom.6:23, and as for Grace whereby we are made meet for Heaven, Col.1:12, it is as much the gift of God, as Heaven itself is the gift of God. If any desire to see those texts elsewhere cleared from the common mis-applications he may, if he hath my last book of the Glory of Christ Unveiled, consult its pages.

Plea# 18. "The Gospel must be first preached, and the proposal of Christ made to the Jews, which they rejecting, it was then carried to the Gentiles."

Reply. Preaching of the Gospel and proposing of the Gospel are two things very wide one from another, as this treatise hath shown enough. The Gospel must first be preached to the Jews, which did contain in it Eternal Life and Glory, because in preaching it to the Jews, there was among them an elect number, even a remnant, Rom.9:27, to be laid hold on by the Gospel preached; but the Scriptures speak of no proposing of the Gospel to the Jews. This is a sort of Neonomian quill dipped in the Arminian ink, and cast abroad into nature's blot, on purpose to amuse and confuse the people about the true preaching of the Gospel.

Plea# 19. "Thus was the Commission, Luke 24:47."

Reply. Let us read this Commission, for the words of the text are, "and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." That the Gospel must be first preached to the Jews is so clear from this text that none can deny it; but that the Gospel therein must be at all proposed to the Jews appears not; for God stood not to the courtesy of any man or creature under Heaven, in his receiving the Gospel. Therefore in order to its acceptance, it would have been an inapt and unbecoming means for God to have proposed it to Jew or Gentile. On the other hand, the elect were to be conquered by it, Psal.110:3, and to be conquered at Jerusalem; that the others seeing

it might not be able to maintain their own doctrinal infidelity out of the Old Testament, and therein might have their sins ripened to their own destruction, as is plain by the Scriptures, in God's hardening them under the Gospel and casting away the non-elect. {"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Rom.9:18.} And what is this Commission then to preach the Gospel in Christ's name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem, to offers of Grace and proposals of Christ? Nothing! Oh, how powerfully did the preaching of the Gospel discriminate the elect from the non-elect at Jerusalem! It presently severed them into two companies. It broke their carnal union; but your offers accomplish nothing in a congregation, when you make them to blind sinners. No, sinners come, and sinners go as they come. Oh, but if we preached the Gospel as we should, they would very few of them come and go from time to time as we first found them all, all holding in a string to exalt self, instead of exalting the Lord alone. {"And the loftiness of man shall be bowed down, and the haughtiness of men shall be made low; and the LORD alone shall be exalted in that day." Isa.2:17.} No, they would be divided into two companies, the comers unto a living Stone, "disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious," I Pet.2:4, and the goers that went back, Jn.6:66, and walked no more with him. The Gospel would have some notable work upon them speedily; for there would be a true work which would break out into a clear work afterwards. The non-elect on the other hand, would growl, murmur, cavil and be gone and nestle under their silk and satin preachers, as they do sometimes here in this place after a morning's trial of the Everlasting Gospel in the leaking times of Stourbridge Fair¹⁴! Where perhaps the place, while a live coal is taken off the altar, Isa.6:6, that just warms God's children, and burns up some of their lusts in the forefront of the day, Isa.4:4, is too hot to hold some other professors in an

¹⁴ Stourbridge fair was an annual fair held on Stourbridge Common in Cambridge, England. At its peak it was the largest fair in Europe and was the inspiration for Bunyan's "Vanity Fair."

afternoon! Nay, I have seen some of them run out of the place, and have had no patience upon the points that give all the glory to God in Three Persons, and exalt the work of Conversion upon Election, Redemption and Regeneration! Now there must be some notable trial and discrimination of men by and under the preaching of the Gospel, Dan.12:10, if it be right preaching and such as the Lord himself commissions us to and owns. Such a discrimination there was an Jerusalem, at Antioch, at Rome, &c., but now your un-commissioned offers cheat men, your proposals beget in them false conceptions of the freedom of the will, and leave them utter strangers to the influences of the Lord the Spirit through and under Imputed Righteousness. {"Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." II Pet.2:1.} You propose {their coming to Christ and going to Heaven} by such a nature of preaching, that they frame to themselves, {where they have never felt the power of corruption, nor have been in bondage under the Law,} an imagination of self strength to be going and doing under your doctrine, as easily, if they be not wanting to themselves, as they might take a place for London in the stagecoach. The truth is, till I was under greater convictions than Arminians generally are, I thought so too. Now the Scripture tells us, that as in water, face answers to face, so the heart of a man to man, Prov.27:19, then, if these were my thoughts to hear men offering me Christ, why may I not believe that they are also many other men's thoughts, when they hear you offer Christ and Grace to them? {"Cursed be he that maketh the blind to wander out of the way. And all the people shall say, Amen." Deut.27:18.} You may tell them perhaps that you don't mean this, nor mean that, nor mean the other, nor would have them mistake you; yet they will mistake you, so long as you harp upon your offers and mistake yourselves.

Plea#20. "Thus it was meet it should be and necessary, Acts 13:46, but they to whom forgiveness was preached, verse 38, put it from them and judged themselves unworthy of everlasting life, verse 46, unto them first God sent his Son Jesus, viz., in the Gospel, Acts

3:26; and so was there here no tender of Christ? No offer of Grace or Salvation?"

Reply. It was meet that the Gospel should be first preached to the Jews, because they were in an elder church-state than the Gentiles. Isa.54:1. And whether they would hear the doctrine or forbear the doctrine preached, {for it was no offer of Grace and Christ to them,} it was meet for the stopping of their mouths against the free dispensation to all sorts of sinners, that they should not be able to say that the dispensation of the Apostolic Doctrine was worse than the dispensation of Ezekiel's, for he was to go and tell them the truth, though they were a rebellious house, whether they would hear, or whether they would forbear. Ezek.2:7. So the same rebellious house which had killed the heir, Matt.21:38, should be first told of it, and told of it too roundly through both their ears. If the Holy Ghost would open the event prosperously, and discover an Election of Grace amongst them, then this Gospel should lay hold of them in the virtue of the blood they shed; and if not, yet it should clearly discriminate them, by the very opposition to the Gospel they should be left to raise, and make it known to the Apostles that they were of the non-election whom God would cast away, Rom.11:1,7, and show the Apostles their duty from whom they ought to turn unto the Gentiles, Acts 13:46; and so it was meet the Gospel should be first preached unto the seed to be cast off, Rom.9:7, to clear the righteous way of God's Dispensations in the Jews reflection.

Again, it was necessary; for without this discrimination of elect and non-elect by a powerful and effectual Gospel preached, to stumble the Jews and enlighten the Gentiles at Antioch, {which could not have been done by a proposed or offered Gospel,} there had been no way made for the Apostle's clearly to reject the Jews, for some people must be rejected where the true Gospel comes in the unction of the Spirit. But if men will club together to accept of a Gospel upon their own agreed proposals, it must be another Gospel that everybody can easily agree upon before their eyes are opened, which is not the Gospel, for the Gospel of Christ cannot be so served. {"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him

that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel; which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." Gal.1:6-8.} Well, it was necessary according to the deep and wise counsel of God, Eph.1:11, that the Apostles should first preach the Gospel to the Jews at Antioch in this 13th of the Acts, where I am opening the 46th verse, that the issue might be effectual and discriminating, in an orderly way, upon another sort of people, and so the Apostles might leave the rebellious Synagogue, and go amongst the Gentiles. {"The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever." Psal.33:11.} And as this was the foundation of that famous church in Antioch, the Cornerstone being laid in when the Jews had stumbled thereat, it was after the same manner in other parts of the world. {"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." I Pet.2:6.} The elect Gentiles were not to receive the Gospel, and be taken into a church state, till the non-elect Jews had stumbled at Christ, Rom.9:32, and rejected the Gospel in his Name. It is their fall brought about by the discriminant preaching of God's Settlements and Christ's Sufferings which stumbled them, and which hath also set in motion that Salvation in Christ, Rom.11:11, upon the Gentile world. {"Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness?" Rom.11:12.} But now wherein was it necessary that the Gospel should be first preached to the Jews by a company of cold offers? What would these have done? Would they have stumbled the Jews? In no wise! They would but have diverted them into a fit of laughter, and have made them look upon the Apostles, Paul and Barnabas, to have been a couple of clowns. Whereas a powerful opening of the Mystery of God in Christ, of which that sermon at Antioch consisted, {far enough from an offer of Grace,} presently stumbled them, that the counsel of God, as to election and non-election, touching Jew and Gentile, openly took effect. And why? Because

they preached according to that doctrine of good old Simeon, "behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against." Lk.2:34. Offers would have propagated a mixed Gospel, but these were Operations of the Holy Ghost which severed the wheat from the chaff, the elect from the non-elect, and preserved the pure Gospel entire. The Apostles were of a brave and faithful spirit; for they would not run in an old Adam's mixture, Jn.3:6, into a carnal composition in the nature of proposals, {one side abating, and the other side advancing,} such as hath since obtained, though it might have carnally united a mixed congregation, and hypocritically there at Antioch have comprehended both Jew and Gentile. {"But as God is true, our word toward you was not yea and nay. For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who was preached among you by us, even by me and Silvanus and Timotheus, was not yea and nay, but in him was yea." II Cor.1:18-19.} But they were brave and peremptory, such as if men are in any degree for Christ now, they are presently branded for schismatics or breakers of churches. {"Then Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you; but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." Acts 13:46.} But how is that to be understood, you judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life? Not as sinners troubled in conscience, Psal.88:14, but as adversaries engaged with displeasure against the Gospel, and so had made a judgment of themselves to the Apostles, how base and unworthy they were in the Apostles eyes to have the Gospel of Everlasting Life preached unto them again; inasmuch that by this plain and full discovery of the Jews, the Apostles saw it to be their duty to turn unto the Gentiles. {"But when the Jews saw the multitudes, they were filled with envy, and spake against those things which were spoken by Paul, contradicting and blaspheming." Acts 13:45.} Then as to that, Acts 3:26, "unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities;" here again is no offer of Christ, but a positive sending of Christ unto them in Effectual Grace.

For here is a blessing them in turning away every one of them from their iniquities. How is that? Why, every one of those three thousand souls, Acts 2:41, that had been converted in the former chapter, and were added to the number of the names which in the first chapter had been about one hundred and twenty, Acts 1:15; and these had been blessed in being turned away every one of them from their iniquities, according to Christ's prayer for the elect part of them, Jn.17:9, though they crucified him. And further, every one of those who should be found converted, as a fruit of it, in that next sermon in this third chapter of the Acts, which upon scrutiny made of their further number appears, Acts 4:4, to be about five thousand souls. {"And of Zion it shall be said, this and that man was born in her; and the highest himself shall establish her. The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there. Selah." Psal.87:5-6.} Thus it's plain, the same forgiveness prayed for in their behalf by Christ upon the cross, Lk.23:34, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," was brought home unto them from Christ now upon the throne. So that it opens in blessing the elect, and in turning away every one of the elect from their iniquities. {"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old." Micah 7:18-20.} And what is all this to an offer to bless? Or an offer to turn away every one of the elect from their iniquities? Or what is this to an offer of Grace to bless the non-elect sinners, who are never blessed? And a offer of Grace to turn away every one of the non-elect from their iniquities, when yet not one of them ever are, nor shall be turned away from them? {"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins; whither I go, ye cannot come." Jn.8:21.} Oh, that all this might be as a sponge to wipe away all such offer-pleas from authors

that would endorse the same, and to give future additions of the churches writings in a fairer copy; and again, as a sponge upon paper to blot out all these Nonconformist offers.

Plea#21. "This same slighted Gospel was brought to the Gentiles, Acts 28:28, so that if it were an offer of Christ to them, it is so to us."

Reply. Very good! It was brought to the Gentiles, and then the reverse of this plea will make the answer; that if it were not an offer of Christ to them, then it is not so to us. Now to the place, for the words of the text are, "be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it." Is there anything here that looks like an offer of Salvation to the Gentiles among all this? Let us examine the matter. This is positively called the Salvation of God which should go to the Gentiles, whereas under a latitude of expression at verse 23, it is called the kingdom of God, Lk.17:21, which concerned elect and non-elect, subject and rebel too, as it came unto the Jews, according to what I have distinguished in Doctrine and Salvation, in some of the fore-parts of this treatise. And yet when it is styled the kingdom of God there at verse 23 to the Jews, it's said of it in Paul's ministry, that he expounded and testified, and not that he proposed, offered or tendered the kingdom of God. But here is no such thing; and then when it goes higher, even to the elect, it's accompanied with a merciful and effectual Operation, and is called the Salvation of God. This Salvation of God is sent, and is never offered. If a lord sends his coach to fetch home his children, doth he offer his coach? No, for this would be to a stranger, but it cannot be so to his children; and neither doth Christ offer his chariot, but sends it, paved with love, to bring home the elect daughters of Jerusalem. The Gospel is our message, not our proposal; it is God's Operation and none of our offer; for all to whom the Gospel is sent will hear it. Will hear it? How? With free will or with a freed will? It must be one or the other. If it be free will, then men it seems must be supposed all of a piece who talk of their offers, for they show us professedly where they had them, even under the standard of Arminius. If with a freed will, then it's done by Operation, and not by offers. For God

doth not free the will by an offer of Grace, but by an Operation of Grace. Let me then preach home the points of Grace, as they lie in God's hands, and not wander into a parcel of offers that lie in creature bounds. {"For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." Heb.8:10.}

Plea#22. "Where the issue is either choosing or refusing a proposed advantage or benefit, there is always an offer."

Reply. The Truths of the Gospel are to be preached first of all absolutely, as matters of God's Glory. Besides, how can we think that the advantage and benefit of the creature can rise up separately? The truth of the doctrine, because it belongs to the kingdom of God, should be argued, opened, witnessed and inculcated to a persuasion of the notion and report of it, if possible, whether it rebounds to the saving advantage and benefit of the person, or not. On supposition of benefit to the elect, if there was a closing with the heart by the power of Christ, before there was any closing with Christ by a choosing the benefit; then it is plain that the benefit was not proposed, but applied by means of preaching, and so in bringing home of the benefit by the Holy Ghost there was no offer. {"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." Rom.1:16.}

Plea#23. "Some choose Christ, so Mary, as she had chosen that good part, which would not be taken away from her. Lk.10:42."

Reply. Mary chose not upon an offer, but upon a pursuit of God's choice of Mary that took hold of her heart; and so it is in all who have a will freed from the bondage of corruption, and will hear Christ speaking in the Gospel. 'Tis by no offer of Grace, that a man is born not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. Jn.1:13.

Plea#24. "Some refuse him, Lk.19:27, so the Jews, and are accountable for so doing."

Reply. They refused him not upon an offer of Salvation, for this is plain, but upon the devil's sin that they would not be subject to Christ. Lk.19:27. Christ's enemies are the devil's children, Jn.8:44, and like their Father the devil, Jn.8:41, do quarrel about dominion. The Jews would stoop to God, they pretended; but when it came to Christ, they cried out, "as for this fellow we know not from whence he is." Jn.9:29. It's upon this refusal now that the text, Lk.19:27, is discovered to be a law of dominion, and not an offer of Salvation. The kingdom of God to the non-elect is not Grace proposed, but dominion and subjection imposed, because they {the non-elect} are under the Law, and not under Grace. {"For sin shall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom.6:14.} They disobey upon Christ's right to govern, and will be crushed under the sceptre of the disobeyed Prince for their daring rebellion! Psal.45:5. How is it then a refusing upon offers of Grace? He has propounded no such thing, for he was sent to none but the lost sheep, Matt.15:24, and what had the dogs to do to fly upon the Shepherd? He will hang them up for their cursings. "Beware of dogs," Phil.3:2, says the Apostle.

Plea#25. "I contend not that ministers must use that exact form, 'I tender or offer you Christ,' but that the Gospel includes such a tender in the nature of it while Christ is preached."

Reply. You may as well contend for the form, as practice the scope of it. If I have a warrant to practice the scope of an offer from the Scriptures, then offers are in the Scriptures, and I may contend for the form of them. Why should not a minister of Christ contend for that form which the Gospel includes in the nature thereof, while Christ is preached? Here's either giving up the cause or betraying it. The form of an offer is less than the nature of an offer; sure then if the Gospel included the nature of it, the minister of the Gospel should contend for the form of it, because it would then be the form of sound words, II Tim.1:13, which a man ought to hold fast. This discovers the offer to be an anti-evangelical cheat, in that ministers need not contend for that form of the Gospel, which yet the nature of the Gospel includes.

Plea#26. "God will have it told to his elect and to

others who his Son is, and what he has done; and now {saith he} soul, is he worth thy accepting. See what thou wilt say, and they all practically return some answer."

Reply. It is granted, that it's far better in this writer to bring in the elect here, than to despise Election with a trifle, or to say it's insignificant, as in the third plea, to suppose the elect may not, or that others besides them may be saved, when we abstract from the consideration of hearers, children and servants, the point concerning them as elect, though we pray for the conversion of them. For without doubt, that must carry with it a very great contradiction, which abstracts Election from persons in our praying for them, Jn.17:9, and yet doth pronounce an Election of them in our preaching to them, in order to their conversion. I have all along owned and proved that the doctrine of Christ is to be preached to the others, if by the others you mean, as the Holy Ghost doth, the rest, Rom.11:7, which hear that doctrine and are blinded. What is this preaching the doctrine of Christ to the rest, to a proposing of Christ to those others {besides the elect} for acceptance unto Salvation? How will that conclusion hold from Gospel premises? {"Therefore my people shall know my name; therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak; behold, it is I." Isa.52:6.} Furthermore, it is an ill drawing up forms of proposals for God, and then building our confidence in the fact that God will stand to those forms, and convert sinners to his Son by them.

Plea#27. "But the business is, some are left to their own choice, and they are sure to refuse Christ; whilst others are determined by Divine Grace, and enabled by Divine Power in a day of power to choose him."

Reply. There's enough in this, for let men keep close to this preaching, and not crack with the times; for though they be earthen vessels, II Cor.4:7, yet they'll carry such treasure in them as will null all the offer doctrine. Herein Father, Son and Holy Ghost are exalted in their Councils and Operations. Let not men now be weary of well doing, Gal.6:9, deny matter of fact, and undo all again.

Plea#28. "But God will make men see what is in men, for we have nothing to do to discern or distinguish

vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy in preaching Christ to men, and that preaching is proposing, and that is in effect an offer of Grace."

Reply. Oh, in and out! Have we nothing to do to discern or distinguish vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy, Rom.9:22-23, in preaching Christ to men? Then how could this writer say before that some are left to their own choice, and they are sure to refuse Christ? These are the vessels of wrath distinctly; so that is not here a plain discerning and distinguishing of the vessels of wrath from the vessels of mercy? Again, how could this writer say that others are determined by Divine Grace, and enabled by Divine Power in a day of power to choose Christ? We know of no discerning or distinguishing of the vessels of mercy but what is of the same piece of Free Grace with the aforesaid concession. What a strange contradiction do these two pleas hold forth one against another! How dangerous and anti-evangelical is the assertion in itself, that we have nothing to do to discern or distinguish vessels of wrath and vessels of mercy in preaching Christ to men! We are to discern the doctrine in our preaching, and eye it to give God the glory of our labours. Otherwise what means those texts, "but if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost," II Cor.4:3, "but ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me," Jn.10:26-27, "to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life," II Cor.2:16, "though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved," Rom.9:27, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," Matt.15:24, "he that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God," Jn.8:47, "so then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy," Rom.9:16, "therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth," Rom.9:18, "for many be called, but few chosen," Matt.20:16, &c.

If we preach the doctrine of Christ right, we shall soon discern the two companies severed by this, the vessels of wrath and the vessels of mercy. And we may be confident that offers are none of the right doctrine,

because they plead contrary to a discerning and a distinguishing of the elect and the rest. And this is quite against the strain of the Scriptures too. See Acts 13:48, "and when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." "Disposed to eternal life, and so found in a good temper and disposition to be wrought on," as erroneously suggested by your oracle Limborch¹⁵. But I answer, that can never be the meaning of the word "ordained" there in the Acts, because this word used in other texts is {radically} quite of another signification. I'll instance but in one place, viz., Rom.13:1, "the powers that be are ordained of God." What is that? Disposed of God? And so wrought to become the powers, being found in a good disposition towards it? Where then would the right of Monarchy quickly be, Isa.49:23, if a Republican usurper should be disposed to set up a Commonwealth against it? Which for the honour of Christ's monarchy in the Person of God's Son, Isa.9:6, Isa.33:22, the Lord forbid should ever come to pass in Great Britain! Furthermore, Christ saith of men that "you shall know them by their fruits," Matt.7:16, as to say that grapes shall be discerned from thorns, figs shall be distinguished from thistles. Now thorns and thistles, Heb.6:8, which bring forth their prickles by the same influences of earth, rain and sun, which cause vines to bring forth their grapes, are such as elsewhere are called vessels of wrath, II Tim.2:20; and grapes and figs which are brought forth upon their proper branches, while the same influences that produced them work hurtful effects in others, Isa.32:13, are called elsewhere vessels of mercy, in opposition to the said vessels of wrath. So that I may say of the doctrine in the plea to the writers who stand by it, as the Apostle said to the Galatians, cometh this persuasion of him that calleth you? Gal.5:8.

Plea#29. "Now this answers God's end, even the discovery of what is in men, and rendering them inexcusable, as all shall be; but not all necessarily under greater condemnation by the Gospel, but so far as it is

¹⁵ Philippus van Limborch -1633-1712, a Dutch Remonstrant {as the Arminians were known} theologian and writer.

doctrinally and professedly embraced and encouraged, it will be an extenuation of sin and misery, which you also think, and which smiles on this doctrine of the Gospel containing an offer of Christ-Man."

Reply. It is the Holy Ghost who uses God's means which discovers God end. {"He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Jn.16:14.} The Lord's means I have proved are preaching of the Gospel home to the elect; and it's this only that discovers what is in men. Offers never make any discovery of men further then what is consistent with an un-renewed nature and hypocrite. {"But if they had stood in my counsel, and had caused my people to hear my words, then they should have turned them from their evil way, and from the evil of their doings." Jer.23:22.} The Scripture declares that that which leaves men without apology, or without excuse, Rom.1:20, is sinning against the light of nature, and not refusing tenders of Salvation. The phrase hath nothing to do here, according to the wisdom of the Spirit, but is altogether misapplied, as if all shall be inexcusable for not having an interest in Christ, because you have proffered them an interest under this dark preaching. {"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come." Jn.16:13.} It is against the light of nature in reason, Acts 5:38,39, to hate, persecute, disturb and revile the open effects of the power of the Gospel, and under doctrinal discoveries of the power of that light, still to cleave to man's own dark way, and serve the Lord not as he is God revealed, nor regard to glorify God according to those open doctrinal discoveries, which men's own judgments are professedly convinced of, Rom.1:21, touching the first foundation of the Christian Religion, as to the Divine Essence of God and his Gracious Operations, but to serve him with mixtures of men's own devices, though he is a Pure and Un-Mixed Being, Jn.4:24, having no glory but his own within himself, and his Grace so far from composition, that it is the simplicity of the Gospel of Christ. II Cor.11:3. To do thus now is against the light of reason, and reason is the light of nature, assisted by the

checks of conscience. Rom.2:15. Then to hate all of those faithful who will not by open and professed mixtures do so too, is against the light of reason or nature in its creature dependence upon God, and so brings men necessarily under greater damnation where the Gospel comes, not as it comes amongst Christ-less men, but as the Christ-less men oppose it. {"And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder." Matt.21:44.} This is that which renders men without excuse; this also increases it, that they will not have the King to teach them by his Holy Spirit, how to glorify and serve the Lord as Supreme God in Christ. But now you come with your offers, and proffer men an interest in Christ if they will accept him. You'll pretend to proffer an everlasting possession in Christ, but only if sinners will accept him. Wherein doth your offer here fall short of the offer of Arminius, or the conditional offer of the Neonomians? The truth of it is, in offers of Grace their principles are all of a consistent piece, but your offers of Grace are no more of one piece than a rope of sand!

Plea#30. "It is as to the elect not an offer barely, and left there, and they left to themselves as it is with others, but when Christ is tendered to them in an outward administration, he is given to them by a positive work, an inward Revelation and Operation of the Holy Ghost."

Reply. The outward administration is a contradiction to an offer at all, for the outward administration is God's positive outward work, as the God of Grace, in conveying the doctrine and sounding of the trumpet, I Cor.14:8, which makes preachers labourers together in faithfully proclaiming the truth of Christ. For in the outward conveyance of the Gospel from the mouth of the speaker to the ear of the hearer, they are at the outer gate of knowledge, the Spirit within, still further as the God of Grace, takes up the word by an inward positive work that answers to the outward; and so by an inward Revelation in Operation of the Holy Ghost, Gal.1:16, he then distinguishes the elect from the non-elect, to whose ears only he had conveyed the sound of the Gospel, as the Sovereign God, and had there left it. Yet still this is done without offers of Grace and tenders of Salvation. The

Lord goes not so far towards the non-elect, Matt.15:26; and again, he comes not so short to the elect of God; for though the preacher doth not discern who the elect individually be, and who they be not, yet the Holy Ghost doth, both in his outward and in his inward work. {"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." II Tim.2:19.}

Plea#31. "At the same time God saith, here is my Son, soul, wilt thou have him? He also saith, here he is, thou shalt have him, and bows the will to choose him. Then he owns that choice, Mary hath chosen, &c., though it's altogether of God."

Reply. I find nothing like such a question to the elect of God {of whom the writer speaks} in all the Holy Scripture. I am certain that all the texts which in this matter are to the purpose, and speak in the language of Effectual Grace, do prove that God puts no such question, nor makes any such proposal to the elect, but that the Lord works all his Grace positively in them by making them willing, and not putting the question, Mic.5:7, whether they are willing, or not. That which is made an amplification of the matter, "he also saith here is my Son thou shalt have him, and bows the will to choose him," ought to have been laid down only as a restriction of the matter, that he only saith thus, and bows the heart upon it in the day of Christ's power. {"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matt.3:17. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Psal.110:3.} We read of no offers upon which Mary chose. {"O ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame?" Psal.4:2.} Mary chose upon a discovery of Grace, Lk.10:42, not a proposal, but upon an effectual Operation of the Spirit, and upon no offer whatsoever. The Lord broke in with that good part upon her soul, whereby in the views she had of Christ Person and Doctrine, she saw it better to sit at Christ's feet, Lk.10:39, and to hear his word, than to be cooking with her sister Martha in the kitchen. Martha saw not what her sister did behold, and so chose according to her other sight of reason, she thinking that dinner might be spoiled if she herself did not look after it, &c. It was Preventing and Effectual Grace which took hold of Mary,

Isa.65:1, out of which Preventing Grace she chose, and that act of choice the Lord owned in her own personal making it, because she did it as a child of electing love, Rom.9:13, and because he loved her as a one of his own. Even as when a little child of ours hath done anything through a great deal of assistance to bring the child to it, yet anyone of us that's a parent of the child, {and it's a because we love our offspring, and are for encouraging the child,} own it all as upon the child's score, and say now my child hath done it!

Plea#32. "We have no hope nor aim to save the non-elect."

Reply. When men are driven to it, then they confess this; whereas still the drift of their preaching speaks another thing {so wide is it from truth} in God's sight, and in common apprehensions. If it was not so, why is the Gospel ordinarily preached among you with no more visible discrimination? {"For the vile person will speak villany, and his heart will work iniquity, to practise hypocrisy, and to utter error against the LORD, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail." Isa.32:6.} Why are the elect so seldom insisted on by men who speak so much of offers, unless when they are driven to some apology, some self-defence in their way of preaching the Gospel? Why should the Epistles be so full of distinguishing doctrine, {to a distinguished and elect group of people; namely, the saints in Christ, II Pet.1:2, I Cor.1:3, Phil.1:2, &c.,} and our sermons and praying commonly so empty thereof? This is no sign that we have no hope nor aim to save the non-elect. For my own part, I profess to the glory of God the Father through Jesus Christ by his own good Spirit, that neither my soul nor ministry grew in the Lord, Acts 19:20, until the Lord the Spirit brought me on without fear, and under distinct discernings of the Gospel, to adhere firmly unto that doctrine which maketh a man to differ. I Cor.4:7.

Plea#33. "But we use all means of God's appointing that the elect may obtain the Salvation which is in Christ, viz., already wrought, among which I reckon the preaching, proposing and tendering of Christ freely."

Reply. God hath appointed the preaching of Christ

freely as a deliverance to the captives. {"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Lk.4:18-19.} But to propose and tender Christ freely to sinful and enslaved captives, as all are by nature, Eccl.7:29, and to offer Christ freely to them, in order to their deliverance, is a thing altogether of a man's free devising, and not of God's free appointing. {"For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him." Job 23:14.} Oh, if you knew how to preach as you ought from Isa.49:9-10, 42:6-7 & 45:13, you would never offer Christ anymore, nor expect to see captives in sin released out of the condition they are in by such empty proposals. The Holy Ghost slights this means, for it is none of the way he blesses, I Sam.12:21, to tender the Gospel to them that are bound. Surely, if your souls had been in bondage so long as I have been, before I received the gracious Spirit of Adoption, Rom.8:15, you would never stand up thus for these useless offers, and proposals which gendereth to bondage. Though I confess that the heart is deceitful here too. Jer.17:9. I remember some years ago I visited a minister in despair, and knowing that his way in the pulpit had been to run upon proposals, and make the offer to sinners, I asked him what he thought of it now? Oh, says he, all is wrong! Why then said I, what think you of God's power exerted on the behalf of all such as look to Christ exclusively for the entirety of their Salvation? Ah, he could speak nothing but of the power of God's wrath against him! However, God raised up that bruised reed again, but instead of magnifying God's Grace in Christ, he fell to his old way of proposals again, and never that I could hear, exalted the power of God in the conversion of the elect, but sunk into the conditions, terms and offers of the Gospel as a New Law where I could never yet see the Holy Ghost follow men. {"Yet they obeyed not, nor inclined their ear, but walked everyone in the imagination of their evil heart; therefore I will bring upon them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do;

but they did them not." Jer.11:8.} And as to the instance of this nature so well-known at hand, I am bound in duty to Christ, and conscience, no longer to smother it. {The sad fruits of ministers who preach notions, but evermore neglect to preach the Gospel of Christ.} The Salters Hall¹⁶

¹⁶In the year 1672, when King Charles II issued a Declaration suspending the penal laws against Dissenters; numerous Congregations were soon formed; and, to illustrate the Harmony between Presbyterians and Independents on the leading Doctrines of Grace; as well as to support the Doctrines of the Reformation against the prevailing Errors of Popery, Arminianism, Socinianism, and Infidelity, a weekly lectureship {through the contributions of the principal merchants and tradesmen of their persuasion in London} was established, in which four Presbyterian and two Independent ministers officiated in rotation. Initial speakers included Dr. Bates, Dr. Manton, Dr. Owen, Mr. Baxter, Mr. Collins, and Mr. Jenkyn; and so these weekly lectures were delivered in Pinners' Hall, an ancient building in Old Broad Street, London. Toward the close of the year 1694, an open rupture took place among the lecturers of Pinners' Hall, and another lecture was set up by a few Independents or Congregationalists, as they began now to be called, at Salters' Hall. The occasion of this breach was the re-publication of the Sermons of Tobias Crisp, {this was in 1690, by Crisp's son, Samuel,} a book whose distinctive tendency was to overthrow the religion of man, whilst maintaining clear Law/Gospel Distinctions and setting forth Christ's Pre-eminent Glory, which Gospel Truths thus simply set forth, essentially revived the spirit of the faithful, at a time when men whose limp {mere creedal} grasp of the Everlasting Gospel, began a down-grade towards Arminianism, as many who professed the truths known as the Doctrines of Grace were drifting away from their Foundational Pillars. In attempts to quench the light of Crisp's distinct setting forth of the Glory of Christ, and to diminish the Glory of Free Grace, Richard Baxter, in a lecture on Jan.28th, 1690 at Pinners' Hall, and in his book, "Scripture Gospel Defended," immediately lashed out, and in his book principally succeeded in utterly distorting the views of Tobias Crisp; to which the son of Crisp swiftly came to his father's defense in a pamphlet of his own entitled, "Christ made Sin," {Samuel Crisp, London, 1691.} In the light of Baxter's death in 1691, a few of the Presbyterian ministers of London deputed Daniel Williams {a disciple of Richard Baxter} to send forth a reply to the book of Sermons by Crisp,

people have laid out abundance of their money now for ten years together, and under a succession of near twenty ministers they have provided and sent down to Cambridge, {though it may be that many lately have become weary of it,} to uphold a parcel of Divinity at Green Street¹⁷, which both this treatise and another {far larger} hath overthrown. What has been the issue? Why, we who have lived all along upon the spot do not hear of one miserable soul that hath been so much as awakened under their strange admixture of Law and Gospel, much less brought to Christ after all. Whereas, if there had been

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

¹⁷Mr. Hussey's first settlement in Cambridge {1691} was as pastor of an assembly of believers which consisted chiefly of Presbyterians. The church was then comprised of seventy-six members, and was known as the Hog Hill Meeting House. Mr. Hussey exercised his ministry at Cambridge with great success, till October, 1696, at which time his church had increased to 122 communicants. The constitution of the church was then altered by the vote of a considerable majority. Seventy-six members, with the pastor, were for a Congregational discipline, and twenty-four were against it. Upon this, the latter withdrew, and formed the Presbyterian Society in Green-Street. Those who remained behind signed a rigid covenant, drawn up by Mr. Hussey. When Mr. Hussey left this Congregation in 1719, {to pastor the church in Petticoat Lane, London,} there were about 1600 communicants, with a Church Membership of 150.

known to be a thorough experience of the work of Grace upon the heart, as has been known, felt and confessed by hundreds, under the contrary Doctrine of Christ in the room of conditions, terms and proffers, then it had been also known that the Holy Ghost had owned the undertaking of the men above, Jer.23:21, and of the doctrine they have sent below, and that God had prospered the word in that place, Acts 12:24, as he has done in many places elsewhere!

Plea#34. "When I offer Christ to all within the sound {here's Christ dear souls, a sweet Saviour, whosoever thirsts come and drink} I firmly believe Election, as to keep it in mine eye, knowing that as many as are ordained to eternal life shall close with this tendered Jesus, not as merely an offer, but as the gift of the Father, and no more."

Reply. Then why don't you preach Holy Spirit Regeneration, Effectual Calling in the Workmanship of God in a passive work, Irresistible Grace that conquers the will, and the rest of the Operations of God in the Power of the Holy Ghost, which are all of one piece of Pure Grace with Election? Why do you keep so good a thing in your eye as Election, and so bad a thing in your mouths, as that doctrine which hath nothing to do with it, Rev.22:17, as I have shown in the last chapter, nor with the Holy Ghost's honour in what men count the way of a soul's Conversion to Christ? Again, who speaks most consistently, the Arminian and Neonomian, that talk of an offer to all within the sound upon the belief of a General Redemption to support it? Or the reputed Orthodox, who plead for the general offer of Salvation to sinners upon their professing of a Particular Redemption by the Free Grace of God, through the blood of Christ? Surely one would think that this nonsense had a greater tendency to harden the Arminians, than something else hath to harden them, which was objected to before. What Arminian of them all will not say that he firmly believes Election too, {such,} an Election as seems to be here laid down, that to free it of absurdity, is consistent with an offer of Christ to all within the sound? Judge of this particular man, whoever he is, by his words, that he has openly set his bias towards the Arminian ground, though

he professes himself to be on the other side of the Calvinists at delivering it. Neither is he alone, but hundreds more join him; nor can mine be a greater opposition to him in the principle, than it is to hundreds more in the same matter.

Plea#35. "I steadfastly believe Particular Grace, and lodged in the Holy Ghost's hands to bestow it on none but the elect. Nor is the tendering of Christ any contradiction here too, any more than the preaching of Christ to all."

Reply. We may steadfastly believe more than we closely practice. We may receive that truth in our understanding, about which we may be such prudential cowards, Jonah 1:3, as that we will not preach it, if we can well avoid it, and divert to a more agreeing subject. Jer.14:14. I am afraid we have too many of us that are guilty of this, who scarce ever preach to the full of our light, Jer.1:6-7, and a steadfast belief within ourselves of that to be true in the Gospel of Christ, which we dare not utter. There is never a minister of Christ in the world that grows in his soul, but he'll find temptations enough to check him in his duty, under the soft and deceitful charm that he do not go too far. So if a man be resolved to offer Salvation to all within the sound, he must resolve likewise, unless his prudential auditory agree not to put him to the blush, conceal upon the housetops, Lk.12:3, his steadfast belief of Particular Grace. For should he insist upon such a contradiction, the rational part of the auditory must in charity conclude he had overspent himself, awakened to some disorder, or mislaid his notes!

Plea#36. "Seeing the Gospel, as preaching, in the very nature of it, carries all we mean by an offer, viz., a setting forth or proposing of Christ for acceptance, where nevertheless Grace determines to that acceptance."

Reply. This hath been answered enough throughout the second chapter, that the nature of preaching the Gospel lies not in an offer of Grace, and that the Gospel carries nothing like it in the nature thereof, nor in the preaching thereof, as preaching according to the mind of the Holy Spirit. I need only to observe here, that though they professed to mean nothing else by an offer except preaching, yet they do

palpably utter a thing very alien from preaching the Gospel; and that the proposing of Christ for acceptance is so contrary to the nature of the Gospel that it hath been plenteously disproved in this treatise. Furthermore, that Grace never determines upon any proposal, has been likewise proved in the third chapter of this book against offers, wherein is shown that proposals are not the Holy Ghost's external way and means of determining the heart to a saving acknowledgment of Christ in the Gospel.

Plea#37. "Nevertheless preachers may carry this offering of Christ and tendering of Christ too far, as when they seem to lay all there, and carry it to three extremes. For I confess: 1. That the offer of something equally to many among men seems to imply that the heart of the Lord who offers is equally affected towards those many. 2. Where some act required should determine the possession or enjoyment to one rather than another of those many, the offer seems to be properly conditional, and the thing offered not absolutely a gift. 3. The offer or tender of somewhat to men's acceptance seems to imply that the person's to whom the offer is made has power to accept, and that it is of their own will that they do so. If the Gospel therefore is an offer after this sort, the first brings in Universal Grace, the second brings in a Covenant of Works, and the third brings in Free Will. An Arminian need desire no more, but none of these things are necessarily implied in the nature of offers, nor are owned by the Orthodox who use this term."

Reply. It is too far to go one step out of God the Spirit's way. {"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit." Gal.5:25.} When we are dealing with men about their souls, we should be exalting of God the Spirit's work in all the new creature acts, instead of setting out offers to justify men's own practices, they are to set forth the glorious operations of the third Person of God, to pull down the creature, and exalt the Lord alone. {"For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." Lk.14:11.} If preachers do not lay all upon offers, they still lay more than God hath laid, if they lay anything at all, and that hath appeared enough out of the Scriptures brought forth. The Arminian offers founded in Universal Grace and

Free Will, together with the Neonomian offers founded upon Conditions do give being to all other sorts of offers. Whatever it be, other sorts of men having far less learning and cunning to manage them than Arminians have had, do most injuriously expose themselves, and amuse the common sort of people, by calling their new offers evangelical offers, ministerial offers, free offers, effectual offers, obligatory offers, etc., all true but disguised daughters of one and the same mother Arminianism. Nevertheless in all these, because men have departed out of the Holy Ghost's way they would fain make people believe it's no such thing, but that their steps have been just, orthodox and gospel-like.

Plea#38. "Here then is the mind that hath wisdom to keep the defined order of the Gospel, and a just balance in preaching the divers, but not contrary doctrines of the Gospel. So may we be guided by Christ's unerring Spirit."

Reply. Here then is a very great fallacy, and not the mind that has honesty, nor wisdom neither, in predicating contrary doctrines of the Gospel. For doctrines may be contrary to the Gospel, but none that are contrary are doctrines of the Gospel. Again, suppose it to be spoken of things contrary to the Gospel, as Arminianism and offers are, how can there be a defined order of the Gospel and a balance between these? For the nearer it comes to what is contrary to the Gospel to make your defined order, the further you depart from the Gospel. {"A false balance is abomination to the LORD; but a just weight is his delight." Prov.11:1.} For the Gospel, after all this unwary choice of a medium, lies in an Absolute extreme to what is contrary thereunto, and not in a medium, though you sugar it over with a "defined order" between itself and that that's none of itself; and so as to all the diverse doctrines of the Gospel, they are all of one piece of Sovereign Grace. But the misery is, that few men see either the nature or place of what is revealed and instituted in things that concern the Gospel, and to serve the Gospel; which yet is no diverse doctrine of the Gospel, but to be kept still distinct therefrom. The Good Lord teach us all by his Holy Spirit, and lead us more into the mind of Christ in every separate Congregation; and then

it may be said, lo, here is the mind that hath wisdom to preach by the defined order of the Gospel, let man's own wisdom from beneath call it what he will; and let the Holy Ghost be exalted on the bottom of the Father's works, and on Christ's works in all the power of God, throughout the whole works of Application, and this will be a just balance of the honour, according to the scales of the Sanctuary, equally due to all the Three Persons in One God, beheld, worshipped and possessed in Jesus Christ. And herein shall all men that are Christ's disciples indeed, see that we are guided by Christ's unerring Spirit. {"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Jn.8:31-32.} For the Spirit depends not upon the mind of man that hath wisdom, but the mind of man that hath wisdom depends upon the unerring Spirit. "Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Rev.22:20.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Of the Invitation of Sinners to Come to Christ.

Having handled the matter of this treatise through the Father's Donation of Christ, and through the Spirit's Operation with Christ, I have beaten down, as an instrument in the Lord's hand, the minister's dishonourable oblation of Christ. The substance hath been to show, that whilst an offerer of Christ preaches Christ {as he calls it} immediately for acceptance, a faithful steward of the mysteries of Christ {not handling the word of God deceitfully, but workmen like, II Cor.4:2,} preaches Christ first of all in the Father's preparations, next in the Son's procurements, and last of all, under the same communications of the anointing, he preaches Christ in the Spirit's principles to discern and receive him. I now therefore come to some brief account of the invitation of sinners to come to Christ.

Plea#1. "I find that you do not so express about the Invitation of sinners to Christ; but surely an Invitation of sinners to Christ stands or falls with the former about offers of Christ. So I have learned from, II Cor.5:18-20, that there are two parts of a minister's work. 1. A declaration concerning what God and Christ have done in reconciliation made by Christ, verses 18 & 19. 2. An invitation and earnest exhortation to accept it, verse 20, it is the ministry committed to them before they preached to the Corinthians, and which had been their work in preaching to them, whereof he puts them in mind; as though God did beseech you by us {as for instance while we speak to you} be you reconciled to God. This is your work and message, thus to sinners."

Reply. Since I have learned Christ, Eph.4:20, I have never understood that that place, II Cor.5:18-19, was an exhortation to sinners, distinct from Saints and apart from the New Born. I've never took it since Conversion, I Jn.2:20, to be spoken of the elect's first coming to Christ, or of their coming to Christ as a Priest in his Righteousness and Blood, to receive the atonement. {"And not only so, but we also joy in God through our

Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." Rom.5:11.} Indeed before my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, Eph.3:3, {for this was the ground of my Conversion to Christ} I had taken it so as others do, while they profess conversion to Christ, but through Free Grace rectifying the mistake, I now see to take it otherwise. My arguments are these.

First Argument: Though the first argument hath been laid down already, yet I'll just here reinforce it. The words are spoken as part of the Epistle, and that under the same style, as it was directed in the salutation. But the style of salutation was not to sinners, as it was directed unto the Church of God at Corinth, with all the saints which are in all Achaia, I Cor.1:2; whereas if this had been an Invitation of Grace to sinners, or an Invitation of Christ to men's first coming unto Christ {who while invited were not yet Saints} then it would not have been to the purpose, to run it along thus without any difference in the style, as to say "us," "he hath reconciled us," and verse 21, "he hath made him to be sin for us." No, for then he would have said here, as the Nonconformists do, if it had been right, "you sinners, come to Christ; you that are distinguished from us who are come to Christ already, do you lay hold, that it may be for you." This is too much like a Nonconformists language on the text, but blessed be God there is no such language in the Corinthian chapter, nor anything of comparison like unto it that can come up to this peculiar doctrine.

Second Argument: The whole 18th and 19th verses are purely doctrinal, and Absolute doctrine too, as they are no invitation at all, as appears in the words, "and all things are of God who hath reconciled us, &c." {"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen." Rom.11:36.} The text being briefly opened, I shall take notice, that the minister's work in the declaration part of it, as he calls it, is not only concerning what God and Christ have done in Reconciliation, but what God is principally in that work, even God in Christ, verse 19, and God distinct from Christ, verse 18, which yet is not at all minded in the plea. Further I observe, that the text doth not say only as the

plea doth, that Reconciliation is made by Christ, but that God hath made it by Christ. God hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, verse 18, which is very distinct from a declaration concerning what God and Christ have done in Reconciliation made by Christ. For this latter touching declaration, though it be the whole of what is allowed us in the plea, is so short a note, that it's exclusive of much of the Grace of God, and sets all upon the Redemption in Christ separately; whereas that Redemption in Christ depends entirely upon the Grace of God. {“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.” Eph.1:7.} But to argue further that the 20th verse is no Invitation and Earnest Exhortation to accept of Christ in the sinner's first reconciliation to him, consider the following.

Third Argument: What's that? It's earnest pleading or supplication, {“we pray you, &c.,”} at verse 20, for that's no invitation or earnest exhortation to the doctrinal Reconciliation that God hath made by Christ; but it's a secondary wooing of the Corinthians in godly jealousy, whom he had espoused as a chaste virgin to Christ, II Cor.11:2, to be reconciled to Christ's Orders in his house, as he was their Husband whom he had already espoused unto Himself. {“For thy Maker is thine husband; the LORD of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called.” Isa.54:5.} It's no primary or initial wooing them, as if first of all {whilst poor beggars} they were courted to match with Christ and his Righteousness. And this argument suits with the other two already given.

Fourth Argument: These Corinthians were very disloyal to their Husband-King. They were not come clean out from occasional conformity with the pagan world, as is clearly manifest in this Epistle. II Cor.6:15-18. {“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness; and what communion hath light with darkness?” II Cor.6:14.} Now as they had corrupted the Lord's Table, even the Lord's Supper in the former epistle, I Cor.11:30, so he writes to them that they might be ashamed and mended here. As if he had said, “now saints, you see your relation,

II Cor.7:1, learn your duty; be reconciled to the King in the orders of his house. He will have it so and so. Don't stand upon your own wills, nor set up your own unbecoming practices in the profession of the Gospel of Christ, for this is nothing less than scandalous. What will become of the credit of the Gospel, &c.?" {Some no doubt in the Church of God at Corinth thought Paul an arbitrary man because he stood up so much for Church Order.} Now if we take it thus, it all opens of one piece of Grace, for here is no bias towards the Arminian side. The Gospel and the Government of the Gospel must be coupled, though the loops are first made in the new creature, II Cor.5:17, to tack these two together in the Church of God. Moreover, we find that all of us by nature, though it be of us saints who have tastes of God's love and mercy in Christ, if it be whilst we are left alone in our own spirit, are ready to grow secure, carnal, presumptuous and disobedient. We are not always so ready and forward as we should be for strictness in church order and holy walking, to adorn the Gospel and the Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things, Tit.2:10, even in the out-workings of our profession. Now the Apostle here labours to reform a fault in the Corinthians that's very rise amongst us, namely, contempt of church order, II Cor.12:20-21; as much as to say, the Spirit hath done so and so to make you saints in the inner-workings of Regenerating Grace, in the new creature; he hath enlightened your understandings, purged your consciences, renewed your hearts, drawn your wills, sanctified your affections in the main; now upon this bottom of Grace be more strict and conscientious in all the out-workings of a life devoted and consecrated to Christ. Thus it was with godly Paul and godly Timothy, II Thes.2:10-12, they would not allow looseness, nor breach of Church Order in church members, II Cor.13:2,10; they would not bear to see them walk inconsistently with their church relation, as espoused unto Christ, II Cor.11:2, their Husband. But alas! It's otherwise now in a great measure, as the strictness of Gospel Government in the duty of church watchfulness are sinfully laid down, and remitted by looser times. Ministers give grains of allowances to the conversations of their people, and take grains of

allowances in conversation to themselves. So some of the people did in Corinth, and among the saints in Achaia, though they had a Paul and a Timothy of Gospel Order and Strictness to watch over them. And they were not fully reconciled to the Sceptre of Christ in Government, even whilst they were reconciled by Grace to be saved by his blood alone. Now say Paul and Timothy in those matters, "we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Fifth Argument: These servants of Christ, Paul and Timothy, plead with the Corinthians on the behalf of Christ as they were ambassadors, and employed by Christ as King; and therefore his beseeching them at the 20th verse to be reconciled to God, was to God in his Constitution of Christ to be their King, Head and Husband, Psal.2:6; Christ having received all this Power, Honour and Glory of God for the Church. Jn.5:22-23. {"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this." Isa.9:6-7.} A lesson it should seem the Corinthians were slow to learn {search the marginal texts in the last argument} and reluctant to fully bow to, though they were saints; that is, though they were already loved and washed from their sins in Christ's own blood. Rev.1:5. And we find it's the same thing now, for are there not too many saints in the world, who are very much estranged from, and opposite unto Christ's Government in the churches? Some are in the world, and not embodied in the churches at all; some are in the churches under a Corinthian looseness, as if they were in the world; and do choose rather to live without the yoke of Christ, Matt.11:29-30, than to live under it. These still in the main, "as a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves," Isa.6:13, having God's Grace in and through Christ at the bottom, {which though it secures them from sinning the devil's sin which is unpardonable, I Jn.3:6-9,} must be

exhorted to fall under the Governmental Reign of Grace through Christ in the Assemblies of the saints. That is, to bow to Christ's Absolute Sceptre, and live more strictly than ever they have done, both in the churches and in their private conversations. I Pet.2:12. And indeed under the Spirit of Christ this is the sweetest way of living. {"How sweet are thy words unto my taste; yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth!" Psal.119:103.} It's made so, it's found so, I have found it so through Grace, let them talk what they will. Now ministerial exhortations of saints to be reconciled to God in the taking up of Christ's yoke, is quite a distinct consideration from any first conversion to Christ. Ministers therefore do make a woeful mistake upon this 20th verse, and carry on their work very inconsistently, when they make the meaning of it to be an invitation of sinners, as sinners, to come to Christ. For let them consider, are they ambassadors from the King of saints? Why then, they are not sent ambassadors to treat with rebels, but to treat with children who are constituted in the Everlasting Covenant between God and Christ; and so ambassadors are sent to treat with them from the Great King, that they may all come into the grand alliance against the devil and the world, and be openly made unto our God kings, by becoming subjects unto Christ. The words then are a plain obsecration of his ambassadors; their beseeching of the saints to submit to Christ, to be reconciled to God in him, and be ruled by Christ according to the law of their espousals unto this Lord and Husband. And what's all this saint's duty of practical reconciliation to the sceptre, {I would ask} to prove a sinners invitation to accept of that Grace of doctrinal reconciliation which God hath made by Jesus Christ, as the plea hath urged out of this text?

Plea#2. "Another part of the application is to believers, chapter 6:1, that you receive not the Grace of God in vain."

Reply: It is plain in the face of all the foregoing light, to him that doth not shut his eyes, Jn.3:19, that the object of the application is not changed, but is the same in this text, II Cor.6:1, as it was in the former text, II Cor.5:20. They were the same persons before as here, and they are the same persons here as before. The

application to the subject is all one part and one piece. And oh, that it would teach us indeed to make our applications so too, and not so wandering, dead, and formal {under the blinded notion of an invitation of sinners to come to Christ} as our vain and degenerate customs have rendered them, Jer.23:36; and then we might not receive the Grace of God so much in vain, as most preachers do, who, notwithstanding all they have been taught of it, pull down at one end, {exactly in the nature of these pleas,} what they have doctrinally built at the other end, II Cor.1:18; and all through a wrong and unskilful way of application. {"The priests said not, where is the LORD; and they that handle the law knew me not; the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit." Jer.2:8."} And however the carnal part in the minds of some good men may be such as cannot yet stoop to a conviction in this matter, and may look upon all this to be too much exposing {as they have said} an invitation of sinners to come to Christ; yet the Lord keeps up the same thoughts of severity towards this way of the invitation {so notoriously crooked} as I have admonished to urge against it in my last book, and in other places of that work. {"Therefore thus saith the LORD, if thou return, then will I bring thee again, and thou shalt stand before me; and if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth; let them return unto thee; but return not thou unto them." Jer.15:19.} For such a way, as appears by the taste of it already in those Corinthian texts, can never be made out to be according to the mind of Christ, but is very injurious to the Wise Revelation of Grace, in that the practical part is not managed according to the influential springs of Grace, Phil.2:13, which flow from that Wise and Gracious Revelation; I mean the Revelation of God in Christ reconciling the world, II Cor.5:19, even that whole world of sinners, I Jn.2:2, unto Himself, for whom the propitiation was effected. A whole world distinct from that other whole world which lies evermore in wickedness, I Jn.5:19, and is a generation that is not washed, Prov.30:12, from their filthiness. Now ministers may be sure, that God himself works not with us in our

invitations, when we are so left as to go on contrary to God the Holy Ghost, Isa.63:10, and therein do spoil his own work in the Holy Scriptures, in order to make ours hang together in the pulpit.

Plea#3. "Nor can I be persuaded but that, 'come unto me, &c.,' Matt.11:28, is an invitation to saving faith; for he speaks to the multitudes, verse 7, whose legs had brought them to him. And why should it have a particular meaning here from all other 'comings' in the New Testament that are at all parallel? Coming is believing, Jn.6:35; and besides, Christ proposes himself as a Saviour for soul-rest, and there lay his work and employment, and so it is therefore a suitable coming. Besides, the experience of many souls under their troubles and conflicts finding it a sweet invitation unto spiritual coming to, or believing on Christ, bears testimony to this sense. And doubtless it stands upon record for usefulness, as well as it might be so when spoken by Christ."

Reply: This text hath been partly expounded in my other book, and was produced there as an invitation to no spiritual act, such as saving faith is, but to the natural and local act of coming to Christ, Jn.3:19-21, when Christ should be gone to another place, and to a frequent or constant attending upon his ministry. It was to come to Christ, even out of their cities into the wilderness, in the ministry of his flesh, which coming and attendance had a promise of blessing {in an experimental rest made unto it} if they should come from principles of Divine Grace. I say on this supposition, or what you'll call it, laid underneath, Christ speaks to the multitudes whose legs, while the Lord was in their cities, verse 1, had brought them to him. But what then? It is consistent enough to invite such as were present {out of curiosity} to come again another time and in another place out of principles of judgment. {"Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed." Jn.8:31.} And as now they were building all their expectations of Rest and Salvation upon their Temple and its legal services, so they should come to one Greater than the Temple, Matt.12:6, and make an exchange, expect that Rest and Salvation from Christ

alone, Acts 4:12, and therein come and take up Christ's Institutions, Lk.14:26-27, from a principle of laying down all other things that be inconsistent with Him. To what hath been briefly hinted according to the former treatise, I will add a little more of what the Lord hath shown me, Isa.43:21, by way of reply and answer to the foregoing plea. The "come" {as I've expounded upon Matt.11:28,} hath no such particular meaning, as to say a singular interpretation here in this one instance, II Pet.1:20, and not the same elsewhere, when it's applied to a natural and local act from all other "comes" in the New Testament, I Cor.2:13, but is parallel to the same meaning in divers other texts. Indeed sometimes "come" in the Evangelists must be interpreted to signify believing. I'll produce some instances. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." Jn.6:44. Here coming to Christ must be believing on him with that kind of believing which is called saving faith, Heb.10:39, because no man can exert or act it towards Christ, except he that is drawn by the Father to him. So, verse 45, "it is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me," is likewise a place which plainly speaks of saving faith, for the like reason with the cause foregoing. Again, verse 65, "therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." This is a plain owning of coming to Christ to be believing upon him, Phil.1:29, for still it insists upon the same cause. The place instanced in the plea is next, viz., Jn.6:35, "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." This is expressly called believing, {in the next words,} so we cannot doubt of the sense of the word to be used for saving faith here. And it's the same below at verse 37, "all that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." For whatsoever faith is thus laid upon the Father's gift must be spiritual and supernatural believing or saving faith. Lastly, we must allow it at Jn.7:37, because it is so expounded in that contexture, "in the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, if any man

thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Here the Holy Ghost calleth coming unto Christ a believing on him. Therefore here they are one and the same thing, as the next verse proves, "he that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." But, verse 39, "this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive." {"For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." Isa.44:3.} It's twice called believing, and it can be interpreted in no other sense; and besides these places I have brought forth, I scarce know another parallel for spiritual coming.

Nevertheless "come" is much oftener used in the New Testament of a natural and local act, than of a spiritual and mental act. How then hath the "come" in Matt.11:28, a particular meaning there, if interpreted of a natural and local coming, from all other "comes" in the New Testament that are at all parallel? That is, which hath any relation or business belonging to men's souls about Christ, though it doth now lie immediately in saving faith in the word "come"? Come then, let us examine the places which are already at hand, and see if "come" as interpreted in Matt.11:28, of a natural and local act, hath no such parallel sense in other texts of the New Testament, as coming unto Christ in a place.

I begin with John 3:26, "and they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." What "coming" can this be to Christ, but a natural and local coming to him? First, it was a coming to Christ, for John here, upon a question arising between some of his disciples and the Jews about purifying, verse 25, bear witness to Christ, "he must increase, but I must decrease. He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth; he that cometh from heaven is above all, &c." {"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." Phil.2:9.} It is the Person to whom John bare witness before, that {when this question was moved about purifying} did then baptize, but this Person was

Jesus, "behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him," said they to John, verse 22 with verse 26 compared. So they are said to come to him who baptized distinctly from John, and that without confession of sins, as John had done it upon men confessing their sins. Matt.3:6. Therefore it was coming to Jesus Christ that is spoken of in this text of the Gospel according to John. Secondly, it was a natural and local coming to Christ into the Land of Judea, for they came to him there where he was baptizing, verse 22. Besides, how could all men; that is, the multitudes, come unto him at that time and place spoken of, otherwise than by a natural and local coming unto Christ, Jn.10:41, in his Humbled State? So that I prove the sense of "come" in Matthew 11:28 as interpreted of a natural and local coming to Christ, to be no interpretation of such particular meaning, but what agrees with some other parallel "come" in the New Testament, in point of the act.

I next proceed to Matt.19:14, "Jesus said, suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me; for of such is the kingdom of heaven." None can think this was believing, yet it's called coming to Christ. In the words before it is thus, "they were brought unto him little children;" and it is plain this was a natural and local bringing of children, and so a coming of children with legs and arms to Christ. So that Matt.11:28, {"come unto me, all ye that labour, &c,"} though interpreted of a natural and local coming, yet hath other parallel texts in the New Testament to justify it.

Next I bring Mark 2:18, "they come and say unto him, why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but thy disciples fast not?" Here was a coming to Christ, but what coming? It was not a coming by an act of the mind, Jn.17:3, but by an act of the body. It was not a spiritual coming, but a natural coming. It was not faith's motion, but local-motion even a local coming unto Jesus. It was place-coming, and not a believing-coming.

Likewise I produce Mark 5:15, "and they come to Jesus;" that is, the men of that country of the Gadarenes did come unto him, upon his delivering the possessed with the legion of devils, and his permission of the devils to enter into the herd of swine, &c. Fame made many to

go out and see what it was that was done, and it follows, "and they come to Jesus, and see him that was possessed with the devil, and had the legion, sitting, and clothed, and in his right mind; and they were afraid." Here again is a natural and a local coming unto Jesus. They came out of curiosity, and trembled, not out of a holy principal, and believed. So that by way of parallel exposition, it was the same kind of natural and local act which they were exhorted to in Matthew 11:28, only to be stripped of its defect and faultiness.

Again, Mark 2:3, "and they come unto him, bringing one sick of the palsy, &c." Here is palpably coming to Christ with a natural and a local motion, coming with their legs. It's the action of their bodies, not the action of their mind which is spoken of. "Come" then in Matthew 11:28, {though it be interpreted naturally in motion on their legs to come and partake of Gospel ordinances,} hath places enough to support the interpretation against a weak displeasure.

So how can Matthew 22:4, "come unto the marriage," and the same in Luke 14:17, "come; for all things are now ready," be interpreted consistently, except of a natural and local coming to the means of Grace, in order unto a due conviction that Messiah was come in the flesh? For, as the Jews require a sign, I Cor.1:22, they might have seen enough of it, Lk.12:56, according to the Scriptures, in that Marriage, if they had not been moody, quarrelsome, made excuses, &c., but had gone forth to see Jesus. Jn.12:21. The invitation of coming was to the means, not to the act of saving faith. Come with your legs, wait there to be born in Zion, Psal.87:5, and then to be fed in the house of God, where the children are new born.

To these places I add John 1:46, "come and see," John 1:39, "Jesus saith come and see." It is plain that these texts speak of coming to Christ, and it is equally clear that they speak of coming to him in a natural and local manner with body and legs, the very way that my exposition heretofore on Matthew 11:28 has been so ridiculed by these ignorant zealots.

Lastly, I will name no more than John 21:12, where Jesus saith unto the disciples, "come and dine." It

was no less than an invitation to dine with him that was risen from the dead. This was not an invitation to saving faith, but to a natural and local act of approach. So that there are parallel texts enough to justify my interpretation of Matthew 11:28 to be meant of a natural and local coming to the means of Grace, Psal.27:4, and not an invitation to the act of saving faith, as hath been hostilely contended in some pulpits, out of a mere opposition, the last winter, to truth broken out the summer before.

Now since there are so many texts to favour it, why may not the interpretation of Matthew 11:28 be justified the same way? And why may not other good men who interpret the "come" there of an act of saving faith be carried away to it more by incogitancy than forceful reason? Only some younger men than the divines of the last age, by mere preposition are resolved to maintain, if they can do it, what the elder men have said, and this at best is all that can be made of it.

As to John 5:40, "and ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," the sense of the word can never justly be meant of saving faith. No, it's plainly meant of a natural reasonable faith, distinct from a spiritual and supernatural believing. It's such a human faith as they must needs have had on Christ, if they would, being convinced that no man could do the works he did, except Messiah. It's spoken also of such a life as they might have had if they would have humanly embraced him, when they saw his works. Thus they might have taken care to have saved themselves outwardly by a natural stooping unto Jesus, as a man may save himself from drowning who will be advised and ruled, and not run himself into a deep water that lies before him, though he be certainly told he must perish, if he tries to ford it over. This was just the case of the Jews in that flood of mighty waters overflowing, Isa.28:2, the people of the Roman power, raised it up to an overspreading of desolation for the overspreading of abominations, Dan.9:27, which in a little time swept away all the doctrinal unbelievers before it, who would obstinately try, Acts 22:18, in rejecting of Messiah to ford through it. Whereas Christ was a Rock above the floods, Psal.40:2, and they might have seen by

the light of his doctrine and his mighty works, that "surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him," Psal.32:6; and whereas in the prophetic Psalm that described these matters, God saith in Christ unto the single hearted believer, verse 8, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with mine eye;" and so he speaks with a rational advice unto the multitude, that they don't like the beasts rush into the mighty waters, verse 9, "be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding; whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee." The Lord restrained them awhile, otherwise they had come in so near to his interest in Judea, as visibly to have destroyed it, so far as lay in the Jewish power. And while he predicts upon a foresight of their headstrong wills to reject all means of their rational conviction, verse 10, that "many sorrows shall be unto the wicked," Christ doth but take up the same prediction and carry it on agreeably in this John 5:40, "ye will not come on to me that you might have life." So that here is a coming unto Christ suggested in a kind of believing, which is short of saving faith. "You will not come to me," as much as to say, you act with as unreasonable a stupidity as the brutes, Isa.1:3, and will not, according to the faculty of mankind, exercise a believing reason. I have produced so many reasonable arguments both in my doctrine and miracles to persuade you unto reason, that there is nothing more to be done towards convincing you, Isa.5:4, and subduing you to reason, that can fall within the sphere of a reasonable and common operation. This is the consistent meaning, and all this makes it appear that the "come" in Matthew 11:28 hath divers parallels, instead of no parallel in the New Testament, to justify that there is a coming to Christ in Scripture, {naturally,} distinct from coming to him, {spiritually,} in saving faith, which latter is the coming that men now in the preaching of the Gospel mean, Rom.10:10, when they invite sinners from Matthew 11:28 though present under the means, and in the very assembly of the multitude gathered together, still to come to Christ.

To all that I have said I add further, that it could be no spiritual coming that is meant in the invitation of

sinner, Matt.11:28, because the Spirit of Christ was not then indeed {in the humbled State of our Saviour} given for any act of coming in a spiritual sense, Jn.7:39, as is suited to the spiritual act of a believer in the times of an Exalted Jesus. The freedom of sinners for spiritual acts lay in a supernatural power of believing. Gospel coming is another thing in one text, than natural coming, Jn.6:5, {whether locally or reasonably,} in other texts. The true freedom of souls created for the spiritual act, lay in an after-drawing up of their hearts in a spiritual sense to Christ; that is, to follow him by motion-faith which stays in nothing of its own, and to ascend after him, entering into that within the veil, Heb.6:19, 10:19, when he should be gone out of this world. And therefore none could come to Christ in his state of Humiliation with that inward freedom to take up Salvation in and with him, according to the Mystery of the Gospel, any more than afterwards he could go to Christ in his Exalted State to take up the same Salvation, except the Father irresistibly draw him. Now drawing argued a distance of the object, as well as a disease within the faculty. {"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." Jn.6:44.}

Again, that the coming to Christ in Matt.11:28, signified but a coming locally to Christ, Jn.4:40, in means of Grace with a natural act of motion, with their legs; only at another time and in another place with better principles than curiosity, Jer.29:13, and with better persuasions of Messiah than these weary and heavy laden souls had entertained to that day, appears in that the use of the phrase "coming to Christ" is found only in these historical books of the New Testament, which treat historically of what Christ began both to do and teach, Acts 1:1, whilst he was below upon earth, and so could and ought to be "come" {or resorted, and repaired} "unto." It was most proper for Christ in his state of Humiliation to say to sinners "come unto me," but it's improper for us in the ministry of the Gospel to say now unto sinners in Christ's Exalted State, that they must come to Christ. No, Christ is not here, he is risen and ascended, Matt.28:6, and sinners therefore ought to be instructed and taught in the preaching of the Gospel to go to Christ, instead of being

invited to come to Christ, which carries along with it an ill favoured construction, as if Christ was still on earth, and was not gone into Heaven! Our common preachers, when inviting sinners to come to Christ, and not being not aware of this, for unless they are speaking of a local and external act of coming to means, do really speak nonsense. For Christ is in Heaven, I Pet.3:22, and they should rather call upon sinners to go to Christ, if they mean saving faith, than to come to Christ. Christ is above, he is risen, he is risen above ordinances, he is not here, "God is gone up with a shout," Psal.47:5, and then why do you bid them come, as if he were here? I observe agreeably hereunto, that in the historical book of the Acts of the Apostles, when Christ was gone to Heaven, there the phrase of coming to Christ, or the Evangelists phrase of invitation used before to come to Christ, ceased, for there was no more to be heard of it. Faith under that form of words appears no longer. The phrase is not once used in all the Acts of the Apostles. It's there only expressed by faith and believing, but no coming to Christ is spoken of. This admirably strengthens the sense of that same "come to me" in Matthew 11:28, to be meant literally of a local coming to Christ, fitted in the Jews to Christ's State of Humiliation. Zech.9:9, Matt.21:5, Isa.62:11. Besides too, in the doctrinal books of the New Testament, I do not find this form of Invitation of sinners to come to Christ used in all Paul's Epistles to the Gentiles. There is spoken indeed in his writings to the Jews of a coming to God by Christ, who is to be found in the use of Gospel-means; and this coming is spoken as a thing effected Supernaturally by Grace. {"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." Heb.7:25.} And also once more it is written in the Hebrews, "let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of Grace, &c.," Heb.4:16, the meaning is, let us now, by reason of the priesthood and blood of Jesus Christ {whom as the High Priest the Apostle had been setting forth in the verses before, verses 14-15,} come boldly, and without disturbing fear, to the Majesty which is now open in Christ's discoveries of himself, for because he sitteth on the right hand of God in the Heavens, Col.3:1, he

sitteth also below in his house in the ordinances of his Grace, which ordinances he hath erected in his spiritual Tabernacle and Temple, the Gospel Church, which is his rest. {"We will go into his tabernacles; we will worship at his footstool." Psal.132:7.} Let us therefore come unto it boldly there in worship. But still this doth not reach a minister's sense of inviting sinners to come to Christ, to close with his Person in their first act of believing. It's not at all as a form of invitation to be used in the preaching of the Gospel, for as to say, "come to Christ, sinners; here is Christ; I have been preaching Christ, now let me invite you; come, now will you come and have him? Will you come and take him? I invite you to come. Why can I not prevail, &c.," I say, that I see nothing like this whatsoever in all the Holy Scriptures, but it's quite another thing; and this more plainly makes it appear that the "coming" spoken so much of in the historical books, treating of things as they were transacted whilst Christ was upon the earth, was for the most part a local coming to the Man Jesus of Nazareth where he was, and following him as he went about doing good, Acts 10:38, which is sometimes called a coming after him, Matt.19:21, Matt.16:24, so they should be more and more convinced by all his conduct, that at the bottom of the Man Jesus, that Man in another and higher nature was God. {"I and my Father are one." Jn.10:30.} By all it's plain, that in a Matthew 11:28 the invitation then was to a coming unto Christ on their feet for the use of means in hearing of the word of God, and in beholding of the miracles which were wrought by Jesus of Nazareth, towards a reasonable conviction that he was the true Messiah.

Now says he, "come unto me all ye that labour for a thing of nought, Isa.55:2, and spend your money for the lambs of the flock and the calves of the stall, Mal.4:2, and know not what they mean. Come unto me all ye that weary yourselves, and labour in the fire of mine altar for very vanity, casting off me, who when sacrificed will put a sure end unto all of it. Come to me you weary worshipers that are heavy laden in all your common attendance upon the Mosaic Institutions, and are under a ceremonial yoke of legal bondage, Gal.5:1, in carrying on the observation of so many typical rights or ceremonies,

Heb.9:1, as the temple worship requires. Some of you have a load of offerings, Hos.8:13, to go up withal, and all of you have a heavy load of flesh to go up constantly with to the top of Zion-Hill. Come to me in the true worship of the Gospel, Jn.4:21, and I will give you rest. Come to me in my daily teaching; come to me, and hear the doctrine I bring from Heaven, for albeit you are here in person today, yet in heart you are all running away again, Jn.6:66, and tomorrow will think to rest in the labours and burdens of the temple! What do you think always to do there? Be ready to lay it all down, and take up your cross {in mockery and persecution} and come and follow me. I'll make the service easier." Come to me in another place than this, for my stay to teach and to preach in their cities here is short, Matt.11:1, and it's known in the next chapter, that it was not long after Jesus withdrew himself from thence, Matt.12:15, and this proves that the invitation of Christ there to come unto him, was surely meant of a local coming unto Christ, or a following him on their legs when Christ should be gone from thence.

"But Christ there proposes himself as a soul-Saviour for soul-rest, and their lay his work and employment."

Answer: It appears not but it might be a bodily rest they should have in his risen state at hand, for the service and yoke of Christ, {"take my yoke upon you," verse 29,} is not one quarter of the toil for the body, though you travel seven or ten miles to a meeting, as the service of Moses was unto it; traveling with weary limbs hundreds of miles perhaps, and with costly sacrifices to ascend into the hill of the Lord at Mount Moriah. {"Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD, or who shall stand in his holy place?" Psal.24:3.}

When we take it of soul-rest, it cannot necessarily be understood of salvation-rest, or any other soul-rest beyond the easiness of the mind fully resolved about the rational inquiry, or the puzzling scruple as to who the Messiah is, or where he is, whether he came or not. So that "I will give you rest" may be interpreted thus, I will give you quietness in your minds about the main scruple, "art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?"

Matt.11:3. Come then to me, even when I am gone from hence, and see my works there in the wilderness; keep close to my doctrine when I shall leave your cities, and you'll be convinced that I am he, even the Messiah you look for. {"Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." Isa.35:5-6.} Come to me again and again for satisfaction, don't come once either through a kind of necessity now that I'm in town or with curiosity or presuppositions, and then be gone, running away with stories to the Pharisees, and never returning; but come at all times, and you'll see and hear that which is more apt to convince, quiet and satisfy your minds, who is the Christ of God, Lk.9:20, and to give you soul-rest and conscience-rest in the enquiry {even more at one time} then you may hear and see today in your cities, or at another time in town. Come unto me all you too that are especially troubled in mind upon this matter, come to me, when I have a blind man next to cure, or when I have a dumb or a maimed man brought before me, and see how I will raise the infirm with a word, Matt.12:22-23, and then consider with yourselves, whether the prophecy of Messiah and the history of Messiah don't agree? And whether the scruple upon your minds about the coming of Christ into the world doth not vanish? Thus in Matthew it's an invitation to the outward means of a doctrinal conviction, and that was the main thing then to be looked at and accomplished, among the dissatisfied and restless inquirers, where and who is Messiah? {"Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, this is the Christ; but some said, shall Christ come out of Galilee?" Jn.7:41-42.} Come, says Christ, to untie the knot upon this argument, be not detained by the ordinary and common pullbacks from attending on me and on my faithful ministry, Heb.3:2, so long as I keep in these quarters, and you'll be at ease from your pain upon this inquiry by what you'll see and hear, even before I visit another region of Judea, that then too you'll hear and follow me, when I go to another side of the country. I tell you, come,

and let not the stir and clamour of the town and country, Jn.7:12, keep you back from me at these meetings, and you shall find rest unto your souls in this grand point resolved, whether I am the Christ, or no? Accordingly, his sheep did hear his voice and follow him, and from doctrinal conviction where it began, it went on and came from faith to faith, Rom.1:17, or from faith into the report that he was Messiah, to faith into the Person of Messiah himself, and after his crucifixion for our sins and resurrection for our justification, Rom.4:25, the faith of the elect arose under a more glorious work of the unction, I Jn.2:20,27, in their anointings by the Holy Ghost, even as Christ had been promised it should be afterwards. And all this began with "coming unto him" on their feet, their bodily feet, according to the Invitation, "come." This now is plain and consistent with our own experience of Grace. For we find rest comes in from Christ into our souls by a continuing and waiting upon God in ordinances of Christ filled with God's love, power and presence. And therefore when we take it as it is meant of soul-rest, yet this affords a third answer. {"Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me." Mic.7:7. "But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint." Isa.40:31.}

Though you may understand it of soul-rest, you'll find spiritual privileges are often the issues of natural action, and that from other springs and principles than the action itself. For instance, a natural looking to the brazen serpent, Num.21:9, cured the Israelites of the contagion of their wounds, not from the nature of the act, but from the virtue, verse 8, of the institution. So coming on the legs to an Ordinance of Christ, even with a design to scoff hath been issued in God's time with the privilege of the New Birth, though the new birth never flowed from the scoffing principle of coming to hear the Word of the Lord. Accordingly there is in Matthew 11:28. Soul-rest is a spiritual privilege and yet was a natural act of coming to Christ in the days of his flesh, Mk.6:33, and of attendance on the ordinance of instruction or hearing the Gospel preached, and seeing the miracles that were

wrought, and might be issued, and often had been so in this soul-rest. {"And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle; but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there." Jn.10:41-42.} This coming also is consistently agreeable in another kind, though not specifically agreeable in the same kind. That is, it follows not, that because it is a soul-rest, therefore it is a soul-coming, for now it may be a soul-rest upon a bodily coming to a place to hear the Gospel, when there is only formed and begotten in the soul a spiritual looking up to Christ there, and no actual coming. For the coming and looking acts of faith are not the same act of faith. {"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Isa.45:22.}

Objection: "Experience hath found it a sweet invitation to spiritual coming."

Answer: Experience hath found it a sweet invitation to local ordinances. Experience hath found the local ordinances sweet under an Operation of the Spirit. The faith which the Spirit hath wrought hath been sometimes discerning-faith in soul views, when it hath been no coming-faith in a soul-motion unto Christ, though it can't now so properly in Christ's state of Exaltation be called a coming unto Christ, as it may be called a going unto Christ. Oh, that we learned wisdom when we speak of these things, and did look more into the things we speak of, and not take them up from mere traditions or sounds of words. Oh, that we could distinguish of the Humiliation state of Christ in the Evangelists, where faith is called a coming to Christ agreeable with his local descent on earth, and of the Exaltation state of Christ, where faith is not called a coming to Christ, but only a believing on him. It confines much to the latter phrase, for coming to Christ doth but sometimes signify a believing on him. It doth not in the word always, and necessarily signify believing, as I have enough shown, nor {for ought I see in the word} may believing on Christ, as faith is set out in the holy writings under the Exaltation state of Christ, Phil.2:9, be called a coming unto Christ. And so it stands upon record for usefulness to distinguish of the two states of Christ, the one on Earth and the other

in Heaven. Also to prize Christ in his Institutions, Psal.27:4, and to rectify our own carnal mistakes about the absolute limitation of a soul-rest.

But wherein doth all this yield any argument that Matthew 11:28 is an invitation to saving faith, and not rather an invitation to come and take up Christ's Institutions, from a principle of laying down all other things that be inconsistent with them? {"And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." I Jn.3:24.} I am persuaded in the face of all this light, that good men have nothing in the main to say for the other way of carrying this text, except that Mr Jeremiah Burroughs {whose memory I also honour as a faithful servant of Jesus Christ according to his light, Isa.2:5,} hath written his whole treatise on the 11th chapter of Matthew¹⁸ upon the other sense of the words.

To conclude this, it's very plain to me that this "come" in the place opened, is a coming on their feet to Christ when he preached and wrought miracles upon the earth, because it would have been preposterous to invite to come in faith, before they saw in faith. Jn.6:40 & Jn.12:44-45. For when coming is interpreted in other texts of believing, it's motion-faith which surely is not the first-act of believing, but the after-act. Seeing is the first-act, John 6:40, as we cannot suppose that Christ would begin in faith with the motion of the heart, without an eye of the understanding, Jn.14:7, the foot is not the first member in the new creature, but the eye. Accordingly, the Scriptures do everywhere set forth the beginning of saving faith with spiritual sight upon the Revelation of Jesus Christ. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up;

¹⁸Four books on the eleventh of Matthew. I. Christ inviting sinners to come to him for rest. II. Christ the great teacher of souls that come to him. To which is added a treatise of meekness and of anger. III. Christ the humble teacher of those that come to him. IV. The only easy way to heaven. By Jeremiah Burroughs, preacher of the Gospel at Stepney and Cripplegate, London. 1659.

that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Jn.3:14-15. "And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." Num.21:9. Also: Isa.45:22; I Jn.3:6; Isa.65:1; Jn.17:3; I Jn.5:20; Psal.34:5; Jn.12:45; Jn.14:17; Job 42:5; III Jn.11; Heb.11:27, &c., faith is an eye to discern the object, before it is a foot to approach the object. {"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." I Jn.5:20.}

And here it may be proper and seasonable briefly to lay open the office, place and use of faith, the faith of the Operation of God towards Christ, Col.2:12, according to their Scriptures in their latitude, for they speak not of all faith in one text. I am here speaking of that spiritual faith towards Christ which is wrought in the soul after it hath come naturally and locally to that place where the Gospel may be heard, to those Ordinances wherein Christ may be found, to those Appointments where Truth may be effectually conveyed.

Faith is an eye in the soul, a spiritual eye, and the light {of which Christ is the Object} is led into the soul through it. Hence the plenteous phrase of the New Testament, "through faith." Rom.3:25; Acts 3:16; II Tim.3:15; Col.2:12; Rom.3:30,31; Gal.3:8,14; I Pet.1:5; Phil.3:9, and often in Hebrews, chapter 11. Is it now through faith? Then justification is established in Christ above faith and before faith, Rom.8:33,34, because it is clearly conveyed through faith into the soul. {"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim.1:9.} Establishment of a deed in the whole of its articles must be before the conveyance thereof, though the conveyance too must necessarily be, after the establishment and fixing of the several articles. Faith is a beholding the Glory and Divinity of Christ's Person. {"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the

Father, full of grace and truth." Jn.1:14.} Now this discerning and beholding of Christ, is as the object is let in upon the eye of the soul through the workmanship and operation of God the Spirit. {"For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." Eph.2:10.} In spiritual vision there is {after the manner of corporal vision} a fixing of the rays, or species, of the object by a gracious irradiancy upon the very retina {as it is known in optics} or the inmost fine wrought part of the eye of faith. Thus through faith, the eye of the new-born soul, Christ is let in, or Christ is received. John 1:12 & John 1:29. So it is called at the Lord's table a discerning of the Lord's body. I Cor.11:24 & I Cor.11:29. Men of natural understandings, or of the most physical abilities and enlargements, as the word is in the original {take them in all their best ornaments, their clearest parts and most intellectual studies} yet before spiritual renovation, are unfit spiritually to discern Christ. {"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jn.3:3. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. I Cor.2:14.}

Faith is a spiritual will and heart to submit and stoop, and there must be this will to stoop, and there is so upon a spiritual discerning of Christ, before there is the coming-faith, even to the throne of Grace boldly, Heb.4:16, though Christ in the outward ministry of his word. Oh, what need, what Absolute need is there of God's creating Spirit! {"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psal.51:10.} For if Christ be only let into the soul through a rational eye, for so he may, so far as the nature-part of Christ and the out-works of Christ are fitted to reason, yet that soul through a prevailing law, Rom.7:23, in its members doth still rebel, {for brevity obliges me to contract it in all hints,} as Christ must be let in through a renewed eye upon a renewed heart, and then it is that the soul receives him. Rom.10:10; Lk.2:25-30. {"And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us; this is the LORD; we have waited for him,

we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation." Isa.25:9.}

Faith is a spiritual cure with God's strength put into the soul through the Holy Ghost's indwelling and inward operation, to enable the soul for its spiritual journey through flesh, world and the oppositions of the devil, to set out in a further operation of faith, under the Spirit still. {"For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." I Jn.5:4.}

Then comes faith spiritually, and to the throne of Grace boldly with its footing in Christ. So it came to Christ in the days of his flesh, as coming to Christ was then fitted both in soul and body to his humiliation state, while Christ waited below upon earth for the motion of poor sinners. John 6:35,37. {"And therefore will the LORD wait, that he may be gracious unto you, and therefore will he be exalted, that he may have mercy upon you; for the LORD is a God of judgment; blessed are all they that wait for him." Isa.30:18.} And so it goes to Christ in the days of his Exaltation state, as faith in this sort of motion is fitted to Christ's being gone into Heaven before us. I Pet.3:22. {"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." Heb.4:14.} {"I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." Psal.40:1-2.}

Faith is a spiritual hand, to lay hold. See Prov.3:18, with Luke 11:49, which tells us that wisdom there laid hold upon, as a Tree of Life, is the Person of Jesus Christ crucified, I Cor.2:2, and then risen for our life, and set forth as a Tree, in opposition to the fruit of that forbidden tree, Gen.2:17, whereof we ate and died. See also, Heb.6:18; Isa.64:7; I Tim.6:12,19; Phil.3:12. Faith also is a hand to open the door to Christ, upon visits either of reproof or of communion love unto the church. "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." Rev.3:20. "Behold I stand," says Christ, at visible ordinances, which are the door of the church to keep out strangers, and admit her

own to sit and sup together in sweet Gospel fellowship as seated at the feet of Christ. Lk.10:39. I stand and knock at my own Institutions to have them set open to me, that I may be more accredited and owned in what is owned and professed within. "If any man open the door," though it be but the door of his lips for me, Psal.141:3, confessing my name, Rom.10:9-10, subjecting himself to the ordinances of my appointment, opening for me, who has stood knocking, though unheard, and speak for the honour of me and my own governing in the House of God, Heb.10:21, I'll come into his very soul and sup with him, and he and I will have a feast together, while the rebellious who shut me out, and yet cry up the church, the church, Jer.7:4, and will admit of no Reformation therein, shall dwell and starve as in a barren land. Psal.68:6. The Church of Christ upon his own foundation opens the door upon heart-smitten sinners, Jer.31:19, and opens the door by repentance, after any disorder hath barred it up. This the Spirit brings the church of Christ unto. Christ doth it by his Spirit, Ezek.36:27, so she prepares the outer parts of the ordinances, through which Christ enters for Communion, while she is brought and kept to walk according to the Gospel Rule, taking due care that all the Ordinances of Christ fitted to communion, and of which the church hath seals, II Cor.1:22, be kept pure and uncorrupted, and also that they be not cast aside, but duly kept up in order to the same Communion.

Faith is a new creature presented all in the stature {as I may say from the crown of the head unto the soul of the foot} full of burden, want, weariness and self-insufficiency, to lie down upon a well-known Christ, and rely on the Mercy and Strength of God in Christ, Psal.37:7, and there rest and cast itself, I Pet.5:7 & Psal.55:22, upon Jehovah our righteousness. {"In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jer.23:6.}

Faith is the same new creature under pursuits by the flesh, by Satan and the world to hide itself in Christ. {"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found; surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." Psal.32:5-7.}

Lastly, faith is the spiritual loyalty and fidelity of a wife to trust her most faithful Husband Christ. {"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid; for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation." Isa.12:2. "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower." Psal.18:2.}

So that as all this faith is wrought of God through Christ under Divine Conveyances of sheer Grace, and the ordinances of the Gospel, viz., Gospel preaching, Gospel praying, Gospel praising, so poor souls should make use of this text, Matt.11:28, as an invitation to them to come out of their cities and houses, and out of their villages to a Christ in open ordinances. {"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Heb.10:25.} For there they may find by experience under their troubles and conflicts, a sweet and gracious easing them of many a doubt and burden, and likewise in the nearer matters of Salvation too, they may find an easing them with the power of Christ in the Gospel rest, which they that have believed, {to any establishment in Grace,} do enter into, as the Apostle speaks, Heb.4:1, and as hath been opened before. Under this experience of the virtue of Christ received by coming to outward ordinances, viz., by coming to a meeting and hearing the Gospel in such a village, or in such a street of the city, Lk.14:21, will find it far outweighing their pains in coming, though they have taken many a weary step to Zion, and outweighing their cost, II Sam.24:24, in being at charges to maintain the Ordinances of Christ. All which bears a full and clear testimony to this sense of Matt.11:28, and that the "come unto Christ" there is not immediately spiritual believing, as the first thing of all, but is an outward coming to the

ordinances of the Gospel, which God hath set up in Christ. Thus doubtless, it stands upon record for usefulness, as well as it was of use in the same nature when the words were spoken by Christ. {"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." Rom.15:4.}

Invitations are not made immediately to saving Grace, but to those resources of saving Grace that are treasured in Christ. Not to special acts which fall under a work of the Spirit above nature, but to common acts which are promiscuous, and related to good and bad. Thus sinners cannot be invited immediately to a saving apprehension of the Grace of God in Christ, for neither the Scriptures, nor the nature of the thing admits it. Invitations have a foundation in the Scriptures, but then it's to common acts. Thus Samuel invited the people to eat of the remainders of the sacrifices. I Sam.9:24. But invitations to any supernatural acts, such as the exercise in putting forth of saving faith into the Person of Christ, have no footing in the Sacred Oracles. This is altogether fit matter for an Operation of the Spirit, but altogether unfit for an invitation to deal with. An invitation is a means used towards the absent, either absent in body or spirit, to make them and keep them present on the outworks of Grace. From hence, an Operation of the Spirit must deal with them further, and make them discern Christ and willingly embrace the Son of God. Invitation hath for its object a person or persons habitually residing in local distance, though actually and by the bye just met upon the spot. {"And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live." Ezek.16:6.} Whereas the same person, as the object of Divine Operation, is considered in his sinful distance, where all invitation must leave him, when invitation hath gained him fixedly to a local presence at the Ordinances of Grace. The immediate or next means which the Spirit now uses in Operation upon the sinner under the word, is instruction by the word, not invitation. It's teaching the elect of God in the great mysteries of Salvation, it is leading them into the

knowledge of Christ's Person and Righteousness, set in opposition to all that other conviction which the Spirit hath wrought in me about my sin and Adam, and in my own nature, as well the truth concerning myself, Eccles.7:29, especially as to my nature in the sin of unbelief, Jn.16:9, or my not going to Christ to receive life, but rather my taking it up for granted, that I may have more sin and unrighteousness in myself, than I have righteousness, strength, holiness and all Grace in Christ, as a Second Adam that hath died and rose again for me, Rom.8:34, even in my room and stead.

Instruction in the ministry of the word, which the Holy Ghost uses to lead any sinner into this transcendent and amazing knowledge of Christ, is soon issued in a further work of the Spirit of Christ knitting the heart of that sinner unto him, and drawing him after Christ. {"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." I Jn.5:20.} This is saving knowledge and saving faith which cannot be wrought by an invitation to come to Christ, but must be wrought by instruction, and such an instruction as I have shown about Christ, who is the way of the Lord. Teaching Christ is quite another thing, and far superior to an act of inviting sinners to Christ. Teaching is tincturing the mind with some efficacious experience of the things taught. Teaching sinners in the way of Christ, as Christ is the way from the Father unto us, and from us through him again unto the Father, is the way to convert them to Heaven and Salvation in truth. {"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." Jn.14:6.} Inviting sinners to come to Christ, as men talk at random, is but ignorant noise, I Tim.1:7, and no proper and effectual means whatsoever. Let invitation have its proper object and bounds in duty, and then it is but a means to Christ, not to Christ Himself. Invitation carries me to means, Operation carries me to Christ. {"For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which

effectually worketh also in you that believe." I Thes.2:13.} Invitation is but as it were bidding to the Meeting, and therein pointing sinners to the means at such or such a place. This is also in Scripture called a preparing the way of the Lord. {"The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Isa.40:3.} So the meetings of John the Baptist were bid in the wilderness, and thither they went out to him in the desert; and hereby the multitudes made a path {made his paths straight} to the meetings of the Lord Jesus Christ, and thus making straight in the desert a highway for our God, Matt.3:3, even a beaten way to go out soon after John, and hear the Gospel of the Christ of God, Lk.9:20, preached at the mouth of the Lord himself in the same places. But now it is an direct Operation of God in his Grace that brings the soul into Christ; for invitation where it is most successful brings the person but to the means. The converting power of the ministry to the unconverted, lies in a Demonstration of the Holy Ghost before the converted, I Cor.2:4, and that demonstration never appears {that I can see} in men's ordinary management of their invitation. Demonstration of Salvation is some of the glory of Free Grace. {"That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Eph.2:7.} The cause of it is in God's own good pleasure; that is "the immutability of his counsel." Heb.6:17. The original rise of it is in the Father's love. {"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." I Jn.4:10.} The prepared fountain of it is in the Mediator's blood. {"For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light." Psal.36:9.} The procurement also of conveyance, even the conveyance by deed of purchase, in the Obedience and Sufferings of Christ, is through the Redemption that is in Jesus Christ, notwithstanding all temporary obstacles in the current of free Grace by the entrance of sin. {"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." Rom.3:24.} Now these and the like pieces of the Gospel are all a glorious display of what a bright Salvation those

elected in Christ are interested in, Psal.34:2-3, as it is settled and prepared for us in Another, and conveyed unto us through that Other. It's God's demonstration of it to my soul through Operation of the Spirit on my soul, Jer.33:6, to behold it as mine own by his free gift. {"For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us." I Thes.5:10.} It is this message of the Gospel that I am commissioned as an ambassador of Christ to faithfully preach. And thus I am to deal with poor sinners towards their conversion. This is that also which I do preach to sinners, and this being the great frame and coherence of truth struck at, I daily find it to be filled up with more power in my own and other men's souls and ministry! {"And they shall fight against thee; but they shall not prevail against thee; for I am with thee, saith the LORD, to deliver thee." Jer.1:19.} Showing of these glad tidings in God's Salvation to the soul is the means in which the Spirit falls, and converts the sinner unto Christ. {"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." Acts 10:43.} It's by this means the object seen suitably falls into the very soul through the eye of faith, and gives it a most lovely and effectual prospect of the same object, such as no eye of any sinner that ever perished without Christ hath seen. {"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Jn.14:17.} Now here I might bring in offers again, and take notice that the said sweet and transcendent objects do never shine forth through them; nor do their golden beams glitter with the transcendencies of Everlasting Love, Jer.31:3, in a faint and duskish proposal. Offers do not strike in upon the very retina of the new eye of faith, nor present the object in the Salvation of God, as the object itself presents itself, whilst showing and granting of this Salvation, Psal.85:7, to sweetly run together. But I will rather keep to the argument, as the title of the chapter falls, about the invitation of sinners to come to Christ.

Invitation to Grace-Means can be no invitation into Christ himself. Invitations to come and see, Jn.1:39,

invitations to come and hear, invitations to come as guests to Gospel truths, though men come without the wedding garment, Matt.22:12, and invitations to them to cease and forbear to come as wanderers {to divert a carnal mind and delight a carnal ear, if anything possibly might be picked up as delightful to it} are all vastly distinguished from invitations to Christ in saving faith, as men pretend they make, when they preach the Gospel. Jer.9:6. For I must say what I know upon spiritual sight, II Cor.4:2, albeit therefore that these things are never so much darkened by men, Job 38:2, whether it be partly through their inability to receive, Jn.3:27 & Matt.13:9, to think, to ponder, to weigh and deeply consider in their thoughts concerning the nature of these things; or, whether it be partly that God hath not made their heart discerning enough in faith to meditate terror, Isa.33:18, and not be afraid to think that while the Election hath obtained, the rest are blinded, Rom.11:7; or, whether it be partly through self-esteem, because what they call inviting sinners to come to Christ, hath been their own way, and their old way of mingling things that are and must be distinguished, and so they would fain have it to be the Gospel way and the Scripture way, Rom.10:2, because it hath been their way to confound an invitation of sinners to saving Grace with an invitation of sinners to means of Grace, and so to outer Grace, and to the hearing of Effectual Grace preached in and about the inner work of Grace to elect sinners alone. Albeit, I say, the things about invitation have been never so much and so improperly confounded, whereby some preachers make them to be all one, which yet are really so very distinct; we must say, that the distinction is very plain, unless we pull down one part of the Bible into dust to make the other part disappear. Deut.20:19-20. Inviting of persons to the Gospel, {as it set forth in the Gospel by a bidding of them to a dinner or supper, the instance of which is so clear in Matt.22:3-8 & Lk.14:7-24, is a plain allusion to common feasts and entertainment of guests invited, or bidden and called to banquets and good cheer. See Esther 5:12 & II Sam.13:23,} is an outward calling them to partake of the outward parts of the Gospel in the cluster, Matt.20:16, before a visible separation of the kernel and shell are

made. Now they are outwardly called, because the outer case and shell fall to their own share, according to their outward capacity, Exod.16:21, of receiving them. Thus, invitation is immediately made unto a duty of performance, to come or go where the Ordinances of Grace are, and so to an outward Grace very separable from the inward grace or kernel, Rom.4:7-8, at the bottom of all this Grace cluster. All are invited to the means promiscuously, Matt.22:10, especially such as are by a natural custom or habit religiously disposed, and yet though they have so much of the Pharisee in them, are very great publicans besides, Isa.58:1-3; but after the general invitation to means, the Holy Ghost, under the same means, inwardly falls on the elect of God, Acts 11:15, converts them by Effectual Power, and in Sovereign Wisdom passes by the rest, and leaves them to themselves, under the same means of Grace, that it may be next time you hear of him, they are fighting, Acts 13:45, against the Grace which hath conquered another, Acts 13:48, to Salvation. {"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Matt.13:15.} Yet all the non-elect may peradventure not be thus headstrong, invitations therefore may be further made to such as do not openly appear malignants, because the inviter's know not yet what they'll prove, Matt.13:47-48, so they may counsel them to a further attendance upon the means of Grace, Rom.11:22, outwardly to persevere, and go on to retain the outward part and form of the Gospel, for indeed their very retaining of the form, as I have shown, is of singular use to God's children who receive the power.

There ought to be counsel seasonably given them not to forsake the assemblies, Heb.10:25, nor cast off the visible profession of the Gospel, Phil.3:16, so far as they have already attained. Also, that they rise not up against the doctrines of Supernatural Grace, that they rebel not against the light, Job 24:13, by setting up a separate outer-court frame to strike at an inner-court worship. When men are present in the assembly of the saints by

invitation, many such considerations as befit their reasonable capacities may be suggested. Acts 17:22-31.

Whatever it be, I will speak it mainly as to the elect of God. When invitation hath done its part towards them, and that in the promiscuous call, and they are all present before God to hear, Acts 10:33, {if devout, as Cornelius and his company were before they knew Christ,} what God hath commanded to be said to their souls in the Gospel of his Son; for then the Operation of the Holy Ghost begins and sets in with imposing power, Rom.1:16, in the affirmative preaching of Christ {the Living Seed} cast into their souls, {they having been often enough, at least some or others of them, under the plough,} which direct preaching of the Gospel the Holy Ghost carries home into their hearts, and there impregnates it with a heavenly operation; that is, fills it to a bearing of fruit through a spiritual sap and juice in the proper nourishment of life. Thus the word lives and grows in their hearts. By all it is plain, that there is no fit joint or space left for invitation of sinners to come to Christ's Person in saving faith, but to come to Christ's provisions only in ordinances of means towards it, and this rightly states the doctrine of invitations. For I know of no invitation in the Scriptures made immediately unto saving Grace, nor yet immediately to the act of saving faith. I may invite sinners, for instance, to come unto the doctrine of God, to the report and witness of God which he hath testified of his Son, I Jn.5:9, for this is a piece of the material Gospel. But how can I invite sinners to come into the Person of Jesus Christ; for faith is a spiritual motion into his Person. So how can I invite them into regeneration, as to say, into the Mystery and Experience thereof. I must invite them to come often by a natural act to the Gospel, but must not deceive them to invite them to come into the Gospel. That's not put into my commission, Jonah 3:2, but is referred to the peculiar honour of the Holy Ghost in his own Operation. I am to invite them to come to the doctrine of the Spirit of God, Rev.3:22, but not to come into the Spirit of God. This is a thing above invitation. Let preachers have but patience to preach so, as believing there is an Election of Grace before them in their assemblies, Rom.11:5, and no matter in the act of

their preaching, whether they discern who they be or not, for the issue will be safely determined at last, as the Spirit of God will make it plain. This hath through Grace been many years my own practice at Cambridge, to speak as believing an elect number of the unconverted before me, Acts 18:10, and so to speak to them to see the Lord to bring them to conversion, as I speak to the converted, II Cor.13:5, to know their conversion; that is, I speak by Exalting Christ to one in the presence of the other, even as Christ spake to the disciples in the presence of the multitude, Matt.5:1-2, and it hath been with more success, than when I used the common way of preaching, which still takes with the greatest part. Indeed, when a minister of Christ is opening of God's work upon the soul, as God the Spirit teaches that servant of Christ, Exod.4:12, and speaks according to what he hath seen and heard, I Jn.1:3, not as he hath gleaned from books, and collected from dead authors, Jer.23:30, nor delivers by the standard of his paper-form; the Holy Ghost will certainly own, and carry this Gospel Message, Jer.23:28, because it is a fruit of his own Divine Operation, {and therefore evangelical, distinguishing and a clear proclamation of the Person and Work of Christ,} further than he will ever take up the dark way of men's common managery, II Cor.4:6; that is, he will work clearly, spiritually, experimentally to the saving of the soul, Heb.10:39, by that preaching which is clear, spiritual and experimental in its self; but he will not work with that preaching which is quite another thing, Deut.1:42, though there may indeed be some truths and many good things mixed with it. God first fortifies and fits his own channel of Divine conveyances, Psal.61:7, and then works his end by them, but preachers often seem determined to fit a foreign means for him, and so never live to see the Holy Ghost, Gal.6:8, clearly in their labours. Men may speak of the work of faith, and yet not of the work of faith distinctly. There are plainly three things in it that are distinct. 1. The work of faith, as it is the Holy Ghost's workmanship in the soul. 2. To the work of faith, as it is the exercise or act of faith out of that workmanship, still by the Holy Ghost's own guidance in influences from Christ. 3. The work of faith, as the object or employment

thereof, about which it ought to be conversant in Gospel service unto the glory of Christ. Howbeit, the work of faith is so doubtfully expressed and muddled by preachers without clear opening, that no man can tell you perhaps which of these three they mean, since some men only mean one of the three, and others mean only another of the three, and very few speak distinctly like men taught of God, to distinguish any of the three. {"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?" I Cor.14:8.} {"It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Jn.6:45.}

We ought not to be troubled that God hath appointed our ministry to two sorts of men, to the elect and to the non-elect. To the one we are the savour of life unto life in the power and unction of the Holy Ghost, and to the other we are the savour of death unto death in the form. II Cor.2:16. We are a sweet savour of Christ unto God in both, II Cor.2:15, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. Both favour the word; the elect of God do favour the power, the non-elect do favour the form without the power. {"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away." II Tim.3:5.} Whether men are capable only of the invitation to come under the means of Grace, or of the Operation of the Spirit to come into Christ, Jn.6:29, both take their own appointed lot. Outer Grace-parts are determined, as well as inner Grace-parts. The Scripture is both to all intents fulfilled, for God is differently glorified upon men, Isa.43:21, whether they be elect or non-elect, and that in the way of their passing either into Salvation or Condemnation. {"The LORD hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." Prov.16:4.} His mercy and free Grace are glorified in free conveyances and operation of the inner Grace-parts of the Gospel, Tit.3:6 & Eph.2:7, to, upon and within the elect. The Lord's justice is glorified in the scornful rejection of the doctrine of his Grace, or of the outer Grace part of the Gospel, by the non-elect. The Lord hath commanded Hagar to attend upon Sarah, and the outer-court faith, and fruits of it, to wait upon inner-court faith,

and the fruits thereof. Rom.9:12. Now here God justly finds occasion against them, being persuaded that a grand body of evil men in the world, being the devil's seed, Jn.8:44 & Isa.57:3-4, will never comply, I Jn.3:8, so much as with this distinction {if it came among them} of an outer-court faith, and the fruits thereof, to wait upon an inner-court faith and the fruits thereof, which do issue according to an Election and a Non-Election of persons cast under means, in God's Councils before the foundation of the world. {"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Eph.1:4-5.}

Consequently, the world, who cannot receive the Spirit of truth, as Christ saith, Jn.14:17, do break and will break with God, even as their doom was foretold by our Lord himself, Jn.8:44, and as they fulfil their purpose by nature from their father the devil before them. For when he was an angel of light in Heaven, II Pet.2:4, he there broke upon an upper-way revelation of Christ's Headship over the entire angelical nature and order, Col.1:16, in the Comprehensive Settlements of our Mediator, or for the Father's Constitution of him to be the comprehending Alpha, Rev.1:8, or Head of Nature, Grace and Glory. Also, a revelation was made of heavenly church order, that all the angels of God should attend upon the Glory-Man, and minister to the Glory-Man accordingly. Jn.17:5 & Psal.8:1. Hereupon the whole rout of devils, according to what they are now, {and according to this view of Creation Order and Settlement,} immediately broke with God upon this one point, and so sinfully chose to depart their stations in Heaven, Jude 6, and confederate into a power or kingdom of their own forming, Col.1:13, and set up a head in their own nature over it, rather than they would submit to Christ, upon the Revelation of Grace made unto them and among them.

And here I take it, that our church order in Gospel days, according to the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, Eph.1:17, comes in. I'm sure it did upon this joint prevail with me, when I first embraced

judgment, Isa.42:4, or church order, according to the Scriptures, in that form I will heartily embrace; namely, the Congregational Way of Churches. Acts 14:27 & Acts 15:30 & Acts 2:1 & I Cor.5:4. For in other forms of church administration, I found that a man might be convinced by mere reason, books, common arguments and common establishments, such as are most fitted to times, together with the opinions and practices of learned, great and good men, &c., and that, whether a man had the Spirit of God {either to increase or assist his conviction of a church way} or no. But to be convinced of judgment, Jn.16:11, or church order {as I was} and brought to submit to it by the Holy Ghost upon this foot, that this judgment as the prince of this world is judged, and cast out of Heaven; this is a conviction in the very bottom and foundation of church government, that most certainly belongs to the Spirit of God to teach from his own Word, for be sure Satan was cast out of Heaven upon the point of Christ's Kingly Office, the truth he abode not in, Jn.8:44, or that glorious Church Government which was there set up amongst the angels. Hence the angels that sinned, sinned primarily in this one point, II Pet.2:4, that they would not be subject unto the Son of God, as he was Alpha, and revealed the Glory-Man, but they would gather a new empire of their own nature and order, Matt.12:26, which should be vested in one of their own number over all the rest, and that one aiming to be like the Most High, Isa.14:14, God-Man, or God in Christ, and every Headship with him; they all broke with God, and resolved this new empire of theirs should not be subject to the Mediator, to Christ, as their Head in the Open Commander thereof. Accordingly, Gen.3:1, Satan deceived our first parents with those words, "ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil," verse 5; that is, you shall be as the angels that sinned, are. These are the Elohim, {"gods,"} which the devil meant, though our first parents were deceived by him, and understood it of the Triune Elohim, even God Himself, thinking that the fruit of that tree would render them like unto God. The devil meant they should be like himself, the god of this world, II Cor.4:4, and like his angels, who knew good and evil by the woeful experiment; that is, good by the loss of it, and evil by the

punishment thereof. And then after this Satanical deceit, he set up a kingdom of worship and church government in the pagan world, {mimicking that of the true church & worship of God,} among a great part of Adam's fallen posterity in his own name, II Thes.2:4, the now pagan religion of this world system, II Chron.32:17, or gods of the nations. The Old Testament church was gathered in, Psal.135:4, from this open empire of the devil, as appears, Deut.14:2; Exod.19:5; Acts 14:16; Isa.41:8-9, &c. But when Christ came in the flesh who is over all God blessed for ever, Rom.9:5, and through death had destroyed him that had the power of death, Heb.2:14, that is the devil, the Lord Christ did then by his Spirit in the Apostles, and all the primitive pastors, whom the Holy Ghost had made overseers of the flock of God, Acts 20:28, and in all the first saints of the New Testament, wonderfully shake the demonic realm or the devil's empire throughout the pagan world, Eph.2:2-3, brought in the glorious Gospel, the Kingdom of God's dear Son, Col.1:13, into which the elect of God were translated out of pagan darkness. By which means a great part of the pagan world was taken out of the devil's hands, or he was cast out of a great part of his own model and regiment in Heaven, Rev.12:9, as to men's worshiping of the sun, moon and stars, &c., and all of which defileth, worketh abomination, or maketh a lie, Rev.21:57, which system he had formed into another kingdom, distinct from that of the Gospel, even a kingdom of his own, and so had larger territories here below amongst men, who placed all their happiness in doing service to them, Gal.4:8, {the imaginary divinities in the planetary heavens,} which by nature were no gods, as the Apostle says. Now out of this dominion he is cast, and thus the prince of this world is judged by the government and kingdom of the Gospel in Christ's own Administration, and so Satan is once cast out again by means of the birth and dominion of the Christian Religion in the hands of Jesus Christ. {"And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church." Eph.1:22.}

Now here I was helped of God to see that Church Government which by the holy strictness of it in its close dependence upon Christ, wherein the prince of this world

is still most judged, is a Church-Order most of God and of Christ. And likewise I found God strengthening my heart by his Spirit, Isa.40:29, in bowing my will to submit to the goodness of this, as well as I found him convincing my understanding, Eph.3:21, to discern the truth of this mystery. Then I was enabled to cleave to that which originally depends upon the Primitive and Ancient Kingship of Christ, Acts 11:23, and leans upon that High Constitution which the devil was cast out of, II Pet.2:4, for despising and rejecting. Yea, and which the prince of this world was judged for, in not submitting to the Government of Christ, as it was first set up in Heaven, of which the devil was again put in mind, when he was cast out of so much of the pagan world, Rev.12:9, as was taken in to be the kingdom of Christ by the preaching of the Gospel.

To thus conclude this section, casting out the bondwoman and her son, Gal.4:30, out of the church in Abraham's family, as Hagar was a type of the church which Christ hath not founded, and as Ishmael was a type of the non-elect, was intended and executed of the Lord as of a similar punishment to the casting of the devil from the rest of the angels, out of Heaven. Again, excision, or cutting off from a church where Christ keeps up his Presence, or putting away from among ourselves, I Cor.5:13, for immoralities an evil doer, though it's nowhere called by the Holy Ghost by so bad a name as "casting out," because the action of rebuke is done by brethren, verse 4, or by the ruling part of the church who cannot discern, whether the person be a vessel of wrath, {for very often it appears otherwise,} yet nevertheless in a Church of Christ, so far as Christ owns the church, and the church walks by Christ's rules, which among others are visible unspotted holiness, I Thes.4:7, of the members in all their worldly conversation, I Pet.2:12, is a dreadful rebuke {as the word "punishment" in II Corinthians 2:6, signifies, and signifies neither censure so commonly in use, nor punishment as the word is ill translated} inflicted of many; and because in the very act of rebuking by putting the person away into the world, there is still a delivering such a one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, I Cor.5:5, because the world is

Satan's domain and kingdom, so far as it is unruly and disobedient to Christ; and so far as Satan is revealed to be the god of this world, and a prince and spirit that now is at work in the children of disobedience. Eph.2:2. Thus I have finished all I intended to say about invitations, wherein the false pleas have been replied to, the matter stated, the objects determined, and the issue of the matters summed up into obedience and disobedience touching Church-Order.

CHAPTER TWELVE

Of Exhortation to Sinners to come to Christ, in Preaching the Gospel, Examined.

The bowels of Jesus Christ are the greatest bowels to sinners, Phil.1:8, and therefore let us understand what the bowels and mercies are, Phil.2:1, and understand what the mind and will of the Lord is, Eph.5:17, in exhortations.

An exhortation plainly differs from an invitation, {though we see that men have mismatched them, as if they understood not the property of them,} and likewise is the difference from an offer of Grace. It is sheer ignorance in the thoughts of any men to take them up promiscuously; that is, without order or consideration, without any regard or respect to difference. An offer, as I've have shown, is before a person, and an invitation is of a person, and is sent out after a person to be a guest, Lk.14:16-17 & Matt.22:3-4; and so is an outward call of that person absent, to come and be present. An exhortation is of one that is, to hand, and their stands present upon the spot. The exhortation also is that the person standing present would perform some other act than that first act of his coming to means upon invitation.

Objection: "As for exhortations to unbelievers, all you allow, if I mistake you not, is to exhort them unto an attendance upon the means of Grace, or things of that

nature, but I confess that ministers should be careful as that they rob not Christ, so that they rob not the Spirit; and though the work of faith, repentance, etc., is the Spirit's, yet the acts are ours. So that it doth not exhort to take his work into the creature's hand. It doth but direct the way of duty, and leave the issue to the Spirit. It is prophesying indeed to the dry bones, but therewith and thereby may life be conveyed. John the Baptist doctrine, {repent and believe the Gospel,} was not to believers only; nor Peter's exhortation in Acts chapter two; for sinners as sinners must be exhorted to come to Christ, etc." Says this defence, which as appears by the confusion of it, the defender himself never understood.

Answer: When ministers exhort unbelievers and unregenerate sinners, or sinners as sinners, I Tim.1:7, to come to Christ for what they call Union, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, &c., they must be supposed to exhort them to come to Christ, either in a mere act of the unregenerate nature, or by an act of that nature apprehended of Christ Jesus. Phil.3:12. Let them take which side they will to defend their own thought. If they take the one side; that is, if ministers exhort sinners to come to Christ by an act of the nature apprehended of Christ Jesus, then they are not unregenerate persons after that Apprehending Act, nor are they sinners as sinners, but are Sanctified through Christ Jesus, Jn.17:17, even when they so exhort them to come to Christ, to use their own phrase. They are persons through the Apprehending Act of Christ Jesus previously or beforehand influenced in the Election Union, in the Justification, in the Adoption, in the Sanctification, &c., as it stands for them in the Mediator between God and Christ; and also as it hath passed upon them by vital and efficacious influences of the Spirit's work through Christ, I Jn.4:9 & Rom.5:9 & Eph.2:18; and so they cannot be now unregenerate, nor sinners as sinners under this Salvation Grace. The reason is, the apprehending act of Christ Jesus doth under it certainly bestow the Holy Spirit, who instantaneously works spiritual life, as himself becomes the secret earnest in their natures of all that had passed for them federally, or in the Everlasting Covenant for them, Jer.31:3, between God and Christ in and by

Christ Jesus, and so by an Operating Conveyance, Christ from the Father through the Spirit, Eph.2:22, hath passively wrought the change. My meaning is, the regenerate object hath been passive under the Spirit's work, antecedently to the exhortation, Acts 10:42-43, and not consequently thereunto. Again, if ministers take the other side, and exhort these persons as unregenerate and sinners as sinners to come to Christ, to believe in Christ; and also if they mean in exhorting them that they come certainly, and come through all seen difficulties, then unavoidably, and contrary to their own first principles, they make faith to be but coming into a report of Christ, Isa.53:1, as we all admit touching the capacity of an unregenerate nature, and not "into" the Person of Christ, nor "into" Christ, as the original phrases signify. {"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name;" Jn.1:12; that is, "into his name." "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed; and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard;" Rom.10:14; that is, "into Him." "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus;" Acts 19:4; that is, "into him, and into Christ Jesus."} This is far more than a believing of Christ, and so is translated a believing on him, and on his Name, but the original makes it agree with the very mystery and experience of faith into Christ, which no unregenerate person, or sinner, as a sinner, can be exhorted unto, if the exhortation be bounded according to the rules, cases and instances of the Word, as through help obtained of God shall be made to appear. To believe into the Person of Christ, distinct from believing into the report of Christ, as I have also distinguished in my fifth chapter of this treatise, is far above the capacity of any sinner as unrenewed. {"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of Him." I Jn.5:1.} All the faith of an unrenewed sinner is but into some of the report of Christ, and is no more than a natural faith, and so not rising higher than its fountain in unregeneracy. The natural man

can only believe some things concerning Christ, but can never lay hold of Christ himself by a Life which he hath not received in sanctifying Grace conveyed through him, as is proved. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." I Cor.2:14. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." Jn.3:6-7. "He answered and said unto them, because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Matt.13:11.

Oh, it's a blessed thing indeed to be taught of God to discern what is the fit matter and manner of an exhortation to believers. It's a blessed thing likewise to be able to distinguish of the faith, and of the repentance we inquire about in the matter of the exhortation, for therein lies the point. What faith, what repentance do men mean? What faith, what repentance do they think the Spirit of God intended in John the Baptist's doctrine? Jn.3:30 & Matt.3:11. It must no doubt be meant of such a repentance and faith, as was consistent with the day, wherein the Spirit was not yet given, Jn.7:39, to work anything in reformation of manners, above the oldness of the letter, Rom.7:6, and consistent with the state of unregeneracy. Otherwise, there will be a robbing of Christ, even whilst men don't think of Christ, and a robbing of the Spirit, whilst men don't think of the Spirit. {"Because thou hast forgotten the God of thy salvation, and hast not been mindful of the rock of thy strength." Isa.17:10.} For if I exhort to an act arising out of the Spirit's work, though the act be ours, and the work his, I plainly exhort to take the work out of the hand of the Spirit, because I look for that kind of act from a sinner, as a sinner, which I have elsewhere acknowledged {suppose in the very plea of exhorting sinners to come to Christ} must arise out of the Spirit's work, and so do plainly rob the Spirit, when I am got into this eccentrical way of the exhortation, I Kings 19:9, to exhort a sinner as a sinner, or before the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost shed on the sinner abundantly

through Jesus Christ our Saviour, Tit.3:5-6, to come to Christ. Is it not an odd directing to duty, as the plea calls it, to direct to duty in Supernatural Acts pressed upon natural men, and required of them before they are born from above? Jn.3:3. It's presumption, not faith {in the very preachers} who dares thus ungroundedly leave such an issue with the Spirit; that is, to expect the same fruit from unregenerate nature, Matt.7:16, which may be looked for from renewed nature.

What kind of exhortation was John the Baptist's exhortation to sinners? Mark 1:15. Was it not an exhortation towards their putting forth a natural and rational act of faith into the report of a Christ at hand, and so about the accomplishment of Redemption by Christ's Incarnation, Obedience and Sufferings to be shortly made to appear? {"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Jn.1:29.} Was it not into the witness and testimony of Jesus, and so into the witness and testimony of Salvation by him, Jn.3:33, according to the Scriptures? {"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12.} All this sort of faith, and so a repentance that answers it, a man not born from above, Matt.13:20-21, might be brought unto, for which cause John's ministry might well be an exhortation in that day hereunto, for what else could it be?

But now all this natural repentance and faith, whether in the elect of God or the non-elect, is nothing to our purpose, where the common faith and belief of the report is settled. Acts 20:21. As to the non-elect, it's not to the purpose, because the same natural and rational faith now in them, as at that day when John preached faith and repentance, is no coming to Christ for Salvation. Acts 19:2-3. It's no believing into the Person of Jesus, but a believing into the testimony of Jesus Christ. Rev.12:17. Then, as to the elect of God, the repentance and faith in John the Baptist's doctrine which the people were exhorted unto, was such as afterwards was changed into Spirituality and Power, and from faith and repentance belonging to the nature-fullness of Christ, Rom.1:17, and

received from thence without a saving change, went into another faith, and was raised into a faith and repentance of a higher species, Acts 11:18 & 5:31, and that belonging to the grace-fullness of Christ, and received from thence in, by and under a saving change, as I have distinguished formally about this distinct fullness of Christ, Col.1:19, in my book entitled, the Glory of Christ Unveiled. A natural and rational repentance and faith, though it be included in and connected with the Gospel repentance and faith of the elect of God, is very distinct from it, and is swallowed up in it, and this Gospel faith and repentance swallowing up the other that's natural and rational, II Cor.7:10, is a faith and repentance transcendent, exalted, spiritual, supernatural, wrought and raised in men according to the Spirit of the Gospel, as it lies above nature under the mighty work of the Lord the Spirit.

Now, we should understand whom we exhort, whether it be such as have had the Holy Ghost fallen on their natures, or such as have not had him in that first passive Effusion of Grace? And we ought to understand what we exhort men unto, within that natural capacity which is given them, Acts 17:22, and no further. It's a pity that clear Free-Grace doctrine should be ever plucked down and all knocked over the head by free will application! The non-elect have reason, and that backed with natural conscience, which, in some common enlightenings of the Spirit, Heb.6:4, where any of them are under the Gospel, is the highest thing they can attain unto. Let's exhort them therefore only to nature acts consistent with reason, Acts 8:22, as the Scriptures do, upon our absolute un-acquaintance with their personal and eternal state. On the other hand, the elect, as unregenerate, are to be instructed in the Gospel. They are ministerially to be shown Supernatural Acts, not exhorted to them, while unregenerate. They are to be taught things above nature, Lk.24:47, for it is in the teaching part, not the exhortation part, that they are begotten through Christ Jesus, I Pet.1:3, to a spiritual act of believing upon him. They are to be preached to in glad tidings, whilst dead in trespasses and sins. Eph.2:1. They are to be spoken to as the Gospel lies above nature, consistently with the gift of the Spirit for begetting them into a new-

born power of acting supernatural faith, Eph.1:19-20, and that albeit we know not the elect personally, as long as we may know them doctrinally {for therein we know them certainly in God's Constitution} because the Lord knows them personally, and by name, even all them that are his, II Tim.2:19, and with his own pure searching Spirit of burning in the Gospel {as fire soon searches and discovers metal hid to the eye amongst combustible matter} finds them out personally, melts them down one by one, {for this I have seen,} and refreshes them in the very refining of them; {"when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning," Isa.4:4, "and I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The LORD is my God," Zech.13:9,} and this so openly under the Spirit's work, that it hath been carried out personally to our own knowledge of them too afterwards, I Thes.1:4, in some good measure of the evidence, while he had wrought efficaciously on their souls by and under a Gospel ministry. This is the means in which the Holy Ghost falls, under the righteousness of God in Christ imputed, I Cor.1:30, to work the new nature, or the new life within their dead souls, and to give them experience of what it is to be born from above. For Christ is not first received by me practically, in order next to change me powerfully, but Christ first changes my nature and principles by his Power, Rom.1:16, in order next to be received by me in my practice. It is his direct act through the Spirit which changes me, I Pet.1:22, and then it is my act under the Spirit which apprehends him in all his Salvation fullness and glory. {"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; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Tit.3:5-7.}

So the drift of the Apostle's sermons was to find

out the elect of God, and in order to the Spirit's falling on them in the New Life, to beget them unto Christ under the righteousness of God in him, II Cor.5:21; which fell clearly upon the revelation part, Rom.1:17, or the instructing part, the teaching part, {not the exhortation part,} of preaching; and there looked for in all the passive workmanship of the Spirit, in a change of the people's disposition, {the Spirit's work in inclining and motioning the sinner into Christ,} to come to Christ. Moreover, when by that extraordinary Spirit of discerning which the Apostles had from the pre-operation of the Spirit upon their own souls and ministry after Christ's Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, {which was quite another, Matt.11:11, and a higher ministration than John the Baptist's ministry,} they saw God's work begun there in the Second of the Acts, in a descending of the Holy Ghost to work Conversion, Acts 2:16-17 & Isa.44:3, then they gave the short hint, {repent, &c., in the Name of Jesus Christ, Acts 2:38,} when they saw the Spirit was come, they exhorted to the act; and they did not exhort as men nowadays do, at all adventures, nor make a long part of their sermons proportionally, Isa.1:12, to all the rest of the matter, {as the manner now is,} upon the exhortation part, but the exhortation then was dropped in a word or two, Deut.32:2, and there ended in a breath. They first discerned, I say, a pre-operation of the Spirit, for the Spirit had been poured out that day, antecedently to Peter's sermon, as appears by the mighty convictions, Acts 2:7-11, whereby he saw the Spirit was given to work mightily upon the auditory, before his saying those words, "repent, &c."

So in the next chapter, the Spirit had been poured out in that great miracle to heal the cripple, before they utter those other words, "repent and be converted." Acts 3:19. Aye, but when there is no visible fruit of the Spirit's being given in some places in many years together of the ministry in our day, Hos.4:10; yet even there ministers will make nothing to insist with a warm zeal upon the form of words, "repent ye unconverted sinners, and believe on Jesus Christ, come to Christ and be saved. Why, sinner, should you not come instantly? What should hinder thee from coming to Christ this moment? Come away therefore

presently, &c." Now as to the Apostles, it's plain that under their begun speaking, Isa.65:24, at the first end of their sermon, the Holy Ghost from Christ had wrought spiritual life, Jn.10:10, and by this means the Apostles before the other end of their sermon came on, discerned how their short and seasonable exhortation upon that discerned life, would rise consistently out of the Spirit's preventing work, or out of his fore-operation on the means, and on the hearts of speaker and hearer, in his being poured forth that day. They saw also that pouring him forth was altogether in a way of encouragement towards believing, or of a seed to serve the Lord, Psal.22:30, and in a way of evidence of God's turning them, Jer.31:19, to take off anything that might lie in the way against the exhortation. And those wise and holy Apostles never did, as our Non-Conformists do now, Ezek.13:17; either to sinners antecedently where the Spirit is not poured out upon them at all, or to sinners customarily in a long dead exhortation, consisting of I know not how many hortatory particulars one after another, nor be sure as the way hath been in many legal particulars, and commands to believe, which still have made the perceptive exhortation more dead and useless. And indeed as to the common and prevailing form, I have found it experimentally in my own soul hurtful, contrary to rule, I Cor.14:4, and so to have killed the felt life of the Spirit, and never to have kindled it. There is a world of difference between the seasonable exhortations practiced in the Scriptures after the Holy Ghost is given to the elect in an auditory, while the said exhortation is dropped in one word by way of encouragement under the gift of the Holy Ghost to faith, or by way of evidencing Regeneration in the soul by the Spirit; and between the common mode of exhortations to Faith and Repentance by way of legal precept. {"But ye are departed out of the way; ye have caused many to stumble at the law; ye have corrupted the covenant of Levi, saith the LORD of hosts." Mal.2:8.} The former is quick and evangelical, the latter dead and legal. Now in the dead perceptive exhortation, they make the nature of the act of faith to extend to so low a thing as the effect of moral suasion, Acts 21:14, and this separately stands in the wisdom of men, as the Apostle

says, "that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." I Cor.2:5. Now such a low, moral sort of faith as this, never goes out of a man's self to fasten unto the promise, as right persuasion-faith passing into motion-faith doth, for I can best explain faith by my own experience thereof. Acts 4:20 & II Cor.4:13 & I Jn.1:3. Gospel faith under the Spirit's efficacious work goes out of a man's self into the Person of Christ, where the promise is yea and amen, II Cor.1:20; that is, into the Person of Christ as doing, dying, and as his soul was made an Offering, a Sin Offering, in the room and place of me the sinner! And so Gospel faith flows into righteousness, as Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. Now this same going out into the Person of Christ {for faith is rather a going to Christ, than a coming to Christ, since Christ is at God's right hand,} is far beyond a going forth into the report, though to do that too, where ignorance, prejudice, &c., are removed, the arm of the Lord must be revealed.

But men commonly make faith of coming to Christ {to use their phrase} so low, as that there is indeed no necessity of the supernatural work of the Spirit for it. Eph.1:19-20. And so while they make it to rise out of unrenewed reason and the old nature, there is no such need of Power for it above the human will, as there is for that faith of coming to Christ, or rather {as I have said} going to Christ, which is created out of the virtue of Christ's ransom blood, Matt.20:28, and which is wrought by the Power of God in life and experience. View all the ministry of the Apostles in their own glass which they have held forth, and if the Lord gives you the seeing eye to distinguish of the lovely colours in their ministry, you will see that no part of their ministry as an exhortation of sinners, as dead sinners to come to Christ vitally and spiritually, and to look to Him supernaturally, and be saved by Him, before the Spirit was evidentially poured on them, Zech.12:10, even to a discrimination of the auditory in a way of life and experience. It was not, I say, before the Spirit of God was poured out upon poor sinners, as on dry and barren ground, Isa.44:3, while they drank in the Apostle's doctrine. Nor was it before the Apostles discerned it too.

How then can I take the Apostle's example in Exhortation, to say "repent and believe, and thou shalt be saved," telling men that I ought to preach to sinners under the Word, not knowing whose hearts God has touched, or will touch, Mal.2:2, when it's most plain that the Apostles themselves, our examples, did it not otherwise than as they discerned God had powerfully touched the hearts of their auditory. Do we imagine, when 5000 persons were converted in Acts chapter 4, {for so mightily grew the word of God and prevailed, Acts 19:20, under the Efficacy of the Spirit's work upon the preceding sermon in chapter 3,} that Peter did not see the Congregation under a powerful work in that sermon, before he came to the Exhortation in those words at the 19th verse, "repent ye therefore and be converted." Who can rationally think otherwise, all circumstances compared? For, those influential verses that lead to the exhortation, verses 12-16, do carry such a majesty of Faith, Rom.1:2, Eph.1:19, in them from the soul of the preacher, that Peter could easily discern it by what he felt {no doubt of it} on his own soul. The people must be visibly melted down, {there in Acts 3,} in Peter's eye, otherwise what meant the change of his style and argument upon it? For so it was, as there was an encouragement of them as brethren, verse 17, and this is a mighty step towards the following exhortation, which is not found among those preachers who are fallen into this practice of exhorting sinners to spiritual coming to Christ. And then, the mollifying argument, "ye did it through ignorance, &c.," as in Paul's case, I Tim.1:13; and, in that sweet Gospel compilation and treating them as brethren, there's the Gospel of it, not the complement. For a sight of the Power of Grace in any commands it, Acts 9:17, and brings it easily out of us. And then when we do not treat men as brethren, 'tis because we have some grounds at the bottom to question, whether from the power of the Gospel they are brethren, or under the plausible form, whether they be not false brethren. Gal.2:4. Moreover, we durst not treat them as brethren, to carry off the Holy Ghost's style of Power into a formal Compliment. Well, here was Power, and under that Power of the Grace of God upon these Sinners the Apostles treated them as

brethren. And had there not been a Discerning of this Power in a Work of Grace, then what made Peter go on, verse 18, {still before he came to the Practical Exhortation, Repent,} and fall presently upon the Gospel of Christ's Sufferings? Lk.24:26. Even as God before had showed by the mouth of all his Prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. This now took off the burden of the Matter from them by mere Grace that God had so fulfilled it, Acts 2:23, and was Good News to them under the same Sermon that had been a means of letting in a sight of their own sin upon them; especially from those cutting words at verses 14-15, neither did the Apostles preach in such a style, when they had no pre-operating, or fore-working signs of success in Preaching such matters, as appears beyond all contradiction, Acts 5:29-33, where no such Signs are to be found. By all it is plain, Mic.5:7, that before Peter came to his practical Exhortation, Acts 3:19, "repent, &c.," they were clearly under a Work of God already. If they had not, Peter's style and way had been of the same nature with his Sermon before the Adversaries in chapter 5, and I say besides, the Conversion of the five thousand, Acts 4, out of this Number {when the Holy Ghost tells us all the issue of the matter} plainly demonstrates that the Apostles saw great reason, from a word, Matt.4:19, as well as from a mighty Work of God upon their souls antecedently to the Practical Exhortation, to bid them to Repent; and why? That God and Christ might be Glorified in their Salvation at latter Day, II Thes.1:10, when it should come to an Open Acquitting of these before the World in the Day of Judgement. "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Acts 3:19.

And albeit we in Preaching cannot discern so perfectly, as they were enabled to do, touching the Spirit's Pre-Operation or Fore-Operation, upon the object; yet it we who preach the Gospel have saving Experience, we may discern persuasively, Matt.28:20, as to some measure of Gospel evidence, and so discern very probably, to make a correct judgment on the true Foundation or Ground of Exhortation. The Apostle's

Ministry was no Exhortation of deceit, nor in guile fallaciously, I Thes.2:3, to come to Christ; that is, into Christ by an Act of Spiritual closing, whether Sinners were alive or dead. Acts 17:34. For again, as to what they urge in Acts 17:30 and chapters 20 & 21, it will be found to be no Exhortation to close with Christ Spiritually, as in our Pulpits sinners have been most ignorantly exhorted to do; but to close morally. The Apostles saw how the Word wrought upon some in the assembly, before they came to the Practical Exhortation to Repent, with any Repentance above Nature; and in promiscuous Assemblies, where God's Work lay not discriminately open to their view upon all, they exhorted and persuaded them to believe Doctrinally into the Report of Christ; and not vitally into the Person of Christ. Acts 28:23 & 13:38. They exhorted upon this foot, without making a Difference, where there appeared none, between the elect and the non-elect, to believe the Report of Christ witnessed to by his ministers, and to repent morally of their opposition to Christ, of which the Jew was guilty, and of Gentile Idolatries and Superstition, I Thes.1:9, which by God's bringing the Gospel among the Gentiles, he commanded the Gentiles everywhere to do. I say, to repent morally, not to repent spiritually. God commanded them everywhere to repent, I Jn.5:9; that is, to entertain the Witness or Testimony, and Doctrine of Faith; and with it morally to repent. Rom.2:4. And to what ends, I have been helped abundantly to discover from the Word, in my Fifth Chapter of this Treatise.

As to any discriminate exhortations of the elect, Acts 3:25-26, where the holy apostles could discern the new creature formed, there their encouragement-exhortations {beyond the mere perceptive exhortations} to faith, were immediately dropped, not delayingly suspended till the next Lord's Day, or till eight or ten particulars off; and then come to a cold formal use of exhortation {as the manner is} at parting with the text. They never did thus, and then further if we consider it, the Apostle's encouragement-exhortation was dropped upon the new creature, which they discerned from Christ, Isa.50:4, could, under the Holy Ghost at that instant, repent and be converted, as it actually came to pass, Acts

4:4, out of the plain grounds they had for their exhortation in Acts 3:19. So in Acts 15:29, where it's called the exhortation, verse 31, in the Greek, though our translation renders it the consolation, it was an exhortation, dropped upon the new creature, II Cor.5:17, and not upon qualifications of the Law. It was upon souls Gospelized, Matt.11:5, {or having the very Spirit of God in the work of Regeneration entering and altering their natures,} by the very hearing of glad tidings in a Crucified Jesus, under the Holy Ghost's work of Quickening Power; and the exhortation was not upon souls taken pains with to be legalized, Gal.4:24, and in sermons like the drought of summer, Psal.32:4, made thirsty, without any drink of the Living Water to relieve them. None can thirst for the Living Water, except the new creature; and in preaching, souls must not be tantalized. What's that? They must not be merely told of water, and brought to the water {as Tantalus¹⁹ was up to the very chin} and yet relieved by none in the pure soul-refreshing Doctrine of the Gospel. {"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Isa.12:3.} The Apostles dropped their exhortation upon a new creature, and did not aim {for they had renounced the hidden things of dishonestly} in preaching, to make sinners heavy laden, mourners, affrighted and crying out of their sins and burdens without ease or remedy, except what is pressed out of themselves by their own repentance. {"Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Acts 5:31.} Indeed, as to ourselves, if this be the issue of a sermon in the all Supreme Hand of the Lord, be it so, the will of the Lord be done, Acts 21:14, and let it be acquiesced in. But that this thing should be the design of preachers in their doctrine, to prepare for exhortation {as I have known in some} is all wrong. Isa.61:1-3.

Now how is application abused; and yet a

¹⁹ Tantalus was a Greek mythological figure, most famous for his eternal punishment in Tartarus. He was made to stand in a pool of water beneath a fruit tree with low branches, with the fruit ever eluding his grasp, and the water always receding before he could take a drink.

correction of the abuse of it is so impatiently entertained by some pert and confident men, that they will not bear the abuse of an application should be laid open. No, to cover the old faults still, they'll pretend in their defence that all use of a Doctrine presently is struck at; and that in my former book I have too much exposed an inviting and exhorting of sinners to come to Christ. Whereas in this book I have been the more obliged to prove that their noise and defences are a mere ignorant sort of prattle. It's plain what poor work some men make of it in Exhortation! For suppose they spent a Lord's Day or two upon opening something of the nature of Regeneration, who would think now they should go and spoil this deep Mystery of the Gospel with formal noise? I Cor.14:8. And yet you shall take notice, that upon neither of the two day's abode on the doctrinal part of that subject, they'll ever {for encouragement} drop one word of use; as to say, {if they behold any sinners melted at the Word,} "brethren, be encouraged under this precious work of the Spirit to cast all your eye, your hope, your confidence on Jesus Christ." For this doth but explain what the Spirit is then visibly working. No, they'll stay till noon, perhaps when the work is all cold; for the Spirit of God is a Free Agent, he'll not be tied to Use and Application. Aye, but nevertheless it seems impossible to get them into any of this way of Exhorting, and draw them out of their old method. Jer.13:23. "Exhort? What, exhort so preposterously! Exhort by dropping a word now and then, as we can discern the Spirit's work in our own or other men's souls? No, no, stay, that's too fast. We be not yet come to the use of exhortation, where we expect it will be more in season, and where it will do more good. We intend to bid you sinners to come to Christ, and believe on him the next Lord's Day, before we part with the subject; {though alas; some of them may be in eternity tomorrow;} but to speak to you now thus in the doctrinal part of a Discourse would be out of joint. We be not yet come to use. There lies the place, the form, the draught of the paper. We can't reach so far as that note yet." Ah! Poor hearts, I pity you of the elect of God! My soul is moved with bowels for you sinners, I Chron.21:17, and I am helped to pray for you that be under these softly

preachers, and these fine silken well spun Methodists.

Notwithstanding all this ground of exposing, reproving and arguing down the unscriptural exhortations of men which have obtained, Isa.8:20, yet we shall see some weaker sort of men, while they observe us striking at any faults in Exhortation, presently run off with the vulgar cry, as if we were against all Exhortations, Warnings, Admonitions and Motives to visible believers in a moral way, {because we deny this to be a means of Conversion,} and as if we admitted of no manner of Exhortation to such as in man's judgment are in the way of Salvation. Aye, they have slain all the king's sons! Whereas it's Amnon only that is dead. II Sam.13:30-32. Now they must certainly be men of the meanest abilities to discuss debates, who will thrust themselves in to defend the sense of Scripture, I Tim.1:7, and yet never distinguish of the sense of Scripture, no not in their very Defence of Exhortations. From hence it is that such men, in their itch of scribbling what they have never digested to live on in their souls, Jn.20:31, Acts 4:20, do at two or three removes run themselves out of their own depth; and it may be cry to come back again, when themselves see, and others look on too and see, that they have swallowed themselves up by their own precipitancy.

Well, the Scripture Exhortations in Acts 2:38 & Acts 3:19, were both dropped in a word, Ezek.20:46, Deut.32:2, Ezek.21:2, and dropped upon the new creature, and dropped upon the new creature discerned, which none of our common exhortations of sinners to come to Christ, nor the usual exhortations to spiritual coming to Christ by faith, are at all limited by, nor have any conformity, or close regard unto. The exhortations in those places of Scripture proceeded not from the preacher's form and notion, I Cor.4:20, but from a feeling of the Power of the Spirit of Christ upon them, in a way of evangelical discerning. Isa.28:26. The five thousand that believed under the latter sermon are a proof of it in Acts 3, and the many who received the Word gladly upon the voice of Good News, Acts 2:41, are an evidence of the same way and grounds of exhorting in Acts 2. The upshot of both is, that the exhortations there mentioned had no other subject of qualification meetly and agreeably, than

what was the subject of comfort, Acts 3:18, born into the heart that received the Word with power. By which it's manifest, that all desirable qualifications, such as discerning, yielding, rejoicing, &c., being Evangelical effects of the Spirit's work, Isa.35:2, are all of a Gospel piece with its self, the new creature, or subject of them in the workmanship of God, Eph.2:10; and therein are fitted not to hinder but produce the comforts of the Gospel, in contra-distinction to Law comforts. Matt.19:16, Rom.10:3. It's plain then the exhortation to Spiritual Faith was dropped upon the person, as seen to be called, upon the Election-bottom, and it's plain it was done no otherwise.

So that other sort of Exhortations are well distinguished in the Apostle's ministry by a changing his voice. Gal.4:20. For it was quite another thing in the business of the Galatians, Gal.4:19-20, for there the Apostle's exhortation was plainly to a Doctrinal Reformation in a way of arguing with visible believers, Gal.3:1-5, &c., in danger of Apostasy on the out-works, Gal.5:5, 3:3, and though he could presently as visible believers exhort them, not to apostatize and corrupt the faith; yet as to the sacred works of power and forming Christ in their souls, Col.1:27, we see he does not exhort them there, nor put them to act anything in believing, repenting, &c., according to such an inward and supernatural formation of Christ in their souls, to apprehend the perfect Christ of God, every ways full and complete in Himself, and so to receive him into their souls by a spiritual act. Jn.6:44. For this he calls a forming of Christ in them, Gal.4:19, and herein tells you only of these little children, that he travailed in birth again {thinking once that the work had been wrought in that nature before} for them. And he does not tell you, he exhorted them to what he travailed for, II Cor.2:17; but he exhorted them to another thing, and that as they were visible believers in the out-works; and he waited for all demonstrations of the Power of God in the in-works. This now makes God's Word distinct and coherent in the matter, II Cor.1:18; for the common huddling of the Scripture and making the places in the Acts and in the Galatians to be all one, confounds the case, and quite

darkens the point.

So the Apostle is very distinct in his exhortations to order; for order of the Gospel going along with faith of the Gospel makes men that profess the Gospel perfect, Col.4:12, Phil.3:15, II Cor.13:11, I Cor.2:6, in the profession of the Gospel. {"For though I be absent in the flesh, yet am I with you in the spirit, joying and beholding your order, and the steadfastness of your faith in Christ." Col.2:5.} Otherwise, if you take away New Testament Order, one main branch of the Good News about the Mediator; to wit, all that belongs to Government, Beauty and Defence in the Kingly Office of Christ, is wanting, and the profession halts and is imperfect. We all visibly are lame, deficient and want a limb of the new creature to be well jointed, and put in its place, Tit.1:5, if we want Gospel-Order. The Apostle therefore took care in all the churches, II Cor.11:28, I Cor.7:17, to provide against this woeful imperfection, as appears, Col.1:28,29, "whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus; whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily." He could not bear to think of presenting any man in Christ Jesus unto Christ Jesus, that had lived out of church-order.

But alas! Come you to exhortations, and how do our exhorters run quite another way by themselves, I Cor.15:46, exhorting to spiritual acts and motions in the in-works? This is openly seen in the practical part of their books, and is notorious in their sermons; and then when we take them to task, they either peevishly quarrel, II Tim.4:3, or else run away without any understanding or distinction to the Apostles, and think all to make them their vouchers. Whereas if we are tried by the Apostles, these papers discover that our own common way of preaching must fall, and a quite different method of preaching must be established. It's therefore Reformation that I have always pleaded for in the matter, Mal.2:1-2; and there's need of it now more abundantly, to rectify the anti-evangelic exhortation that grow almost everywhere in vogue, Gal.1:6-7, patronizing free-will applications of those men's sermons, who yet {tell them of free will, and they} seem to be warm against it. Rom.10:2. Some men

in their very defence of exhortations have done it so injudiciously and in the dark, as if the Apostles had spoken of exhortations in their utmost latitude, almost in every single text, and not spoken of these things distinctly. For it's the way of weak defenders never to distinguish between a doctrinal exhortation rectifying repentance, as in Acts 20:21, and a practical exhortation, commanding repentance, according to that doctrinal testimony thereof, as in Acts 17:30, for we see the Scriptures distinguish. But now inconsiderate and untaught men huddle them both into one thing; so few of their days have they spent under the Lord's influences, in a close study of the Scriptures; and this is much of the cause of their injudiciousness in the Scripture Oracles.

Besides lastly, {which will still more open things,} our exhortations ought to be miraculous, Acts 3:6-8, Isa.35:6, as when Christ healed men's bodies of their infirmities, he said by a word of omnipotent power {as the Son of God} "arise and walk, arise and come forth," Jn.11:43, or "stretch out thine hand," and the like. Indeed at that extraordinary day of the Apostles, wherein was a miraculous stretching forth of the hand of God to heal, and doing Signs and Wonders by the Name of his Holy Child Jesus, Acts 4:30, at the first preaching of the Gospel, there were openly from an Exalted Jesus, conversions to Christ, or turnings to the Lord Jesus, very miraculously caused at the pronouncing a form of words. {"And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following." Mk.16:20.} However this was done partly, because the apostles had the faith of miracles, and believed it should be done according to their word upon men's souls, Matt.21:21, as well as that miraculous cures should be wrought by them upon the bodies of men, Isa.35:5; and then further, that such miraculous Conversions in the success of the Gospel were partly needful {in that sudden Revolution} to stop the mouth of the Jews, I Cor.1:22, by proving that the Gospel-Dispensation, in point of a miraculous and sudden power, was not a jot inferior, II Cor.3:6-11, to the Law-Economy. {"God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy

Ghost, according to his own will." Heb.2:4.} They had known the Law to have been introduced by external miracles, under the rod of Moses; and now they should see that the Gospel was still above it. How? By internal miracles; or by Conversions outwardly confirmed by the external signs in the Ministry of the Apostles, Mk.16:20, Acts 4:16, that went along with them. The apostles under the glorious measure of their apostolic unction, did believe by a faith of miracles, while they used those extraordinary forms in the miraculous age, Acts 15:12, that the people, standing before them under the hearing of the Word, should infallibly be brought to do as they exhorted them, even as many as were ordained to everlasting life, Acts 13:48; and this is written as a confirmation by power of miracles, Heb.2:3-4, for the ground-work of our Doctrinal Faith. So Paul's word, Acts 16:31, to the jailer, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Mk.16:16, was clearly founded upon a two-fold evidence; that is, upon a miraculous spirit of discerning that the Holy Ghost was at the root of the jailer's convictions, Acts 16:29-30; and, upon the mighty attestation of heaven to an apostolical, wonder-working ministry, in shaking the foundations of the prison, Acts 16:26, opening all the prison doors immediately, and loosening every one's bands. These things now quite alter the case. The apostle's, Paul and Silas, Acts 15:40, had both seen the Spirit at work, breaking in mightily upon the jailer's soul, in a way of life and stirrings, and also beheld the miraculous notices of a conquering Jesus in the very prison, and that this was now the time for the great power of the Gospel to break out in the blood of Messiah, Isa.49:8, crucified and cut off, Dan.9:26; and here it was they saw God's work in his arm going along with Christ, according to the Covenant, Psal.111:5, and breaking out in the sure success of the Gospel. All this put together, Paul and Silas had a full ground of faith to believe that their exhortation of the jailer to spiritual faith into the Person of Christ, Jn.6:69, should most surely take effect. I say, that Paul and Silas, by a faith of miracles of the Holy Ghost, were persuaded that this exhortation should be made effectual upon the soul of the jailer on the spot by the great Power of God, to a spiritual believing

on the Lord Jesus; and then further, the miracle of faith, as to the jailer's Conversion {in the means and application thereof} by an encouragement-exhortation to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, Acts 16:31, and by the miracle of fear in shaking the prison, &c., was to work courage and more faith in the disciples, that they should not be daunted at the casting of the apostles into prison for Christ and the Gospel's sake. Acts 9:16. It was all of it a pure miracle of Grace for open confirmation of the Gospel of Christ; and yet was carried on all along answerably to its patterns in Electing Grace, Eph.1:11; as that it should be only the jailer, Lk.4:27, so astonished under the Spirit's first preventing work, and then converted, whilst all the rest, Rom.11:7, of the prisoners {though all had seen the miracle of fear, and every one's prison-bands or fetters were loosened from him} did remain in their blood and blindness.

Oh, what sweet effects, Acts 16:40, must this be supposed to work upon the Apostles and Disciples, and upon the whole Church! The miracle was a means in the hand of the Holy Ghost by which he wrought great things, for when the jailer believed so suddenly, and embraced a persecuted Christ in his members the very first night of their imprisonment, verse 33, upon Christ's Mighty Attestation to the Gospel both by Providence and by Preaching, then all the Disciples of Jesus had an open confirmation that God in Christ was for them; that Father, Son and Spirit wrought Salvation, and who therefore could be against them? Rom.8:31. And that God should hearken thus to the voice of a man, Jos.10:14, as was said of Joshua in the other wonder-working day of old; and could clear up things so to the soul of this jailer, in those words, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," when the apostle came afterwards to open the Mystery of them upon that text, Psal.51:13; for it is said moreover, verse 32, "and they spake unto him the Word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house," in the next words. This gave a further testimony to the Lord's mighty ascension, to the promises, to the councils and the oath of God, Psal.110:4, in the death of the Man Jesus, to the prophecies, and to the giving of the Holy Ghost. This mightily strengthened the converted Disciples by comparing it with the Power of

Conversion which they had felt in their own hearts. Acts 26:16. If any man therefore took this text and pressed it now, merely as a direction or command to saving faith, he is gravely mistaken. For its written to no such present purpose, any more than the account of that command of Peter and John to the cripple, "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk," Acts 3:6, hold now forth unto us the same form to be in present and perpetual use. Nor can it anymore be argued that it is so, because it's recorded in the Word; for the record of it there is quite to another end. Miraculous instances were peculiar. What present practical use then, you'll say, does that text, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," Acts 16:31, now serve for, if sinners are not immediately to be commanded from it to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ? I answer, that the ministers of the New Testament ought from hence to open the Object of Faith, the Lord Jesus Christ, whom God the Father hath appointed, sent, accepted, raised, exalted, heard and is always hearing as Advocate with the Father, and Intercessor at the right hand of God for all the elect of God unto salvation; and next to open the renovation-act of believing, as caused by the Spirit's Power and Grace in Regeneration from and under the Father's Christ.

So you have the like agreeable instance in the fourth of Acts, that at the very time, the moment, when the Apostles having great grace, Acts 4:33, and the faith of miracles in their souls, believed that the people now should be turned, Jer.31:19, and live upon a word spoken in season; and that for the exalting of Jesus of Nazareth. It was done, even as in the words of Peter {in the fourth chapter} to the cripple, or a man lame from his mother's womb, he having the steadfast faith of miracles, and therefore spake without doubting in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, Acts 3:6, "rise up and walk," and at a time when believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women, Acts 5:14, it's plain too by the scope and current of the Second of the Acts, that the Apostle Peter had then, Acts 2:14, under the first fruits of the Spirit, a like faith towards the miraculous conversion of the Jews in a great draught of them; and so remembered that his Master had said it in a former word,

when the Lord told him and Andrew his brother, Matt.4:19, that he would make them fishers of men; and this was a further ground of Peter's exhortation to sinners in Acts 2, to repent, than the ground of it before hinted. For even as Jesus himself {some while afore this in the Second of the Acts fell out} had said "stretch forth thine hand," Lk.6:10, Jesus knew that the man should infallibly stretch forth his hand that instant by an out-stretched arm of power given him, which other men did not see. Yes, whilst the word was being spoken, the Lord knew he would give forth {to the man that had his hand withered} the full virtue of extending it; and the Apostles likewise had full grounds to believe that their commands in his Name should not fall to the ground, I Sam.3:19, whilst they spake in this miraculous form to men's souls, as well as to men's bodies, in the faith of miracles, Acts 3:16, a faith peculiar to the first Ministry of the Gospel. The reason of it is, because the seat of Evangelical Conversions was then among the Jews, Lk.24:47, both in Judea and other countries; and also in that day a remnant of the Jews were to be converted to Jesus Christ by operations openly miraculous, and in such cities of the Gentiles as had Jewish Synagogues at hand, the Lord gave them opportunity to hear what was done by the Power of the Gospel.

Now as to men's bodies, the ministers of the Gospel at this day would count it presumption, to go to a sick or impotent person and say, "be healed, or be thou whole, arise and walk in the name of Christ," to a man lame that never had walked; yet they count it a ministerial commission to go and use the miraculous soul-form, as if whilst they pronounced the words, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" {savingly} to a man who never had been savingly healed, the effect of his soul-healing should follow. Yet Peter went in and did thus, who said also with success, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole," Acts 9:34, "arise, &c." To follow it then, why should it not be thought presumption, and quite besides the sphere of our ministry {and what is not done by it in faith is done in presumption} to come close to a dead soul, II Kings 4:31, and say, "do thou live spiritually, do thou believe savingly on the Lord Jesus Christ." To speak I say to dead souls

immediately in their unregenerate state, before we have any grounds to believe that that state of theirs in nature is changed by Jehovah the Spirit, Isa.40:28; yet to bid them in exhortations to repent, turn, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, come to Christ, come to him, &c., merely because the Apostles did thus, just in the instant when they saw grace working, and had the faith to believe that the persons they spoke to, should believe in Jesus Christ and be saved, is certainly as much beside the scope as to say to the sick, "be whole," where it can be only done upon the spot by miracle. {"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near." Isa.55:6. "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found." Psal.32:6.} Whereas the Operation of the Holy Ghost on the ministry now {as to these things} is quite in another way.

The ministry of the Gospel now labours more in a way of expectation, Gal.6:8, Rom.12:7, to see the fruits of instruction in the Mysteries of Christ sealed, than it works by any miraculous believing, that a spiritual act will be put forth instantaneously, upon our exhortations to sinners to believe and come to Christ. We have no ground {that I know} to believe that Conversion will be surely effected by exhortations to Conversion, or by some other branch of our ministry. Acts 17:2-4. It is not a zealous pressing of faith, or a frequent pronouncing of the phrases, repent, and believe on Jesus Christ {when we preach the Gospel to poor sinners} that will be found a means to convert them to Jesus Christ.

Besides, who has that faith now, that their exhortations instantaneously will take effect unto Salvation? What need is there of miraculous operations by open seals, Acts 14:3, since the whole deed of the Gospel has been generally conveyed and openly received? {"Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ." Rom.15:19.} For which cause there being no need of a miraculous faith in preaching the Gospel, since the common report of the Gospel has been spread, our exhortations, like our ministry, ought to be of the ordinary stamp. We must not look for faith by miraculous

commands, as the apostle's urging of faith in some cases was, under an ordinary ministry as ours is. There in our encouragement-exhortation's, I Tim.4:13, {not miraculous and perceptive,} we should never exhort to spiritual and supernatural acts, but as we see the Spirit in pre-occupation on our own and their hearts hath gone before us, by a supernatural and blessed work in that very season while we exhort. And so let him that exhorts, exhort according to the proportion of faith in exhortation, Rom.12:8; and then we are evangelical and right in our exhortations, and follow the Apostolic Pattern; and this is the more needful, since Popery and Arminianism have made such sad work with our Bibles, in confounding spiritual and moral acts.

Again, these exhortations must be occasional, as the Lord sets in with an antecedent witness on our ministry, and not where he leaves men, that they will not receive our testimony concerning him, Acts 22:18; for if exhortations be constant and peremptory, they will be formal, flat and useless, and quite beside the Rule, as the too frequent practice of them upon every subject, or any text, by mere custom, plainly appears to be; when men exhort, beseech and persuade unrenewed souls to come to Christ by faith for Salvation, I Tim.1:7, or to look to him by an eye of faith which was never planted, nor shall be in their natures while remaining dead in trespasses and sins. For they are first quickened by the Holy Ghost, and then have this eye given them. He that formed the eye, Psal.94:9, shall he not see to work the soul-life, and in that life to form this precious eye of faith? Thus we see in a few words, how we are to make Christ and his Apostles our rule for matter and manner, doctrine and method, according to the Scripture-Canon, Phil.3:16, Gal.6:16, both in the latitude of an exhortation, as to the general nature of it, and the due object of any exhortation in the application thereof.

Let me a little state the doctrine of exhortations according to the Scriptures. Exhortation should not be legal, such as a Jew in the synagogue would be content to hear.

It's said of Paul and his company at Antioch, Acts 13:15, that "after the reading of the law and the prophets

the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on." We have read the Law, now you may exhort the people to the keeping of it. The Jews and Jewish Christians too were for exhortation to keep the Law. Acts 21:20, 24. The Jews were for extorting to some natural duty belonging to the fear of the true God. They did not see any need of a Salvation by Christ to be sent to them, because they feared God, Acts 13:26, and trusted to that; and they thought that whosoever of them feared God, it was enough, Matt.19:16; that that religious fear would bear them out, and they should be happy by it in another world; and so they thought they wanted nothing but a little stimulus to this same fear in an exhortation. They were for no instructions about the way of Salvation by Christ. Acts 7:57. Besides, were altogether ignorant of it, nor could endure to hear anything of God in Christ, but all their flurry was in exhortation! How! An exhortation? Thought Paul, you need a Revelation of the Gospel, an instruction into the Mystery of Christ to make you believers! And {thinks he} now I have gotten leave for this exhortation {as they'll have it} I'll take the opportunity, under the Lord's Operation, to preach the Gospel, Rom.1:16, among them here in this synagogue, and so he stands up, Acts 13:16, and preaches the Gospel Evangelically in that synagogue at Antioch. He there falls upon telling them what God had done in the Old Testament to make way for Christ, Jn.5:39, and how he had sent Christ into the world; as all so how they that dwelt at Jerusalem crucified him, and therein fulfilled the Scriptures in condemning him, verse 27; he preaches his resurrection, verse 30; he declares glad tidings to the Antiochian Jews, he does not offer them glad tidings, verse 32; he preaches to them forgiveness in his Name, verse 38, 39, and he concludes with a prophetic sort of caution, lest that blindness and judicial hardening spoken of in the prophets come upon them for their open contempt, hatred, and persecution of the Gospel of Christ. Rom.11:25. Here now was the Apostles Doctrine, Acts 2:42, and no doubt but the rulers of the synagogue would have been glad to have seen all this instruction, or declaring and showing of the Gospel,

turned into a legal exhortation, according to what they had first of all motioned, Acts 13:15, to be spoken to the people. But blessed Paul would disappoint them.

Well then, our exhortations should not be legal, such as the Jews stood up for; nor yet such as some Christians have blindly contended for. For instance, take an exhortation to the practical love of God, and consider, says one, "God is our great benefactor, and therefore let us love God, for love to God rectifies all other loves." Now wherein are such legal exhortations fitted to any of the spiritual forms of the Christian? Does the Holy Ghost use such language about the love of God? Do they befit the Gospel, so much as they are fitted to the Jew in his desire of an exhortation in the synagogue? Are not the foregoing heads, synagogue-exhortations; and should not such exhorters be rebuked, as they were, when Paul so much disappointed their expectations at Antioch, in falling close upon the Gospel, and not meddling with that moral work of the Law, which in the general notion of a Deity, is written, Rom.2:15, upon every man's heart by nature?

Exhortations should be Instructive and Doctrinal, Declaratory and Manifestative, as the Scriptures plainly show. We should find the Gospel in an exhortation, and not lose it there. An Exhortation should be every way suited to the Gospel Profession in the Good News its self; and sinners are not to be told that the whole of exhortations are a practical point; for a great deal of them are Doctrinal and Instructive points; and he that never made this distinction in his very defence of exhortations, hath held forth rather his own darkness, than the Word of God hereabout, a Gospel Exhortation instructs into the objects, principles and springs of motion, agreeably with a new creature-change; and then under right discourses directs to the immediate duty of believing, repenting, &c.

"And I beseech you, brethren, suffer the word of exhortation; for I have written a letter unto you in few words." Heb.13:22. It's plain by this letter written that it is the whole discourse of the Epistle to the Hebrews written to the churches of the Jews, Heb.13:7,17, he means to be this exhortation. All this entirely taken he calls an Exhortation. Oh! How the Holy Ghost's Exhortations radically differ from the form of some men's!

Also, how instructive, how nervous, how penetrating and argumentative, how evangelical and spiritual, how sublime and supernatural is the matter of this exhortation, which this text speaks of, even the Epistle to the Hebrews! The original phrase is a word of consolation, as well as a word of exhortation. Again, was this an exhortation to unbelievers? No, it was written exclusively to saints, Heb.13:24, churches, and holy brethren, Heb.3:1, who were liable to great temptations, to staggerings in the faith, and who had among them some formal and doctrinal believers only, and not experimental, who were upon the brink of apostasy, after they had doctrinally and notionally believed into the report of Christ. {"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Heb.3:12.} No doubt but such an exhortation was that of Paul's in Macedonia which we find.

"And when he had gone over those parts, and had given them much exhortation, he came into Greece." Acts 20:2. Those times of pursuit by the enemy were hard times to live in, and who can think that the Apostle put them upon work in his Exhortation, without feeding them in his exhortation with the bread which came down from heaven? Jn.6:51.

Hence the Holy Ghost hath coupled a testimony of the Grace of God with an exhortation, as I Peter 5:12; and an exhortation is explained by a confirmation, Acts 15:32; and so likewise, an exhortation is matched with doctrine, I Timothy 4:13, and then joined with comfort, I Corinthians 14:3. These all do go in couples, and mutually lead hand-in-hand, to show us that exhortations are not only and merely practical points, but of a very doctrinal and instructive nature, as well as upon a Doctrinal Foundation.

John the Baptist himself in an exhortation to sinners does plainly vary from our various forms of exhorting, and was more evangelical and instructive therein, than ordinarily men now will suffer that part of a discourse before any auditory to be. "John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the

Holy Ghost and with fire; whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable," Lk.3:16-17, and then verse 18, "and many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people." Doctrinal, instructive and declaratory truths are here called an Exhortation. Holy and useful instructions in the account of the Holy Ghost, Heb.4:12-13, 13:22, are called an Exhortation. Whereas our folk think nothing can be an exhortation, if it be not according to their form and module, a use of exhortation made up into doings; as it is easily seen in the universal crowd of use and application.

Then in Hebrews 12:5,6, we have an account that the exhortation was manifestative of help and supply, of grace and fullness, as well as tending of duty and counsel. "And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, my son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him. For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." Here is much of the Gospel manifested in this exhortation, because it is made to inward acts under the Operation of the Lord the Spirit. 1. It is a son in the father's arm that is bid to slight not correction, nor faint at his father's rod. 2. It is a son whom the father loves in the act of chastening. Psal.94:12 & Rev.3:19. 3. It is a son he receives under the most scourging blows he gives him. So that in the very administration of this lively exhortation, it's both a means to work up the children of God to honour him in all their afflictions, as their holy, wise and everlasting Father, Isa.9:6, and to raise up the children of God from despondency, dejection, sinful distrust and unbecoming jealousies, Psal.42:11, under all the severe corrections of his hand. {"I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me; he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." Mic.7:9.}

Furthermore, as to practical exhortations, so far as conformed to Scripture-module, II Tim.1:13, they ought to be kept distinctly within their own practical bounds,

and not mingled with the Gospel of your Salvation, Eph.1:13, as too commonly they are. Some exhortations that are practical are of one kind, and some of another. Howbeit they should not be confounded, as usually they are. I find all practical exhortations in Scripture {which I would distribute methodically in this discourse} couched under these five following particulars, and not one of the number is an exhortation of unbelievers to come to Christ, nor of sinners, as sinners, to act Spiritual Faith, as men now-a-days contend for the shaping of their exhortations.

First: The scripture hints a practical exhortation, or friendly advice, unto mere natural acts to unbelievers. "And now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship," Acts 27:22, to be of good cheer; that is, to put forth natural courage, and not to be dismayed at the expectation of so much danger, as you have thought, in this voyage. To believers and regenerate persons. "For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busybodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." II Thes.3:11-12. This was an exhortation to saints. There were some disorderly persons in this church of the Thessalonians. Their disorder was they wrought not at all; they lived idly, either without a calling, or occupation, or else in the neglect of one. Instead of working at all, and busying themselves in a lawful employment of their own, they were busybodies; they minded the concernments of other men they had nothing to do with. Now them that were such the apostle exhorts to a Reformation; and it lay in natural acts. Nevertheless it was by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Great Magistrate over the commonwealth of Israel, Eph.2:12, that the Apostle took upon him to make such a Church Act against idle vagabonds of the Society that would not work, I Tim.5:13, nor be quiet, but run up and down, and do mischief with their tongues; and the stature is, that with quietness they work; that they don't clamour because they are bid to work; and that they eat their own bread, that they earn what they eat, and not to think to live in idleness upon the Church, and eat other men's

bread. "But ye, brethren," says he, "be not weary {faint not} in well-doing," II Thes.3:13; this exhortation, says he, is not to cut off all bounty from them neither, and leave them altogether destitute, where they cannot altogether provide for themselves. But is to direct your menagerie into a prudent discerning between their idleness and their true poverty. Thus, according to this instance, persons who have Grace at the bottom may need an exhortation to reform a disorder among them, and mend it even by natural acts in well-doing.

Secondly: The scripture presents us with practical exhortations to a common act of self-preservation from the impending judgments, Jer.51:45, Rev.18:4, II Cor.6:17, by a faith into the Report and Witness of the Gospel, as it most reasonably agrees with the truth of Messiah's coming. God may set home terrible things, and an exhortation unto such reasonable faith, built upon open evidence and matter of fact, is known almost in all churches who receive their members, as the church at Jerusalem did Saul, viz., upon a relation of their Conversion. But this is no exhortation to the supernatural act of believing into Christ's Person, nor to any other supernatural act.

See the instance, Acts 2:40, "and with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation." Not save your selves into Christ, that's not your work, but is the work of Free Grace, II Tim.1:9; but your work is to save your selves into the good report of Christ, to believe that Jesus is the Christ, and so to save your selves before the Decree bring forth destruction upon others, Zeph.2:2, to save your selves from the judgments which shall overtake this untoward generation, Num.14:37, who bring up an evil report upon him. They had a common power of acting to save themselves from the Romans, Isa.1:19, by accepting Messiah; though they had embraced him but as we in Great Britain embraced the Prince of Orange, when thereby we saved ourselves from the Bloody Papists, and because that untoward generation of the Jews would not exert the common power, Jn.5:40, therefore the company of Israel present in the Pentecost-Assembly were exhorted to save themselves, Acts 2:40, from the said

untoward generation. It's just as if a friend that is near a house, or a tree falling, Matt.21:44, should be exhorted and pressed to get off the spot, by a mere rational and natural act, where otherwise it will fall and crush him, with all the rest of the stubborn race that are resolved to try, and keep under it. {"And he spake unto the congregation, saying, Depart, I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins." Num.16:26.}

Thirdly: The Scriptures in practical exhortation do exhort to the moral acts of professors, Tit.2:14, that they do not sink below the examples of many, Mk.6:20, unregenerate men. The design of such exhortation, or the use of it in any point, is to promote an external practical walk, so as befits the Gospel, either as to the upholding it, or the adorning it in the out-works. The texts for this are at hand.

"Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded," Tit.2:6, it's plainly an exhortation to some parallel sobriety and discretion with what went before in the council to young women, verse 5, as appears by the adverb "likeness" {likewise} in verse 6, which connects the sense with the former advice. But that was an exhortation unto moral acts, as to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, &c., and what was this moral exhortation for? Was it that sinners should come to Christ? Or, was it intended as a piece of practical holiness to save them? No, Paul did not muddle the Gospel at that rate; but he tells you, it was that the Word of God be not blasphemed. Tit.2:5. Ay, these be your Christians! See how they live! He exhorts the Christians therefore here, through Timothy, to moral acts of Gospel behaviour, to stop ungodly men's mouths, that they have nothing of blame to lay to godly men's charge that's against the light of nature.

"Exhort servants to be obedient unto their own masters, and to please them well in all things; not answering again; not purloining, but showing all good fidelity; that they may adorn {with a moral ornament, so as natural and moral men may judge of the adorning of} the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things." Tit.2:9-10. None therefore that I know of doubt or deny practical

exhortations to moral duties, as the Apostles did exhort among their church-members, when they wrote either to churches or to church-officers. But what's this to an exhortation to a spiritual duty in the example? Nothing!

"These things teach and exhort." I Tim.6:2. What things? Moral things common to and incumbent upon all believing servants, "and they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit." Of what benefit? Of the benefit of church-order and membership in the fellowship of the Gospel, Phil.1:5, upon the Foundation Gift of God, Jesus Christ, in Redemption and Salvation through his blood. Col.1:14. These things teach and exhort; teach them evangelically, and exhort to practice still as becomes the Gospel, in what is distinct from it, and yet still bears a serviceable relation to it.

In all these instances we see the exhortation to moral acts is confined within its own bounds. Psal.81:13-14. It was not any exhortation to acts that lay quite above the liberty or power of the man's will, as spiritual and supernatural acts do, Phil.2:13; nor was it an exhortation to unbelievers, but unto saints. These moral acts are all such external duties, Jer.7:13-14, as are common to all believers. It is no coming to Christ, it is no pressing of spiritual faith on sinners, nor spiritual duties, Rev.2:24-25, on saints. The Spirit led them into these under instructions, not under practical exhortations.

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men." I Tim.2:1. This again is no exhortation to sinners to come to Christ, nor is it an exhortation to the unbeliever not embracing the report of the Gospel, but to the professor in common.

Fourthly: The Scriptures do contain practical exhortations to practical sanctification. Perhaps these practical exhortations to churches are more necessary at church-meetings, than in mixed assemblies. {"And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith unto the Gentiles." Acts 14:27.}

"Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblameably we behaved ourselves among you that believe; as ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." I Thes.2:10-12. It's practical holiness with moral justice and visible unblamableness in life and conversation, I Pet.2:12, of which the plain matter of this Exhortation consists. So that yet it does not appear in the practical part of an exhortation, that it is any exhorting of unbelievers, I Thes.5:14, much less of unbelievers to come to Christ; nor yet of saints to spiritual duties, but of saints to moral duties.

"Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more." I Thes.4:1. 1. It's most clear, that this exhortation is not to unbelievers, but to believers. 2. Therefore not an exhortation to sinners, as sinners, to come to Christ, but to saints to walk with Christ, and please him in the external walk and conduct of their lives. 3. For it appears that the matter of this walk exhorted to is practical sanctification in abstaining from fornication and uncleanness, I Pet.1:14-15, and so externally differencing the professor from the profane, and the Christian from the Gentiles that knew not God, verse 5, and further, that the matter of this walk exhorted to, is practical sanctification, Matt.7:12, in all acts of moral justice to one another. "That no man go beyond and defraud his brother in any matter; because that the Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forewarned you and testified." This practical sanctification differs from morality, because the Spirit of God in believers does strengthen and enable them inwardly to incline and set upon external acts of morality, I Thes.5:22-23, which he who has not the Spirit of God cannot be inclined to; and so his may be morality, while it is no practical sanctification; and what is all this morality now and practical sanctification in outward acts to spirituality of acts between Christ and the soul? We see it's an exhortation to the former, not to the latter. We are

led into the former by preaching of power, not by preaching of practical exhortation to spiritual duties. It's under instruction not under exhortation, as men take it.

Fifthly: The Scriptures abound with practical exhortations to a visible church-walk, in church-order in the Government of Christ, as persons are built upon the Grace of God.

"Who, {Barnabas,} when he came, and had seen the grace of God, {That is, that they were a converted people, and that the power of Christ by the Holy Ghost was lodged among them} was glad, and exhorted them all, {for now they were believers into Jesus Christ, he exhorted them to embrace and set up church-order,} that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." Acts 11:23. Cleave unto him as the wife cleaves unto her husband by the marriage-covenant between them. Mal.2:14. For by the church-covenant in receiving Christ as Lord, the purpose of their heart would be made known. He exhorts them therefore that they would consent to be espoused in a church-way unto the Lord, II Cor.11:2, who had loved them, and washed them from their sins in his own blood. Rev.1:5. All this is still fit matter for a practical exhortation of the saints, Col.2:6, but what is it to justify the common exhortations that are made to unbelievers?

To consider the practical exhortations of the Word in reference to a church walk, they will appear to be both in the hands of the Ministers of Christ, and in the hands of the saints distinctly. These exhortations are put by our Lord Christ into the minister's hand under a double kind. As they signify a dispensing of the Word by virtue of their office in the Church of Christ. So I Pet.5:1-2, "the elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed; feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, &c." This was a practical exhortation to practical divinity, as it lay in outward acts. Acts 20:31. To feed the flock of God by doctrine and wholesome preaching, and distributing their portion of meat {in the doctrine of Christ} in due season, Lk.12:42, is what appertains to duty and open performance in the Ministry. This is proper matter of a practical exhortation, Tit.2:1-2, but here is no exhorting

the unbeliever, nor the sinner, as a sinner, to come to Christ.

"Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, {speak comfortably to them, tell them your own experiences, or your own account, your own succours, your own burdens, your own temptations, your own supplies from the promises of God, and hereby you'll instrumentally,} support the weak, {and you must,} be patient toward all men." I Thes.5:14. For some will speak so long, Eccles.5:2, so impertinently, so unseasonably, that it will nearly try your patience.

"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." II Tim.4:2. Put up all affronts and contempt which will injuriously be cast upon thee, even by many proud professors for exhorting them to their duty. Bear it becomingly with all long-suffering, and continue still to exhort. Neglect not thine own duty, though thou seest some who ought to be subject, spurn, Jer.44:16, more and more at theirs. No, but instruct them more and more, II Tim.2:25, in the reason and ground of the exhortation. Exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. We plainly see that this is not an exhortation of sinners, as sinners, Eph.5:8, to come to Christ; but is an exhortation of the froward, tetchy believer to be subject to Christ, II Cor.6:14, and to practice certain duties, which {it may be} through sin dwelling in him, he is averse or backward to.

"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers." Tit.1:9. This is spoken of the scripture-bishop, I Pet.5:2, Acts 20:28, Zech.11:17, or the by-sheep {for he had need to be by the sheep, not a non-resident, neither to see nor oversee the flock met in one place} the overseer, as he is called. Acts 20:28. This same officer in the house of God, the pastor in the Church of Christ, Jer.3:15, must feed the flock of God; and when it comes to a practical exhortation, it must be in sound doctrine, Tit.2:1,8, upon external and capable practicals, let a man be in what frame he will, and not in rotten Arminianism.

"Confirming the souls of the disciples, and

exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." Acts 14:22. When souls are confirmed in the Gospel under Christ's ministers, they are fit matter to be exhorted by them to persevere in the Gospel. So that it was an exhortation of believers, not of unbelievers; and believers were exhorted here by Paul and Barnabas, to walk and continue in Christ, Jn.15:4, notwithstanding the hard things, I Pet.4:13, Christians suffered of the world for his Name's sake; and so were not exhorted to come to Him. It was confirming work, not converting work that issued in the Exhortation. They were exhorted, notwithstanding outward trials, to walk constantly {as they had opportunity} in all visible acts; the exhortation was not made unto vital acts, as the exercises of spiritual faith and coming to Christ are. Vital acts are performed through an Operation of the Holy Ghost; visible acts are performed {and ought to be} by our own profession; and so are fit matter for a practical exhortation.

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, {or the faith of the Gospel as perverted by the universalists,} it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you {about a particular in the latitude of that contended universal} that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3. And that's a particular Gospel of Salvation to the people of God sanctified in Christ Jesus, Jude 1, however men may drown themselves in all voluptuousness and licentiousness, verse 4, under their dream of the Common Salvation, that in the issue all men will be saved. In the common salvation, or the common faith, Tit.1:4, contend you for the particular faith which was once delivered to the saints. The exhortation here of the Apostle was still to saints sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus and called. It was made to saints to contend for Christ, not to sinners to come to Christ. {"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ; that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel." Phil.1:27.} How many professors then have we in this lukewarm and

degenerate age, who need to be exhorted to Controversy! I exhort men therefore fearing God, with whom I have to do for God in Christ, to contend, and not to give up Christ's cause. Hence a minister is to speak and exhort and rebuke with all authority. No man must despise him. Tit.2:15. {"He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me." Lk.10:16.}

As these Practical Exhortations in the minister's hand signify an exhorting of brethren to an act of service, in taking on them the labour of a journey, III Jn.6, unto a Church of Christ, for the supply of other saints, {which also with such like belong unto church-order,} so it's plain concerning the exhortation in what appears.

"Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren, that they would go before unto you, and make up beforehand your bounty, {literally to distribute,} whereof ye had notice before, that the same might be ready, as a matter of bounty, and not as of covetousness," II Cor.9:5, {sinfully to hoard up and spend all upon your selves, grudging to part with any of your money, Rom.12:13, in Christ's service and interest.}

"But thanks be to God, which put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you." II Cor.8:16. 1. God is to be thanked for every instrument of service, above our thanks to the instrument himself. 2. All genuine Gospel usefulness in a person is put into that person by the Spirit of God in Christ. {"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil.2:13.} 3. Earnest care for the churches, and for the interest of Christ in them, or care about the wants of any of the saints in fellowship of the Gospel is put into their hearts and thoughts by God. II Cor.3:5. So it was here into the heart and thoughts of Titus. The next words in the holy text that follow, are, "for indeed he accepted the exhortation," verse 17, {it is not accepted the offer, as saith the Holy Ghost,} "but being more forward of his own accord he went unto you." The practical exhortation was to a practical part within its own practicable bounds. It was not an exhortation of sinners, as sinners, to come to Christ; that was not practicable. The apostles never made their impracticable use and application.

Furthermore, there are practical exhortations put by our Lord Christ into the saint's hands, and that also of one kind and another. Exhortation's to acts of visible perseverance in the Doctrine and Worship of the Gospel, and to a remembrance of God's dealings with us in former times, Heb.10:32, 12:5, and the like.

"But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Heb.3:13. One doubted upon the points of the Gospel, and another staggered at the ordinances of the Gospel; and they talked of these matters one to another to harden one another in sin, and then concluded they were right, because they were not alone, but other brethren too were found in the same opinion. Acts 5:9. Thus the deceitfulness of sin hoodwinked many of them, and plausibly led them away, even as many as were warping again from Christ to Moses, Jn.6:66, just as some professors now run back from Orthodoxy to Arminianism and Conformity. II Tim.4:3. Now says he, talk together, converse one with another to do one another good, and not to do mischief and to draw one another into sin. Exhort one another to hold on in the Doctrine and Worship of Christ, while it is called, today. {"Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another; and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name." Mal.3:16.} Speak to the strengthening one of another, Isa.35:3, while it is the day of Christ's Power and Presence among you in the Doctrines and Ordinances, which some of you doubt and debate, Matt.28:17, though you see they are made so strengthening and effectual from the Lord to convert and build up others. Talk one to another of what is done by Christ among you in the assemblies, that you may be more warmed, strengthened and encouraged in the Lord's ways.

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." Heb.10:25. You see {says he} not only in the day, how Jerusalem's Desolation hastens, albeit the Jews everywhere have a longing desire to be found there,

Jer.22:27, but in the same Gospel-Day you see how the truths of Christ get ground; the light of the day, in this Apostolic Morning thereof, increases, which makes things more plainly appear, both for the believing Gentile and against the unbelieving Jew, in the rise of the Gospel and the ruin of the Temple. Matt.24:1-2. Exhort one another, as you see the day more and more approach, and come on into the higher parts of it out of your late Jewish midnight; even whilst your ancestors with their soul had desired him in the night, Isa.26:9; viz., him whom our souls love who are faithful, and whom we behold in our evening of the same Gospel-Day. Zech.14:6-7. Now let not us, says he, as some have done among us, forsake the assembling of ourselves together, but let us who are believers, rather exhort one another by gospel-motives, and holy, spiritual arguments, Eph.5:2, Phil.2:1-2, to hold on in the Doctrine and Worship of the Gospel, even whilst others are run back to their Judaism and Temple worship. Peter also wrote to them about the same thing, as we see in the next scripture.

“By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand.” I Pet.5:12. Men in all ages of the Gospel have had a counterfeit grace of God, which is not the true Grace of God. Now in opposition hereunto, it’s the true Grace of God the Apostle asserts, Jn.21:24, wherein the faithful stand. True Grace is Effectual Grace, and this does not force men {as the Arminian calumny all along has been} but favours men. Proofs and Testimony of the Gospel-Truth of the cause we exhort to persevere in, must strengthen the exhortation, and come along therewith, as the authentic exhortation-pass, without which it would {as our common exhortations do} want letters of credence from Jesus Christ to authorize it. Matt.21:23.

Exhortations made unto the Disciples of another fellowship elsewhere, to receive and entertain a Minister upon recommendation; so the disciples of Achaia were exhorted by the brethren at Ephesus to receive Apollos the Jew, he being intrusted in the way of the Lord. Acts 18:25. “And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive

him; who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace." Acts 18:27. This also was a practical exhortation to duty within its own practicable bounds in a church-walk. Thus we plainly see by the pattern in all scripture-exhortations unto practice, that they are made only in matters of religion to believers; and not to sinners, as sinners, to come to Christ. Therefore if Exhortations be made to them, it can be but to a practical attendance upon means, outward reformation of manners, and things of that nature, till the Holy Ghost breaks in. But now men in their exhortations to practice, exhort to impracticables, and so quite out-do the scripture-module, II Tim.1:13, and exhort sinners, as sinners, to do that which belongs to the very passive Work of Grace, contrary to all Divine Revelation.

Take a short list of exhortation copies, which have woefully deviated from the true original, Eph.5:13-15, almost throughout divinity. I may call them Arminian expectations in anti-Arminian writers.

First: "Let us establish our hearts in the belief of God's Being."

Answer: Where is such a sort of exhortation to be found in God's Word? "Let them measure the pattern." Ezek.43:10. How boldly doth this rob the Spirit upon a highway of formality and common profession, Isa.35:8, and trodden by universal practice! And how openly, even by men who have professed to travel the highway to heaven, though distinct from a way, the narrow way, Matt.7:14, Christ, who is the only way of holiness! It's the God of all Grace who hath called us into his eternal glory by Christ Jesus that does establish, strengthen, and settle us. I Pet.5:10. A man should not be so much as named in point of establishment, where it's God through Christ establishes by the Holy Ghost.

Second: "The price of Redemption is already paid; let us but take Christ for our Saviour and our Lord, and live a life of dependence and holiness for a few days, and we are as safe as if we were in glory."

Answer: The Scripture does evermore honour the Spirit in such high points as these, but here's an exhortation to the whole practice of the new creature, and not one word of the Holy Ghost in it. Dan.5:23. How

independent does this make man in the free will-power of application! How intimately does this favour Arminianism! What Arminian in the world but would subscribe to this exhortation? And yet it lies in the heart of the points they controvert, viz., about Conversion and Effectual Grace. Paul says that he was apprehended of Christ, Phil.3:12, but here's nothing like apprehending by Christ owned, to take Christ for Saviour and Lord. Paul owned the Gift of faith for a life of faith; but here's a life of faith pressed and none of the Gift of faith declared in glad tidings. Paul acknowledges the Gentiles were sanctified by the Holy Ghost, Rom.15:16, but here in the common exhortation a life of holiness is talked of, and no such Sanctification is shown.

Third: "Renounce thy covenants with sin, Satan and creatures, or else thou wilt never be admitted into covenant with God."

Answer: What a bold and ignorant stroke is this against the whole Gospel! It tends to set up another gospel upon the basis of man, Gal.1:6, which is not another, as the Apostle says; for there can be no other gospel than what is built upon Free Grace, and is contrary to the foregoing exhortation, "but there be some that trouble you, verse 7, and would pervert the gospel of Christ!" My whole 13th chapter in the last book, and likewise the latter part of the 14th, is a full confutation of the error and absurdity of this exhortation in the practical part of it, as the 6th chapter and the 27th chapter are a direct confutation of the doctoral part thereof.

Fourth: "Let our loss by the first Adam be an incentive to us, to pursue advantage in the second Adam."

Answer: It requires a great deal of the conviction of the Spirit, Jn.16:8, about sin to know our loss feelingly by the first Adam. It needs a great deal more of the Conviction of the Spirit about righteousness, verse 10, and the virtue of it in Christ's blood, to give a sinner a discerning of the advantage he hath in the Second Adam, I Jn.5:20, especially now while it is so much struck at by men who are resolved to oppose it. And lastly, how can anything be an incentive to a man to kindle grace in his soul, where the Holy Ghost the kindler of it is shut out?

Jn.16:13. Can any man show me an exhortation anywhere in the word, Exod.25:40, that's like this Council to the unbeliever laid down? Or, can he direct me where to find any such exhortation to a believer either?

Fifth: "Let us see the nature of sin."

Answer: A right view of the nature of sin is a supernatural mystery. Rev.3:17. And then instead of this exhortation, why was it not an instruction into the duty of magnifying the work of the Spirit in his discovering of sin to us?

Sixth: "Let the consideration that Original Sin is in us wean us from the world, and the immoderate desire of living in it."

Answer: Alas! Instead of this exhortation, the minister should faithfully have shown, that the being of Original Sin in us, without the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in us too, I Cor.3:16, would be far stronger to make us in love with the world, than the consideration that Original Sin is in us, can be, to wean us from it, Rom.7:23-24, and the immoderate desire of living in it. Where is there any ground in exhortation in the Word, for such a foolish exhortation as this? Who would think the man that gave this Council ever felt the sad influences of Original Sin in his own soul?

Seventh: "A use of exhortation to carnal and unregenerate persons. 1. Stir up shame, and sorrow, and fear, and indignation against your selves. 2. Lie down meekly at the Lord's feet. 3. Embrace the Lord Jesus in the force of all his blessed offices, and then go fly to, and lift up thy face without spot before the Father in him."

Answer. Can any man by the light of this divinity {left us in the world} tell me what Office the Comforter was sent upon? For my own part, when I preached after this rate, I could not have told him what I did use to preach thus. Why? Because I forgot the Spirit. All this exhortation should have been instruction into Jehovah the Mediator's work, Isa.48:17, and into Jehovah the Spirit's work, from Jehovah the Father; and then Jehovah the Father had been exalted too in the salvation of the elect; while the elect sinner had been brought to it under that preaching; but no elect sinner surely is brought to Christ, Acts 11:21, under such kind of exhortations as have

nothing of their very exhortation-being in Scripture, Mal.2:8, but they are without doubt reserved to be brought to Christ by the fit means.

Eight: "Use of a man's impotency to help himself to the unconverted. 1. Be sensible of your condition. 2. Mourn over it to God. 3. Acknowledge the debt. 4. Confess your impotency. 5. Beg pardon and grace. 6. In a humble sense of your misery endeavour earnestly to come out of it."

Answer: How few of these exhortations will you meet with in the Scripture! 1. That we shall find that the Lord works sensibleness upon sinners, Eph.1:11, I Thes.2:13, instead of bidding them be sensible. 2. The Scripture exalts Christ in a sinner's mourning and repentance, Acts 5:31, Zech.12:10, and not merely presses the sinner's act. 3. In the Scriptures the Spirit convinces of the debt, and the Gospel does not exhort to an acknowledgment of the debt. 4. Men need much of the Spirit to believe their impotence. 5. The Gospel of an Exalted Jesus reveals forgiveness to the elect, exhorts not to ask it, except a Simon Magus to whom it was uncertain, Acts 8:21, and to lay a foundation of outer-court-service from mere Gentilism, to cover the in-works in Gospel Salvation. 6. The Gospel speaks of a translation out of darkness, Col.1:13, and that men are passively brought out of it. There is no exhortation given them to endeavour to come out of it. The nature of it lies above all creature endeavours. {"And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live." Ezek.16:6.}

Ninth: "Sinners, offer up your selves to Christ in the gospel-covenant."

Answer: Alas! That is far more than sinners can do. More than preachers can do. More than any exhortations in the Scripture speaks of. {"Will ye speak wickedly for God; and talk deceitfully for him?" Job 13:7.}

Tenth: "Exhortation to them that are not effectually called. 1. Do not resist the Holy Ghost. 2. Today if you will hear his voice, harden not your hearts. If he now knock, and you will not open, you may knock at the door, and he will not open."

Answer: This disorderly use of the Holy Scripture in measuring the sense by the sound of it, is so great a piece of contradiction, as nothing can be greater. How can the people not effectually called open in the free will sense, or open as they mean it of opening the heart to Christ? How can they hear spiritually who are spiritually deaf and uncircumcised, and cannot hearken? {"To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear; behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken; behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it." Jer.6:10.} If any man say, it's his duty, I say so too; but this does not cure him. Exhortation to such an act as this will never help him, it's no fit or appointed means. Again, how can they but resist the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the Word, Acts 7:51, who are not effectually called under an Operation of the Spirit by the Word? If any desire a large answer to the second and third cases, he may see it in the 30th chapter of my last book. As to those words of Scripture, Hebrews 3:15, they are very contradictorily applied to Effectual Calling. For if it had been meant of Effectual Calling, which is not the design of the Epistle to the Hebrews to insist on, the Apostle had made a plain distinction, as he does elsewhere, between exhorting unto duty, and instructing into Grace. Jer.31:19. This was a plain exhorting to duty among professors, visible saints and the visibly called ones; so could not be an exhortation to Effectual Calling, which is an Invisible Grace. It was most certainly meant by the Apostle as an exhortation unto visible acts, Heb.10:23, of profession which they began to falter in, and not unto invisible acts of believing on the Lord Jesus Christ in Effectual Calling. In a word, it was, that they would keep Judaism and Christianity asunder, and not think to try experiments, and make a medley and compounding the old Law and the new Gospel. For they were men of the very same spirit with men among ourselves. {"Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." Acts 20:30.} And were the Apostle now alive, men would find it so. The Apostle would not spare them.

Eleventh: "Exhortation to sinners not united to

Christ. Be persuaded to give your eyes no sleep, your eyelids no slumber, till you are ready and closely united to Christ Jesus. 1. The sentence is passed against thee, in the next scene expect the executioner. 2. A deluge of wrath is pouring down in full streams upon thee, and thou art as yet shut out of the ark. 3. A shower of brimstone is falling on thee, and thou hast no Zoar to fly unto."

Answer: Sure this divine mistook the title of his Master. Instead of a use of exhortation, he should have called it a use of condemnation; for there is more in it to affright, amaze, keep back and drive away sinners from Christ, than to unite them at this rate! No wonder these men say there is no difference any way between the elect, Rom.8:29-30; no, not mystically and representatively in Christ, and the non-elect, before Conversion. For its plain they make none. Now in the face of this untruth I exhort men of this persuasion to answer fully and closely the 27th chapter of my last book, according to the textual grounds, Num.16:28, limitations, state, and distinctions of the matter; and not wander from the point, Mal.2:8; especially in the way of some, in a proud declension from the labour, who have said it is not worth answering; for I say it is worth their answering to whom the doctrine is accounted a damning error; and they ought not to content themselves to make a little noise about it in their own private congregations. For if it be worth the one, all wise men must account it to be worth the other. If it be worth their while to make a little noise about it in a corner, Mk.4:22, it would be far more worth the while, to see them do the brave piece of service in an answer for the good of souls openly. And what's an answer? Why to throw fairly upon the author all the Scriptures, Arguments, and Distinctions used upon the point by him. That's answering him. Nothing else can be called an answer. No, not the pert squibs and little ignorant bounces, II Sam.16:6, in two or three pages of an octavo epistle, fitted out to do execution upon my fourth chapter of THE GLORY OF CHRIST UNVEILED.

Twelfth: "Exhortation to the unconverted in the business of Justification. 1. We are ambassadors of Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God. 2. Why will you

not come unto me, says Christ, that ye might have life? 3. What thou dost, do it heartily as unto the Lord, as for thy Life. 4. Wrestle with him for Faith and Justification. 5. Let him not go till he has blessed thee with blessings in Christ Jesus."

Answer: It has been shown in this small piece to an eviction of the truth, how the first and second points have been mistaken. 3. The exhortation which the Holy Ghost makes to the converted, ought not to be confounded with an exhortation to the unconverted. 4. What difference is acknowledged between converted Jacob who wrestled with God {though never for Faith and Justification} and unconverted men who want the regeneration-life of prayer? Surely it's great blindness to put dead men to wrestle. 5. How can an unconverted man, who cannot take hold of Christ, be said not to let him go? 6. All blessings are bestowed in Christ Jesus before the world began, as well as they are again bestowed through him at Effectual Calling. Eph.2:7, Acts 10:43, Jn.20:31. Otherwise it is not blessing the elect in Christ, according as God hath chosen them in Him, for his choice made in Christ was made before the world began, the text says. All blessings were so originally bestowed in Christ. So was the Father's justifying us in Christ, the Father's sanctifying us in Christ distinctly, before the world began. But men will not learn of the Spirit of Christ to distinguish between the Father's sanctifying in Christ Jesus, Jude 1, and the Spirit's sanctifying through Christ Jesus. Nor indeed can these things be understood, nor sanctified unto any man that meddles with them, to discourse or write of them with any holy savour, till the Holy Ghost has taught him {apart from leaning upon the staff of his authors} humbly to submit to his own Revelation of the truth of the Gospel, as it is distinguished to be in Christ Jesus first, by him next, and through Christ Jesus last of all, in the Spirit's own applicatory work to the called of God.

Thirteenth: "Exhortation to strangers about adoption. 1. Art thou an alien, never rest till thou get into a state of sonship. 2. Be convinced of thy hellish filiation, that thou art indeed of the family of Hell. 3. Make good thy effectual calling, thy justification, and reconciliation."

Answer: Is not here another very unscriptural exhortation? Can any Arminian give grosser direction in the matters laid down than the aforesaid anti-Arminian? Rom.2:17-21. What conceptions have men of a spiritual sonship, in maintaining that an alien may never rest till he gets into it? Who is there can be convinced he is of hellish sonship {for conviction is a work of the Spirit} whom the Holy Spirit ever called effectually? And he calls none so, except the seed of Christ, Jn.11:52, Isa.53:10, Psa.18:50, the secret adopted ones of the Father, before a vital call. The elect, perhaps to a man of them, may at one time or another have been afraid that they belong to hell, but who of them ever was convinced of it? This is not practicable. Again, how can an unconverted man make good his Effectual Calling, his Justification and Reconciliation? See my 34th chapter in the former book.

Fourteenth: "Exhortation to sinners to get saving faith. 1. Labour after this faith. 2. Take heed of this gross self-murder, unbelief." Fifteenth: "Exhortation to gain repentance. 1. Study the Nature of God. 2. Be serious in self-examination, 3. Sit loose to the world. 4. See the limitation of the Day of Grace. 5. Expect judgment. 6. Soak the heart in the blood of Jesus."

Answer: Did the Apostles ever take such a method, or ever use such matter as this, in their exhorting of men, when they treated of Faith and Repentance through Grace, II Cor.7:10, by which they are saved? When we say saving faith therefore, it is saving faith, according to the mind of the Holy Ghost, as faith is a saving means, not as it is a saving cause. For the elect of God under the preaching of the Word are saved by a work of the Holy Ghost, from the Father and Christ by this means. How distinctly have they managed exhortations! How confusedly have ours done it! When the Apostles in their Exhortations said believe, repent and be converted unto their hearers, Acts 3:19, it was because they saw the Spirit poured out in those times for spiritual abilities, and so their exhortations in the second and third chapters of the Acts are evangelically founded. Whereas since, men have departed from the doctrine and use of the Spirit, and although they have departed from the Faith, the Spirit {which is plain} is neither poured out

upon preachers, nor upon hearers, I Tim.4:1; and men will confess this, and say they speak to the unconverted; yet they will exhort them to the faith of saving, and to a gospel-repentance, quite beside all apostolical rule or example; while the very exhorters own that the auditors exhorted, Matt.16:11, are without the renewing Spirit of Christ. They {unconverted sinners} can bodily labour after something of Christ, it is true, as Christ exhorted natural men to labour bodily after the meat that endureth to everlasting life, John 6:27, and to take as much pains with their bodies to go up and down after Christ, till they got more knowledge of him, &c., as well as go up and down thus with their bodies after the loaves, or the bread that perisheth. But Christ exhorted not those natural men to labour spiritually, evangelically, supernaturally {for the meat that endureth to life everlasting} as our modern exhorters have mistaken it; and then by exhorting thus in a natural Arminianism, Lk.12:1, they have brought down upon us a dreadful instance of man's apostasy from God, Rom.3:23, Eccl.7:29, beyond what men see without the teachings of Jehovah the Spirit. For it is he that teacheth us in these things to profit, Isa.48:17, and then we shall know the difference between Scriptures which speak of bodily acts, and spiritual acts; of visible faith, and invisible; of believing rationally into the report, and believing savingly into the Person of Christ, &c., for God's outer court-people are irrationally foolish, Jer.5:21-22, and his inner court-people do but know in part. I Cor.13:9. Now without such distinctions I see men continue woefully to blunder, while they continue to write, that they think sinners, as such, are to be exhorted to believe in Christ, and to repent of sin, although thus blunderingly and blindly to exhort they think to be their duty. When the Scripture exhorts sinners, as sinners, it's to natural repentance and moral Reformation upon such a motive as this, if it may be a lengthening of their temporal tranquillity. Dan.4:27.

To conclude: The primitive patterns have been so far from correction in any of my writings in the point of exhortations, that the plain drift of those writings have been to abide by the Wisdom of God, I Cor.2:7, and to bring up men who have departed from the Primitive Faith

and Rules, to return, and to act by the Primitive Patterns; which I see without this instruction, and these distinctions aforesaid, are not rationally understood, nor the outward call of the elect of God to come unto means fitly minded or discerned, Matt.22:3-4, Prov.9:4-6; for otherwise it could not be misjudged that I reprehended Christ and his Apostles for their exhortations made in the Word of God; or that I destroyed Gospel-Obedience required of men, because I am altogether for bounding it within its own springs and the principles upon its own Foundation, and can't call that Gospel-Obedience which men exhort to, while the exhorted remain in old Adam, or continue captives to Sin and Satan in a natural un-renewed state, knowing that men at this day do not write upon Gospel-Obedience as the thing is in its own rise and springs; nor when they discourse of Sanctification do they utter knowledge at all clearly. Job 33:3. The mystery of it they are strangers unto, and that seems not to satisfy them of late, unless they are enemies too unto the mystery of it, and strike at things which it's plain they never understood. "For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt." Job 11:12.

Exhortation, if it be right, may come in as a piece of holy needle-work, interwoven with the Mystery of Grace, I Cor.2:7; for so the Apostle's exhortations were, and not an exhortation of the saints themselves to any duty, but as there was an evangelical savour shed abroad upon their spirits and discourses. But now men content themselves with so cold and legal a form of exhortations, and so impertinently carried off from Scripture-modules, that even while they give us the Ten Commandments, they are so afraid of the Gospel in that part of a sermon, as they leave out the very preface to the Ten Commandments, "I am the Lord thy God."

Exhortation therefore, if it be wrong, spoils the serviceableness of a man's labour. And to give any man a true idea of wrong exhortations, I know no portraiture so full of the evidence, as the modern and present use of them presented, and examined by the primitive exhortations in this chapter. And the defence of them has been more ridiculous than men's incogitant use of them.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Of preaching with and without notes, considered.

The Holy Ghost hath better gifts for men in the ministry whom Christ sends, than such have yet received, who can't so much as exhort, much less instruct without their notes. A dry paper hath been found to be a very dead assistance in the work. Sententious, premeditated forms of preaching are a Scripture-less way of preaching. And what signifies a dressed matter upon the cushion, when I find it all out of order, where it should be better dressed upon my heart? What a piece of disorder is it to read a message that is to be spoken, Tit.2:1, 15, I Thes.2:2, Col.4:3, Eph.6:19, &c., and surely, if my heart were big with my message, I need not have recourse every half minute to the line above my thumb, or else run the hazard of being run out and silenced! If a man deliver his message experimentally and not notionally, it must come more from the sanctified treasure of the heart in matter, and less from the paper-help in form. Also, if a man spoke with his understanding more, he should speak from his memory less. If a man's notes were well-written down upon the hidden man of the heart, I Pet.3:4, by the finger of God's Spirit, they would be more covertly laid, than that scandalous and common way of exposing them to every body's view; or than that industrious concealment with hand or handkerchief, which some have studiously erected between the prying eyes of the galleries, and the copy of the sermon. Oh! Trust not thy pen, when you should be telling what is written on your heart. Let me here exhort you. Be not snow-balls in divinity to roll up numerous particulars, and lick up so many prepared sentences upon the sixth and seventh days of the week, lest you dissolve to your own loss, and to nobody's gain, upon the Lord's day. Remember, you'll certainly stumble when you go about to tell us more than you feel that instant. The Lord knows that we have poor small doings among us! Lord! Pour down thy Spirit, that we may all blush and be ashamed to read sermons. Let me freely speak to you, Acts 2:29, 4:29, not let me freely read to

you, says Peter. Let men read the text as Christ did, and it suffices, as to the reading part. Then as to the rest of the labour, close the book, and say unto the people, or speak to them after the manner that Christ did in his own preaching the Gospel. Luke 4:17-21. The greatest part of our reading preachers have done most mischief to applications, and the poor hearers suffer! Oh! That their eyes were opened! Some hearers who sit under the hour-glass or the pulpit watch {for few preachers by the measure of spending themselves know when to give out} have found, that Grace, it may be, has been set up, while the glass has had the far greatest part of its sands to run out, or the watch its greatest number of minutes to come on; but as the dust has declined, and the time elapsed, the grace-part of the sermon has sunk away with the time, till all has been lost and swallowed up in the unreformed management of use and application.

Objection: "Oh! Sir, why do you expose the reading of notes at this rate? 1. All have not the same memory. 2. As we have had the assistance of the Holy Ghost to prepare our notes in our studies so we may lawfully read to the people what has been so prepared of God."

Answer: 1. Preaching the Gospel is from an unction of the understanding to open the Scriptures, and from a touch of God upon the heart, to open them too from what we feel of them. For Scriptures rip us up if we let them take their own way, let men who go by their authors say what they can. Preaching the right Gospel is not from an unction of the memory. He that practices Gospel-Orthodoxy in the pulpit by memory, acts more like a parrot-taught to utter words, than he speaks like a preacher of the Gospel. Promises and Experiences run all to the understanding and the heart, and not to the memory. {"For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard." Acts 4:20.}

2. Preaching the Gospel is expressed in the Word by speaking, and is an unction of the mouth. Eph.6:19, Exod.4:11. It's from the Spirit we have the true liberty, or free speech, Acts 2:29, the boldness, II Cor.7:4, Acts 4:29, 31 and the confidence, Acts 28:31, as the Word is differently translated, and in each of the instances

brought, is accommodated by the Holy Ghost to utterance in our pulpit-speech, Eph.6:19, as it is plain to him who takes his Bible and consults the places. Now we may speak to men in the things of God without notes, if we have an understanding and utterance given us by the Spirit to know what we say, as we may speak to them in the things of men without notes. For instance, if men speak to one another about trade or news, they can speak without notes. And the truth is {to hold to the comparison} I can remember far more of the news from him that tells me the news, than from him that reads the news. If I have newspapers, {for I use similitudes, Hos.12:10,} they are for mine eye not mine ear. So men's notes in the pulpit are more fitted to the eye of other readers, than they are to the ear of our auditors. Reading by notes I have felt experimentally both in reader {inasmuch as 22 years ago I used to read my notes in preaching} and in hearers, to be the most unprofitable way of speaking. How can he that speaks and reads, think that I can profit much by him, unless he acted fairly, threw me down another copy of his notes and let me hear and behold, along with him that sees all penned down before him in the paper? Or as much of it {at least} as he reads unto me? For just lifting off his eye from the cushion towards the middle of a sentence that helps him out in the latter end of it, is not the gift which makes it cease to be reading. Let the preacher, I say, if reading be best, disperse copies of his notes, that we may be all of one piece, as many of us as can be instructed by a view of the manuscript, and let us all look upon it together. 3. As men have had the assistance of the Spirit in their notes, without notes to compose notes; so it's plain they have not the assistance of the Spirit without their notes to deliver his own assistances unto us. Besides, if notes were the scriptural way of preaching, men should surely have a gift of the Spirit to read those notes, but they have no gift of the Spirit to read them. All worship should be carried on by immediate gifts of the Spirit, so far as God hath bestowed immediate gifts upon any; which proves that all should covet earnestly the best gifts. I Cor.12:31. But now in notes and the scandalous indulging the life of them I may say, that that assistance of the Spirit of Christ

which I'll suppose they had before in composing them, is afterwards gone, at least sensibly abated in the worship. Hos.5:6. And may not one reason of it be for want of occupying in their talent by meditation, and trust in the Lord, &c., who alone makes us able ministers of the New Testament, II Cor.3:6, not of the letter {no, not of the letter in a cut of paper, though I am afraid men look too much at the letter, and therefore look so much to their notes} but of the Spirit? And an able minister of the New Testament of the Lord's making by the Spirit, can never be by reading notes; that that kills may be copied on paper, wherein lies not the ability; but that which gives life is the Spirit who needs no paper, and which teaches the man, that he needs none at all neither. Men should occupy their talent by this trust, and not slight it by napkining it in a scroll of paper, and there reading it through a mere distrust indulged. To be sure, if ever these men have had the assistance of the Spirit in composing notes, II Cor.3:5, they have had his assistance to another end than to read them; which may be done without any further measure of the Spirit, and then what are the dry things worth? To me the argument is plain, that if I have had a measure of assistance in private for Lord's day work, it argues a most sinful distrust of my soul, if I do not look for an equal measure of the Spirit, not to say a greater measure of the Spirit in his farther gifts, when I come publicly to use these prepared helps of meditating the Scripture-arguments beforehand. Consequently, a greater measure of the Spirit, nay an equal measure of his help in the pulpit must be to preach without reading; for if by his help I studied them without reading, why not by his help, if I think I am a minister that he sends and owns, do I not deliver them, and why then ought I not to deliver them too, without reading? May it not be said, that after help in our studies, we indulge a simple distrust in the pulpit, and by our tying up ourselves to a set of words, do think we please man by keeping close to the argument, Gal.1:10, while we displease God while running away from His assistance. Has not this distrust of farther gifts of the Spirit for utterance, upon trial of the Spirit's help in our studies for argument, provoke the Lord to leave the ministry so much at this day, even in Orthodox pulpits,

that it's much to our lamentation? Has not flying to notes upon every sentence almost to be uttered, under a colour of refreshing memory, grieved the Spirit, in a deadening both the pulpit and auditory, that we may almost fear he is gone, and suspends his effectual operation? 4. Why should men's souls so generally choose to be for yesterday's cold meat now after so long a time upon Lord's Days in the churches, though fire was under it yesterday; when as their minds are all agreed to put hot meat into their mouths, and to refresh their bodies upon Lord's Days in their families with something that's warm? Well then, that which comes hot from off the altar, warmed by the fire of our Great Sacrifice and brought in immediately from the minister's own heart by the Lord the Spirit, is a soul-provision that certainly makes us thrive best; and not that which comes cold, after it's strained through a man's notes to chill it.

Hearers also may read better sermons at home than any are read in the pulpit at this day. Nevertheless, though they can read better than any are now preached, yet public preaching has more of God's blessing to go along with it than any private reading, Rom.10:17, because it has so solemn and express an institution in the written Word. II Tim.4:2; Rev.2:29; Acts 15:7, &c.

Most gracious Lord, pour forth thy Spirit. Lord Jesus, come quickly, that the human way of applications may wear off and vanish, and the dust of the prophet's feet, who do not live for ever, Zech.1:5, may be all thrown out of doors! Then shall the sanctuary be cleansed. Dan.8:14.

THE END.