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*A Caveat against Unsound Doctrines:*



Being the SUBSTANCE of a

# S E R M O N

Preached in the

## PARISH CHURCH

OF

### St. ANN, BLACKFRYARS;

On SUNDAY, APRIL 29, 1770.

By AUGUSTUS TOPLADY, A. B.

Vicar of BROAD HEMBURY, DEVON.

Seeing, then, that we have such Hope, we use  
great Plainness of Speech. 2 Cor. iii. 12.

L O N D O N :

Printed for JOSEPH GURNEY, No. 54, in Holborn,  
opposite Hatton-Garden.

M. DCC. LXX.

[ Price Nine Pence. ]

13.

## A D V E R T I S E M E N T .

*THE* ensuing Discourse was, first, preach'd at St. Matthew, Bethnal-Green, April 22. Some Persons, then present, to whose Judgment and Request I pay the highest Deference, desired me to retrieve as much of it as I could, the Sunday following, at St. Ann's; with a View to its being taken in Short-Hand, and publish'd.

The Loss of my nearest Relative, soon after this Sermon was preach'd; and the many Avocations, occasion'd by that lamented and unexpected Event; account, but too well, for the Delay, with which the Publication has been attended. Having, however, transcribed it, at last, from the Notes of the Person who penn'd it at the Time of its Deliv'ry; I now transmit it to the Press, most affectionately and respectfully Inscrib'd to my Dear London Friends: whose Favors, equally great, numerous, and unmerited, I have no other public Way of Acknowledging.

LONDON,  
July 3, 1770.

## I. TIMOTHY i. 10.

— *And if there be any other Thing that is contrary to sound Doctrine.*

**S**T. Paul is commonly, and most probably, supposed to have written this Epistle about A. D. 65. that is, about *two* Years before his own Martyrdom, and about *thirty-one* after our LORD's Ascension.— He addressed it to *Timothy*: who, though a very <sup>a</sup> young Man, had been some Time in the Ministry, and was then entrusted with the Oversight of the Church at *Ephesus*. In the Estimation of unprejudiced Reason, *Honorable Age is not that which standeth in Length of Time, nor that is measured by Number of Years: but Wisdom is the grey Hair unto Men, and an unspotted Life is old Age* <sup>b</sup>.

But *Timothy*, though young, was far from Robust. He was only *strong* in the *Grace that is in Christ Jesus*. His regenerate, heaven-born Soul dwelt in a sickly, infirm Body. Whence we read of his *various ailments*, 1 Tim. v. 23. or frequent *Indispositions*: arising, perhaps, originally, from a natural Delicacy of Constitution; and, certainly, increased by a rigid Abstemiousness, and constant Course of mini-

A 2

mini-

<sup>a</sup> 1 Tim. iv. 12.

<sup>b</sup> *Wisd.* iv. 8, 9.

ministerial Labors.— Thus our heavenly Father, graciously severe, and wisely kind, takes Care to infuse some salutary Bitter into his Children's Cup, below: since, were they, Here, to taste of Happiness, absolute and unmingled; were not the Gales of Prosperity, whether spiritual or temporal, counterpoised, more or less, by the needful Ballast of Affliction; His People (always imperfect here) would be enrich'd to their Loss; and liable to be overset, in their Way to the Kingdom of God. Wherefore, *consummate Felicity*, without any Mixture of Wormwood, is reserved for our Enjoyment, in a State, where *perfect Sanctification* will qualify us to possess it. In Heaven, and there only, *the Inhabitant shall, no more, say, in any Sense whatever, I am sick* <sup>c</sup>.

St. Paul, in the Opening of his Apostolic Directions to *Timothy*, adopts the same simple, majestic, and evangelical Exordium, with which the rest of his Epistles usually begin. *Paul, an Apostle of Jesus Christ*; ordain'd and sent forth, by the Head of the Church, the supreme Master of the spiritual Vineyard: without whose internal, authoritative Commission, none have a real Right to minister in sacred Things, or to thrust the Sickle into God's Harvest. For, *How can Men preach to Purpose, so as to be Instruments of Conviction, Comfort and Sanctification, except they be sent* <sup>d</sup> of God, and owned of Him? whence the Apostle adds,

<sup>c</sup> *Isai. xxxiii. 24.*

<sup>d</sup> *Rom. x. 15.*

adds, *By the Commandment ° of God our Savior, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our Hope.* As an *English Nobleman*, who travels to some foreign Court, cannot reasonably expect to be received as the Representative of his Sovereign here, unless charged with an actual Delegation, and able to produce the Credentials of his Mission; no more is any Individual authorized to *arrogate to himself the Honor* of a Divine Embassy, *but he that is called of God, as was Aaron* †. A sufficient Degree of Gospel Light and Knowledge; an ardent Love of Souls, and a disinterested Concern for Truth; a competent Measure of ministerial Gifts and Abilities; and, above all, a Portion of Divine Grace and Experience; a saving Change of Heart, and a Life devoted to the Glory of God; are essential Prerequisites to an Evangelical Discharge of the sacred Function.

The 1st Verse may be read thus: *Paul, an Apostle of JESUS CHRIST, according to the express, or authoritative Designation of JESUS CHRIST our GOD, SAVIOR, and LORD* ‡. So the Passage may be rendered; and so, perhaps, it ought to be understood, in its natural and most obvious Construction. Now, even supposing that the Apostle had not the Divinity of CHRIST immediately in View, at the Time of his writing these Words; yet, you must either give up his Inspiration, or believe that CHRIST is, with the Father and the Spirit,  
 GOD

° Κατ' ἐπιταγήν, according to the positive Injunction, or express Designation. † Heb. v. 4. ‡ Κατ' ἐπιταγήν Θεοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν καὶ Κυρίου Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ.

**God over all, blessed for ever**: since, on a Subject of such unspeakable Consequence, it would have argued a Degree of Negligence, little short of criminal, had the Apostle express'd himself in Terms palpably liable to Misapprehension. I therefore conclude, that, both as a Scholar, and as a Christian; as *Gamaliel's* Pupil, and as an inspir'd Apostle; our sacred Penman would have deliver'd himself in a far more guarded style, had not the Son of GOD, been indeed GOD the Son. Either Jesus is the God, *Savior and Lord* of his People; or *St. Paul* was guilty of such inexcuseable Inaccuracy, as every Writer, of common Sense and common Honesty, would be sure to avoid.

He goes on to style the blessed JESUS, *our Hope*. Ask almost any Man, "Whether he hopes to be *saved* eternally?" He'll answer in the Affirmative. But enquire again, "On *what Foundation* he rests *his Hope*?" Here, too many are sadly divided. The *Pelagian* hopes to get to Heaven by a moral Life, and a good Use of his natural Powers. The *Arminian*, by a Jumble of Grace and Free-will, human Works and the Merits of CHRIST. The *Deist*, by an interested Observance of the social Virtues. Thus, Merit-mongers, of every Denomination, agree in making any Thing the Basis of their Hope, rather than that Foundation, which GOD's own Hand hath laid in *Zion*. But what saith Scripture? It avers, again and again, that JESUS alone *is our Hope*: to the exclusion of all others, and to the utter annihilation of human Deservings.

Beware,

Beware, therefore, of resting your Dependence, partly, on CHRIST; and, partly, on some other Basis. As surely as you bottom your Reliance partly on the Rock, and partly on the Sand; so certainly, unless GOD give you intermediate Repentance to your Acknowledgment of the Truth; will your supposed House of Defence fall and bury you in its Ruins, no less than if you had raised it on the Sand alone. CHRIST is *the Hope of Glory*. Faith in his Righteousness, received and embraced as our sole justifying Obedience before GOD; and the Love of CHRIST (an inseparable Effect of that Faith), operating on our Hearts, and shining in our Lives; are the most solid Evidences, we can have below, of our Acceptance with the Father; and of our being sav'd in JESUS with an everlasting Salvation.

*Unto Timothy, my own Son in the Faith; Grace, Mercy, and Peace, from GOD our Father, and from the LORD JESUS CHRIST.* Some have thought, that *Timothy* was not converted under the Ministry of *St. Paul*: and they ground their Conjecture on *Acts xvi. 1, 2.* where *Timothy* is mention'd as a *Disciple*, and a Person well reported of by the Christians at *Derbe* and *Lystra*, previous to *St. Paul's* Visitation of those Places. That *Timothy* was a nominal *Professor* of Religion, and a Youth of circumspect Behavior, are evident from that Passage: which external Form of Godliness was, probably, the Effect of the religious<sup>h</sup> Education he

<sup>s</sup> *Colossians i. 27.*

<sup>h</sup> *II Timothy iii. 15.*



he had the Happiness to receive from his earliest Childhood. But, from St. *Paul's* Compellation of him as *his own Son in the Faith*; it may, I think, be reasonably inferred, that the young Disciple was led, from the outer Court of mere External Profession, into the Sanctuary of heavenly and spiritual Experience, either by the private Labors, or under the public Ministry, of this Apostle. And none but those Ministers, whose Endeavors have been blest to the Conversion of Souls; and those Persons, who have been born of God, by their Instrumentality; can form any Idea of that spiritual Relation and unspeakably tender Attachment, which subsist between spiritual Fathers and *the Children of Grace whom God hath given them.*

*Timothy* had been a true Believer, some considerable Time before St. *Paul* wrote this Epistle. Consequently, by the *Grace, Mercy, and Peace*, which, he pray'd, might be the Portion of his beloved Convert; we are to understand, not the first Vouchsafement, but a large *Increase*, of those spiritual Blessings and Comforts: that he might have *repeated Discoveries*, and *continued Manifestations*, of the Father's electing *Grace*; of CHRIST'S Redeeming *Mercy*; and experience that sweet *Peace* and Joy in believing, which are Fruits of the Holy Spirit's Influence, and flow from Fellowship with Him. Privileges, these, which unawaken'd Men will always ridicule; but to which, every real Christian will ardently aspire.

Time

Time would fail me, should I attempt to consider all the intervenient Verses. I find myself at a Loss, not what to say, but what to leave unsaid. However, I shall observe, as briefly as I can, that one grand Reason of St. *Paul's* writing this Epistle, was, to put *Timothy* on his Guard against the Dissemination of corrupt Doctrines, and the insidious Arts of corrupt Teachers, with which the Church of *Ephesus*, where *Timothy* was now station'd, seems to have been particularly infested. Unregenerate Ministers are much the same, in all Ages, and in every Country: An unconverted Preacher in *England*, and an unconverted Preacher in *Italy*; so far as Matters merely spiritual are concern'd, stand nearly on a level. These, all, are, what the *Ephesian* Schismatics were desirous to be, *Teachers of the Law*, or legal Teachers. And all unconverted People, whether their Denomination be *Protestant* or *Popish*, desire to be *Hearers of the Law*, and are displeas'd when they hear any Thing else. We are, naturally, fond of that very Law, which, unless the Righteousness of CHRIST is ours, is the *Ministration of Death*, pronounces us *accursed*, and binds us over to everlasting Ruin. The pernicious Error, against which *Timothy* was directed to guard his Flock, was, a *Dependence on the LAW, and the WORKS of it, for Salvation*. And the Reason, why this destructive Tenet was taught and enforc'd by some Preachers of that Day, and has been taught by their Successors ever since, is assign'd by the Apostle; who observes,

B serves,

serve; that those blind Guides *understood neither what they said, nor whereof they affirmed*: For, if they HAD understood any Thing of GOD's inviolable Holiness; of the Law's inflexible Rectitude, Extent, and Spirituality; of Man's total Inability to fulfil it perfectly (and without perfect Obedience the Law cannot justify); they would, at once, have ceased to be *Teachers* of the Law, and simply pointed Sinners to that Savior alone, who *is the End of the Law for Righteousness to every one that believeth*<sup>1</sup>.

Fashionable as the Doctrine of Legal, conditional Justification is, we may say, to every Individual that embraces it, *There is one that condemns you, even Moses, in whom you trust,*<sup>k</sup> and that very Law on which you rest: for it's Language is, *He that breaketh me only in ONE Point, is guilty of ALL*:<sup>l</sup> And, *Cursed is every Man that continueth not in ALL Things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them*<sup>m</sup>. Shew me the Man who has never offended in *one* Point; who hath continued in *all* Things prescrib'd by JEHOWAH's perfect Law; who loves the LORD with *all* his Heart, and his Fellow-creatures *as himself*; shew me the Man, who, from the first to the last Moment of his Life, comes up to this Standard: And THEN you'll shew me a Man who can be justify'd by Works of his own.

But,

<sup>1</sup> Romans x. 4.    <sup>k</sup> John v. 45.    <sup>l</sup> James ii. 10.    <sup>m</sup> Galatians iii. 10.

But, if no such Person could ever be found, JESUS CHRIST the Righteous singly excepted; St. Paul's Conclusion stands unshaken, that they, who teach or hold Justification by any other Obedience than that of CHRIST, *neither know what they say, nor whereof they affirm.*

Yet, notwithstanding, we neither are nor can be justify'd by the Law; still, the *Uses* of the Law are numerous and important: whence the Apostle takes Care to add, that *The Law is good*, or answers several valuable Purposes, *if a Man use it lawfully.* Nothing can be more evident, than that, by the Law, in this Place, is meant the *Moral Law.* The *Ceremonial* could not possibly be intended; because it is not now to be adher'd to, and is no longer in Force: Whereas the Apostle speaks of a Law which is, to this very Day, *un-repeal'd*, and of standing *Use*: *The Law IS good, if a Man USE it lawfully.* Of this Law, there is a two-fold Use: Or, rather, an *Use* and an *Abuse.* The *Use* of the Law is, among other Things, first, to *convince* us of our utter Sinfulness; and then, secondly, to *lead* us to CHRIST, as the great and only Fulfiller of all Righteousness. Now, the Law does not answer these important Ends, *directly*, and *of itself*; but in a Subserviency to the Holy Spirit's Influence<sup>n</sup>; when

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that

<sup>n</sup> "A gracious Sight of our Vileness," says one of the ablest and most useful Writers of the last Century, "Is the Work of CHRIST only, by His Spirit. The Law is, indeed, a Looking-glass; able to represent the Filthiness of a Person:

" But

that adoreable Person is pleas'd to make the Law instrumental to the Conversion of a Sinner. In which Case, having shaken us out of our Self-righteousness, and reduc'd us to an happy Necessity of closing with the Righteousness of CHRIST; the Law has still another and a farther Use, no less momentous: For, thirdly, It, from that Moment forward, stands as the great Rule of our practical Walk and Conversation: Seeing a true Believer is *not without Law*, (*ανομος, a lawless Person*) towards God; but is *ενομος, within the Bond of the Law to CHRIST* °: Not exempted from its *Controul*, as the Standard of Moral Action; though deliver'd from its Power and Execution, as a Covenant of Works.

These are the three grand, lawful Uses of the Law. On the other Hand, if any of us are so deplorably lost to all Sense of Christian Duty and Gospel Privilege, as to suppose, that, by our own partial Conformity to the Law, how *sincere* soever it be, we can work out, and work up, a Righteousness for ourselves, wherein to stand before

“ But the Law gives not *Eyes*, to see that Filthiness. Bring a  
 “ Looking glass, and set it before a Blind Man: he sees no  
 “ more Spots in his Face, than if he had none at all. Though  
 “ the Glass be a good Glass, still the Glass cannot give Eyes:  
 “ Yet, if he had Eyes, he would, in the Glass, see his Blemishes.  
 “ The Apostle *James* compares the LAW to a *Looking-glass*;  
 “ and a *Faculty* to represent, is all the Law possesseth: But it doth  
 “ not impart a Faculty to *see* what it represents. It is CHRIST  
 “ alone, who opens the Eyes of Men to behold their own Vileness and Guilt. *He* opens the Eyes, and then, in the Law, a  
 “ Man sees what he is.”

° I *Corinthians* ix. 21.

fore the Tribunal of God, and for which to obtain any Favor at his Hand; we use the Law *unlawfully*: We sadly mistake the very End for which the Law was promulgated, which was, that, under the Efficacy of Grace, and the Teachings of the Blessed Spirit; it might bring us to a Knowledge of our <sup>p</sup> *Guilt*, and a Sense of our <sup>q</sup> *Danger*; convince us of our <sup>r</sup> *Helplessness*, and, as a *Schoolmaster*, bring us to CHRIST, that we may be justify'd by Faith, and NOT by the Works of the Law: For, by the Works of the Law, as perform'd by us, *shall no Flesh be justify'd*.

That grand Error of the Heart (for 'tis an *Heart-error*, as well as an *Head-error*; deeply rooted in our corrupt Nature, as well as perniciously pleasing to unassisted Reason), which misrepresents Justification as at all suspended on Causes or Conditions of human Performance; will, and must, if finally persisted in, transmit the Unbeliever, who has Opportunities of better Information, to that Place of Torment, *where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched*.

The Apostle goes on: *Knowing that the Law is not made for a Righteous Man, but for the Disobedient, &c.* The Phrase, *a Righteous Man*, means, in its strictly Evangelical Sense, *one that is in CHRIST*; or, who is *righteous before GOD* in the Righteousness of His Son, apprehended by Faith.

Now,

<sup>p</sup> Romans iii. 20.    <sup>q</sup> Deuteronomy xxxiii. 2. Hebrews xii. 18, 19, 20, 21.    <sup>r</sup> Psalm cxix. 96. Romans viii. 3. <sup>s</sup> Galatians iii. 24. and ii. 16.

Now, the Law, *i. e.* the *Damnatory Sentence* of it, was not designed for such a Person. Weak Believers have, sometimes, a good deal to do with the Law, and are apt to hover about Mount *Sinners*; but the Law has nothing to do with *them*: any more than a Creditor, who has received ample Payment from the Hand of a Surety, can have any remaining Claim on the original Debtor. The Law took, as it were, our heavenly Bond's-man by the Throat, saying, *Pay me that thou owest*. And JESUS acknowledg'd the Demand. He paid the double Debt of *Obedience* and *Suffering*, to the utmost Farthing. So that, as some render the Words under Consideration, *the Law lyeth not against a righteous Man*<sup>t</sup>: its Claims are satisfied; its Sentence is superseded; its condemning Power is abolished. And whoever have been enabled to fly for Refuge to the Righteousness of CHRIST, and to lay hold on the Hope set before them; may depend on this, as a most certain Truth, that CHRIST *both redeemed them from the Curse of the Law, having been, himself, made a Curse for them*<sup>u</sup>. Such are *not under the Law*, whether as a Covenant of Works, to be saved by; or as a Denunciation of Wrath, to be condemn'd by; *but they are under Grace*<sup>x</sup>: under that sweet Dispensation of everlasting Love, which, when made known to the believing Soul, at once ensures the Practice of universal Godliness, and refers the entire Praise of Salvation to the unmerited Grace of Father, Son and

<sup>t</sup> Δικαιῶ νόμος ἔστιν αὐτοῦ.    <sup>u</sup> Gal. iii. 13.    <sup>x</sup> Rom. vi. 14.

and Spirit. I said, that the Dispensation of Grace ensures the Practice of universal Godliness: for, considered as a Rule of moral Conduct, the Law most certainly IS design'd for Believers. And, indeed, only Believers can yield real, acceptable Obedience to the Law: for, *Without Faith, it is impossible to please God* <sup>1</sup>; and *Whatever procedeth not from Faith, is Sin* <sup>2</sup>. Therefore, if GOD hath not wrought living Faith in your Heart, you have never perform'd one truly good Work in your whole Life.

St. Paul next proceeds to draw a Catalogue of Sins, against which the Denunciations of the Law are most eminently levell'd: closing the List with the Words first read, *And if there be any other Thing that is contrary to sound Doctrine*. A plain Intimation, that Error, in Principles fundamental, has a very unfavorable Influence on Practicals: and that, in Proportion as the *Doctrines* of GOD are disbeliev'd, the *Commandments* of GOD will be disobey'd. Doctrinals, therefore, are not of that small Significance, which the Injudicious and the Heterodox affect to give out. For, though Matters of Doctrine are, by some, considered merely as the *Shell* of Religion, and *Experience* only as the *Kernel*; yet let it be remembered, that there is no coming at the Kernel, but through the Shell: and, while the Kernel gives Value to the Shell, the Shell is the Guardian of the Kernel. Destroy *That*, and you injure *This*.

The

<sup>1</sup> Heb. xi. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Rom. xiv. 23.



The Apostle, in the Words before us, stamps the Evangelical Doctrines with the Seal of Dignity, Usefulness, and Importance: as is evident from the *Epithet* he makes use of. He calls the System of Gospel-Truths, *SOUND Doctrine*: ὑγιαίνουσα διδασκαλία, *salutary, health-giving Doctrine*; not only *right* and *sound* in itself, but conducing to the spiritual Strength and Health of those that receive it: *Doctrine*, that operates like some efficacious Restorative on an exhausted Constitution; that renders the sin-sick Souls of Men healthy, vigorous and thriving; that causes them, through the Blessing of Divine Grace, to *grow as the Lilly, and to cast forth the Root as Lebanon, to revive as the Corn, and to flourish as the Vine, to diffuse their Branches, and rival the Olive-Tree*\*, both in Beauty and Fruitfulness.

On the other Hand, unsound Doctrine has the very opposite Effects. It impoverishes our Views of God; withers our Hopes; makes our Faith languid; blasts our spiritual Enjoyments; and lays the Ax to the very Root of Christian Obedience. We may say of it, as the *Jewish* Students said, on another Occasion, *there is Death in the Pot*. If you eat it, you are poison'd. With the utmost Attention, therefore, should we attend to the Apostle's Caveat, and avoid every Thing *that is contrary to sound Doctrine*.

Many such Things there are. I have not Time even to recite, much less to expatiate on them  
All.

\* *Hof.* xiv.

All. I shall, therefore, only endeavor, as God may enable me, to point out a few very common, but very capital Errors, which are totally inconsistent with *sound Doctrine*.

Previous to my Entrance on this Part of the Subject, I would premise Two Particulars:

1. That what I am going to observe, does not procede from the least Degree of *Bitterness* against the Persons of Any, from whom I differ; and,

2. That I am infinitely remote even from the slightest Wish of erecting myself into a *Dictator* to others.

The Rights of Conscience are inviolably sacred; and Liberty of private Judgment is every Man's Birth-right. If, however, Any, like *Esau*, have sold their Birth-right for a Mess of Pottage, by subscribing to Articles they don't believe, merely for the sake of temporal Profit or Aggrandisement; they have only themselves to thank, for the little Ceremony they are entitled to.— With Regard to myself, as one whom God has been pleased to put into the Ministry; above all, into the Ministry of the best and purest visible Church in the whole World; I should be a Traytor to GOD, to CHRIST, to the Scriptures, and to Truth—unfaithful to Souls, and to my own Conscience,—if I did not, without Fear or Favor, declare the *entire Counsel of God*, so far as I apprehend myself led into the Knowledge of it. Inconsiderable as I am, many of you are, no Doubt, acquainted with the Variety of Reports that have been spread (especially since  
C this

this Time of my being in Town), concerning Me, and the Doctrines by which I hold it my indispensable Duty to abide. I deem myself, therefore, happy, in having one more Opportunity to testify the little that I know, concerning that *Mystery of the Gospel, which God ordain'd, before the World, for our Glory.* And I desire, in the most public Manner, to thank the Great Author of all Consolation, for a very particular Instance of his Favor, and which I look upon as one of the most felicitating Circumstances of my whole Life: I mean, my *early* Acquaintance with the Doctrines of Grace. Many great and good Men, who were converted late in Life, have had the whole Web of their preceding Ministry to unravel, and been under a Necessity of reversing all they had been delivering for Years before. But it is not the smallest of my distinguishing Mercies, that, from the very Commencement of my unworthy Ministrations, I have not had a single Doctrine to retract, nor a single Word to *un-say*. I have *subscribed* to the Articles, Homilies, and Liturgy, *five* separate Times; and that from Principle: nor do I believe those Forms of sound Words, because I have subscribed to them; but I therefore subscribed them, because I believed them. I set out with the Gospel, from the very first; and, *having obtained Help from God, I continue to this Day, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other Things than Moses and the Prophets<sup>b</sup>, Jesus and his Apostles,*

<sup>b</sup> *Act.* xxvi. 22.

Apostles, have said before me. AND, in an absolute Dependence on the Divine Power and Faithfulness, I trust that I shall, to the End, be enabled to count neither Health, Wealth, Reputations nor *Life* itself, dear to me, so I may finish my Course with Joy, and fulfill the Ministry which I have receiv'd of the LORD JESUS, to testify the Gospel of the Grace of GOD.

- “ Careless (myself a dying Man)
- “ Of dying Men's Esteem;
- “ Happy if thou, O GOD, approve,
- “ Though all beside condemn.”

If the most accomplish'd and respectable Person of all *Heathen* Antiquity, could declare, that he “ Would rather obtain the single Approbation of *Cato*, than have a Triumph voted to him by the “ Senate;” much more will a Christian Minister prefer the Approbation of GOD, to all the evanid Eclats of an applauding Universe.

I shall arm myself, this Afternoon, with a two-fold Weapon: with the *Bible*, in one Hand; and our Church-*Articles*, in the other. I shall appeal at once, for all I have to say, to the Authority of God's unerring Oracles; and to their faithful Epitome, the Decisions of the Church of England. They who, perhaps, set light by the *Scriptures*, may yet pay some decent Deference to the *Church*: And they, who, it may be, pay little Attention to Church-Determinations, will render implicit Cre-

dit to the *Scriptures*. So that, between the Bible and the Thirty-nine Articles, I hope I shall be able to carry my Point, and, as far as my Subject leads me, enter a successful Caveat against whatever Things are *contrary to sound Doctrine*. In attempting this, I shall fix my Foot upon ARMINIANISM; which, in its several Branches, is the Gangrene of the Protestant Churches, and the predominant Evil of the Day.

What think you,

I. Of *Conditional Election*? We have, indeed, some, who deny that there is any such Thing as Election at all. They start at the very Word, as if it were a Spectre, just come from the Shades, and never seen before. I shall waste no Time on these Men. They are out of the Pale, to which my allotted Plan confines me at present. They cannot be Church of England Men, who proscribe a Term that occurs so frequently in her Offices and Standards of Faith; nor can they even be Christians at large, who cashier, with affected Horror, a Word, which, under one Form or other, is to be met with between forty and fifty Times, at least, in the New Testament only.

My Business, Now, is with those who endeavor to save Appearances, by admitting the *Word*, while, in Reality, they anathematize the *Thing*. These profess to hold an *Election*: But then it is a *conditional* one, and founded, as they suppose, on some good Quality or Qualities *foreseen* in the Objects of it. Thus, bottoming the Purposes of God on the precarious Will of apostate Men; and making That, which

which is temporal, the cause of That which was Eternal. "The Deity," say Persons of this Cast, "foreknowing how you and I would behave, and "foreseeing our Improvements and our Faithfulness, and what a proper Use we should make of our Free-will; ordain'd us, and all such good Sort of People, to Everlasting Life."

Nothing can be more *contrary to sound Doctrine*, and even to sound Reason, than this. It proceeds on a Supposition, that Man is *beforeband* with God, in the Business of Salvation; and that the Resolutions of God's Will are absolutely *dependent* on the Will of his Creatures: That he has, in short, created a set of sovereign Beings, from whom he receives Law; and that his own Purpose and Conduct are shap'd and regulated according to the prior Self-determinations of independent Man.—What is this, but Atheism in a Mask? For, where is the Difference, between the *Denial* of a First Cause, and the Affignation of a *False* one?

Quite opposite is the Decision of Inspiration, *Romans xi. 6.* where the Apostle terms God's Choice of his People, an *Election of Grace*, or a gratuitous Election: And observes, that, *If it be of Grace, then is it no more of Works; otherwise Grace were no more Grace: But, if It be of Works, then is it no more Grace; otherwise, Work were no more Work.* Conditional Grace is a most palpable Contradiction in Terms. Grace is no longer Grace, than while it is absolute and free. You might, with far greater Ease, bring the *two Poles* together, than

than effect a Coalition between *Grace* and *Works* in the Affair of Election. As far, and as high, as the Heavens are above the Earth, are the immanent Acts of GOD superior to a Dependence on any Thing wrought by sinful, perishable Man.

Consult our *seventeenth* Article, and you'll clearly see, whether conditional Election be the Doctrine of the Church of *England*. "*Predestination to Life is the EVERLASTING Purpose of GOD, whereby, BEFORE THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE WORLD WERE LAID, He hath constantly DECREED, by his Counsel secret to us, to deliver from Curse and Damnation those whom he hath CHOSEN in Christ OUT OF Mankind; and to bring them by CHRIST, to everlasting Salvation, as VESSELS MADE TO HONOR.*" Is there a Word about *Conditionality*, here? On the contrary, is not Election, or Predestination unto Life, peremptorily declared to be GOD's own "*everlasting Purpose, Decree, Counsel, and Choice?*" The Elect are said to be brought to Salvation, not as Persons of foreseen Virtue and Pliableness; but, simply and merely, "*as Vessels made to Honor.*" Add to this, that the Article goes on to style Election a *Benefit*, or *Gift*; "*Wherefore they that be indued with so excellent a BENEFIT*"——But how could Predestination to Blessedness be so term'd, if it were suspended on the Foresight of something to be wrought by the Person predestinated? For, a *Condition*, in Matters of spiritual Concern, is analogous to a *Price*, in Matters of Commerce: And a  
*purchas'd*

*purchase'd Gift*, is just as good Sense, as *conditional Grace*.

Our venerable Reformers were too well acquainted with *the Scriptures*, and with *the Power of God*, to err on a Subject of such unutterable Moment. Whence, in the Article now cited, they took Care to lay God's absolute and sovereign Election as the Basis of Sanctification; so far were they from representing Sanctification as the Ground-work of Election. Our modern Inverters of Christianity, the *Arminians*, by endeavoring to found Election upon human Qualifications, resemble an Insane Architect, who, in attempting to raise an Edifice, should make Tiles and Laths the *Foundation*, and reserve his Bricks and Stones for the *Roof*. *Quot sunt Hominum Virtutes, totidem sunt Dei Dona*, said the learned and excellent *Du Moulin*: and, if Sanctification be God's Gift, Men's Goodness could not possibly be a Motive to their Election: unless we can digest this enormous Absurdity, *viz.* that God's Gifts may be conditional and meritorious one of another. Do you imagine, that God could foresee any Holiness in Men, which Himself did not decree to *give* them? You cannot suppose it, without believing, at the same Time, that God is *not* the Author of *all* Good; and that there are, or may be, *some* good and perfect Gifts, which do NOT descend from *the Father of Lights*; and that the Apostle was widely mistaken, when he laid down this Axiom, that *it is God, who, of his own good Pleasure, worketh in us both to WILL and to DO*.

According



According to our Church, God's *Election* leads the Van; *Sanctification* forms the Centre; and *Glory* brings up the Rear: <sup>d</sup> "Wherefore, they  
 " that be indued with so excellent a Benefit of GOD,  
 " be CALLED, according to God's PURPOSE, by  
 " his Spirit working in due Season: they, through  
 " Grace, obey the Calling: they be JUSTIFIED  
 " FREELY: they be made the Sons of God by  
 " ADOPTION." Hitherto, good Works are not  
 so much as mentioned. Why so? Because our  
 Reformers were *Antinomians*, and exploded or  
 despis'd moral Performances? By no means. Those  
 holy Persons were, themselves, living Confutations  
 of so vile a Suggestion. The Tenor of their Lives  
 was as blameless as their Doctrine. But they had  
 learned to distinguish Ideas, and were too judicious,  
 both as Logicians and Divines, to represent *Effects*  
 as prior to the *Causes* that produce them. They  
 were not ashamed to betake themselves to the  
 Scriptures for Information, and to deliver out the  
 Living Water of sound Doctrine, pure and un-  
 mingled, as they had drawn it from the Fountains  
 of Truth. Hence, *Election*, *Calling*, *Justification*,  
 and *Adoption*, are set forth, not as caused by, but  
 as the real and leading Causes of, that moral Change,  
 which, sooner or later, takes Place in the Children  
 of GOD. For thus the Article goes on; "They  
 " be made like the Image of his only begotten Son  
 " JESUS CHRIST: they walk religiously in GOOD  
 " WORKS: and, at length; by God's Mercy, they  
 " attain to everlasting Felicity."

THIS

<sup>d</sup> Art. xvii.

This, then, is the Order : 1. *Election* ; 2. *Effectual Calling* ; 3. *Apprehensive Justification* ; 4. *Manifestative Adoption* ; 5. *Sanctification* ; 6. *Religious Walking in good Works* ; 7. *Continuance* in these to the End : which last Blessing must, of Necessity, be included, because the Article adds, that these elect, regenerate Persons attain, at length, to *everlasting Felicity* ; which they could not do, without *final Perseverance*, any more than you or I, upon our Departure from this Church, could arrive at our respective Homes, if we finally *stopt short* of them by the Way.— Such, therefore, being the Chain and Process of Salvation ; how *impious*, and how *fruitless*, must any Attempt be, either to *transpose*, or to *put asunder*, what God has, so wisely, and inseparably, *joined together* !

Unless we take absolute ELECTION into the Account, we must either suppose, that GOD saves *no Man* whatever ; or that those, He saves, are saved *at random*, and without Design. But his *Goodness* forbids the *first* ; and his *Wisdom* excludes the *latter*. Absolute Election, therefore, must be taken into the Account ; or you, at once, *ipso facto*, strike off either *Goodness*, or *Wisdom*, from the List of Divine Perfections.— That Scheme of Doctrine must, *necessarily*, be untrue, which represents the Deity as observing no regular *Order*, no determinate *Plan*, in an Affair of such Consequence, as the everlasting Salvation of his People. I cannot acquit of Blasphemy, that System, which likens the Deity to a careless *Ostrich*, which, having

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deposited

deposited her Eggs, leaves them in the Sand, to be hatch'd; or crush'd, just as Chance happens. Surely, HE, who numbers the very *Hairs* of his People's Heads, does not consign their *Souls*, and their *eternal* Interests, to precarious Hazard! the Blessings of Grace and Glory are too valuable and important, to be *shuffled* and *dealt* out by the Hand of *Chance*.— Besides, if *one* Thing comes to pass, either *without*, or *contrary* to, the Will of God; *another* Thing, nay, *all* Things, may come to pass in the same Manner: and then, good Bye to *Providence* entirely.

When *Lysander*, the *Spartan*, paid a Visit to King *Cyrus* (at *Corinth*, if I mistake not); he was particularly struck with the Elegance and Order, the Variety and Magnificence, of *Cyrus's* Gardens. *Cyrus*, no less charm'd with the Taste and Judgment of his Guest, told him, with visible Emotions of Pleasure, “ These lovely Walks, with  
 “ all their Beauty of Disposition and Vastness of  
 “ Extent, were *plann'd* by Myself; and almost  
 “ every Tree, Shrub and Flower, which you behold, was planted by my own Hand.” — Now, when we take a View of the *Church*, which is, at once, the House and Garden of the Living God; that Church, which the FATHER loved — for which, the SON became a Man of Sorrows — and which the HOLY SPIRIT descends, from Heaven, in all his Plenitude of converting Power, to cultivate and build anew; — When we survey this living Paradise and this mystic Edifice, of which  
 such

such glorious Things are spoken<sup>a</sup>; and on which such glorious Privileges are conferred; Must we not acknowledge?— THY sovereign Hand, O uncreated Love, drew the Plan of this spiritual Eden! THY Hand, Almighty Power, let every living Tree, every true Believer, in the Courts of the Lord's House. Thy converted People are all righteous, they shall inherit the Land for ever, even the Branches of thy planting, the Work of thy Hands, that Thou may'st be glorified<sup>b</sup>.

Admitting Election to be thus a complete, eternal, immanent Act in the Divine Mind, and, consequently, irrespective of any Thing in the Persons chosen; then (may some say) “ Farewell to Gospel Obedience: all good Works are destroyed.” If, by destroying good Works, you mean, that the Doctrine of Unconditional Election destroys the Merit of good Works, and represents Man as incapable of earning or deserving the Favor and Kingdom of God; I acknowledge the Force of the Objection. Predestination does, most certainly, destroy the Merit of our Works and Obedience, but not the Performance of them: since Holiness is, itself, one End of Election<sup>c</sup>, and the Elect are as much chosen to intermediate Sanctification, on their Way; as they are to that ultimate Glory, which crowns their Journey's End<sup>d</sup>: and there is

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no

<sup>a</sup> Psalm lxxxvii. 3.

<sup>b</sup> Isai. lx. 21.

<sup>c</sup> Eph. i. 4.

<sup>d</sup> “ Because we deny Salvation by our own Deeds,” says one of our good old Divines, “ the Papists charge us with being Enemies to good Works. But am I an Enemy to a

“ Nobleman,

no coming, at the One, but through the Other. So that neither the *Value*, nor the *Necessity*, nor the *Practice* of good Works is superseded by this glorious Truth: our Acts of Evangelical Obedience are no more than marshaled, and consigned to their due Place: restrained from usurping that *Praise*, which is due to the alone GRACE of GOD; and from arrogating that *Office*, which only the SON of GOD was qualified to discharge.

That Election, as taught by the Scriptures (and from thence by our Reformers), not only carries a favorable Aspect on Universal Piety and Holiness, but even ensures the Practice of both; is evident, among many other Passages, from that of the Apostle, II. *Thessalonians* ii. 13. *We are bound to give Thanks, always, to GOD, for you, Brethren, beloved of the LORD, because GOD hath, from the beginning, i. e. from everlasting, chosen you to Salvation through [not for, but through] SANCTIFICATION of the Spirit and BELIEF of the Truth.* How very opposite were St. Paul's Views of the Tendency of this Doctrine, from those of the *Pelagian* and *Arminian* Objectors to it! They are perpetually crying out, that it "ruins Morality, and opens a  
" ready

" *Nobleman*, because I will not attribute to him *those* Honors, which are due only to the *King*?— If I say to a common Soldier in an Army, *You cannot lead that Army against the Enemy*; will he therefore say, *Then I may be gone; there is no need of me*? or, if I see a Man at his Day-labor, and say to him, *You will never be able to purchase an Estate of 10,000*l.* per Annum, by working in that Manner*: will he therefore "give over his Work, and say he is discouraged?" Mr. PARR'S Comm. on *Romans*, p. 117.

“ ready Door to Licentiousness :” He, on the contrary, represents the believing Consideration of it as a grand Incentive to the exercise of our Graces, and to the observance of Moral Duty. *Let us, says he, who are of the Day, who are enlighten’d into the Knowledge of this blessed Privilege, and can read our Names in the Book of Life ; Let us, who are, thus, of the Day, be SOBER ; putting on the Breast-plate of FAITH and LOVE, and, for an Helmet, the HOPE of Salvation : FOR, GOD hath not appointed us to Wrath, but to obtain Salvation by our LORD JESUS CHRIST. I Thessalonians v. 8; 9.* Now, if Election secures the Performance of good Works, and, upon its own Plan, renders them indispensably necessary ; I should be glad to know, how good Works can suffer by the Doctrine of Election? You may as well say, that the Sun, which now shines into this Church, is the Parent of Frost and Darkness. No: ’tis the Source of Light and Warmth. And you and I want nothing more, than a Sense of God’s peculiar, discriminating Favor, *shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost given to us*<sup>1</sup>, to render us more and more fruitful in every good Word and Work. As an excellent Person<sup>k</sup> observes, “ That Man’s Love to God will be without End, who knows that God’s Love to him was without Beginning.”

II. What think you of that fashionable Tenet, *so contrary to sound Doctrine, concerning the suppos’d Dignity and Reëstimate of Human Nature in*

*its*

<sup>1</sup> Romans v. 5.

<sup>k</sup> Dr. Arrowsmith,

*its fallen State?* A Doctrine, as totally irreconcilable to Reason and Fact, as if an expiring *Lepor* should value himself on the Health and Beauty of his Person; or a ruin'd *Bankrupt* should boast his Immensity of Wealth.

*As soon as we are born, we go astray.* Nay, I'll venture, on Scripture-authority, to carry the Point higher still. All Mankind are *Guilty* and *deprav'd* BEFORE they are born. *Behold, I was SHAPEN in Wickedness, and in Sin did my Mother CONCEIVE me!* A Thunder-bolt to human Pride, and a Dagger in the very Heart of natural Excellence! Thus speaks the *Bible*; and thus *Experience* speaks. Our own *Church*, likewise, delivers Her Judgment in perfect Conformity to both.

#### ARTICLE 9. Of ORIGINAL, or BIRTH-Sin.

“ *Original Sin standeth not in the following*” [or *Imitation*] “ of Adam, as the PELAGIANS <sup>m</sup> do  
“ *vainly*

<sup>1</sup> *Psalms* li.

■ In this Article, express mention is made of the *Pelagians*; but nothing is, by Name, said of the *Arminians*. The Reason is plain. At the Time, when our Articles pass'd the two Houses of *Convocation*, in the Year 1562; *Arminius*, who was then only *two* Years of Age (for he was born, A. D. 1560), had not began to sow his Tares; he was no more than a *Schismatic in Embryo*.—*Arminianism* is a Mushroom of later Date, than the Re-establishment of the Church of England, by *Elizabeth*. It was not 'till the latter End of her Reign, that *Arminianism* had any great Footing even in *Holland*; the Seat of its Nativity. I say, in *Holland*: For, *there* this grand Corruption of the Reformation began; and *from thence* it found its Way to *England*. 'Twas a *Dutch Wind*, that blew *Arminianism* over to this Island, many Years *after* our Articles were re-settled as we now have them. Therefore it is, that only *Pelagianism* is mention'd. However, tho' *Arminianism* is younger,  
by

“ vainly talk ; but it is the FAULT” [by *Imputation*], “ and, CORRUPTION” [by internal, hereditary *Derivation*] “ of the NATURE of EVERY  
 “ MAN who naturally is engender’d of the Off-  
 “ spring of Adam : Whereby Man is very far gone  
 “ from Original Righteousness, and is, OF HIS OWN  
 “ NATURE, inclin’d to Evil ; so that the Flesh  
 “ lusteth ALWAYS contrary to the Spirit. And there-  
 “ fore, in EVERY PERSON born into this World,  
 “ It” [namely, Original, or Birth-Sin] “ deserveth  
 “ GOD’S WRATH and DAMNATION.”

Now, what becomes of those plausible, sophistical *Similes*, which compare the natural Mind of Man to a *Sheet of white Paper* ? Or, to a *pliant Ozier*, which you may bend, with Ease, this Way, or that ? Or, to a *Balance in æquilibrio*, which you may incline to either Side, according as you throw more or less Weight into the Scale ? Or, to a *Wax Tablet*, on which you may stamp what Impressions you please ? Alas ! the Impression is already

ready  
 by about 1200 Years, than *Pelagianism* ; its Nature and Tendency are much the same in Fact. The seeming Difference lies in little more than this : *Pelagius* spoke out ; *Van Harmen* (commonly call’d *Arminius*) ; with more Art, but less Honesty, qualify’d and disguis’d the Poison, that it might not be quite so alarming. Somewhat like what a good Man remark’d, long ago, concerning the *Leaven*, or False Doctrines, of the *Pharisees* : “ CHRIST,” says he, “ compares the Errors of the Pharisees  
 “ to *Leaven*. Why so ? because of its secret Mixture with the  
 “ wholesome Bread. You don’t make your Bread all of *Leaven* ;  
 “ for then, nobody would eat it : But you *minge it skill-*  
 “ *fully*, and, by that Means, both go down together. Thus, our  
 “ LORD intimates, that the Pharisees *mix’d* their Errors with  
 “ some Truths ; and therefore he directs them to beware, lest,  
 “ with the Truths, they swallow the Errors also”. GURNALL’s  
*Christian Armor* ; Vol. I. p. 104. *Osavo* Edition.



ready made. The Thoughts and Purposes of Man's Heart, previous to Regeneration, are (spiritually considered) ONLY evil, and that CONTINUALLY<sup>a</sup>. When converting Grace lays hold of us, there is not only an *Heart of Flesh*, to be given, but an *Heart of Stone*, to be taken away<sup>o</sup>. God must not only write his own Law on the Minds of his People; but must obliterate the Law of Sin and Death, which has a prior Footing in every Man that naturally is engender'd of the Offspring of Adam. So much, for the Spiritual and Moral Rectitude of Man, while unregenerate.— What think you,

III. Of *Conditional Redemption*? Another mo-  
dish Tenet; and no less *contrary to Reason*  
and *sound Doctrine*, than the preceding. We  
are gravely told by some, that “CHRIST did in-  
“ deed die; but he did not die *absolutely*, nor pur-  
“ chase Forgiveness and Eternal Life for us *cer-*  
“ *tainly*: His Death only puts us into a *salvable*  
“ State; making GOD *placable*, and Pardon *possi-*  
“ *ble*.” The whole Efficacy of his Sufferings,  
according to these Persons, depends on *our* be-  
ing towardly and complying: Which if we are,  
we then come in for a Share in the *subsidiary*  
and *supplementary* Merits of CHRIST; having  
first *qualify'd* ourselves for his Aid, by a Per-  
formance of certain *Conditions* requir'd on our  
Part, and entitled ourselves to the Favor and  
Notice of GOD.— According to this Scheme  
(which

<sup>a</sup> Genesis vi. 5.    <sup>o</sup> Ezekiel xxxvi. 26.

(which is only the Religion of Nature spoil'd;— spoil'd by an injudicious Mixture of nominal Christianity), the adorable Mediator, instead of having actually *obtain'd Eternal Redemption* \* for his People, and *secur'd* the Blessings of Grace and Glory to those for whom he died; is represented as bequeathing to them only a few spiritual *Lottery-Tickets*, which may come up, Blanks or Prizes, just as the Wheel of Chance and human Caprice happens to turn. Our own Righteousness and Endeavors, must, first, make the Scale of Eternal Life preponderate in our Favor; and Then, the Merits of CHRIST are thrown in, to make up *good Weight*. The Messiah's Obedience and Sufferings stand, it seems, for mere *Cyphers*; 'till our own Free-will is so kind as to prefix the *Initial Figure*, and render them of Value.— I tremble at the shocking Consequences of a System, which (as one well observes) considers the whole Mediation of CHRIST as no more than “ a *Pedestal*, on which “ human Worth may stand exalted:” nay, (to use the Language of another) which “ sinks the “ Son of GOD — how shall I speak it? — into a “ spiritual *Huckster*, who, having purchased certain “ Blessings of his Father, sells them out afterwards “ to Men upon Terms and Conditions.”

But, my Brethren, *I hope better Things concerning You; even the Things that accompany Salvation.*

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\* *Hebr. ix. 12.*

We have not, I trust, so learned CHRIST; or, rather, so mis learned Him, and the Work he came from Heaven to accomplish. God forbid, that we should be found in the Number of those, who adopt a Principle so highly derogatory from the Glory of Divine Grace, and so deeply dishonorable to the Great Savior of Sinners. *To the Law, and to the Testimony.* How speaks St. Paul? He avers, that JESUS, *By the one Offering of Himself, hath PERFECTED FOR EVER the Salvation of them that are sanctified* †. And our LORD expressly declared, in the most solemn Prayer that ever ascended from Earth to Heaven, *I have FINISHED the Work which Thou gavest me to do* †. Who, then, art thou, O Man, that dar'st to tack an imaginary *Supplement* of thy own, to the Finished Work of CHRIST? Such a Conduct, were to charge Incarnate Truth with uttering a Falsehood; and would be equivalent to saying, "No! Thou didst not *finish* the Work of Redemption which was given thee to do: Thou didst, indeed, a Part of it; but I myself must add something to it, or the whole of *thy* Performance will stand for nothing."

*He appeared once in the End of the World, or at the Close of the Jewish Dispensation, — to do what? to render Sin barely pardonable, on the Sinners Fulfillment of previous Terms? No: but actually*

† *Hebr. x. 14.*

† *John xvii. 4.*

actually to PUT AWAY Sin by the Sacrifice of himself<sup>s</sup>. The Apostle's Expression is, that CHRIST appeared, *Et adernon apasias*, unto the utter Abolition of Sin : so that, by Virtue of his perfect Oblation, Sin should neither be charged upon, nor eventually mention'd to, Those, for whom He was offered up. *The Iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the Sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve*<sup>t</sup>. In a Word: either the Death of CHRIST was not a real and perfect Satisfaction for Sin; or, if it was, then upon every Principle of Reason and Justice, all That Sin must be actually forgiven and done away, which his Death was a true and plenary Satisfaction for.— On the Supposition that his Redemption was not absolute; it vanishes into no Redemption at all. Go over, therefore, fairly and squarely, to the Tents of Socinus; or believe that CHRIST is the Lamb of God who, in Deed and in Truth, beareth and taketh away the Sin of the World<sup>o</sup>.

How speaks the Church of England, concerning this important Matter? I refer you to her

31st ARTICLE, “ Of the one Oblation of CHRIST, FINISHED upon the Cross.

“ *The Offering of CHRIST, once made, is that PERFECT Redemption, Propitiation and Satisfaction, for ALL the Sins of the whole World, both*

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Original

<sup>s</sup> Hebr. ix. 26.

<sup>t</sup> Jer. l. 20.

<sup>o</sup> John j. 29.

“ *Original and Actual: and there is NO OTHER*

“ *Sacrifice for Sin, but THAT ALONE.*”

Don't let that Expression, *The whole World*, stumble you. You remember what our *Te Deum* says: “ *When thou hadst overcome the Sharpness of Death, thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to* “ **ALL BELIEVERS.**” So in the above Article;— *The Oblation of CHRIST once made for all the Sins of THE WHOLE WORLD: b. e. the whole World of Believers: for GOD's Elect are a World within a World.* The *whole World* is a Scripture-Term; and the Compilers of our Articles did well in adopting it. But do you imagine that *every Individual* of Mankind is meant? surely, no; for, were Redemption *thus* universal, Salvation would and must be of equal Extent: otherwise, either GOD the Father would be unjust, or the Bloodshedding of CHRIST could not be (what our Articles affirm it to have been) a *perfect Satisfaction* for ALL Sin. Let unlimited *Redemption* be once proved; and I will take upon myself to prove unlimited *Salvation*.

There are many Scripture Passages, where the Phrases *World*, and *whole World*, are and must be understood in a restricted Sense. So, where St. *Paul* thus addresses the Roman Converts: *Your Faith is spoken of, or celebrated, throughout the whole World, i. e. throughout the whole believing World, or Christian Church; for none but Believers would*  
 applaud

applaud and celebrate the *Romans* for their Faith in Christ, *Rom. i. 8.*—*We are of God*, says the Apostle *John*, and the whole World lyeth in the wicked One, *1 John v. 19.* Where, if the whole World denote every Individual of Mankind, it would follow, that both the Apostle himself, and the Christians to whom he wrote, were, at that very Time, in the wicked One; and, consequently, that he was guilty of a Self contradiction, in saying, *we are of God.*—In the Book of Revelations, Satan is styled the *Deceiver of the whole World*, Chap. xii. 9. and the whole World are said to wonder after the Beast, Chap. xiii. 3. meaning, a considerable Part of the World.

Nay, even in daily Conversation, it is customary with us to make use of the Word *World*, in a limited Signification. So, when we speak of the *Learned World*, the *Busy World*, the *Gay World*, the *Polite World*, the *Religious World*; we don't mean that every Man in the World is *learned*, *busy*, *gay*, *polite*, or *religious*: we only mean, *Those* in the World, who are so.

To close this Head. Upon the Supposition of a random Redemption, and a precarious Salvation; St. Paul's Inference, "*Who shall condemn? it is CHRIST that dyed;*" might be easily answered and overthrown: since, if the Arminian Hypothesis be true, Millions of those, for whom CHRIST dyed, will be condemned; and, what heightens the  
Abfurdity,

**Absurdity, condemned on Account of those very Sins for which CHRIST did dye. A Supposition, exploded by the Apostle, as impossible. — Surely, CHRIST knew for what, and for whom, he paid the Ransom-price of his infinitely precious Blood! nor would the Father purchase to himself a Church of elect Persons, for his own peculiar Residence; and then leave Satan to run away with as many of the Beams and Pillars as he pleases. Equally contrary to sound Doctrine, is,**

**IV. The Tenet of *Justification by Works.***

All human Righteousness is imperfect: And to suppose, that God, whose Judgment is *always according to Truth*, will, by a paltry Commutation, which he every where disclaims, and which the Majesty of his Law forbids; be put off with not only a *defective*, but even a *polluted* Obedience, and justify Men by Virtue of such a counterfeit (at most, a *partial*) Conformity to his Commandments; to imagine, that the Law accommodates itself to human Depravation, and, Chameleon like, assumes the Complexion of the Sinners with whom it has to do; — is *Antinomianism* of the grossest Kind. It represents the *Law* as hanging out false Colors, and insisting on Perfection, while, in Fact, it is little better than a formal Patent for Licentiousness; and degrades the adorable *Law-giver* Himself into a Conniver at Sin,

Add

Add to this, That, if God can, consistently with his acknowledged *Attributes*, and his avowed *Declarations*, save guilty, obnoxious Creatures, without their bringing such a *complete* Righteousness as the Law demands; it will necessarily follow, that God, when his Hand is in, may save Sinners without *any* Righteousness at all: since, the same Flexibility, which (as the Arminians suppose) induces God to dispense with *Part* of his Law; may go a Step farther, and induce him to set aside *the Whole*.— Moreover, if our Persons may be *justified*, without a legal (*i. e.* a *perfect*) Righteousness; it will follow, on the same Principle, that our Sins may be *pardoned*, without an Atonement: and then, farewell to the whole Scheme of Christianity at once.

There are *Two* grand Axioms, which enter into the very Foundation of Revealed Religion:

1. That the Law will accept no Obedience, short of *perfect*, as the Condition of Justification; and,
2. That, ever since *Adam's* first Offence, Man has, and can have, no such Obedience of his own.

What, then, must a Sinner do to be saved? He must *Believe* in, and *rest* upon, that SAVIOR, who was, by gracious Imputation, *made Sin for us*, that *we*, by a similar Exchange, *might be made the Righteousness of God IN HIM* \*. If *This* be the Gospel Scheme of Salvation, the Apostle's Assertion will be incontestible: *As many of you as are justified by the Law, or seek Justification on the*

Footing

\* 2 Cor. v.



Rooting of your own Works, are fallen from Graces, revolted and apostatized from that Gospel-System, which teaches, that Men are justified by the Grace of God, flowing through CHRIST's Righteousness alone\*. Alas! how hardly are we brought to accept Salvation, as a Gift of mere Favor! We are for bringing a Price in our Hands, and coming with Money in our Sack's Mouth: notwithstanding the celestial Direction is, *Buy Wine and Milk, WITHOUT Money and WITHOUT Price*; i. e. take as absolute Possession of Pardon, Holiness and eternal Life, as if they were your own by Purchase; but remember, that you, nevertheless, have them *gratis*, without any Desert, nay, contrary to all Desert, of Yours. — We did not bribe God to create us: and how is it possible, that we should pay him any Thing for *saving* us?

*Zeuxis*, the celebrated *Grecian* Painter, used, towards the latter Part of his Life, to give away his Pictures, without deigning to accept of any pecuniary Recompence. Being asked the Reason, his Answer was, “ I make *Presents* of my Pictures, because they are *too valuable* to be purchased. “ They are *above all Price*.” — And does not God freely give us a Part in the Book of Life, an Interest in his SON, and a Title to his Kingdom; nay, does he not make us a Present of HIMSELF in CHRIST; because these Blessings are, literally, *above all Price*? too great, too high, too glorious, to be purchased by the Works of Man? Because

we

\* Gal. v. 4.

= Rom. v. 21.

= Isai. lv. 1.

we cannot merit them, God is graciously pleased freely to bestow them.

'Tis equally sad, and astonishing, to observe the *Ingredients* of that Foundation, on which Self-Justiciaries build their Hopes of Heaven. First, there's a Stratum of *Free-Will*; then, of *good Dispositions*; then of *legal Performances*: next a Layer of what they term, *Divine Aids* and *Assistances*, ratified and made effectual by human *Compliances*; then a little of *Christ's Merits*; then *Faithfulness* to Helps receiv'd; and, to finish the Motley-Mixture, a *Perseverance* of their own Spinning. At so much Pains is a Pharisee, in going about to establish his own *Righteousness*, rather than embrace the Bible-way of Salvation, by submitting to the *Righteousness of God the Son* <sup>b</sup>.

Now, what says the Church of *England*, concerning the Cause and Manner of our Acceptance with the Father? Thus she speaks; and Thus all her real Members believe:

ARTICLE XI. "Of the Justification of Man.

"We are ACCOUNTED Righteous before GOD,  
 "ONLY for the Merits of our Lord and Savior  
 "JESUS CHRIST." One would imagine, This might have been enough to establish the Point: but, utterly to preclude Self-Righteousness from all Possibility of Access, the Church immediately adds, "And NOT for OUR OWN Works or De-  
 "servings."

F

Here,

<sup>b</sup> Rom. x. 3.

Here, the old Question naturally recurs, "What, then, becomes of good Works?" The plain Truth is, That, 'till a Man is justified by Faith, he can do *no* good Works at all.

ARTICLE XIII. "Of Works done BEFORE Justification.

"Works done BEFORE the Grace of CHRIST, and the Inspiration of His Spirit, are NOT PLEASANT to GOD:" and, if so, how is it possible, that he should justify us on Account of them? — But WHY are they not pleasing to GOD? "Forasmuch," adds the Article, "as they spring not from Faith in JESUS CHRIST."

"Well but," may some say, "admitting that Works done before Justification don't properly recommend us to GOD, they may, at least, qualify us for Believing; and thereby, be, remotely, a Condition, *sine quâ non*, of Justification." The Church will not allow even of This. For, treating, in the above Article, of Works prior to Justification, She adds; "neither do they make Men MEET to receive Grace." This clinches the Nail, and cuts up Self-Righteousness, Root and Branch. — But does the Church stop here? no: to put the whole Matter as far beyond Doubt, as Words can place it, She closes her Decision thus; "Yea, rather, for that they are not done as GOD hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the Nature of SIN." Now, if Works, wrought previous to Justification, are Sin; 'tis absolutely

olutely impossible that we should be justify'd by Works: unless Sin can be supposed to recommend us to God's Favor. Which, to imagine, were Antinomianism outright.— What think you,

V. Of the Doctrine of *Unsuccessful Grace*? A Doctrine, which represents OMNIPOTENCE itself as *wishing*, and *trying*, and *striving*, to no Purpose. According to this Tenet, God, in endeavoring (for, it seems, 'tis only an *Endeavor*) to convert Sinners, may, by Sinners, be foil'd, defeated, and disappointed:— He may lay close and long Siege to a Soul, and that Soul can, from the Citadel of impregnable Free-Will, hang out a Flag of Defiance to God himself, and, by a continued Obstinacy of Defence, and a few vigorous Sallies of Free-Agency, compel him to raise the Siege. — In a Word; the Holy Spirit, after having, for Years, perhaps, danc'd Attendance on the Will of Man, may, at last, like a discomfited General, or an unsuccessful Petitioner, be either put to ignominious Flight, or contemptuously dismissed, *Re infecta*, without accomplishing the End, for which he was sent,

Can, then, *The LORD and GIVER of Life*; can he, who, like the adorable SON, is GOD of GOD, and GOD with GOD; shall the Blessed Spirit of Grace, who is, in Glory, equal, and, in Majesty, co-eternal, with the Other Two Persons of the Godhead, and has all Power both in Heaven and in Earth; — shall he, *who hath the Key of David; who openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and*

*no man openeth* <sup>b</sup>; shall he knock at the Door of the human Heart, and leave it at the Option of Free-will to insult him, from the Window, and bid him go from whence he came? Surely, Men's Eyes must be blinded indeed, before they can lay down such a shocking Supposition for a religious Aphorism; and even go so far as to declare, that, unless God is *vanquishable* by Man, "There can be no such Thing as Virtue, or Vice, Reward or Punishment, Praise or Blame!"

The main Root of the Error consists, greatly, in not distinguishing, between the *Gospel of Grace*; and the *Grace of the Gospel*. The *Gospel of Grace*, may be rejected; but the *Grace of the Gospel* cannot. God's *written* Message in the Scriptures, and his *verbal* Message by his Ministers, may, or may not, be listen'd to: whence it is recorded, *All the Day long have I stretched forth my Hand to a disobedient and gainsaying People* <sup>d</sup>. But, when God himself comes, and takes the Heart into his own Hand; when He speaks, from Heaven, to the Soul, and makes the *Gospel of Grace* a Channel to convey the *Grace of the Gospel*; the Business is effectually done. *If God makes a Change, who can turn him away?* <sup>e</sup>— *Whatsoever he doth, it shall be for ever; nothing can be put to it, nor any Thing taken from it: and God doth it, that Men should fear before*

<sup>b</sup> Rev. iii. 7.      <sup>d</sup> Rom. x. 21.      <sup>e</sup> See the Marginal Translation of Job xi. 10.      <sup>e</sup> Eccl. iii. 14.

before him<sup>1</sup>; and acknowledge, that the Excellency of  
 Conversing Power is of HIM, and not of Us<sup>2</sup>.

A modern Schismatic; now living, thought he  
 both shewed his Wit, and gravel'd his Opponents,  
 in saying, that, according to the Doctrine of our  
 Church, "The Souls of Men can no more van-  
 quish the Saving Grace of God, than their  
 Bodies can resist a Stroke of Lightning." I  
 would ask the Objector, Whether he ever knew of  
 any Lightning, like *That* which flash'd from the  
 Mediator's Eye when he *turned and looked upon*  
 Peter? And something similar is experienced by  
 every converted Person. The LORD turns and  
 looks upon a Sinner; who then relents, and cries  
 out, with his whole Heart, O LORD my GOD,  
*other Lords; besides Thee, have had Dominion over*  
*me; but now, by Thee, through the Energy of thy*  
*renewing Influence, will I make Mention of Thy*  
*Name only.*<sup>3</sup>—*Whom have I in Heaven, but Thee?*  
*and there is none upon Earth that I desire, in Compa-*  
*rison of Thee*<sup>4</sup>.—When God says to the Heart,  
*Seek thou my Face;* the Reply is, and cannot but  
 be, *Thy Face, LORD, will I seek*<sup>5</sup>. For, GOD,  
 who, in the Beginning of the Creation, *commanded*  
*the Light to shine out of Darknes, bath, by an*  
*Exertion of Power, equally invincible, and as*  
*certainly effectual, shined into our Hearts, to give us*  
 the

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 7.    <sup>2</sup> *Isai.* xxvi. 13.    <sup>3</sup> *Psal.* lxxiii. 25.  
<sup>4</sup> *Psal.* xxvii. 8.

*the Light of the Knowledge of God, as it is manifested in the Person and Grace of Jesus Christ.* Wherefore, then, do Men say, *We are Lords, and we will come no more unto Thee*, except we ourselves chuse it?—Alas, alas! did the Matter rest with us, we should never chuse to come to God at all. If he did not first change our Wills, we should never even will that great Change, that internal Regeneration, without which, no man can see the Kingdom of Heaven<sup>m</sup>. God, I am bold to declare, would not have been Lord of any Hearts, now under this Roof, had he not, by the constraining Power of his own Love, effectually gain'd them over, and invincibly attach'd them to his Blessed Self. The Glorious and Independent Creator *made* us, at first, without our Leave; and yet, according to the modern System, he must *ask* and wait for our Leave, before he can *make* us *anew*!

Do you desire to know the Judgment of the Church, upon this Point? You have it, in her 17th Article; where, speaking of God's Elect People; She asserts, that *“They are CALLED, according to his Purpose, by his SPIRIT working in due Season.”* and immediately adds, that *“They, thro' Grace; OBEY the Calling.”* GOD's converting Call, therefore, is such as produces *Obedience* to his *h.c.* it is *triumphantly efficacious*; and rendered *successful*.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. iv. 6.

<sup>1</sup> Jerem. ii. 31.

<sup>m</sup> John iii. 3.

not by the Will and Towardliness, of the Person Called, but by the Power and Grace of *Him that Calleth*. Nay, so far is the Efficacy of Divine Influence from being suspended on any internal or external Ability of the Creature, that in our 10th ARTICLE, concerning *Free-will*, the Church expresses herself thus: "*The Condition of Man, since the Fall of Adam, is such, that he CANNOT turn, nor*" even "*Prepare himself, by his own natural Strength and good Works, to Faith and Calling upon God.*"

VI. What think you of *Antinomianism*?

By *Antinomianism*, I mean, That Doctrine, which teaches, "That Believers are released from all Obligation to observe the Moral Law, as a Rule of External Obedience: That, in Consequence of CHRIST's having wrought out a justifying Righteousness for us, we have nothing to do, but to sit down, eat, drink and be merry: That the Messiah's Merits supercede the Necessity of personal, inherent Sanctification; and That all our Holiness is in *Him*, not in *ourselves*: That the Aboundings of Divine Grace give Sanction to the Commission of Sin; and, in a Word, That the whole preceptive Law of GOD is not established, but repealed and set aside, from the Time we believe in CHRIST." This is as *contrary to sound Doctrine*, as it is to sound Morals: and a Man heed only *ask up* to these Principles, to be a Devil Incarnate. It is impossible, that either

the



the SON of GOD, who came down, from Heaven, to perform, and to make known, His Father's Will; or that the SPIRIT of GOD, speaking in the Scriptures and acting upon the Heart; should administer the least Encouragement to Negligence and Unholiness of Life. Therefore, That Opinion, which supposes personal Sanctification to be unnecessary to final Glorification, stands in direct Opposition to every Dictate of Reason, and to every Declaration of Scripture.

Indeed, the very Nature of Election, of Faith, and of all Covenant-Grace whatever, renders Holiness absolutely indispensable: forasmuch as, without a spiritual and moral Resemblance of GOD, there can be no real Felicity on Earth, nor any future Enjoyment of Heaven.— Suppose, we appeal to Experience? I speak now to You, who *know in whom ye have believed*; to You, who have *received the Atonement*, and who have been sensibly *reconciled unto GOD by the Death of His Son*. If, at any Time, ye have been off your Guard, and suffered to lapse into Sin; How have ye felt yourselves afterwards? ye have gone with broken Hearts and with *broken Bones* \*. Ye have found it to be indeed *an evil and a bitter Thing, to depart, though ever so little, from the Lord*. Ye know, by dismal Experience, that *The Way of Transgressors is hard*, and that Sin, like *Ezekiel's Roll*, is written, within  
and

\* *Psaln. li.*

and without, with *Lamentation and Mourning and Woe*. The *Gall of Bitterness* is inseparable from the *Bond of Iniquity*. Upon the Principle, therefore, of mere *Self-Interest* (to go no higher), a true Believer cannot help aspiring to Holiness and good Works.

Heaven must be brought down into the Human Soul, e'er the Human Soul can be fitted for Heaven. There must, as the School-men speak, be "a Congruity and Similitude between the Faculty and the Object," *i. e.* there must be an *inward Meetness* for the Vision and Glory of GOD, wrought in you by His Holy Spirit, in order to render you susceptible of those exalted Pleasures, and that Fulness of Joy, which are in his Presence, and at His Right Hand, for ever. Was thy Soul, O unconverted Sinner, to be, this Moment, separated from thy Body, and even admitted into Heaven (supposing it was possible for an Unregenerate Spirit to enter there); Heaven would not be Heaven to *Thee*. You cannot relish the Blessedness of the *new Jerusalem*, unless GOD, in the meanwhile, make you Partaker of a *new Nature*. The FATHER chose His People to Salvation; The SON purchased for them the Salvation, to which they were chosen; and the Blessed SPIRIT fits and qualifies them for that Salvation, by His Renewing Influences: for, as a Dead Man cannot inherit an Estate, no more can a *Dead Soul* (and every Soul is spiritually Dead, 'till quicken'd and born again of the Holy Ghost) inherit the Kingdom of GOD.

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Yet, Sanctification and Holiness of Life do not constitute any Part of our *Title* to the Heavenly Inheritance; any more than mere animal Life entitles a Man of Fortune to the Estate he enjoys; He could not, indeed, enjoy his Estate, if he did not *live*; but his Claim to his Estate arises from some other Quarter. In like manner, 'tis not our Holiness, that entitles us to Heaven; though no Man can enter Heaven, without Holiness. God's gratuitous Donation, and CHRIST's meritorious Righteousness, constitute our *Right* to future Glory; while the Holy Ghost, by inspiring us with spiritual Life (of which spiritual Life, good Works are the *Evidences* and the *Actings*), puts us into a real *Capability* of and *Fitness* for That Inheritance of endless Happiness, which, otherwise, we could never, in the very Nature of Things, either *possess*, or *enjoy*.

“ Let it be observed,” says one of the most learned and judicious Writers of this Age, “ that  
 “ CHRIST's Active Obedience to the Law for Us,  
 “ in our Room and Stead, does not exempt *us*  
 “ from Personal Obedience to it; any more than  
 “ His Sufferings and Death exempt us from cor-  
 “ poral Death, or from Suffering for His sake.  
 “ 'Tis true, indeed, we don't suffer and dye, in  
 “ the Sense He did; to satisfy Justice, and atone  
 “ for Sin: so neither do we yield Obedience to  
 “ the Law, in order to obtain Eternal Life by it.  
 “ By CHRIST's Obedience for us, we are exempted  
 “ from Obedience to the Law, in this Sense: but  
 “ not

“ not from Obedience to it, as a Rule of Walk  
 “ and Conversation, by which to glorify God, and  
 “ express our Thankfulness to Him for His abun-  
 “ dant Mercies.”— Travellers inform us, that, in  
*Turkey*, the Partisans, of the several Denominations  
 there, are distinguished by the Color of their Shoes:  
 so that, if you meet any Person in the Streets, you  
 need only look at his *Feet*, to know of what Reli-  
 gion he is. And may not the Truth of Grace  
 be discerned, to, at least, an high Degree of Pro-  
 bability, by the Life and Conversation of those  
 who make a Religious Profession? The Man, who  
 says that he knows GOD, and in Works denies  
 Him; who calls CHRIST, *Lord, Lord*, but does  
 not the Things that He enjoins; whose *Veice*, in-  
 deed, is *Jacob's Voice*, but his *Hands* are the  
 Hands of ° *Esau*; resembles our SAVIOR'S Per-  
 secutors and Murderers, of old, who bowed their  
*Knees*, and cried, *Hail, King of the Jews!* while  
 they *spit* in His Face, and *smote* Him with the  
 Palms of their *Hands*. The Hypocrite's Profession  
 is dark and opaque: but That of a real Saint is

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pellucid

• A very capital Painter, in LONDON, lately exhibited a  
 Piece, representing a *Fryar*, habited in his Canonicals. View  
 the Picture at a Distance, and you would think the Fryar to be  
 in a genuine Attitude: his Hands are clas'd together, and held  
 before his Face in Reverence; his eyes meekly demitted, like Those  
 of the *Disciple* in the Gospel; and the good Man appears to be  
 quite absorbed in humble Adoration and devout Recollection.—  
 But take a nearer survey, and the Deception vanishes: the *Book*,  
 which seemed to lie before him, is discovered to be a *Panck-  
 Pouch*, into which, the Wretch is, all the While, in Reality,  
 only squeezing a *Lemon*.— How lively a Representation of  
 an Hypocrite!

pellucid and transparent. The Rays of Grace, in a genuine Believer, pervade his whole Behavior, and are transmitted through all the Parts of his Practical Walk. Though every Moral Man is not therefore a Christian, yet every Christian is necessarily, a Moral Man.

When *Flaminius*, the Roman General, did at the *Isthmian* Games, announce FREEDOM to Greece, in the Name of the Senate and People of Rome; The transported Greeks receiv'd the glorious News with such Acclamations of Gratitude, and Thunder of Applause, that some Ravens, which were flying over the Stadium, dropt down to the Earth, stunn'd and senseless: The very Games and Exercises were neglected, and nothing, but bursting Eclats of admiring Joy, engrossed the Day.— So, when the Holy Spirit of Consolation announces Gospel-Liberty, and Eternal Redemption, to the Souls of the Awaken'd, the Love of Sin, and the Ravens of detested Lusts, fall before His sacred Influence. Both the Toils and the Pleasures of the World are regarded as insignificant, when set in Competition with the One Thing needfull. Holy Wonder, Love, and Joy, quite engage the Powers of the Believer's Mind, during the Spring-tide Consolations of his first manifestative Espousals; and a sure Foundation is, from that Moment, laid, for the Performance of all those good Works, which are the Fruits of Salvation by Grace. While Faith is in Exercise, and a Sense of Divine Favor is warm upon the Heart; a Child of GOD is as much steel'd

freel'd to the Allurements of Sin, as *Octavius* was cool to the meretricious Charms of *Cleopatra*.

Thus, conscientious Obedience, though neither the Cause nor Condition of our Justification in the Sight of God, nor of our Admittance into His Glory; is, nevertheless, an essential Branch both of Privilege and Duty, as well as a necessary *Indication* of our Acceptance in the Beloved. *This* is the Point of View, in which our Church considers *Good Works*: viz. not as preceding Conditions of Salvation, but as subsequent *Testimonies and Marks* of Salvation already obtained.

ARTICLE XII. “ *Of Good Works.* ”

“ *Albeit that Good Works, which are the FRUITS of Faith, and FOLLOW AFTER Justification, cannot put away our Sins, and endure the Severity of GOD’S Judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to GOD in CHRIST, and do SPRING OUT, necessarily, of a true and lively Faith: insomuch that, by them, a lively Faith may be as EVIDENTLY KNOWN, as a Tree discerned by its Fruit.* ”

VII. What think you, concerning the Tenet of *Sinless Perfection*? which supposes, that the very *Inbeing* of Sin may, on Earth, be totally exterminated from the Hearts of the Regenerate; and that Believers may, Here, be pure as the Angels that never fell, yea, (I tremble at the Blasphemy — Holy, as CHRIST Himself. To hold this Heresy, is the very Quintessence of Delusion; but to imagine ourselves really in the State it describes, were the very

very Apex of Madness. Yet, many Such there are? some such, I myself have known.

Indwelling Sin and unholy Tempers do, most certainly, receive their *Death's-Wound*, in Regeneration: but they do not quite *expire*, 'till the Renewed Soul is taken up, from Earth, to Heaven. In the mean Time, these hated Remains of Depravity will, too often, like Prisoners in a Dungeon, crawl toward the Window (tho' in Chains); and shew themselves through the Grate. Nay, I don't know, whether the Strivings of inherent Corruption for Mastery, be not, frequently, more violent in a Regenerate Person, than even in One who is dead in Trespasses: as wild Beasts are, sometimes, the more rampant and furious for being wounded. A Person of the amplest Fortune cannot help the harboring of Snakes, Toads, and other venomous Reptiles, on his Lands; but they will breed, and nestle, and crawl about his Estate, whether He will or no. All he can do, is, To pursue and kill them, whenever they make their Appearance: yet, let him be ever so vigilant and diligent, there will always be a Succession of those Creatures, to exercise his Patience and engage his Industry. So is it with the true Believer, in Respect of Indwelling Sin.

Would you see a *perfect* Saint? you *must needs go out of the World*, then; you must go to Heaven, for the Sight: forasmuch as THERE only are *The Spirits of just Men made perfect* †. This Earth, on which

† *Hebr. xii. 23.*

which we live, never bore but *Three* Sinless Persons: our first Parents, in the short State of Innocence; and *JESUS CHRIST*, in the Days of His Abode below. Of the whole Human Race beside, it always was, and ever will be true, that *there is not a just Man upon Earth, who doeth good and sinneth not.* The most forward and towering Professors are not always the firmest and most solid Christians. Naturalists tell us, that the *Oak* is a full Century, in growing to a State of Maturity: yet, though, perhaps, the slowest; it is one of the noblest, the strongest, and most Useful Trees in the World. How preferable to the flimsy, watery, shooting *Willow!*

Our Church enters an express Caveat against the pestilent Doctrine of Perfection, in her 15th Article, entitled, "*Of Christ ALONE without Sin.*" where she thus delivers her Judgment;

"CHRIST, in the Truth of our Nature, was  
 "made like unto us in all Things, Sin only except,  
 "from which He was clearly void, both in His  
 "Flesh and in His Spirit. He came to be a Lamb  
 "without Spot, who, by Sacrifice of Himself once  
 "made, should take away the Sins of the World;  
 "and Sin, as St. John saith, was not in Him.  
 "But ALL WE the Rest (although Baptiz'd and  
 "Born again in CHRIST) yet offend in many Things:  
 "and, if we say We have no Sin, we deceive our-  
 "selves, and the Truth is not in Us."

So,



So, 'tis declared, about the Middle of the 9th ARTICLE, that the "*Infection of Nature doth REMAIN; yea, in Them that be Regenerated.*"—  
Let me just mention,

VIII. One more Particular, *contrary to found Doctrine*: I mean, the Assertion of some, who would fain persuade us, that it is impossible for us to receive *Knowledge of Salvation by the Remission of Sin*. Such a Denial is very opposite to the Usual Tenor of GOD'S Proceeding with His People in all Ages. The Best Believers, and the Strongest, may, indeed, have their Occasional Fainting-Fits of Doubt and Diffidence, as to their own particular Interest in CHRIST: nor should I have any great Opinion of that Man's Faith, who was to tell me That he never had any Doubts at all. But still, there are golden Seasons, when the Soul is on the Mount of Communion with GOD; when the Spirit of His SON shines into our Hearts, and gives us *Boldness and Access with Confidence by the Faith of Him*<sup>9</sup>; and when *Sunt sine Nube Dies*, may be the Christian's exulting Motto. Moreover, a Person, who is at all conversant with the Spiritual Life, *knows* as certainly, whether he indeed enjoys *the Light of GOD'S Countenance*<sup>r</sup>, or whether he *walks in Darkness*<sup>s</sup>; as a Traveller knows, whether he travels in Sun-shine, or in Rain. And, as a Great and Good<sup>t</sup> Man observes, "It is no Presumption  
" to read what was GOD'S gracious Purpose toward  
" us

<sup>9</sup> Eph. iii. 12.

<sup>r</sup> Psalm. lxxxix. 15.

<sup>s</sup> Jsa. i. 10.

<sup>t</sup> GURNALL; Vol. I. p. 127.

“ us of old, when He, as it were, *prints* His secret Thoughts, and makes them *Legible*, in our Effectual Calling: In this Case, we do not go up into Heaven, and pry into God's Secrets; but Heaven comes down to Us, and reveals them.”

It may, indeed, be objected, that the Scripture-Doctrine of Assurance, when realized into an actual Possession of the Privilege, “ may tend to foster Pride, and promote Carelessness.” It cannot lead to Pride; for All, who have *tasted that the Lord is gracious*, know by indubitable Experience (and one Fact speaks louder than an Hundred Speculations), that Believers are then lowest at God's Footstool, when they are highest on the Mount of Assurance. Much Indulgence from *Earthly Parents*, may, indeed, be productive of real Injury to their Children: but not so are the Smiles of God; for the Sense of His Favor *sanctifies*, whilst it *comforts*.— Nor can the Knowledge of Interest in His Love tend to relax the Sinews of moral Diligence, or make us heedless how we behave ourselves in His Sight. During those Exalted Moments, when Grace is in lively Exercise; when the Disciple of CHRIST experiences

“ *The Soul's Calm Sun-shine, and the Heart-felt Joy;*”

Corrupt Nature (that *Man of Sin* Within), and every vile Affection, are stricken, as it were, with a temporary Apoplexy: and the Believer can no more, for the Time being, commit wilfull Sin, than an Angel of Light would dip his Wings in

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Mud.

Mud. No: 'tis when we *come down from the Mount*, and mix again with the *World*, that, like *Moses*, we are in Danger of *breaking the Tables* of the Law. "But is it not *Enthusiasm*, to talk of "holding *Intercourse* with God, and of *knowing* "ourselves to be Objects of His Special Love?" No more *Enthusiastical* (so we keep within Scripture-Bounds), than it is for a favorite Child to *converse* with his Parents, and to know that they have a particular *Affection* for him. Neither, in the strictest Reason and Nature of Things, is it at all absurd, to believe and expect, That God can, and does, and will, *communicate* His Favor to His People, and *manifest Himself to Them*, as He does not to the *World* " at large.

Yet, though God is thus graciously indulgent to many of His People (I believe, to all of them, at some Time or other, between their Conversion and Death); still, if they trespass against Him, He will not let their Offences pass unnotic'd nor uncorrected. Though *Grace* itself is inamissible, the *Comfort* of it may be sin'd away. *Salvation* is sure to All the Redeem'd; but the *Joy* of it may be lost, *Psalms* li. 12. *Great Peace have They that love Thy Law*; and They only. *Holiness* and *Consolation* are, wisely, and intimately, connected. In Proportion as we are enabled to live *near* to God, to walk *humily* and *closely* with Him, and to keep our moral Garments clean; we may hope for *Freedom* of Intercourse with Him, and to *assure our Hearts*

\* *John*. xiv. 21, 22.

*Hearts* before him \* : like the happy Believers of old, concerning whom it is said, that they *walked at once in the FEAR of the LORD, and in the COMFORT of the Holy Ghost* †.

Let not, however; what has been observed, concerning the Blessing of Assurance, stumble or discourage the Feeble of GOD'S Flock, on whom; for Reasons wise and good, it may not, hitherto; have been His Pleasure to bestow this *unspeakable Gift*. The Scripture, plainly, and repeatedly, distinguishes between *Faith*; The *Assurance of Faith*; and the *FULL Assurance of Faith*: and the *First* may exist, where the *other Two* are Not. I know some, who have, for Years together, been distressed with Doubts and Fears, without a single Ray of spiritual Comfort all the while. And yet, I can no more doubt of their being true Believers, than I can question my own Existence as a Man. I am sure, they are possessed, not only of *Faith* in its lowest Degree, but of That which CHRIST Himself pronounces *GREAT Faith* †: for they can, at least, say, LORD, *I am not worthy, that Thou shouldst come under my Roof; but speak the Word only, and thy Servant shall be healed*. Faith is the Eye of the Soul; and the Eye is said to see almost every Object but Itself: so that, you may have *real Faith*, without being able to *discern* it. Nor will GOD *despise the Day of small Things*. Little Faith goes to Heaven, no less than *great Faith*: though not so comfortably, yet altogether as surely. If

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‡ *John* iii. 19.    † *Acts* ix. 31.    ‡ *Matt.* viii. 8, 10.

you come, merely as a Sinner, to **JESUS**; and throw yourself, at all Events, for Salvation, on His alone Blood and Righteousness, and the Grace and Promise of GOD in Him; thou art as truly a Believer, as the most Triumphant Saint that ever lived. And, amidst all your Weakness, Distresses and Temptations, remember, that GOD will *not cast out* nor cast off the meanest and unworthiest Soul that seeks Salvation only in the Name of **JESUS CHRIST** the Righteous. When you cannot follow *the Rock*, the Rock shall follow *You*: nor ever leave you, for so much as a single Moment, on this Side the Heavenly *Canaan*. If you feel your absolute Want of **CHRIST**, you may, on all Occasions, and in every Exigence, betake yourself to the Covenant Love and Faithfulness of GOD, for Pardon, Sanctification and Safety; with the same Fullness of Right and Title, as a Traveller leans upon his own Staff, or as a weary Laborer throws himself on his own Bed, or as an opulent Nobleman draws upon his own Banker for whatever Sum he wants. — I shall only detain you farther, while I warn you,

IX. Against another Limb of Arminianism, totally *contrary to sound Doctrine*: I mean, that Tenet, which asserts *The Possibility of falling finally from a State of REAL Grace*. GOD does not give, and then *take away*. He does, indeed, frequently resume what He only *lent*; such as Health, Riches, Friends, and other *temporal Comforts*: but what He *gives*, He gives *for ever*. In a Way of **GRACE**,

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*the Gifts and Calling of God are without Repentance*<sup>a</sup>: He will never repent of bestowing them; and every Attribute, He has, forbids Him to revoke them. The Blessings of His Favor are *That Good Part, which shall not be taken from* those that have it<sup>b</sup>.

A Parent, of moderate Circumstances, may give his Children something to set up with in the World; and address them to this Effect; "I have now done for you all that is in my Power to do, and gone as far as my Circumstances will allow: you must, from henceforward, stand on your own Feet, and be good Husbands of the old Stock. The Preservation and Improvement of what I have given you, must be left to Chance and yourselves." In this very View does *Arminianism* represent the Great Father Almighty. But how does *Scripture* represent Him? as saying, *I will NEVER leave thee, nor forsake thee*<sup>c</sup>:—*Even to your old Age, I am He; and even to hoary Hairs will I carry you; I have made, and I will bear, even I will carry and will deliver you*<sup>d</sup>.—*My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand*<sup>e</sup>.

In

<sup>a</sup> Rom. xi. 29.    <sup>b</sup> Luke x. 42.    <sup>c</sup> Hebr. xiii. 5.    <sup>d</sup> *Isai.* xlv. 4.    <sup>e</sup> *John* x. 28. True, said an Arminian Schismatic, grown grey in the Service of Error, and who still goes up and down, sowing his Tares, seeking whom he may devour, and compassing Sea and Land to make Profelytes: "True; CHRIST'S SHEEP can't be pluck'd forcibly out of his Hand, by others: but they themselves may slip through his Hands, and so fall into Hell, and be eternally lost." They may SLIP, may they? as if the Mediator, in preserving His People, held only a Parcel of

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In a Word: If any of God's People can be finally lost; it must be occasioned, either by *their* Departing from God, or by *God's* Departure from *Them*. But they are certainly and effectually secured against these *Two*, and these *only* possible, Sources of Apostacy. For, thus runs the Covenant of Grace; *I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I WILL NOT TURN AWAY FROM THEM, to do them good; and I will put my Fear in their Hearts, that THEY SHALL NOT DEPART FROM ME, Jer. xxxii. 40.* Now, if God will neither leave *them*, nor suffer them to leave *Him*; their final Perseverance in Grace to Glory must be certain and infallible.

Having greatly exceeded the Limits I designed, I shall forbear to adduce the Attestations of the Church of *England* to the Doctrines of *Assurance* and *Perseverance*: especially, seeing I have done this, somewhat largely, elsewhere <sup>f</sup>.— I must not, however,

*Let by the Tail!* Is not this a shameless Way of *slipping* through a plain Text of Scripture? But I would fain ask the *suppery* Sophister, how we are to understand that Part of the last-cited Passage, which expressly declares, concerning Christ's People, that *they shall never perish*? since, *perish* they necessarily *must*, and certainly *would*, if eventually separated from Christ; whether they were to be *pluck'd* out of his Hands, or whether they were only to *slip* through them. I conclude, then, That the Promise made to the Saints, that they shall *never perish*, secures them, equally, against the Possibility of being either *wrested* from Christ's Hand, or of their own *failing* from it: since, could One or Other be the Case, *perish* they must, and Christ's Promise would fall to the Ground.

<sup>f</sup> In a Pamphlet, entitled, *The Church of England vindicated from the Charge of Arminianism*; where, concerning the Doctrine of *Assurance*, see Page 125, 126. and, concerning the Doctrine of *Perseverance*, see Page 127—130.

however, conclude, without observing, That Irreversible *Justification*, on GOD's Part, and subjective *Assurance* of Indefectibility, on ours; do by no means invest an Offending Christian with Immunity from Sufferings and Chastisement. Thus, NATHAN said to DAVID, *The LORD hath put away thy Sin; thou shalt not dye*: yet was he severely *scourg'd*, tho' not disinherited, for his Transgressions. The Tenor of GOD's immutable Covenant with the Messiah, and with His People in Him, is This: *His Seed will I make to endure for ever, and His Throne as the Days of Heaven. If His Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments; if they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments; then will I visit their Transgression with the Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes: nevertheless, my Loving Kindness will I not utterly take from Him, nor suffer my Faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the Thing that is gone out of my Lips. I have sworn, once for all, by my Holiness, that I will not lye unto JESUS the Anti-typical David, by suffering any of his Redeemed People to perish* <sup>s</sup>. Hence, as it is presently added, they shall be *establis'd for ever, as the Moon; and as the faithful Witness in Heaven*: nay, they shall stand forth, and shine, when the Sun is turned into Darkness, and the Moon into Blood; when the Stars shall drop from their Orbits, and the Powers of Heaven shall be shaken. As an excellent Person somewhere observes, "Our own Unbelief may, occasionally, tear the Copies of the Covenant, given

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<sup>s</sup> Psalm lxxxix. 29—35.



“ us by CHRIST; but Unbelief cannot come at the  
 “ Covenant Itself. CHRIST keeps the original Deed in  
 “ Heaven with Himself, where it can never be lost.”

Upon the Whole : Are these Things so? Then,

1. How great, and how deplorable, is the general Departure from the Scripture-Doctrines of the Church of *England*, and the first Principles of the Reformation!

2. How blessed are the Eyes, that *see*; how happy are the Hearts, that *feel*; the Propriety and the Energy of these inestimable Truths! And,

3. How ought such to demonstrate their Gratitude, by a practical Glorification of GOD, *in their Bodies, and in their Spirits, which are His!* Resemble *Thunder*, in your Boldness for GOD, and your Zeal for Truth: but let your *Lives* shine as *Lightening*, and flash Conviction in the Faces of those, who *falsely accuse your good Conversation in CHRIST*, and as falsely charge the Doctrines of GOD with a licentious Tendency.— But let not your Zeal be of the *inflammatory* Kind: let it be tempered with unbounded Moderation, Gentleness, and Benevolence; and shine forth, as the *SUN, with Healing in its Wings*. Remember *Who* it is, that hath *made you to differ* from others; and that *a Man can receive nothing, except it be given him from Heaven*, John iii. 27.

*Not unto Us, therefore, O LORD, not unto Us, but to THY Name alone, be the Praise of every GIFT, and of every GRACE, ascribed; for thy Loving Mercy, and for thy Truth's sake. Amen.*

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# POSTSCRIPT.

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TO THE  
PARISHIONERS  
OF

St. MATTHEW, *Bethnal-Green.*

GENTLEMEN,

**B**EFORE the preceding Sermon could get through the Press, the Rev. Mr. *Haddon Smith*, who, it seems, serves You as Curate, has thought proper to publish a Discourse, which he delivered, in Opposition to This, the Sunday after I had the Honor of Preaching it before You.

It would render that Unthinking, but, I would hope, well-meaning Gentleman, much too considerable, were I either to address him by Name; or descend to canvass a Performance, wherein Heat

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and Scurrility endeavor to supply the total Vacuity of Argument.— For Mr. *Smith* to enter the Lists, with such exceding Fierceness, against a Sermon, which he did not hear, and which, hitherto, he has had no possible Opportunity of reading; discovers a Weakness and Temerity in *him*, which sink him as low beneath my Notice, as the Established Doctrines of our Excellent Church rise superior to his Impotence of Censure.— When the Gentleman shall appear to have at all *considered* the Important Articles of Faith, on which he has presumed to animadvert; when the Sails of his furious Zeal shall be counter-ballasted by some little Degree of Judgment; and when he has learned to express himself, if not with Christian Decency, yet with common, *grammatical* Propriety; Then, and not 'till then, shall I deem him a proper Object of Attention.

You, Gentlemen, can testify, that I never once appeared, in Your Pulpit, but at Your own particular Request: a Request, which I could not, possibly, have any interested Motives for complying with, as I never accepted of the smallest Gratuity for my Attendance. Is it for This, that the Enraged Curate has, repeatedly, traduced me from the Pulpit, and, Now, insults me from the Press?

For

For my own Part, I am so far from entertaining any Resentment against Mr. *Smith* (with whom I do not remember to have exchanged five Words in my Life; and whom I should not even know at Sight), or from being deterred by his unmerited Abuse; that, should I live to see *London* again, I shall always deem myself happy to wait on You, as usual, whenever either Your own Desire, or the Interest of Your public Charity, may command. And, as so many of You have favored me with uncommon Civility and Attention, I am encourag'd to offer one Request; a Request, not in Behalf of Myself, but of Mr. *Smith*: viz. that his ill-judged and unbecoming Warmth may not so far alienate Your Affection from his Person, as to make You persist in withdrawing those usual Proofs of Your Beneficence, which, formerly, You have favored him with; and which, I am sorry to be informed, have, of late, through his Defect of Candor and Humility, been considerably lessened.

My Sermon, and His, are now before the Public. The Rashness, and seeming Malignity, with which he appears desirous to plunge into the Depths of an unequal Contest, might, in the Opinion of some, justify Me in the amplest Severity of Animadversion. But I spare him. I cannot prevail with myself, to render *Evil for Evil, or Railing for Railing*. On the contrary, I wish, and Pray, that Divine Grace may

may cause him to partake of the *Mind which was in CHRIST JESUS*; and that he may, by the same Almighty Influence, be made to experience, to believe, and to preach, the inestimable Truths of that Gospel, which JESUS taught.

Mr. *John Wesley* (on whose Plan of Doctrine, Your Curate seems, in great Measure, to have formed his own) is the only Opponent, I ever had, whom I chastized with a studious Disregard to Ceremony. Nor do I, in the least, repent of the Manner, in which I treated him. To have refuted the Forgeries and Perversions of *such* an Assailant, tenderly, and with Meekness falsely so called; would have been like shooting at an Highwayman with a Pop-gun, or like repelling the Sword of an Assassin with a Straw. I rather blame myself, on a Review, for handling Mr. *Wesley* too gently; and for not acquainting the World with All I know, concerning *the Man and his Communication*. I only gave him the *Whip*, when he deserved a *Scorpion*.

But, as to Mr. *Smith*, he, hitherto, amidst all his Ignorance and Unguardedness, merits a milder Treatment. Want of Talents, and of Thought, appear in every Paragraph of his Sermon: but I am willing to believe him not wholly destitute of Integrity. Though he opposes the Doctrines of the Church of *England*, with Virulence; yet, he seems

to do so, from Principle. Under this Persuasion, I, at present, give him Rope. Hereafter, should he rise into any Thing like a respectable Antagonist; I may, perhaps, hook him, and pull him in.—'Till then, I take my Leave, both of the Curate and of his Preachment, with that justly admired Line, which is, at once, equally picturesque of *his* Behavior, and expressive of *my* fixed Determination;

*Tu loqueris Lapides: Ego Byssina Verba reponam.*

I am, with much Respect and Regard,

GENTLEMEN,

*Your Obliged and Obedient Servant,*

AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

BROAD HEMBURY;

*August 31, 1770.*

