

A DEFENCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION, BY FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST;

SHewing,

TRUE GOSPEL-HOLINESS FLOWS FROM THENCE;

OR, MR. FOWLER'S PRETENDED DESIGN OF CHRISTIANITY, PROVED TO BE NOTHING MORE THAN TO
TRAMPLE UNDER FOOT THE BLOOD OF THE SON OF GOD; AND THE IDOLIZING
OF MAN'S OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

AS ALSO,

HOW WHILE HE PRETENDS TO BE A MINISTER OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND, HE OVERTHROWETH THE WHOLESOME
DOCTRINE CONTAINED IN THE 10TH, 11TH, AND 13TH, OF THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES OF THE SAME,
AND THAT HE FALLETH IN WITH THE QUAKER AND ROMANIST, AGAINST THEM.

By JOHN BUNYAN.

'Disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious.'—1 PET. II. 4.

Printed for Francis Smith, at the Elephant and Castle, without Temple Bar, 1672.

EDITOR'S ADVERTISEMENT.

THIS is one of the least known but most deeply interesting productions of John Bunyan. It has never been reprinted in a separate form; and once only in any edition of his works—that with notes, by Mason and Ryland, and then with great carelessness, the errata remaining uncorrected, and one leaf being entirely omitted. This treatise was published to counteract the pernicious errors in a very popular volume called ‘The Design of Christianity,’ by Edward Fowler, minister of God’s Word at Northill, in Bedfordshire. Printed by the authority of the Bishop of London, April 17th, 1671; an octavo volume of 308 pages. The whole object proposed by Mr. Fowler was to shew, that Christianity is intended merely to restore man to the original state which he enjoyed before the fall.

Bunyan was at that time suffering his tedious imprisonment for conscience sake in Bedford jail; and having refused to expatriate himself, was in daily fear lest his cruel sentence, ‘you must stretch by the neck’ for refusing to attend the church service, should be carried into execution.

The fame of Fowler’s gross perversion of the design of Christ’s gospel reached Bunyan in prison, and its popularity grieved his spirit. At length, on the 13th of the 11th Month (February), a copy of the book was brought to him; and in the almost incredible space of forty-two short days, on the 27th of the 12th Month (March) 1671-2, he had fully analysed ‘The Design,’ exposed the sophistry, and scripturally answered the gross errors which abound in every page of this learned and subtle piece of casuistry.

The display of Latin and Greek quotations from the heathens and fathers, those thunderbolts of scholastic warfare, dwindled into mere pop-gun weapons before the sword of the Spirit, which puts all such rabble to utter rout. Never was the homely proverb of Cobbler Howe more fully exemplified, than in this triumphant answer to the subtleties of a man deeply schooled in all human acquirements, by an unlettered mechanic, whose knowledge was drawn from one book, the inspired volume:—

‘The Spirit’s teaching in a cobbler’s shop,
Doth Oxford and Cambridge o’ertop.’

The Babel building of the learned clergyman could not withstand the attack of one who was armed with such irresistible weapons. His words burn ‘like a fire,’ and consume the wood, hay and stubble; while they fell with overpowering weight, as ‘a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces.’ Je. xxiii. 29. So cunningly was ‘the design’ constructed, that nothing but the fire and hammer of God’s word could have demolished it. Armed with such weapons, he fearlessly from his dungeon made the attack; and, encouraged by the Spirit which animated the prophet, he was not ‘dismayed at their faces,’ but became as ‘a defenced city, and an iron pillar, and brazen walls against the whole land.’ Je. i. 48.

Such internal and powerful support encouraged Bunyan to use the greatest plainness of speech. He was fully aware of his danger, and of the great influence of Mr. Fowler, but he had counted the cost of plain honest dealing, and was ‘undaunted

by the perils which surrounded him. With noble bearing, worthy the descendant of the apostles, he declares, ‘As for your subtle and close incensing THE POWER to persecute Nonconformists, know that we are willing, God assisting, to overcome you with truth and patience; not sticking to sacrifice our lives, and dearest concerns in a faithful witness-bearing.’* ‘Wherefore, sir, laying aside all fear of men, not regarding what you may procure to be inflicted upon me, for this my plain dealing with you, I tell you again, that you are one of them that have closely, privily, and devilishly, by your book, turned the grace of our God into a lascivious doctrine.’† Mr. Fowler’s opinions were not only contrary to scripture, but to that which some esteem a more heinous offence, they opposed the thirty-nine articles; and the result was that Bunyan, who vindicated the scriptures and those articles, was kept in prison, while the clergyman who opposed them was soon after consecrated Bishop of Gloucester! It may lead some simple readers to wonder how it could be, that state religion thus made a mockery of itself. The reason is perfectly obvious; Fowler’s religion was that of a statesman, which may be comprised in one word, *expediency*; and the man who could publish as truth, that religion consists in obeying the orders made therein by the state, deserved the primacy of the united churches of England and Ireland. His words are, speaking of religious observances, ‘Whatsoever of such are commanded by the custom of the places we live in, or commanded by superiors, or made by any circumstance convenient to be done; our christian liberty consists in this, that we have leave to do them. And, indeed, it is so far from being a sin, that it would be so to refuse so to do.’ Could the state have selected a fitter tool for their purposes?

Mr. Fowler is *somewhat* inconsistent with regard to persecution; in p. 266 he says, ‘As for factious hypocrites, they would be with ease suppressed;’ in p. 262 he describes these factious hypocrites, ‘Such as preach up free grace,—laying hold on Christ’s righteousness and renouncing our own righteousness.’ Such are to be suppressed, but for Roman catholics ‘imposing their own sense upon the word of God, and their persecuting, burning, and damning men for not subscribing to *theirs* as to *God’s* word can be no better than an act of devilish pride and barbarous cruelty,’ p. 247. Does not the same pride and cruelty apply equally to the church of Bonner for burning Latimer, of Fowler, for the imprisonment of Bunyan; and of Philpot, for dragging his brother, Shore, from his family, and shutting him up in Exeter jail?

The admirers of Bunyan will feel surprised at his

strictures upon persons calling themselves Quakers. In these severe remarks he does not refer to the Society of Friends; but to some unworthy individuals who assumed the name of Quakers. They will be equally surprised at his freedom of speech with one who he considered to be an enemy to his Lord. He calls Mr. Fowler ‘a brutish, beastly man,’ ‘this thief,’ ‘a blasphemer,’ ‘horribly wicked,’ ‘a learned ignorant Nicodemus,’ ‘one that would fling heaven’s gates off the hinges,’ ‘a bat,’ ‘an angel of darkness.’ Such epithets sound strangely in our more refined age; but they were then considered essential to faithful dealing. The Bishop in his reply, called ‘Dirt wiped off,’ beat the tinker in abusive language; he calls Bunyan ‘A wretched scribbler,’ ‘grossly ignorant,’ ‘most unchristian and wicked,’ ‘a piece of proud folly,’ ‘so very dirty a creature that he disdains to dirt his fingers with him,’ ‘Bunyan can no more disgrace him than a rude creature can eclipse the moon by barking at her; or make palaces contemptible by lifting up their legs against them,’ ‘a most black-mouthed calumniator,’ ‘infamous in Bedford for a pestilent schismatic,’ and with a heart full of venom he called upon his majesty not to let such a firebrand, impudent, malicious schismatic to enjoy toleration, or *go unpunished*, lest he should subvert all government. Bunyan had then suffered nearly twelve years’ incarceration in a miserable jail, and was more zealous and intrepid than ever: and yet this learned fanatic would have added to his privations, because he could not resist the arrows of truth with which this poor prisoner for Christ assailed him, drawn all burning from the furnace of God’s holy word.

Bunyan’s views of the kingly office of Christ are very striking: not only is he king over the church requiring personal obedience, but over the universe for the benefit of believers. ‘Christ is as well a Lord for us, as to, or over us; and it highly concerneth the soul—when it believeth in, or trusteth to, the righteousness of Christ, for justification with God—to see that this righteousness lords it over death and sin, and the devil and hell for us.’ ‘He led captivity captive, that is, carried them prisoners, whose prisoners we were: He rode to heaven in triumph, having in chains the foes of believers.’

This compendious treatise is upon a most important subject, and detects dangerous errors enveloped in most insinuating sophistry. In preparing this edition for the press, the text has been carefully collated with the original, which is in the editor’s possession. The quotations have been verified; those from Fowler by the first edition of his ‘Design of Christianity,’ 1671. The extracts from ‘Penn’s Sandy Foundation,’ by the second edition, in the Friends’ library, Devonshire House. Those from Campion have not been discovered; the

* P. 324.

† P. 221.

author's being confined at Bedford, while his book was printing in London, occasioned numerous typographical errors which have been corrected, and all the obsolete words explained.

To assist the reader, a few leading words have been introduced in italics, and between brackets, to distinguish them from the text.

GEORGE OFFOR.

A PREMONITION TO THE READER.

GENTLE READER,

THAT thou mayest not be tired with longing to know what errors, and doctrines destructive to Christianity, Mr. Fowler in his feigned design of Christianity, hath presented the world withal; and that thou mayest even in the entry, see that which more fully is shewn in the house: namely, of the contradiction that is in his book, to the wholesome doctrine of the church of England, while he stands a minister of the same, I have thought convenient, instead of an epistle, to present thee with those doctrines contained in his; and that are refuted by the book that thou hast in thy hand. The which also, I hope, will be a sufficient apology for this my undertaking.

His Doctrines are these:

1. That the first principles of morals, those first written in men's hearts, are the essentials, the indispensable, and fundamental points or doctrines of the gospel, p. 8, 281, 282. 2. That these first principles, are to be followed, principally, as they are made known to us, by the dictates of human nature: and that this obedience is the first, and best sort of obedienee, we Christians can perform, p. 8, 9, 10. 3. That there is such a thing as a soundness of soul; and the purity of human nature in the world, p. 6. 4. That the law, in the first principles of it, is far beyond, and more obliging on the hearts of Christians, than is, that of coming to God by Christ, p. 7-10. 5. That the precept of coming to God by Christ, &c. is in its own nature, a thing indifferent, and absolutely considered neither good nor evil, p. 7, 8, 9. 6. That Christ's great errand, in coming into the world, was to put us again in possession of the holiness we had lost, p. 12. 7. That John the Baptist, the Angel that was sent to Zacharias, and Mary, preached this doctrine, and so also did Malachi the prophet, p. 13. 8. That Christ by saving us from sin, is meant, not first, his saving us from the punishment, but from the filth, and from the punishment, as a consequence of that, p. 14, 15. 9. That Christ's work, when he was come, was to establish ONLY an inward real righteousness, p. 16. 10. That Christ's fulfilling the law FOR US, was by giving more perfect, and lighter instances of moral duties, than were before expressly given, p. 17. 11. That Christ's doctrine,

life, actions, miracles, death, resurrection, ascension, and coming again to judgment, is all preached to establish us in this righteousness, chap. 2-8. 12. That it is not possible a wicked man should have God's pardon, p. 119. 13. That it is impossible Christ's righteousness should be imputed to an unrighteous man, p. 120. 14. And that if it were, he boldly affirms, it would signify as little to his happiness, while he continueth so, as would a gorgeous and splendid garment, to one that is almost starved, p. 120. 15. For God to justify a wicked man,* &c., would far more disparage his justice and holiness, than advance his grace and kindness, p. 130. 16. He saith, men are not capable of God's pardoning grace, till they have truly repented them of all their sins, p. 130. 17. The devils, saith he, have a large measure of these attributes of God; as his power, knowledge, &c.† p. 124. 18. That Christ did himself perform, as our example, whatever he required of us to do; yea, that he trod himself EVERY step of our way to heaven, p. 148. 19. The salvation of Christ, first, consists in curing our wounds (our filth) and secondarily, in freeing us from the smart, p. 216. 20. That pardon doth not so much consist in remission, as in healing; [to wit, our filth,] p. 216. 21. Faith justifieth, as it includeth true holiness in the nature of it; it justifieth AS it doth so, p. 221. 22. That faith which entitles a sinner to so high a privilege as that of justification, must needs be such as complieth with all the purposes of Christ's coming into the world, &c. And it is no less necessary that it should justify as it doth this, p. 222. 23. He wonders that any worthy man should be so difficultly persuaded, to embrace THIS account of justifying faith, p. 222. 24. There can be no pretence for a man, to think that faith should be the condition or instrument of justification, as it complieth with, only the precept of relying on Christ's merits for the obtaining of it, p. 223. 25. It is, saith he, as clear as the sun at noon-day, that obedience to the other precepts must go before obedience to this, p. 223. 26. He shall be his Apollo, that can give him a sufficient reason, why justifying faith should consist in recompence‡ and reliance on Christ's merits for the

* Fowler's words, in place of, &c., are 'while he continues so (if it were possible for God to do it).'

† Holiness is excepted!!

‡ 'Recompence,' depending upon.

pardon of sin,* p. 224. 27. He will take the boldness to tell those who are displeased with this account of justifying faith, that in his opinion it is impossible they should once think of any other, p. 225. 28. The imputation of Christ's righteousness, consisteth in dealing with sincerely righteous persons, as if they were perfectly so, &c. p. 225. 29. The grand intent of the gospel is, to make us partakers of inward real righteousness; and it is but secondary, that we should be accepted as before, p. 226. 30. It is not possible (he saith) that any other notion of this doctrine should have truth in it, p. 226. 31. Whatsoever is commanded by the customs of the place we live in, or commanded by superiors, or made by ANY circumstance convenient to be done, our christian liberty consists in this that we have leave to do them, p. 242. 32. For our refusing to comply with these, can hardly proceed from any thing, than a proud affectation of singularity, or at best from superstitious scrupulosity, p. 242. 33. Those ministers hinder the design of Christianity, that preach up free grace, and christian privileges, OTHER WAYS than as motives to obedience, and that scarce ever insist upon any other duties than those of believing, laying hold of Christ's righteousness, applying the promises, &c., p. 262. 34. But to make the christian duties to consist either wholly or mostly in these, &c., is the way effectually to harden hypocrites, p. 262. 35. Those ministers do nothing less than promote the design of Christianity, that are never in their element, but when they are talking

of the irrespectiveness of God's decrees, the absolute [ness of his] promises, the utter disability, and perfect impotence of natural men, to do any thing towards their own conversion, p. 262. 36. He is the only child of Abraham, who in the purity of his heart obeyeth those substantial laws, that are by God imposed upon him, p. 283. 37. There is no duty more affectionately commanded in the gospel, than that of almsgiving, p. 284. 38. It is impossible we should not have the design of Christianity accomplished in us, &c.. if we make our Saviour's most excellent life, the pattern of our lives, p. 296. 39. To do well is better than believing, p. 299. 40. To be imitators of Christ's righteousness, even of the righteousness we should rely on, is counted by Mr. Fowler, *more noble*, than to rely thereon, or trust thereto, p. 300.

READER,

I have given thee here but a taste of these things; and by my book but a brief reply to the errors that he by his hath divulged to the world: Ay, though many more are by me reflected than the forty thou are here presented with.

God give thee eyes to see, and an heart to shun and escape all these things that may yet come to pass, for hurt, and to stand before the Son of Man.

Thus hoping that this short taste may make Mr. Fowler ashamed, and thee receive satisfaction, touching the truth and state of this man's spirit and principles; I rest,

Thine to serve thee in the gospel of Christ,
J. BUNYAN.

From Prison, the 27th of the
12th Month, 1671.
[27th March, 1672.]

A DEFENCE OF THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST;

PROVING

THAT GOSPEL-HOLINESS FLOWS FROM THENCE.

SIR,

Having heard of your book, entitled, *The Design of Christianity*; and that in it was contained such principles as gave just offence to christian ears; I was desirous of a view thereof, that from my sight of things I might be the better able to judge. But I could not obtain it till the 13th of this 11th month, which was too soon for you, Sir, a pretended minister of the word, so vilely to expose to public view the rottenness of your heart in principles diametrically opposite to the simplicity of the gospel of Christ. And had it not been for this consideration, that it is not too late to oppose open

blasphemy (such as endangereth the souls of thousands) I had cast by this answer, as a thing out of season.

Two things are the design of your book.

1. To assert and justify a thing which you call inward, real righteousness and holiness.

2. To prove, That the whole, the grand, the only, and ultimate design of the gospel of Christ, is to begin and perfect this righteousness.

Into the truth, or untruth, of both these, as briefly as I may, I shall at this time inquire.

First, Therefore, a little to examine the nature of your holiness and righteousness, as yourself hath described the same.

'It is (say you) so sound a complexion of soul, as maintains in life and vigour, whatsoever is essential to it, and suffereth not anything unnatural to mix with that which is so; by the force and power whereof a man is enabled to behave himself as [becometh] a creature indued with a principle of reason, keeps his supreme faculty in its throne, brings into due subjection all his inferior ones, his sensual imagination, his brutish passions and affections.'

You add farther, 'It is the purity of the human nature, engaging those in whom it resides, to demean themselves suitably in that state in which God hath placed them, and not to act disbecomingly in any condition, circumstance or relation.'

You say, moreover, 'It is a divine, or God-like nature, causing an hearty approbation of, and an affectionate compliance with the eternal laws of righteousness; and a behaviour agreeable to the essential, and immutable differences of good and evil,' p. 6.

Farther, You call it a principle or habit of soul, 'originally dictates of human nature,' p. 8.

'A disposition and temper of the inward man, as powerfully inclines it to regard, and attend to; affectionately to embrace and adhere to; to be actuated by, and under the government of, all those [good] practical principles, that are made known either by revelation, nature, or the use of reason,' p. 11. Which in conclusion you call *that* holiness which already we have lost, p. 12.

Thus, Sir, is your holiness, by you described; which holiness you aver is that, which is the great and only design of Christ to promote both by his life and glorious gospel.

To take therefore your description in pieces, if happily there may be found ought, but naught therein.

1. 'It is (say you) an healthful complexion of soul, the purity of the human nature,' &c.

Ans. These are but words; there is no such thing as the purity of our nature, abstract and distinct from the sinful pollution that dwelleth in us. Ro. vii. 24. It is true, a man may talk of, and by argument distinguish between nature and sin; but that there is such a principle in man (since Adam's fall) a principle by which he may act, or that Christ's whole gospel-design is, the helping forward such a principle, is altogether without scripture or reason. There is no man by nature, that hath any soundness in him, Is. i. 6. no, neither in soul or body; his understanding is darkened, his mind and conscience is defiled, Tit. i. 15. his will is perverted and obstinate. Ep. iv. 18. 'There is no judgment in his goings.' Is. lix. 6—10. Where now is the sound and healthful complexion of soul? Let the best come to the best, when we have mustered up all the excellences of the soul of man, as man,

shall nought we find there, but the lame, the blind, the defiled, the obstinate and misled faculties thereof. And never think to evade me by saying, the graces of the Spirit of God are pure: for with them you have nothing to do; your doctrine is of the sound complexion of soul, the purity of the human nature, a habit of soul, and the holiness we lost in Adam, things a great way off from the spirit of grace, or the gracious workings of the spirit. You talk indeed of a divine or godlike nature,* but this is still the same with your pure human nature, or with your sound complexion, or habit of soul; and so must either respect man, as he was created in the image or likeness of God, or else you have palpable contradiction in this your description. But it must be concluded, that the divine nature you talk of, is that, and no other than the dictates of the human nature, or your feigned purity thereof; because you make it by your words the self same; it is the purity of the human nature, it is a divine or Godlike nature.

2. But you proceed to tell us of a degree, it is so sound and healthful a complexion or temperature of the faculties, qualities, or virtues of soul, 'as maintains in life and vigour whatsoever is essential to it, and suffereth not anything unnatural to mix with that which is so.'[†]

Ans. If, as was said before, there is no soundness of soul in man, as man, and no such thing as a purity of our nature, abstract from that which is sin; then where shall we find so healthful a complexion, or temperature of soul, as to maintain in life and vigour whatsoever is essential to it, and that suffereth not any thing unnatural to mix with that which is so?

But let us take Paul's definition of a man; 'There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: [their feet are swift to shed blood: destruction and misery are in their ways: and the way of peace have they not known: there is no fear of God before their eyes.]' Ro. iii. I the rather give you this of Paul, than any of my own; because it is the *soundest* complexion of soul, that the Holy Ghost himself could draw. Here is now no purity of the human nature, nor such sound complexion of soul as can keep itself from mixing with that which is contrary to itself. And note, that this is the state of all men, and that as they stand in themselves before God: wherefore together, even altogether, all the

* Fowler's Design, p. 6.

† Ibid.

men in the world, take them in their most pure naturals, or with all the purity of humanity, which they can make, and together, they still will be unprofitable, and so must come short of doing good, ‘that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God.’ ver. 19.*

3. But proceeding, you say, that this complexion is so forcible as to ‘keep his supreme faculty (I suppose you mean the conscience) in its throne, (and that) brings into due subjection all his inferior ones, (as namely) his sensual imagination, brutish passions and affections.’†

Ans. These words suppose that it is within the power of a man’s own soul, always to keep sin out of itself, and so guilt out of the conscience; albeit the scripture saith, that both the mind and it are defiled with the filth of sin, in all who ever do not believe the gospel, with which belief this description meddleth not. Tit. i. 15.

They suppose that *this* conscience is perfectly clear and light, when the scriptures say they have the understanding darkened; yea and farther, in despite of these your sayings of the sound complexion of soul, of the purity of human nature, and of this supreme faculty, the scriptures teach, that man in his best estate is altogether vanity, that they are darkness and night, &c. Ep. iv. 18, 19. 1 Th. v. Ps. xxxix. 5.

‘Yea, (say you) this sound complexion brings into due subjection all his inferior ones.’‡

Ans. Here seems to be a contradiction to the former part of this description, yea, to the nature of the soul itself; for you say before, it suffereth not any thing unnatural to mix itself therewith, when yet here you seem to suggest that part, I say, even part of itself is disobedient and rebellious, ‘it brings into subjection all his inferior ones.’

‘It brings into due subjection.’

Ans. Due subjection is such as is everlasting, universal, perfect in nature, kind, and manner, such as the most righteous, perfect, comprehensive law, or commandment cannot object against, or find fault therewith. Here’s a soul! here’s a

pure human nature! here are pure dictates of a brutish beastly man, that neither knows himself nor one tittle of the word of God. But ‘*There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet are not washed from their filthiness.*’ Pr. xxx. 12.

‘It is the purity of the human nature, engaging those in whom it resides,’ &c.||

Ans. That is, *verily* in none at all; for there is no such thing in any man in this world, as a purity of human nature: ‘we are all as an unclean *thing*,’ Is. lxiv. 6. and ‘Who can bring a clean *thing* out of an unclean? not one.’ Job xiv. 4. Again,

‘What *is* man, that he should be clean? or *he which is* born of a woman, that he should be righteous?’ Job xv. 14. These are therefore expressions without the testimony of the word, arising from your own phantasy.

‘It is a divine, or Godlike nature.’||

Ans. This you seem also to fetch from the similitude or likeness of God that was in us at our first creation, before we sinned; but that similitude being at best but created, and since most unspeakably defiled, defaced and polluted with sin; there is now, no not in the best of men, as men, any sinless likeness, and similitude of God to be found, no such *petty* divine, or Godlike nature to be found, as you imagine.

But having thus stated your holiness in its nature and essence, you come in the next place to tell us, under what considerations it moveth a person to act, also by what rules and laws it squareth its acts and doings.

FIRST, By or under what considerations it acts, and these you scatter here and there in your description of holiness, under these heads. I. To act ‘as becomes a creature endued with a principle of reason,’ eyeing the state or place in which God hath set him; approving of, affecting and complying with the eternal laws of righteousness, p. 6. which eternal laws in p. 8. you call ‘divine moral laws,’ those that were first written in the hearts of men, ‘and originally dictates of human nature,’ &c. II. ‘To do these, from truly generous motives and principles,’ p. 7. Such as these, 1. Because ‘it is most highly becoming all reasonable creatures (you might also have added, and those unreasonable) to obey God in every thing; (within their spheres) and as much disbecoming them, to disobey him,’ p. 8. 2. ‘Because it is a base thing to do unjustly,’ p. 11.

Now a little to touch upon all these, and then to proceed to what is behind.

I. To act and do the things of the moral law, but as ‘creatures endued with a principle of reason,’ is but to do things in our sphere as men, as the beast, the hog or horse doth things in his,

* Seeing, then, it is evident from scripture, how deeply and dreadfully man is fallen from God, what a folly it is to suppose, in such a depraved creature, conditions previous to his justification! They who talk at this rate, know not what they say, nor whereof they affirm. In a natural man there is no meetness, but a meetness to sin, and a meetness to be damned. They who know themselves, know this. And there are no pre-requisites to justification, but what God, by his Spirit, is pleased to work in men’s hearts. None are meet to obey the gospel, till God implants in their souls a principle of faith and evangelical obedience. Before this is done, there is no meetness in the creature, no disposition to do anything spiritually good; neither are any of our works, till a change of nature takes place, acceptable and well-pleasing in the sight of Almighty God.—*Mason and Ryland.*

† Fowler, p. 6.

‡ Ibid.

§ Fowler, p. 6.

|| Ibid.

as a beast; which is at best, if it could be attained, to act but as pure naturals, which state of man is of at infinite distance from that, in which it is by God expected the man must act, that doth ought that is pleasing in his sight. For,

1. The qualification and consideration by you propounded, is that which is in all men, in men simply as men, they being reasonable creatures, and somewhat, though but somewhat capable of acting as such.

2. This qualification is not only in, but of men; reason is of the man himself, even that which is as essential to him, as is that of his being created or made.

3. The law also, which *you* call divine, moral, and eternal, is that which is naturally seated in the heart, and as *you* yourself express it, is originally the dictates of humane nature, or that which mankind doth naturally assent to, p. 11.

Now I say, that a man cannot by these principles, and these qualifications, please the God of heaven, is apparent. (1.) Because none of these are faith, ‘But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*,’ He. xi. 6. (2.) Because none of these are of the Holy Ghost, but there is nothing accepted of God, under a New Testament consideration, but those which are the fruits of the Spirit. Ga. v. 22—23. (3.) The man and principles you have stated, may be such as are utterly ignorant of Jesus Christ, and of all his New Testament things, as such: ‘But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: (the things of his New Testament) for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.’ 1 Co. ii. 14. (4.) Your qualifications and considerations, know nothing at all of the adoption of sons, and of our acting and doing our duty as such. You only content yourself to rest within the confines of the humane nature, acts of reason, as men or creatures only, or in their supposed pure, natural principles.

And Sir, a little by way of digression; I will tell you also of our truly christian righteousness, both as to its original or first principle; and also how, or under what capacity, it puts the person that is acted by it.

First, The principle which is laid within us, it is not the purity of the humane nature, but of the Holy Ghost itself, which we have of God received, by believing in the Son of God, a principle as far above yours of humanity, as is the heavens above the earth; yours being but like those of the first Adam, but ours truly those of the second. 1 Co. vi. 12. ‘As *is* the earthly, such *are* they also that are earthly: and as *is* the heavenly, such *are* they also that are heavenly.’ 1 Co. xv. 48.

Now whosoever hath not this principle, although he be a creature, and also have the dictates of the

humane nature, yea, and also follows them, yet he is not Christ’s: ‘If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.’ Ro. viii. 9. Thus therefore is the christian principle another from, and far above, your heathenish Pagan one. By this Spirit is the Christian qualified with principles, not natural, but spiritual, such as faith, hope, joy, peace, &c. all which are the fruits of the revelation of the forgiveness of sins, freely by grace, Ga. v. 25. ‘through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.’ Ro. iii. 24. In this spirit and faith we walk, by this spirit we are led, Ro. viii. 14. even into the joy and peace of the New Testament of our Lord; wherefore our holy actions are the fruits of righteousness, that is by Jesus Christ, not by our humane nature, or the purity of it in us; yea, they are the fruits of the Spirit of God, the qualifications that attend the new covenant, and those that by the work of regeneration are brought within the bounds and privileges thereof. Wherefore,

Second, The capacity that we are in, who act and do from the heavenly principle; it is that of sons, the sons of God by adoption, as the apostle said, ‘Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.’ Ga. iv. 6. And again, ‘As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.’ Ro. viii. 14. This is a far other than is your human description of acting as a creature, endued with a principle of reason; for here is a man acts as a son, endued with the Holy Spirit of God, who hath, before the world was, predestinated him to this estate, by Jesus Christ, to himself. Ep. i. 4; iv. 6. As a son therefore, the Christian acts and does, because he is endued with that high and heavenly principle mentioned before; by which principle this man hath received a new heart, a new spirit, a new understanding, a good conscience, so made by ‘faith in the blood of the Lord Jesus.’ He. x. Thus being made again anew and another man, he acts from a new and another principle than yours; a principle as far beyond and above you, as is a man above a brute, and as is grace above nature. 2 Co. v. 14—16.

Third, As the Christian acts and does from a better principle, and under a better capacity or consideration than that you have described; so (to allude to your own notion) the first principles by which they receive this spirit and adoption, are not those principles of morals, or those originally dictates of human nature; but it is through the hearing of faith, Ga. iii. 1—3. by which we understand, that the Son of God became a man, died for our sins, hath saved us from the curse of God, and accounted us to be the righteousness of God in him; this being heard with the gospel, and a New Testament hearing, the Holy Ghost forthwith possessest us, by the glorious working whereof

we are helped, through the Son, to call the God of heaven, our Father.

Now thus being made free from sin, by the only faith of Jesus Christ, ‘we have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.’ Ro. vi. 22.

And here come in those reasonable conclusions, which you would make the very radicals of Christianity, they being only remote, and after conclusions, drawn from the fore-mentioned mercy of God, viz., from predestination, calling, adoption, and justification by Christ’s blood, while we in ourselves are sinners. I say these are the things which Paul endeavoured to provoke the Romans, Philippians, and Colossians, to an holy conversation by.

To the Romans, ‘I beseech you therefore,’ saith he, ‘by the mercies of God, (What mercies? Why those of election, redemption, calling, justification, and adoption, mentioned in the foregoing chapters) that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.’ Ro. xii. 1.

To the Philippians, ‘If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like minded.’ Phi. ii. 1, 2.

To the Colossians, ‘If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth; for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, *who is* our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.’ Co. iii. 1—4. Now mark; mortify therefore, therefore! wherefore? why, because they were risen with Christ; because they should appear at the end of this world with Christ himself in glory; therefore mortify the deeds of the body, or our members that are upon the earth.

These Sir, are the motives by which we Christians act; because we are forgiven, because we are sons, and if sons, then heirs, and so we act; but to speak to this more anon.

Perhaps you will say I deal not fairly with you, because you treat, as of moral, so of gospel or New Testament laws.

But to that I will answer at present, that in this description of your holy principle, which is the foundation of your book, whether the laws be natural or spiritual, moral or of grace, the principle by which you do them, is no other than the principle of nature, the dictates of the human nature; and so such as can by no means reach the doctrines of the gospel any farther than to make a judgment of them, by that wisdom which is ‘enmity with God,’ as will farther be seen in my progress through your book.

Indeed you make mention of divine laws, and

that under two heads. 1. Such as are of an indispensable and eternal obligation, as those purely moral, p. 7 and s. 2. Such which you call positive precepts, in themselves of an indifferent nature, and absolutely considered, are neither good nor evil. Of those of this kind that we have under the gospel, you say you know but three, viz., That of coming to God by Christ, and the institutions of baptism, and the Lord’s supper, p. 9.

So then, although you talk of gospel positive laws, and particularly that of coming to God by Christ; yet those which you call first principles of morals, are of higher concern with you, and more indispensable by far than this, this being a thing of an indifferent nature, and in itself absolutely considered, is neither good nor evil; but the other is the life of the matter. But a little to gather you up.

The morals, say you, are indispensable, and good in themselves, but that of coming to God by Christ, a thing indifferent, and in itself neither good nor evil. Wherefore though in this your description, you talk of conforming to all those good and practical principles, that are made known either by revelation, nature, or the use of reason, yet in this your obedience you reckon coming to God by Christ, but an act of a very indifferent nature, a thing if done not good in itself, neither evil in itself, should a man leave it undone; and so consequently a man may have in him the ground and essentials of Christianity without it, may be saved, and go to heaven without it: for this I say, whatsoever is of an indifferent nature in itself, is not essential to the Christian religion; but may or may not be done without the hazard of eternal salvation; but say you, this of coming to God by Christ, is one of the positive precepts, p. 9. which are in themselves things indifferent, and neither good nor evil: therefore not of the substance of Christianity.

But, Sir, where learned you this new doctrine, as to reckon coming to God by Christ, a thing of so indifferent a nature, a thing not good in itself, but with respect to certain circumstances, p. 7. Had you said this of baptism and the Supper of the Lord, I could with some allowance have borne your words, but to count coming to God by Christ a thing indifferent in itself, is a blasphemy that may not be borne by Christians, it being too high a contempt of the blood, and too great a disgrace to the person of the Lord, the king of glory; of which more hereafter, but to return.

II. The intent of this your description is to set before us these two things.

(1.) What are the essentials of the rule of that holiness, which by the gospel we are immediately obliged to, if we would be justified in the sight of God.

(2.) What are the principles by which we act, when we do these works aright.

1. For the first you tell us, ‘they are the first principles of morals, such as are self-evident, and therefore not capable of being properly demonstrated; as being no less knowable, and easily assented to, than any proposition that may be brought for the proof of them,’ p. 8. Such as are self-evident or evident of themselves; to what? To us as men that know the principles of reason, and that are as easily assented to as any proposition; why said you not such as may be as easily known, as we know there is a day or night, winter and summer, or any other thing that may be brought for the proof of them. This law therefore is none other than that mentioned in Ro. ii. 14, 15. which is the law of our nature, or that which was implanted in us in the day of our creation, and therefore is said to be ourselves, even nature itself. 1 Co. xi. 14.

2. The principle, say you, by which we act, and in the strength of which we do this law, it is the principle of reason, or a reasonable compliance with this law written in our hearts, and originally dictates of human nature, &c. which certain principle, say you, is this, to count it ‘most highly becoming all reasonable creatures, to obey God in every thing; and as much disbecoming them, in any thing to disobey him.’ p. 8.

The sum is; this your holiness both in root and act is no other than what is common to all the men on earth; I mean so common as that for the first, is in their nature, as the second is also part of themselves, they being creatures whose prime or principal distinction from other, consisteth more in that they are reasonable, and such as have reason as a thing essential to them; wherefore the excellency that you have discoursed of, is none other than the excellency and goodness that is of this world, such as in the first principles of it, is common to Heathens, Pagans, Turks, Infidels: and that as evidently dictates to those that have not heard the gospel (I mean as to the nature the good and evil) as it doth in them that sit under the sound thereof; and is the self-same which our late ungodly heretics the Quakers have made such a stir to promote and exalt, only in the description thereof you seem more ingenious than they: for whereas they erroneously call it Christ, the light of Christ, faith, grace, hope, the spirit, the word that is nigh, &c. you give it the names due thereto, viz. A complexion or complication and combination of all the virtue of the soul, the human nature, the dictates of it, the principles of reason, such as are self-evident, than which there is nothing mankind doth naturally assent to, p. 6–11. Only here, as I have said, you glorify your errors also, with names and titles that are not to be found, but in your own deluded brains: as that the virtues of the souls can

keep themselves incommixed, that there is yet in us the purity of the humane nature, or such a disposition, that can both by light and power give a man to see, and powerfully incline him to, and bring him under the government of all those good and practical principles, that are made known either by revelation, nature, or the use of reason.

But I say, these principles thus stated by you, being the principles, and the goodness of this world, and such as have not faith, but the law; not the Holy Ghost, but humane nature in them; they cannot be those which you affirm, was or is the design, the great, the only, and ultimate design of Christ, or his gospel to promote, and propagate in the world; neither with respect to our justification before God from the curse; neither with respect to the workings of his Spirit, and the faith of Jesus in our hearts, the true gospel or evangelical holiness.

First, It is not the righteousness that justifieth us before God from the curse; because it is that which is properly our own; and acted and managed by principles of our own, arising originally in the roots of it, from our own. There is the righteousness of men, and the righteousness of God: that which is the righteousness of men, is that which we do work from matter and principles of our own; but that which is the righteousness of God, is that which is wrought from matter and principles purely divine, and of the nature of God. Again, that which is our own righteousness, is that which is wrought in and by our own persons as men; but that which is the righteousness of God, is that which is wrought in and by the second person in the Trinity, as God and man in one person; and that resideth only in that person of the Son. I speak now of the righteousness by which we stand just before God, from the curse of the law. Now this righteousness of ours, our own righteousness, the apostle always opposeth to the righteousness of God, saying, ‘They going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.’ Ro. ix. 3. Farther, This righteousness of our own, Paul counts loss and dog’s-meat, in comparison of that other, far more glorious righteousness, which he calleth as it is in truth, the righteousness of God, Phi. iii. 7–9. which as I said but now, resideth in the person of the Son. Therefore (saith Paul) I cast away my own righteousness, and do count it loss, and ‘but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith.’ The righteousness therefore, that is our own, that ariseth from matter and principles of our own (such as that which you have described) justifieth us not before God from the curse.

Second, The righteousness that you have described, justifieth us not, as before, because it is the righteousness which is of the moral law, that is, it is wrought by us, as walking in the law. Now it mattereth not, whether you respect the law in its first principles, or as it is revealed in the table of the ten commandments, they are in nature but one and the same, and their substance and matter is written in our hearts, as we are men. Now this righteousness, the apostle casteth away, as was shewn before; ‘Not having mine own righteousness (saith he) which is of the law;’ why? Because the righteousness that saveth us from the wrath of God, is the righteousness of God; and so a righteousness that is without the law. ‘But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe.’ Ro. iii. 21, 22. The righteousness of God without the law; the righteousness of Christ who is naturally God; wherefore such a righteousness as was accomplished by him that was Lord, and the very God of the law; whose nature was infinite, and not that which the law could command or condemn; neither was the command of the law, the great and principal argument with him, no, not in its first and highest principles, to do or continue to do it; but even that which the law commanded of us, that he did, not by the law, but by that spirit of life, that eternal spirit, and Godhead, which was essential to his very being: He did naturally and infinitely that which the law required of us, from higher, and more mighty principles than the law could require of him: for I should reckon it a piece of prodigious blasphemy to say, that the law could command his God; the creature, his Lord and Creator: but this Lord God, Jesus Christ, even he hath accomplished righteousness, even righteousness that is without, that is above, higher, and better than that of the law; and that is the righteousness that is given to, and put upon all them that believe. Wherefore the Lord Jesus Christ, in his most blessed life, was neither prompted to actions of holiness, nor managed in them, by the purity of humane nature, or those you call first principles of morals, or as he was simply a reasonable creature; but being the natural Son of God, truly, and essentially, eternal as the Father; by the eternal Spirit, his Godhead, was his manhood governed, and acted, and spirited to do and suffer. ‘He through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God;’ He. ix. 14, which offering respects not only his act of dying, but also that by which he was capacitated to die without spot in his sight; which was the infinite dignity, and sinlessness of his person; and the perfect justice of his actions. Now this person, thus acting,

is approved of, or justified by the law to be good: for if the righteousness of the law be good, which law is but a creature, the righteousness of the Lord, the God of this law, must needs be much more good; wherefore here is the law, and its perfection swallowed up, even as the light of a candle, or star is swallowed up by the light of the sun. Thus then is the believer made, not the righteousness of the law, ‘but the righteousness of God in Christ,’ 2 Co. v. 21, because Christ Jesus, who is the righteousness of the Christian, did walk in this world, in, and under the law; not by legal and humane principles, which are the excellencies of men, but in, and by those that are divine, even such as were, and are of his own nature, and the essence of his eternal Godhead. This is the righteousness *without* the law, accomplished by a person and principles, far otherwise, than is he, or those you make description of; and therefore yours cannot be that, by which we stand just before the justice of God without the law. Now if it be a righteousness without the law, then it is a righteousness without men, a righteousness that cannot be found in the world; for take away the law, the rule, and you take away, not only the righteousness, but that by which men, as men, work righteousness in the world: ‘Mine own righteousness which is of the law.’ The righteousness then by which a man must stand just in the sight of God from the curse, is not to be found in men, nor in the law, but in him, and him only, who is greater, and also, without the law; for albeit, for our sakes he became under the law, even to the curse and displeasure of God; yet the principles by which he walked in the world to Godward, they were neither humane, nor legal, but heavenly, and done in the Spirit of the Son. Wherefore it is not the righteousness you have described, by which we stand just before God.

Third, The righteousness you have described, cannot be that which justifieth us before God, because of its imperfections, and that both with respect to the principle, and the power with which it is managed: for though you have talked of a sound complexion of soul, the purity of the humane nature, and that with this addition of power, as to be able to keep itself incommixt with that which is not of itself; yet we Christians know, and that by the words of God, that there is in man, as man, now no soundness at all, but from the crown of the head, to the sole of the foot, botches and boils, putrefactions and sores. Is. i. 6. We are ALL an unclean thing, and our righteousness as filthy ulcerous rags. Is. lxiv. 6. ‘If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.’ Ga. iii. 21. Could a man perform the law to the liking of the justice of the eternal majesty, then would the law give life to that man; but because of the perfection of

an infinite justice, and the weakness and unprofitableness of the law through our flesh, Ro. viii. 3; therefore, though you speak yet farther of the excellency of your sound complexion, and of the purity of the human nature, you must fly from yourself, to another righteousness for life, or at the last stick in the jaws of death and everlasting desperation. ‘For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.’ Ga. ii. 16.

It is therefore no better than error, thus to ascribe to poor man, ‘that hath drank iniquity like water,’ a soundness of soul, a purity of human nature. Wherefore Jude saith of you, and of all such naturalists, ‘That even in the things that you know naturally, as the brute, in them you corrupt yourselves,’ Jude 10, even in the very principles, the first or original dictates of your nature or humanity. There is none that understandeth or is good, therefore there is none that doth good, no not one: that is, none as continuing in a natural state; none by the power or principles of nature; for he meaneth here, in your own sense, as men by natural principles have to do with the justice of the law.

Fourth, The righteousness which you have described cannot be that which justifieth us before God, because it is that which is not of faith. ‘The law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them.’ Ga. iii. 12. The apostle also in the 10th chapter of the Romans tells us, that the righteousness that is completed by doing the law is one, and another besides the righteousness of faith. For faith in the justification of a sinner from the curse and wrath of God, respecteth only the mercy of God, and forgiveness of sins for the sake of Christ. ‘God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven him that is enabled to believe, that is, trust to, and venture the eternal concern of his soul upon the righteousness that is no where to be found, but in the person of the Son of God.’ For there is justice more than answerable to all the demands of the law, and equal to the requirements of the eternal justice of God, and he is our justice; he is made unto us of God, righteousness, or justice; that is, the righteousness or justice that is in him, is by God accounted the man’s that shall accept thereof by faith, that he might be made the justice or righteousness of God in him. For the righteousness that saveth a sinner from damnation must be equal to that in the eternal Deity: But where can that be found but in him that is naturally God, as is indeed the Son of the Father; in him, therefore, and not in the law, there is a righteousness fit for faith to apply to. Besides, the law is not, neither can be, the object of faith to men; for that which is the object of faith (I speak now as to justifying righteousness) it must be a righteousness already completed, and as I said, a righteousness to be received

and accepted, being now perfected and offered, and given to us by the kindness and mercy of God; but a man may believe long enough in the law, before that performs for him a perfect righteousness. The law can work nothing unless it be wrath. ‘No thou must work by, and not believe in, the law.’ Ro. iv. Besides, all that cometh out of the mouth of the law is, ‘Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them,’ Ga. iii. 10, which no man is capable of doing, so as to escape the curse by doing, that hath once, or first transgressed the same. Wherefore it is a vain thing, yea an horrible wickedness in you, thus to abuse the law, and the weakness of man, by suggesting that the only, the ultimate, or grand design of Christ Jesus was, or is, the promoting of a righteousness by the law, that is performed by humane principles in us.*

I could double, yea ten times double the number of these arguments against you, but I will pass from this to the second thing. ‘The righteousness you have described, is not the true gospel inward holiness.’

I told you before, that the principles which you have described, are not evangelical principles; and now I will add, that as they are not such in themselves, so neither do they fetch in, or obtain by our adhering to them, those things which alone can make, or work in the soul, those truly gospel inward acts of holiness.

[Things essential to inward gospel holiness.]

There are three things which are essential to the inward gospel holiness; of which as your description is utterly destitute, so neither can they by that be obtained, or come into the heart. 1. *The Holy Ghost.* 2. *Faith in Christ.* 3. *A new heart, and a new spirit.*

Without these three, there is no such thing as

* Man, in his first estate, was holy and righteous; and he continued to be possessed of this righteousness as long as he was obedient to his Creator; but as soon as he disobeyed the divine command, he lost all his holiness and righteousness at once; he emptied himself of every spark of goodness, and was full of all manner of wickedness; he forfeited all his primitive purity, and became a sinful, impure, and unrighteous creature. Hence, all mankind are destitute of original righteousness: there is none of the children of men righteous, ‘no not one: there is none that doeth good, no not one,’ Rom. iii. 10, 12. What then becomes of the purity and dignity of human nature, so vainly boasted of? or how shall man be righteous before God? To this last question, we answer with Paul, in the above-quoted chapter, ver. 21, 22, ‘Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, *which is by* faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe.’ Without this righteousness, no soul ever was, no soul ever will be, justified before God.—*Mason and Ryland.*

gospel holiness in man, as before I have also hinted at. But now as there are none of these three found in your description of inward holiness; so neither can you, or others, by all your inclinations, either to those you call first principles of natural reason, or the dictates of human nature, obtain or fetch into the soul the least dram of that which is essential, to that which is indeed according to the gospel description of inward gospel holiness, as will further be manifest in this that followeth.

1. *The Holy Ghost* is not obtained by your description, that consisting only in principles of nature, and in putting forth itself in acts of civility and morality. When the apostle would convince the bewitched Galatians, that your doctrine which was also the doctrine of the false apostles, was that, which instead of helping forward, did hinder, and pervert the gospel of Christ; he applieth himself to them in this manner. ‘This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?’ Ga. iii. 2. By the works of the law, that is, by putting of your principles into practice. Nay, may I not add, by putting of your principles into practice, by a more bright and clear rule, than in the beginning of your description is inserted by you; for the law as written and engraven in stones, with the addition of all the Mosaical precepts, was a more ample, and full discovery of the mind of God, than can be obtained by your virtues of soul, your purity of human nature, or the first principles of morals, as they are written in the heart of man; and originally dictates of human nature. Ro. iii. 1–3. Yet by these, by following these, by labouring to live up to the light of these, their own experience told them, that they neither could, nor did obtain the enjoyment of the Holy Ghost; but that rather their now declining the word of faith, by which indeed they receive it at first (whatever pretences of holiness, and godliness were the arguments to prevail with them so to do) was in truth none other but the very witchcraft, and enchantments of the devil.

Farther, The apostle sets this your spirit and principles, and that which indeed is the Spirit of God, in a line diametrically opposite one against another; yea the receiving of the one, opposeth the receiving of the other. ‘Now we have received, (saith he) not the spirit of the world,’ (that is, your spirit, and principles of humanity) to walk by it, or live in it; ‘but the Spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.’ 1 Co. ii. 12. But what is the spirit of the world? He tells us in the verse before, it is the spirit of a man; which Solomon calls, ‘the candle of the Lord; searching all the inward parts of the belly,’ Pr. xx. 27. by human principles, good motions to moral duties, workings of reason, die-

tates of nature to obey God as Creator. These things flow from the spirit of a man, which is the spirit of all the world. They that preach, or speak by this spirit, they preach or speak of the world, of the virtues of the world; and the world, ‘the whole world heareth them,’ or know in themselves what they say. 1 Jn. iv. 5.

Now when this spirit is received, embraced, and followed, as the spirit that is of God, then it must be branded with the mark of the spirit of error, and of antichrist; because the act in so doing, is most wicked; yea, and Christ himself is made head against, by it.

But I say, the Holy Ghost is not obtained by these principles, nor by the pursuit of them.

2. *Faith* is not obtained by the pursuit of your principles, but by hearing of another doctrine; he that presseth men to look to, and live by the purity of human nature, principles of natural reason, or by the law, as written in the heart, or bible; he sets the word of faith out of the world; for these doctrines are as opposite, as the spirits I spake of before; ‘For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.’ Now he that receiveth this law, to do, and live by; he hath set up, and is in pursuit of a doctrine of another nature, than that which is called the righteousness of faith; that being such, as for justification, and deliverance from the curse, maketh no mention at all of hearing the law, or of doing good works; but of hearing of the mercy of God, as extended to sinners; and of its coming to us through the death, and resurrection of Christ Jesus. ‘The righteousness which is of faith, speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down *from above*) or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, *even* in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.’ Ro. x. 5, 9. This then is the doctrine of faith, or the righteousness with which faith hath to do. Now as old covenant-works are begotten in men by the doctrine of works; so faith is begotten by the doctrine of faith. Therefore after he had said, ‘faith cometh by hearing;’ he insinuates it to be the hearing the preaching of the gospel of peace (peace by the blood of the cross) and the glad tidings of good things, (ver. 14–17.) of good things promised for the sake of the Lord Jesus; not for the sake of good deeds done of us, by human principles, or the dictates of our nature.

Faith, Then the second essential, comes into the heart, not by the preaching, or the practice of your

principles; but by another, a higher, and far more heavenly doctrine. And hence the apostle completely puts the difference betwixt the worker of good works in the spirit of the law, and the believer that taketh hold of grace by Christ, that he may be saved thereby. The one he calls ‘Them that are of the works of the law;’ the other, ‘They which are of faith.’ Ga. iii. This being done, he tells us, that as they differ in the principles, to wit, of faith and works, so they shall differ in conclusion: ‘For the law is not of faith, the promise is only made to faith; therefore, they only that are of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.’

3. The third essential is, *a new heart, and a new spirit or mind*; and this also comes not by your principle, that being but the old covenant that gendereth to bondage, and that holds its Ishmaels under the curse for ever: there comes no new heart by the law, nor new spirit. It is by the new covenant, even the gospel, that all things are made new. Je. xxxi. 33. Eze. xxxvi. He. viii. 8. 2 Co. v. 17–19.

The apostle, after a large discourse of the two ministrations, and their excellencies, 2 Co. iii. tells us that the heart is nothing changed, so long as it abideth in the works of the law, but remaineth blind and ignorant: ‘Nevertheless (saith he) when it shall turn (from the law) to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away.’ But what is it to turn from the law to the Lord? Why, even to leave and forsake your spirit and principles, and works from those principles, and fly to the grace and merits; ‘the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.’ Now when the heart is turned to Christ, then the vail of Moses is taken off; wherefore then the soul ‘with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, is changed – from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.’ 2 Co. iii. 14, 18.

Obj. But it seems a paradox to many, that a man should live to the law, that is, devote himself to the works of the ten commandments, the most perfect rule of life; and yet not be counted one changed, or new.

Ans. Though it seemeth an untruth, yet it is most true, that by the works of the law, no heart is made new, no man made new. A man from principle of nature and reason, (which principles are of himself, and as old) may give up himself to the goodness of the law: yet these principles are so far off from being new, that they are as old as Adam in Paradise; and come into the world with all the children of men. To which principles the law, or the first principles of morals, so equally suit, that, as you have said, p. 8. ‘they are self-evident, than which there is nothing mankind doth more naturally assent to,’ p. 11. Now nature is no new principle, but an old: even our own, and of ourselves. The law is no new principle, but old,

and one with ourselves (as also you well have called it) ‘first written in men’s hearts, and originally dictates of human nature.’ Let a man then be as devout, as is possible for the law, and the holiness of the law. Yet if the principles from which he acts, be but the habit of soul, the purity (as he feigns) of his own nature; principles of natural reason, or the dictates of human nature; all this is nothing else but the old gentleman in his holiday clothes: the old heart, the old spirit, the spirit of the man, not the spirit of Christ, is here.

And hence the apostle, when he would shew us a man alive, or made a new man indeed; as he talketh of the Holy Ghost and faith, so he tells us such are dead to the law, to the law, as a law of works; to the law as to principles of nature. ‘Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law (the moral law, and the ceremonial law) by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another (another than the law) *even* to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.’ Ro. vii. 4.

Ye are become dead to the law. Dead to the law! Why? That you should be married to another. Married to another! Why? ‘That you should bring forth fruit unto God.’ But doth not a man bring forth fruit unto God, that walketh orderly according to the ten commandments? No, if he do it before faith make this in the spirit of a man, by the dictates of human nature, respecting the law, as that, by the obeying of which, he must obtain acceptance with God. This is bringing forth fruit unto himself; for all that he doth, he doth it as a man, as a creature, from principles natural, and of himself, his own, and for none other than himself; and therefore he serveth in an old spirit, the oldness of the letter, and for himself. But now (that is, ye being dead to the law, and married to Christ) that (the law) being dead; by which (while in ourselves) we were held; now we are delivered from that law, both as to its curse and impositions, as it stands a law of works in the heart of the world; we serve in newness of the spirit, ‘and not in the oldness of the letter.’ ver. 6. A man must first then be dead to your principles, both of nature and the law; if he will serve in a new spirit, if he would bring forth fruit unto God.*

* Great will be the condemnation of all those who profess to know God, but in works deny him; who are abominable and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate, Tit. i. 16. A great profession, without a suitable life and conversation, will only procure a greater condemnation. Therefore, up, ye sleepy virgins; up, and be doing; shew your faith by your works. There is no true religion without good works, attended with a godly walk and behaviour. There may be works seemingly good, where there is no true religion. Good works are not the causes, but the fruits and effects of true religion, of justifying faith wrought in the soul by the Holy Ghost; and where true

Wherefore your description of the principle of holiness in man, and also the principles by which this holiness is put forth by him into righteous acts; they are such as are altogether void of the true essentials of inward gospel-holiness and righteousness.

[FOWLER'S ASSERTION THAT THE GRAND, THE ONLY AND ULTIMATE DESIGN OF THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST IS TO RE-PRODUCE MAN'S ORIGINAL RIGHTEOUSNESS EXAMINED AND CONFUTED.]

But there is one thing more in this description, or rather effect thereof, which I shall also inquire into: and that is your saying, 'As it was the errand of Christ to effect our deliverance out of that sinful state we had brought ourselves into: so to put us again into possession of that holiness which we had lost.' p. 12. The proof of this position is now your next business; that is, if I understand your learning, the remaining part of your book, which consisteth of well nigh 300 pages, is spent for proof thereof; which I doubt not but effectually to confute with less than 300 lines. Only first by the way, I would have my reader to take notice that in this last clause, (to put us again into possession of that holiness which we had lost) is the sum of all this large description of his holiness in the foregoing pages; that is, the holiness and righteousness that Mr. Fowler hath been describing; and adds, that Christ's whole business when he came into the world was, as to effect our deliverance from sin; 'so to put us again in possession of that holiness which we had lost.' The holiness therefore that here he contendeth for, is that, and only that which was in Adam before the fall, which he lost by transgression; and we by transgressing in him. A little therefore to inquire into this, if perhaps his reader and mine may come to a right understanding of things.

First then, Adam before the fall, even in his best and most sinless state, was but a pure natural man, consisting of body and soul; these, to use your own terms, were his pure essentials: p. 11. in this man's heart, God also did write the law; that is, as you term them, the first principles of morals, p. 8. This then was the state of Adam, he was a pure natural man; made by God sinless; all the faculties of his soul and members of his body were clean. 'God made man upright.' Ec. vii. 29. But he made him not then a spiritual man; 'the first Adam was made a living soul,' 'howbeit that *was* not first which is spiritual; but that which is

natural, and afterward that which is spiritual: The first man is of the earth, earthly.' 1 Co. xv. 45—47. A living soul he was; yet but a natural man, even in his first and best estate; but earthly, when compared with Christ, or with them that believe in Christ. So then, the holiness of Adam in his best estate, even that which he lost, and we in him, it was none other, than that which was natural, even the sinless state of a natural man. This holiness then was not of the nature of that, which hath for its root the Holy Ghost; for of that we read not at all in him, he only was indued with a living soul; his holiness then could not be gospel, nor that which is a branch of the second covenant: his acts of righteousness, were not by the operations of the Spirit of grace, but the dictates of the law in his own natural heart. But the apostle when he treateth of the christian inherent holiness; first excluding that in Adam, as earthly; he tells us, it is such as is in Christ: 'As is the earthly, such are they that are earthly; and as is the heavenly, such are they that are heavenly.' Let then those that are the sons of Adam, in the state of nature as he, though not so pure, and spotless as he, be reckoned to bear his image and similitude: but let them that are the children of Christ, though not so pure as he, bear the image and similitude of Christ: 'for they are conformable to the image of the Son of God.' Ro. viii. 29. The holiness therefore that was in Adam, being but that which was natural, earthly, and not of the Holy Ghost, cannot be that which Christ came into the world to give us possession of.

Second, Adam in his best, and most sinless state, was but a type or figure: 'The figure of him that was to come.' Ro. v. 14. A type in what? A type or figure doubtless, in his sinless and holy estate, a type and figure of the holiness of Christ: But if Christ should come from heaven, to put us in possession of this sinless holiness that was in Adam, or that we lost in him: to what more would his work amount, than to put us into the possession of a natural, figurative, shadowish righteousness or holiness. But this he never intended; therefore it is not the possessing of his people with that holiness, that was the great errand Christ came into the world upon.

Third, The holiness and righteousness that was in, and that we lost by, Adam before the fall; was such as stood in, and was to be managed by his natural perfect compliance with a covenant of works. For, 'Do this sin and die,' were the terms that was from God to Adam. But Christ at his coming brings in another, a better, a blessed covenant of grace; and likewise possesseth his children, with the holiness, and privileges of that covenant; not with Adam's heart nor Adam's mind; but a new heart, a new spirit, a new principle to act

by, and walk in a new covenant. Therefore the holiness that was in Adam before, or that we lost in him by the fall, could not be the holiness that Christ at his coming made it his great or only business to put us in possession of.

Fourth, The holiness that was in Adam before, and that we lost in him by the fall, was such as might stand with perfect ignorance of the mediation of Jesus Christ: for Christ was not made known to Adam as a Saviour, before that Adam was a sinner; neither needed he at all to know him to be his Mediator, before he knew he had offended. Ge. iii. But Christ did not come into the world to establish us in, or give us possession of such holiness as might stand with perfect ignorance of his Mediatorship. No; the holiness that we believers have, and the righteous acts that we fulfil, they come to us, and are done by us, through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, and of his being the Messias promised. Ep. iv. 21, 22. 2 Pe. i. 3.

Fifth, The holiness that was in Adam, was neither given him through the promise, neither encouraged by the promise. Adam had no promise to possess him with a principle of holiness; it came to him by creation; neither had he any promise to strengthen or encourage him in holiness. All he had was instructions concerning his duty, and death threatened if he did it not. Ge. ii. 15-17. But Christ came not to give us possession of an holiness or righteousness, that came to us by our creation, without a promise; and that hath no promise to encourage us to continue therein; but of an holiness that comes to us by the best of promises, and that we are encouraged to by the best of promises. Therefore it was not his great errand when he came from heaven to earth, to put us in possession of that promiseless holiness that Adam had before, and that was lost in him by the fall.

Lastly, In a word; the holiness that Adam had before, and that we lost in him by the fall; it was a natural shadowish old covenant, promiseless holiness; such as stood and might be walked in, while he stood perfectly ignorant of the Mediator Christ. Wherefore it is rather the design of your Apollo the devil,* whom in p. 101. you bring forth to applaud your righteousness; I say, it is rather his design than Christ's, to put men upon an endeavour after a possession of that: for that which is truly evangelical, is the spiritual, substantial, new covenant promised holiness; that which cometh to us by, and standeth in the Spirit, faith and knowledge of the Son of God, not that which we lost in Adam. Wherefore the song which there you learnt of the devil, is true, in the sense he made it, and in the sense for which you bring it; which is, to beget in men, the highest esteem of

their own human nature; and to set up this natural, shadowish, promiseless, ignorant holiness, in opposition to that which is truly Christ's.

To dwell in heaven doth not more please him, than Within the souls of pious mortal men.

This is the song; but you find it not in Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John, but among the heathens who were his disciples, and who were wont to inquire at his mouth, and learn of him.

Thus have I razed the foundation of your book, even by overthrowing the holiness, and righteousness, which by you is set up, as that which is the only true gospel, and evangelical. Wherefore it remaineth, that the rest of your book, viz. whatever therein is brought, and urged for the proof of this your description of holiness, &c. it is but the abuse of Christ, of scripture, and reason; it is but a wresting and corrupting the word of God, both to your own destruction, and them that believe you.

[*Fowler's insidious errors routed.*]

But to pass this, and to come to some other passages in your book; and first to that in p. 5. where you say,

'The holiness, which is the design of the religion of Christ Jesus, - is not such as is subjected in any thing without us, or is made ours by a mere external application,' &c.

Answ. 1. These words secretly smite at the justification that comes by the imputation of that most glorious righteousness that alone resideth in the person of the Lord Jesus; and that is made ours by an act of eternal grace, we resting upon it by the faith of Jesus.

2. But if the holiness of which you speak, be not subjected in any thing without us; then it is not of all that fulness which it pleased the Father should dwell in Christ: for the holiness and righteousness, even the inward holiness that is in saints, it is none other than that which dwelleth in the person of the Son of God in heaven: neither doth any man partake of, or enjoy the least measure thereof, but as he is united by faith to this Son of God, the thing is as true in him as in us; in him as the head, and without measure; 1 Jn. ii. 8. and is originally seated in him, not in us. 'Of his fulness have all we (saints) received, and grace for grace.' Jn. i. 16. Wherefore the holiness that hath its original from us, from the purity of the human nature (which is the thing you aim at) and that originally, as you term it, is the dictates thereof, is the religion of the Socinians, Quakers,* &c., and not the religion of Jesus Christ.

* Hieroclues, the Greek philosopher.

* Bunyan must have formed his opinions of the Quakers from some persons who passed as such. No form either of

And now I will come to your indifferent things, viz., those which you call ‘positive precepts;’ things, say you, ‘of an indifferent nature; and absolutely considered, are neither good, nor evil;—but are capable of becoming so; only by reason of certain circumstances:’ of these positive indifferent precepts, you say, you know but three in the gospel; but three, that are purely so, viz., ‘That of going to God by Christ, and the institutions of baptism, and the Lord’s Supper.’ This we have in p 7 and 9.

Answ. These words, as I hinted before, are highly derogatory to the Lord, the King of glory; and trample as much upon the blood of the Son of God, as words can likely do. For,

1. If going to God by Christ, be in itself but an indifferent thing, then, as I also hinted before, it is not of the substance of Christianity; but a man may be truly a Christian without it; may be saved, and go to heaven without it; this is in truth the consequence of your words: for things purely of an indifferent nature, do not in themselves either make or mar the righteousness that justifieth us from the curse before God. Wherefore, by your argument, if a man remain ignorant of that positive precept, of ‘coming to God by Christ;’ he remaineth ignorant but of an indifferent thing, a thing that in itself is neither good nor evil, and therefore not essentially material to his faith or justifying righteousness.

2. An indifferent thing in itself is next to nothing, neither good nor evil then, but a thing betwixt them both.

Then is the blood of the Lord Jesus, in itself, of no value at all; nor faith in him, of itself, any more than a thing of nought; their virtue and goodness only dependeth upon certain circumstances that make them so. For the indifference of the thing lieth not simply in coming to God, but in coming to him by Christ: coming otherwise to God, even in this man’s eyes, being the all in all; but in *this* coming, in coming to him by Christ, there lieth the indifference. I marvel what injury the Lord Jesus hath done this man, that he should have such indifferent thoughts of coming to God by him?

But hath he no better thoughts of his own good deeds, which are by the law? Yes, doubtless, for those (saith he) ‘are of an indispensable, and eternal obligation, which were first written in men’s hearts, and originally dictates of human nature,’ p.8. Mark, not a dictate of human nature, or necessary conclusion or deduction from it, is of an indifferent, but of an indispensable; not of a transient, but of

an eternal obligation. It is only going to God by Christ, and two other things that he findeth in the gospel, that of themselves are of an indifferent nature.

But how indifferent? Even as indifferent in itself as the blood of a silly sheep, or the ashes of an heifer; for these are his very words. ‘SUCH (that is, such ordinances as in themselves are of an indifferent nature) were all the injunctions and prohibitions of the ceremonial law; and some few such we have under the gospel,’ p.7. Then, in p.9. he tells you what these positive precepts under the gospel, or things indifferent, are: ‘THAT of going to God by Christ, is one; and the other two, are the institutions of baptism, and the Lord’s supper.’ Such therefore as were the ceremonies of the law, such, even such, saith he, is that of going to God by Christ, &c.

Wherefore, he that shall lay no more stress upon the Lord Jesus to come to God by, than this man doth, would lay as much, were the old ceremonies in force, upon a silly sheep, as upon the Christ of God. For these are all alike positive precepts, such as were the ceremonies of the law, things in themselves neither good nor evil, but absolutely considered of an indifferent nature.

So that to come to God by Christ, is reckoned, of itself, by him, a thing of a very indifferent nature, and therefore this man cannot do it, but with a very *indifferent* heart; his great, and most substantial coming to God, must needs be by some other way. Jn.x.1. But why should this THIEF love thus to clamber, and seek to go to God by other means; such which he reckoneth of a more indispensable nature, and eternal; seeing Christ only, as indifferent as he is, is the *only* way to the Father. ‘I am the way, (saith he) the truth and the life; no man cometh to the Father but by me.’ If he be the *only* way, then there is none other; if he be thus the truth, then is all other the lie; and if he be here the life, then is all other the death; let him call them indispensable and eternal never so often.

So then, how far off this man’s doctrine is, of sinning against the Holy Ghost, let him that is wise consider it. For if coming to God by Christ, be in itself but a thing indifferent, and only made a duty upon the account of certain circumstances; then, to come to God by Christ, is a duty incumbent upon us only by reason of certain circumstances; not that the thing in itself is good, or that the nature of sin, and the justice of God, layeth a necessity on us so to do. But what be these certain circumstances? For it is because of these, if you will believe him, that God the Father, yea, the whole Trinity, did consult in eternity, and consent, that Christ should be the way to life: now, I say, it is partly because by him was the

greatest safety, he being naturally the justice, wisdom, and power of God; and partly, because it would, we having sinned, be utterly impossible we should come to God by other means and live. He that will call *these* circumstances, that is, things over and above besides the substantials of the gospel, will but discover his unbelief and ignorance, &c.

As for your saying, that Calvin, Peter Martyr, Musculus, Zanchy,* and others, did not question, but that God could have pardoned sin, without any other satisfaction, than the repentance of the sinner, p. 84. It matters nothing to me, I have neither made my creed out of them, nor other, than the holy scriptures of God.

But if Christ was from before all worlds ordained to be the Saviour, then was he from all eternity so appointed and prepared to be. And if God be, as you say, infinitely, p. 136. and I will add, eternally just; how can he pardon without he be presented with that satisfaction for sin, that to all points of the highest perfection doth answer the demands of this infinite, and eternal justice? Unless you will say, that the repentance of a sinner is sufficient to answer whatever could be justly demanded as a satisfaction thereto; which if you should, you would in consequence say, that man is, or may be in himself, just, that is, equal with God; or that the sin of man was not a transgression of the law that was given, and a procurer of the punishment that is threatened, by that eternal God that gave it. (But let me give you a caution, take heed that you belie not these men) Christ cries, ‘If it be possible let this cup pass from me.’ Mat. xxvi. 39. If what be possible? Why, that sinners should be saved without his blood. He. ix. 22. Lu. xxiv. 26. Ac. xvii. 3. ‘Ought not Christ to have suffered?’ ‘Christ must needs have suffered,’ not because of some certain circumstances, but because the eternal justice of God, could not consent to the salvation of the sinner, without a satisfaction for the sin committed.† Of which, more in the next, if you shall think good to reply.

* Mr. Fowler gives no reference to any of the works of these learned divines, nor could he! He traduces these great reformers and the doctrines of his own church, and yet was soon after made a bishop!!!—ED.

† The saints of God experience a mystery of iniquity, a horrible depth of corruption in their own hearts, and groan under the plague and burden of it. If we rightly know ourselves, and behold our vileness, filthiness, and exceeding sinfulness, in their true colours, we shall be obliged to own that we are very wicked, unholy, ungodly, abominable; and that a principle and inclination to evil is so prevalent in the best of us, that were God to leave us to ourselves, we should greedily commit the most heinous sins. These truly humbled persons, and these alone, are made sensible of the want of the application of the precious atoning blood of Christ to cleanse them from the pollution of sin, and of the sanctifying grace of the Spirit

Now, that my reader may see that I have not abused you in this reply to your sayings, I will repeat your words at large, and leave them upon you to answer it.

You say, ‘Actions may become duties or sins ‘these two ways; first, as they are compliances ‘with, or transgressions of, divine positive precepts: ‘These are the declarations of the *arbitrary* will of ‘God, whereby he restrains our liberty, for great ‘and wise reasons, in things that are of an indifferent ‘nature, and absolutely considered are neither good ‘nor evil; and so makes things not good in them-‘selves (and capable of becoming so only by reason ‘of certain circumstances) *duties*, and things not ‘evil in themselves, *sins*. Such were all the in-‘junctions and prohibitions of the ceremonial law, ‘and some few such we have under the gospel,’ p. 7. Then p. 9. you tell us, that ‘the reasons of the ‘positive laws (that is, concerning things in them-‘selves indifferent) contained in the gospel are de-‘clared; of which (say you) I know not above ‘three that are purely so, viz. That of going to God ‘by Christ, and the institutions of baptism, and ‘the Lord’s Supper.’

Here now let the reader note, That the positive precepts, declarations of the arbitrary will of God, in things of an indifferent nature, being such, as absolutely considered, are neither good nor evil; some few such, say you, we have under the gospel, namely, that of coming to God by Christ, &c. I am the more punctual in this thing, because you have confounded your weak reader with a crooked parenthesis in the midst of the paragraph, and also by deferring to spit your intended venom at Christ, till again you had puzzled him, with your mathematics and metaphysics, &c., putting in another page, betwixt the beginning and the end of your blasphemy.

Indeed, in the seventh chapter of your book, you make a great noise of the effects and consequences of the death of Christ, as that it was a sacrifice for sin, an expiatory, and propitiatory sacrifice, p. 83. Yet, he that well shall weigh you, and compare you with yourself, shall find that words and sense, with you are two things; and also, that you have learned of your brethren of old, to dissemble with words, that thereby your own heart-errors, and the snake that lieth in your bosom, may yet there abide the more undiscovered. For in the conclusion of that very chapter, even in and by a word or two, you take away that glory, that of right belongeth to the death and blood of Christ, and lay it upon other things.

For you say, ‘The scriptures that frequently affirm, that the end of Christ’s death was the for-

to deliver them from the dominion and tyranny of it.—*Mason and Ryland.*

givenness of our sins, and the reconciling of us to his Father, we are not so to understand, [those places where this is expressed] as if these blessings were absolutely thereby procured for us any otherwise, than upon condition of our effectual believing.' p. 91.

I answer, By the death of Christ was the forgiveness of sins effectually obtained for all that shall be saved, and they, even while yet enemies, by that were reconciled unto God. So that, as to forgiveness from God, it is purely upon the account of grace in Christ; 'We are justified by his blood, we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son.'

Ro. v. 9, 10. Yea peace is made by the blood of his cross, *Co. i. 20.* and God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us. *Ep. iv. 32.* So then, our effectual believing is not a procuring cause in the sight of God, or a condition of ours foreseen by God, and the motive that prevailth with him to forgive us our manifold transgressions: Believing being rather that which makes application of that forgiveness, and that posseseth the soul with that peace that already is made for us with God, by the blood of his Son Christ Jesus; 'Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.' *Ro. v. 1.* The peace and comfort of it cometh not to the soul, but by believing. Yet the work is finished, pardon procured, justice being satisfied already, or before, by the precious blood of Christ.

Observe, I am commanded to believe, but what should I believe? Or what should be the object of my faith in the matter of my justification with God? Why, I am to believe in Christ, I am to have faith in his blood? But what is it to believe in Christ? and what to have faith in his blood? Verily, To believe that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us, that even then, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son: To believe that there is a righteousness *already* for us completed.

I had as good give you the apostle's argument and conclusion in his own language. 'But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.' *Ro. v. 8, 9.* And note that this word now respects the same time with *YET* that went before. 'For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life,' or intercession. *Ro. v. 10.*

Believing then, as to the business of my deliverance from the curse before God, is an accepting of, *1 Ti. i. 15.* a trusting to, *Ep. i. 12, 13.* or a receiving, *Jn. i. 12.* the benefit that Christ hath already obtained for me; by which act of faith, I see my interest in that peace that is made before with God by the blood of his cross: For if peace be

made already by his blood, then is the curse taken away from his sight; if the curse be taken away from his sight, then there is no sin with the curse of it to be charged from God by the law, for so long as sin is charged by the law, with the curse thereto belonging, the curse, and so the wrath of God remaineth.

'But (say you) Christ died to put us into a capacity of pardon,' p. 91.

Ans. True; but that is not all. He died to put us into the personal possession of pardon: Yea, to put us into a personal possession of it, and that before we know it.

'But (say you) the actual removing of our guilt is not the necessary and immediate result of his death,' p. 91.

Ans. Yea, but it is from before the face of God, and from the judgment and curse of the law; for before God the guilt is taken away, by the death and blood of his Son, immediately, for all them that shall be saved; else how can it be said we are justified by his blood; he hath made peace by his blood. 'He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,' *Re. i. 5.* and that we are reconciled to God by the death of his Son; which can by no means be; if, notwithstanding his death and blood, sin in the guilt, and consequently the curse that is due thereto, should yet remain in the sight of God. But what saith the apostle? 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them.' ² *Co. v. 19.* Those that are but reconciling, are not yet reconciled: I mean, as Paul, not yet come aright over in their own souls by faith; yet to these he imputeth not their trespasses: Wherefore? because they have none: or because he forgiveth them as they believe and work: Neither of both; but because he hath first made his Son to be sin for them, and laid all the guilt and curse of their sin upon him, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. Therefore even because by him their sin and curse is taken off, from before the law of God; therefore, God for the sake of Christ, seeketh for, and beseecheth the sinner to be reconciled; that is, to believe in, and embrace his majesty.

'No (say you) the actual removing of our guilt, is not the necessary and immediate result of his death; but suspended until such time as the forementioned conditions, by the help of his grace, are performed by us,' p. 92.

Ans. 1. Then may a man have the grace of God within him; yea, the grace and mercy of the new covenant, viz. Faith, and the like, that yet remaineth under the curse of the law; and so hath yet his sins untaken away from before the face of God; for where the curse is only suspended, it may stand there notwithstanding, in force against

the soul. Now, let the soul stand accursed, and his duties must stand accursed: For first the person, and then the offering must be accepted of God. God accepted not the works of Cain, because he had not accepted his person. Ge. iv. 5. But having first accepted Abel's person, he therefore did accept his offering. He. xi. 4. And hence it is said, that Abel offered by faith: He believed that his person was accepted of God, for the sake of the promised Messias, and therefore believed also that his offering should be accepted.

2. Faith, as it respecteth justification in the sight of God, must know nothing to rest upon but the mercy of God, through Christ's blood: But if the curse be not taken away, mercy also hangeth in suspense; yea, lieth as drowned, and hid in the bottom of the sea. This doctrine then of your's overthroweth faith, and rusheth* the soul into the works of the law, the moral law; and so quite involveth it in the fear of the wrath of God, maketh the soul forget Christ, taketh from it the object of faith; and if a miracle of mercy prevent not, the soul must die in everlasting desperation.

'But (say you) it is suspended till such time as the forementioned conditions, by the help of his grace, are performed by us,' p. 92.

Ans. Had you said the manifestation of it is kept from us, it might, with some allowance, have been admitted; but yet the revelation of it in the word, which in some sense may be called a manifestation thereof, is first discovered to us by the word; yea, is seen by us, and also believed as a truth recorded; before the enjoyment thereof be with comfort in our own souls. 1 Jn. v. 11.

But you proceed and say, 'Therefore was the death of Christ designed to procure our justification from all sins past, that we might be by this means provoked to become new creatures,' p. 92.

Ans. That the death of Christ is a mighty argument to persuade with the believer, to devote himself to God in Christ, in all things, as becometh one that hath received grace and redemption by his blood, is true; but that it is in our power, as is here insinuated, to become new creatures, is as untrue. The new creature, is of God; yea, immediately of God; man being as incapable to make himself anew, as a child to beget himself. 2 Co. v. 17, 18. Neither is our conformity to the revealed will of God, any thing else, if it be right, than the fruit and effect of that. All things are already, or before, become new in the Christian man. But to return:

After all the flourish you have made about the death of Christ, even as he is an expiatory, and

propitiatory sacrifice; in conclusion, you terminate the business far short of that for which it was intended of God: for you almost make the effects thereof but a bare suspension of present justice and death for sin; or that which hath delivered us at present from a necessity of dying, that we might live unto God; that is, according as you have stated it. 'That we might from principles of humanity and reason, act towards the first principles of morals, &c. till we put ourselves into a capacity of personal and actual pardon.'

Ans. The sum of your doctrine therefore is, that Christ by his death only holds the point of the sword of justice, *not that he received it into his own soul*; that he suspends the curse from us, not that himself was made a curse for us, that the guilt might be remitted by our virtues; not that he was made to be our sin: But Paul and the New Testament, giveth us account far otherwise; viz. 'That Christ was made our sin, our curse, and death, that we by him (not by the principle of pure humanity, or our obedience to your first principles of morals, &c.) should be set free from the law of sin and death.' 2 Co. v. 21. Ga. iii. 13.

If any object that Christ hath designed the purifying our hearts and natures; I answer,

But he hath not designed to promote, or to perfect that righteousness that is founded on, and floweth from, the purity of our human nature; for then he must design the setting up man's righteousness, that which is of the law: and then he must design also the setting up of that which is directly in opposition, both to the righteousness, that of God is designed to justify us; and that by which we are inwardly made holy. As I have shewed before.

You have therefore, Sir, in all that you have yet asserted, shewed no other wisdom than a heathen, or of one that is short, even of a novice in the gospel.

In the next place, I might trace you chapter by chapter; and at large refute, not only the whole design of your book by a particular replication to them; but also sundry and damnable errors, that like venom drop from your pen.

But as before I told you in general, so here I tell you again, That neither the scriptures of God, the promise, or threatenings, the life, or death, resurrection, ascension, or coming again of Christ to judgment; hath the least syllable or tendency in them to set up your heathenish and pagan holiness or righteousness; wherefore your whole discourse is but a mere abuse of, and corrupting the holy scriptures, for the fastening, if it might have been, your errors upon the godly. I conclude then upon the whole, that the gospel hath cast out man's righteousness to the dogs; and conclude that there is no such thing as a purity of human

* 'Rusheth the soul.' To rush is a neuter verb, here used in an active sense;—'precipitateth' gives the correct idea.
—ED.

nature, as a principle in us, thereby to work righteousness withal. Farther, It never thought of returning us again to the holiness we lost in Adam, or to make our perfection to consist in the possession of so natural, and ignorant* a principle as that is, in all the things of the holy gospel; but hath declared another and far better way, which you can by no means understand by all the dictates of your humanity.

I will therefore content myself at present with gathering up some few errors, out of those abundance which are in your book: and so leave you to God, who can either pardon these grievous errors, or damn you for your pride and blasphemies.

[*Fowler's false quotations of scripture.*]

You pretend in the beginning of your second chapter, to prove your assertion, viz. 'That the great errand that Christ came upon, was to put us again into possession of that holiness which we had lost.' p. 12. For proof whereof you bring John the Baptist's doctrine, Mat. iii. 1, 2. and the angel's saying to Zacharias, Lu. i. 16, 17. and the prophet Malaachi, iii. 1, 2, 3. in which texts there is as much for your purpose, and no more, than there is in a perfect blank; for which of them speak a word of the righteousness or holiness which we have lost? Or where is it said, either by these mentioned, or by the whole scripture, that we are to be restored to, and put again into possession of *that* holiness? These are but the dictates of your human nature.

John's ministry was, 'To make ready a people prepared for the Lord Jesus;' not to possess them with themselves and their own, but now lost, holiness. And so the angel told his father, saying, 'Many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God:' Not to Adam's innocence, or to the holiness that we lost by him. Neither did the prophet Malachi prophesy that Christ at his coming should put men again in possession of the holiness we had lost. And I say again, as you here fall short of your purpose, so I challenge you to produce but one piece of a text, that in the least looketh to such a thing. The whole tenor of the scripture, that speaks of the errand of Christ Jesus, tells us another lesson, to wit, That he himself came to save us, and that by his *own* righteousness; not *that* in Adam, or which we have lost in him, unless you can say and prove that we had once, even before we were converted, the holiness of Christ within us, or the righteousness of Christ upon us.

But you yet get on, and tell us, 'That this was also the prophesy of the angel to Joseph (p. 14.)

in these words HE (Jesus) shall save his people from their sins.' 'Not (say you) from the punishment of them, although that be a true sense too; but not the primary, but secondary, and implied only, and the consequence of the former salvation,' p. 15.

Ans. Thus Penn the quaker and you run in this, in one and the self same spirit; he affirming that sanctification is antecedent to justification, but not the consequence thereof.

2. But what salvation? Why salvation? say you: First from the filth; for that is the primary and first sense: justification from the guilt, being the never-failing consequence of this. But how then must Jesus Christ, first save us from the filth? You add in p. 16, 'That he shall bring in, instead of the ceremonial observations, a far more noble, viz., An inward substantial righteousness: and by abrogating that (namely of the ceremonies) he shall establish only this inward righteousness.' This is, that holiness, or righteousness you tell us of, in the end of the chapter going before, that you acknowledge we had lost; so that the sum of all that you have said, is, That the way that Christ will take to save his people from their sins, is, first to restore unto them, and give them possession of, the righteousness that they had lost in Adam: and having established this in them, he would acquit them also of guilt. But that this is a shameless error, and blasphemy, is apparent, from which hath already been asserted of the nature of the holiness, or righteousness, that we have lost, viz., That it was

only natural of the old covenant, typical: and such as might stand with perfect ignorance of the mediation of Jesus Christ: and now I add, That for Christ to come to establish this righteousness, is alone, as if he should be sent from heaven, to overthrow, and abrogate the eternal purpose of grace, which the Father had purposed should be manifested to the world by Christ. But Christ came not to restore, or to give us possession of that which was once our own holiness, but to make us partakers of that which is in him, 'that we might be made partakers of HIS holiness.' Neither (were it granted that you speak the truth) is it possible for a man to be filled with inward gospel holiness, and righteousness, that yet abideth, as before the face of God, under the curse of the law, or the guilt of his own transgressions. He. xi. The guilt must therefore, first be taken off, and we set free by faith in that blood, that did it, before we can act upon pure Christian principles. Pray tell me the meaning of this one text; which speaking of Christ, saith, 'Who when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.' He. i. 3. Tell me, I say, by this text, whether is here intended the sins of all that shall be saved? If so, what kind of a purging is hero

* 'So natural, and ignorant,' in distinction from that spiritual wisdom which is immortal and illuminating.—ED.

meant, seeing thousands, and thousands of thousands, of the persons intended by this act of purging were not then in being, nor their personal sins in act? And note, he saith, he purged them, before he sat down at the right hand of God: purging then, in this place, cannot first, and primarily, respect the purging of the conscience: but the taking, the complete taking of the guilt, and so the curse from before the face of God, according to other scriptures: ‘He hath made him to be sin, and accursed of God for us.’ Now he being made the sin which we committed, and the curse which we deserved; there is no more sin nor curse; I mean to be charged by the law, to damn them that shall believe, not that their believing takes away the curse, but puts the soul upon trusting to him, that before purged this guilt, and curse: I say, before he sat down on the right hand of God; not to suspend, as you would have it, but to take away the sin of the world. ‘The Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all.’ Is. lxx. 6. And he bare them in his own body on the tree: 1 Pe. ii. 24, nor yet that he should often offer himself; for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now, (and that at once,) in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin, by the sacrifice of himself. He. ix. 24–26. Mark, he did put it away by the sacrifice of his body and soul, when he died on the cross: but he could not then put away the inward filth of those, that then remained unconverted; or those that as yet wanted being in the world. The putting away of sin therefore, that the Holy Ghost here intendeth, is, *such* a putting of it away, as respecteth the guilt, curse, and condemnation thereof, as it stood by the accusations of the law, against all flesh before the face of God; which guilt, curse, and condemnation, Christ himself was made in that day, when he died the death for us. And this is the first and principal intendment of the angel, in that blessed saying to godly Joseph, concerning Christ; ‘He shall save his people from their sins;’ from the guilt and curse due to them, first: and afterwards from the filth thereof. This is yet manifest, further; because the heart is purified by faith, and hope. Ac. xv. 9. 1 Jn. iii. 3. Now it is not the nature of faith; I mean, of justifying faith, to have any thing for an object; from which it fetcheth peace with God, and holiness before, or besides the Christ of God himself; for he is the way to the Father: and no man can come to the Father, but by him. Come; that is, so as to find acceptance, and peace with him: the reason is, because without his blood, guilt remains. He. ix. 22. He hath made peace by the blood of his cross: so then, faith in the first place seeketh peace. But why peace first? Because till peace is fetched into the soul, by faith’s laying hold on the blood of Christ: sin remains in the guilt and

curse, though not in the sight of God, yet upon the conscience, through the power of unbelief. ‘He that believeth not, stands yet condemned.’ Jn. iii. 18, 19. Now, so long as guilt, and the curse in power remains, there is not purity, but unbelief; not joy, but doubting; not peace, but peevishness; not content, but murmuring, and angering against the Lord himself. ‘The law worketh wrath.’ Ro. iv. 15. Wherefore, as yet there can be no purity of heart, because that faith yet wants his object. But having once found peace with God by believing what the blood of Christ hath done; joy followeth; so doth peace, quietness, content, and love; which is also the fulfilling of the law: yet not from such dungy principles as yours, for so the apostle calls them. Phi. iii. 8. But from the Holy Ghost itself; which God, by faith, hath granted to be received by them that believe in the blood of his Jesus.

But you add, That Christ giveth, first repentance, and then forgiveness of sins, p. 17.

Answe. 1. This makes nothing for the holiness which we lost in Adam: for the proof of which you bring that text, Ac. v. 31.

2. But for Christ to take away guilt, and the curse, from before the face of God, is one thing; and to make that discovery, is another.

3. Again, Christ doth not give forgiveness for the sake of that repentance, which hath its rise, originally from the dictates of our own nature, which is the thing you are to prove; for that repentance is called the sorrow of this world, and must be again repented of: but the repentance mentioned in the text, is that which comes from Christ: But,

4. It cannot be for the sake of gospel-repentance, that the forgiveness of sins is manifested, because both are his peculiar gift.

5. Therefore, both faith, and repentance, and forgiveness of sins, are given by Christ; and come to us, for the sake of that blessed offering of his body, once for all. For after he arose from the dead, having led captivity captive, and taken the curse from before the face of God: therefore his Father gave him gifts for men, even all the things that are necessary, and effectual, for our conversion, and preservation in this world, &c. Ep. iv. 8.

This text, therefore, with all the rest you bring, falleth short of the least shew of proof, ‘That the great errand for which Christ came into the world was—to put us in possession of the holiness that we had lost.’

Your third chapter is as empty of the proof of your design as that through which we have passed: there being not one scripture therein cited, that giveth the least intimation, that ever it entered into the heart of Christ to put us again into possession of that holiness which we had before we were converted: for such was that we lost in Adam.

You tell us the sum of all is, ‘that we are commanded to add to our faith, virtue,’ &c. p. 25. I suppose you intend a gospel faith, which if you can prove Adam had before the fall, and that we lost this faith in him; and also that this gospel faith is none other, but that which originally ariseth from, or is the dictates of human nature, I will confess you have scripture, and knowledge beyond me. In the mean time you must suffer me to tell you, you are as far in this from the mind of the Holy Ghost, as if you had yet never in all your days heard whether there be a Holy Ghost or no.

Add to your faith. The apostle here lays a gospel principle, viz., Faith in the Son of God: which faith layeth hold of the forgiveness of sins, alone for the sake of Christ; therefore he is a great way off, of laying the purity of the human nature, the law, as written in the heart of natural man, as the principle of holiness; from whence is produced good works in the soul of the godly.

In your fourth chapter also (p. 28.) even in the beginning thereof; even with one text you have overthrown your whole book.

This chapter is to prove, that the only design of the promises, and threatenings of the gospel, is to promote, and put us again in possession of the holiness we had lost. For that the reader must still remember, is the only design of your book, p. 12. Whereas the first text you speak of, 2 Pe. i. 4. maketh mention of the Divine nature, or of the Spirit of the living God, which is also received by the precious faith of Christ, and the revelation of the knowledge of him; this blessed Spirit, and therefore not the dictates of human nature, is the principle that is laid in the godly: but Adam’s holiness had neither the knowledge, or faith, or Spirit of the Lord Jesus, as its foundation, or principle: yea, nature was his foundation, even his own nature was the original, from whence his righteousness and good works arose.

The next scriptures also, viz. 2 Co. vii. 1. Ro. xii. 1. overthrow you; for they urge the promises as motives to stir us up to holiness. But Adam had neither the Spirit of Jesus, or faith in him, as a principle: nor any promises to him as motives: wherefore this was not that to which he, or which we Christians are exhorted to seek the possession of; but that which is operated by that Spirit which we receive by the faith of Jesus, and that which is encouraged by those promises, that God hath since given to them that have closed by faith with Jesus.

The rest also, (in p. 29.) not one of them doth promise us the possession of the holiness we have lost, or any mercy to them that have it.

You add: ‘And whereas the promises of pardon, and of eternal life are very frequently made to believing; there is nothing more evidently declared,

than that this *faith* is such as purifieth the heart, and is productive of good works.’ p. 30.

Ans. 1. If the promise be made at all to believing, it is not made to us upon the account of the holiness we had lost; for I tell you yet again, that holiness is not of faith, neither was faith the effect thereof. But,

2. The promises of pardon, though they be made to such a faith as is fruitful in good works: yet not to it, as it is fruitful in doing, but in receiving good. Sir, the quality of justifying faith is this, *Not to work, but to believe*, as to the business of pardon of sin: and that not only, because of the sufficiency that this faith sees in Christ to justify, but also for that it knows those whom God thus pardoneth, be justifieth as ungodly. ‘But to him that worketh not, but believeth;’ (Mark, here faith and works are opposed) ‘But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.’ Ro. iv. 5.

You add farther, ‘That the promises may be reduced to these three heads; that of the Holy Spirit, of remission of sins, and eternal happiness, in the enjoyment of God,’ p. 30.

Ans. If you can prove that any of these promises were made to the holiness that we had lost, or that by these promises we are to be possessed with that holiness again; I will even now lay down the bucklers. For albeit, the time will come when the saints shall be absolutely, and perfectly sinless; yet then shall they be also spiritual, immortal, and incorruptible, which you cannot prove Adam was, in the best of his holiness, even that which we lost in him.

The threatenings you speak of* are every one made against sin, but not one of them to drive us into a possession of that holiness that we had lost: nay, contrariwise, he that looks to, or seeks after that, is as sure to be damned, and go to hell, as he that transgresseth the law; because that is not the righteousness of God, the righteousness of Christ, the righteousness of faith, nor that to which the promise is made.

And this was manifested to the world betimes, even in that day, when God drove the man and his wife out of Eden, and placed cherubims, and a flaming sword, in the way by which they came out, to the end, that by going back by *that* way, they might rather be killed and die, than lay hold of the ‘tree of life.’ Ge. iii.

Which the apostle also respects, when he calleth the way of the gospel, the NEW and LIVING way, even that which is made by the blood of Christ; He. x. 20. concluding by this description of the way

* Against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, such as disbelief, idolatry, adultery, &c., p. 35.

that is by blood, that the other is old, and the way of death, even that which is by the moral law, or the dictates of our nature, or by that fond conceit of the godly holiness of Adam.

[Our Lord's object not merely to restore man's natural holiness, but to impart his own infinite and eternal holiness to those that believe.]

Your fifth chapter tells us, 'That the promoting of holiness was the design of our Saviour's whole life and conversation among men,' p. 36.

Ans. 1. Were this granted, it reacheth nothing at all the design for which you in your way present us with it: For,

2. That which you have asserted is: That the errand about whieh Christ came, was, as the effecting our deliverance out of that sinful state we had brought ourselves into, so to put us again in possession of that holiness which we had lost; for that, you say, is the business of your book, p. 12. Wherefore you should have told us in the head of this chapter, not so much that our Saviour designed the promoting of holiness in general by his life, but that the whole design of our Saviour's life and conversation, was to put us again into possession of *that* holiness which we had lost, into a possession of that natural, old covenant, figurative, ignorant holiness. But it seems you count that there is no other than that now lost, but never again to be obtained holiness, that was in Adam.

3. Farther, you also falter here, as to the stating of the proposition; for in the beginning of your book, you state it thus: That the enduing men with inward real righteousness, or true holiness, was the ultimate end of our Saviour's coming into the world, still meaning the holiness we lost in Adam. You should therefore in this place also, have minded your reader of this your proposition, and made it manifest if you could, 'that the ultimate end of our Saviour's whole life and conversation, was the enduing men with this Adamitish holiness.' But *holiness*, and *that* holiness, is alone with you; and to make it his end, and whole end; his business, and the whole business of his life; is but the same with you.

But you must know, that the whole life and conversation of our Saviour, was intended for another purpose, than to drive us back to, or to endue us with, such an holiness and righteousness as I have proved this to be.

You have therefore, in this your discourse, put an insufferable affront upon the Son of God, in making all his life and conversation to centre and terminate in the holiness we had lost: As if the Lord Jesus was sent down from heaven, and the word of God made flesh; that by a perfect life and conversation, he might shew us how holy Adam

was before he fell; or what an holiness *that* our holiness was, which we had before we were converted.

Your discourse therefore, of the life and conversation of the Lord Jesus, is none other than heathenish: For you neither treat of the principle, his Godhead, by which he did his works; neither do you in the least, in one syllable, aver the first, the main and prime reason of this his conversation; only you treat of it so far, as a mean man might have considered it. And indeed it stood not with your design to treat aright with these things; for had you mentioned the first, though but once, your Babel had tumbled about your ears; for if in the holy Jesus did 'dwell the word,' one of the three in heaven; or if the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, was truly, essentially, and naturally God; then must the principle from whence his works did proceed, be better than the principle from whence proceeded the goodness in Adam; otherwise Adam must be God and man. Also you do, or may know that the self-same act may be done from several principles: and again, that it is the principle from whence the act is done, and not the bare doing of the act, that makes it better or worse accepted, in the eyes either of God or men.

Now then, *to shew you the main, or chief design of the life and conversation of the Lord Jesus.*

First, It was not to shew us what an excellent holiness we once had in Adam, but that thereby God, the Eternal Majesty, according to his promise, might be seen by, and dwell with, mortal men: For the Godhead being altogether in its own nature invisible, and yet desirous to be seen by, and dwell with the children of men; therefore was the Son, who is the self-same substance with the Father, closed with, or tabernaclled in our flesh; that in that flesh, the nature and glory of the Godhead might be seen by, and dwell with us: 'The word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, (what glory? the glory,) as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth.' Jn. i. 14. Again, 'The life (that is, the life of God, in the works and conversation of Christ) was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and shew unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us;' Jn. i. 2. And hence he is called the image of the invisible God; Col. i. 15. or he by whom the invisible God is most perfectly presented to the sons of men. Did I say before, that the God of glory is desirous to be seen of us? Even so also, have the pure in heart, a desire that it should be so: 'Lord, say they, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us.' Jn. xiv. 8. And therefore the promise is for their comfort, that 'they shall see God.' Mat. v. 8. But how then must they see him? Why, in the person, and by the life and works of Jesus. When

Philip, under a mistake, thought of seeing God some other way, than in and by this Lord Jesus Christ; What is the answer? ‘Have I been so long time with you, (saith Christ) and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou *then*, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doth the works. Believe me, that I *am* in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works’ sake.’ Jn. xiv. 9–11. See here, that both the words and works of the Lord Jesus, were not to shew you, and so to call you back to the holiness that we had lost, but to give us visions of the perfections that are in the Father. He hath given us ‘the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ.’ 2 Co. iv. 6. And hence it is, that the apostle, in that brief collection of the wonderful mystery of godliness, placeth this in the front thereof: ‘God was manifest in the flesh.’ 1 Ti. iii. 16. Was manifest, viz. In and by the person of Christ, when in the flesh he lived among us; manifest, I say, for this, as one reason, that the pure in heart, who long after nothing more, might see him. ‘I beseech thee,’ said Moses, ‘shew me thy glory.’* ‘And will God indeed dwell with men on the earth?’ saith Solomon.

Now to fulfil the desires of them that fear him, hath he shewed himself in flesh unto them; which discovery principally is made by the words and works of Christ. But,

Second, Christ by his words and works of righteousness, in the days of his flesh, neither shewed us which was, nor called us back to the possession of the holiness that we had lost; but did perfect, in, and by himself, the law for us, that we had broken. Man being involved in sin and misery, by reason of transgression committed against the law, or ministration of death, and being utterly unable to recover himself therefrom, the Son of God himself assumeth the flesh of man, and for

sin condemned sin in that flesh. And that first, by walking, through the power of his eternal Spirit, in the highest perfection to every point of the whole law, in its most exact and full requirements; which was to be done, not only without commixing sin in his doing, but by one that was perfectly without the least being of it in his nature; yea, by one that now was God-Man, because it was God whose law was broken, and whose justice was offended: For, were it now possible to give a man possession of that holiness that he hath lost in Adam, that holiness could neither in the principle nor act deliver from the sin by him before committed. This is evident by many reasons: 1. Because it is not a righteousness able to answer the demands of the law for sin; *that* requiring not only a perfect abiding in the thing commanded, but a satisfaction by death, for the transgression committed against the law. ‘The wages of sin is death.’ Ro. vi. 23. Wherefore he that would undertake the salvation of the world, must be one who can do both these things; one that can perfectly do the demands of the law in thought, word, and deed, without the least commixture of the least sinful thought in the whole course of his life: He must be also able to give by death, even by the death that hath the curse of God in it, a complete satisfaction to the law for the breach thereof. Now this could none but Christ accomplish; none else having power to do it. ‘I have power (said he) to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again: And this commandment have I received of my Father.’ Jn. x. 18. This work then must be done, not by another earthly Adam, but by the Lord from Heaven; by one that can abolish sin, destroy the devil, kill death, and rule as Lord in heaven and earth. Now the words and works of the Lord Jesus, declared him to be such an one. He was first without sin; then he did no sin; neither could either the devil, the whole world, or the law, find any deceit in his mouth: But by being under the law, and walking in the law, by that Spirit which was the Lord God of the law, he not only did always the things that pleased the Father, but by that means in man’s flesh, he did perfectly accomplish and fulfil that law which all flesh stood condemned by. It is a foolish and an heathenish thing, nay worse, to think that the Son of God should only, or specially fulfil, or perfect the law, and the prophets, by giving more and higher instances of moral duties than were before expressly given, p. 17. This would have been but the lading of men with heavy burthens. But know then, whoever thou art that readest, that Christ’s exposition of the law was more to shew thee the perfection of his own obedience, than to drive thee back to the holiness thou hadst lost; for God sent him to fulfil it, by doing it, and dying to the

* How astonishing the mystery! how condescending the love! that the infinite Deity and finite flesh should meet in one person (Christ), in order to display to mankind the glory of God in that divine person! to bring hell deserving mortals into a nearness, yea, into a oneness with his Creator, that they might be made partakers of his holiness, and adore and admire his perfections for ever! O Christians, know and prize your inestimable privileges, and be instant at the throne of grace, that your souls may be so far assimilated to the image of the ever-blessed and adorable Jesus, that you may be constantly looking and hastening to, and longing for that happy time, when, having dropt the dimming rags of mortality, the veil of sinful flesh, you shall be brought to ‘know him even as you are known’ of him, because you shall ‘see him as he is.’—*Ryland.*

most sore sentence it could pronounce: not as he stood a single person, but common,* as Mediator between God and man; making up in himself the breach that was made by sin, betwixt God and the world. For,

Third, He was to die as a lamb, as a lamb without blemish, and without spot, according to the type; ‘Your lamb shall be without blemish.’ Ex. xii. 5. But because there was none such to be found BY and AMONG all the children of men; therefore God sent HIS from heaven. Hence John calls him the Lamb of God, Jn. i. 29. and Peter him that was without spot, who washed us by his blood. 1 Pe. i. 19. Now wherein doth it appear that he was without spot and blemish, but as he walked in the law? These words therefore *without spot* are the sentence of the law, who searching him could find nothing in him why he should be slain, yet he died because there was sin: Sin! where? Not in him, but in his people; ‘For the transgression of my people was he stricken.’ Is. lxi. 8. He died then for our sins, and qualified himself so to do, by coming sinless into the world, and by going sinless through it; for had he not done both these, he must have died for himself. But being God, even in despite of all that stumble at him, he conquered death, the devil, sin, and the curse, by himself, and then sat down at the right hand of God.

Fourth, And because he hath a second part of his priestly office to do in heaven; therefore it was thus requisite that he should thus manifest himself to be holy and harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners on the earth. He. vii. 26. As Aaron first put on the holy garments, and then went into the holiest of all. The life, therefore, and conversation of our Lord Jesus, was to shew us with what a curious robe and girdle he went into the holy place; and not to shew us with what an Adamitish holiness he would possess his own. ‘Such an high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens;’ that he might always be accepted, both in person and offering, when he presenteth his blood to God, the atonement for sin. Indeed in some things he was an example to us to follow him; but mark, it was not as he was Mediator, not as he was under the law to God, not as he died for sin, nor as he maketh reconciliation for iniquity. But in these things consist the life of our soul, and the beginning of our happiness. He was then exemplary to us, as he carried it meekly and patiently, and self-denyingly towards the world: But yet not so neither to any but such to whom he first offered justification by the means of his own righteousness; for before he saith ‘learn of me,’ he saith,

‘I will give you rest;’ rest from the guilt of sin, and fear of everlasting burnings. Mat. xi. And so Peter first tells us, he died for our sins; and next, that he left us an example. 1 Pe. ii. 21. But should it be granted that the whole of Christ’s life and conversation among men was for our example, and for no other end at all, but that we should learn to live by his example, yet it would not follow, but be as far from truth as the ends of the earth are asunder, that by this means he sought to possess us with the holiness we had lost, for that he had not in himself; it is true he was born without sin, yet born God and man; he lived in the world without sin, but he lived as God-Man: he walked in and up to the law, but it was as God-Man. Neither did his manhood, even in those acts of goodness, which as to action, most properly respected it; do ought without, but by and in conjunction with his Godhead: Wherefore all and every whit of the righteousness and good that he did was that of God-Man, the righteousness of God. But this was not Adam’s principle, nor any holiness that we had lost.

Your fifth chapter, therefore, consisteth of words spoken to the air.

Your sixth chapter tells us, ‘That to make men truly virtuous and holy, was the design of Christ’s imitable actions, or mighty works and miracles, and these did only tend to promote it,’ p. 68.

He neither did, nor needed, so much as one small piece of a miracle to persuade men to seek for the holiness which they had lost, or to give them again possession of that; for that as I have shewed, though you would fain have it otherwise, is not at all the Christian or gospel righteousness. Wherefore, in one word, you are as short by this chapter to prove your natural old covenant, promiseless, figurative holiness, to be here designed, as if you had said so much as amounts to nothing. Farther, Christ needed not to work a miracle to persuade men to fall in love with themselves, and their own natural dictates; to persuade them that they have a purity of the human nature in them; or that the holiness which they have lost, is the only true, real, and substantial holiness: These things, both corrupted nature and the devil, have of a long time fastened, and fixed in their minds.

His miracles therefore tend rather to take men off of the pursuit after the righteousness or holiness that we had lost, and to confirm unto us the truth of a far more excellent and blessed thing; to wit, the righteousness of God, of Christ, of faith, of the Spirit, which *that* you speak of never knew; neither is it possible that he should know it who is hunting for your sound complexion, your purity of human nature, or its dictates, as the only true, real, and substantial righteousness. ‘They are ignorant of God’s righteousness, that go about to establish

* ‘Common,’ as the head of his church, in whom all his people have an equal or *common* right.—ED.

their own righteousness; and neither have, nor can, without a miracle, submit themselves unto the righteousness of God. They cannot submit *themselves* thereto; talk thereof they may, notion it they may, profess it too they may; but for a man to submit *himself* thereto, is by the mighty power of God.

Miracles and signs are for them that believe not. 1 Co. xiv. 22. Why for them? That they might believe; therefore their state is reckoned fearful that have not yet believed for all his wondrous works. And though he did so many miracles among them, yet they believed him not. Jn. xii. 37—40. But what should they believe? That Jesus is the true Messias, the Christ that should come into the world. Do you say that I blaspheme (saith Christ) because I said I am the Son of God: 'If I do not the works of my Father believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me believe the works: that ye may know, and believe that the Father is in me, and I in him.' Jn. x. 37, 38. But what is it to believe that he is Messias, or Christ? Even to believe that this man Jesus was ordained and appointed of God (and that before all worlds) to be the Saviour of men, by accomplishing in himself an everlasting righteousness for them, and by bearing their sins in his body on the tree; that it was he that was to reconcile us to God, by the body of his flesh, when he hanged on the cross. This is the doctrine that at the beginning Christ preached to that learned ignorant Nicodemus. 'As Moses (said he) lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.' Jn. iii. 14, 15. The serpent was lifted up upon a pole: Nu. xxi. 9. 'Christ was hanged on a tree.' The serpent was lifted up for murmurers: Christ was hanged up for sinners: The serpent was lifted up for them that were bitten with fiery serpents, the fruits of their wicked murmuring: Christ was hanged up for them that are bitten with guilt, the rage of the devil, and the fear of death and wrath: The serpent was hanged up to be looked on: Christ was hanged up that we might believe in him, that we might have faith in his blood: They that looked upon the serpent of brass lived: They that believe in Christ shall be saved, and shall never perish. Was the serpent then lifted up for them that were good and godly? No, but for the sinners: 'So God commended his love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.' But what if they that were stung, could not, because of the swelling of their face, look up to the brazen serpent? then without remedy they die: So he that believeth not in Christ shall be damned. But might they not be healed by humbling themselves? one would think that better than to live by looking up only: No, only looking up did it, when death swallowed up them that looked not. This then is the doctrine,

'Christ came into the world to save sinners:' according to the proclamation of Paul, 'Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.' The forgiveness of sins: But what is meant by forgiveness? Forgiveness doth strictly respect the debt, or punishment that by sin we have brought upon ourselves. But how are we by this man forgiven this? Because by his blood he hath answered the justice of the law, and so made amends to an offended majesty. Besides, this man's righteousness is made over to him that looks up to him for life; yea, that man is made the righteousness of God in him. This is the doctrine that the miracles were wrought to confirm, and that, both by Christ, and his apostles, and not that holiness and righteousness, that is the fruit of a feigned purity of our nature.

Take two or three instances for all.

First, 'Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not; the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep.' Jn. x. 24—26.

By this scripture the Lord Jesus testifies what was the end of his words and wondrous works, viz. That men might know that he was the Christ; that he was sent of God to be the Saviour of the world; and that these miracles required of them, first of all, that they accept of him by *believing*; a thing little set by, by our author, for in p. 299. he preferreth his doing righteousness far before it, and above all things else, his words are verbatim thus, 'Let us exercise ourselves unto real and substantial godliness, (such as he hath described in the first part of his book, viz. That which is the dictates of his human nature, &c.) and in keeping our consciences void of offence, both towards God and towards men, and in studying the gospel to enable us, not to discourse, or only to believe, but also and above all things to *do well*.' But believing, though not with this man, yet by Christ and his wondrous miracles, is expected first, and above ALL things, from men; and to do well, in the best sense (though his sense is the worst) is that which by the gospel is to come after.

Second, 'Go into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. And these signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues; they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them,' &c. Mar. xvi. 15—18.

Mark you here, it is believing, *believing*; It is, I say, believing that is here required by Christ. Believing what? The gospel; even good tidings to sinners by Jesus Christ; good tidings of good, glad tidings of good things. Mark how the apostle hath it; the glad tidings is, ‘That through this man [Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.’ Ac. xiii. 38, 39.

These signs shall follow them that believe. Mark, signs before, and signs after, and all to excite to, and confirm the weight of believing. ‘And they went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.’ Mar. xvi. 20.

Third, ‘Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let *them* slip. For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*; God also bearing *them* witness both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.’ He. ii. 1—4.

Here we are excited to the faith of the Lord Jesus, under these words ‘so great salvation.’ As if he had said, give earnest heed, the most earnest heed, to the doctrine of the Lord Jesus, because it is ‘so great salvation.’ What this salvation is, he tells us, it is that which was preached by the Lord himself; ‘For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ Jn. iii. 16. God so loved, that he gave his Son to be so great salvation. Now as is expressed in the text, to be the better for this salvation, is, to give heed to hear it; for ‘Faith cometh by hearing.’ Ro. x. 17.

He saith not give heed to doing, but to the word you have *heard*; faith, I say, cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. Ro. x. But that this hearing is the hearing of faith, is farther evident:

1. Because he speaketh of a great salvation, accomplished by the love of God in Christ, accomplished by his blood. ‘By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.’ He. ix. 12.

2. This salvation is set in opposition to that which was propounded before, by the ministration of angels, which consisted in a law of works; that which Moses received to give to the children of Israel. ‘For the law (a command to works and duties) was given by Moses, *but* grace and

truth came by Jesus Christ.’ Jn. i. 17. To live by doing works is the doctrine of the law and Moses; but to live by faith and grace, is the doctrine of Christ, and the gospel.

Besides, the threatening being pressed with an ‘How shall we escape?’ Respects still a better, a freer, a more gracious way of life, than either the moral or ceremonial law; for both these were long before: But here comes in another way, not that propounded by Moses, or the angels, but since by the Lord himself. ‘How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard *him*.’

Now mark, It is this salvation, this *so great* and eternal salvation, that was obtained by the blood of the Lord himself. It was this, even to confirm faith in this, that the God of heaven himself came down to confirm, by signs and wonders; ‘God bearing *them* witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will.’ He. ii. 4.

Thus we see, that to establish a holiness that came from the first principles of morals in us, or that ariseth from the dictates of our human nature, or to drive us back to that figurative holiness that we had once, but lost in Adam, is little thought on by Jesus Christ, and as little intended by any of the gospel miracles.

A word or two more. The tribute money you mention,* was not as you would clawingly insinuate for no other purpose, than to shew Christ’s loyalty to the magistrate: But first, and above all, to shew his godhead, to confirm his gospel, and then to shew his loyalty, the which, Sir, the persons you secretly smite at, have respect for, as much as you.

Again, Also the curse of the barren fig-tree, mentioned, p. 73. was not (if the Lord himself may be believed) to give us an emblem of a person void of good works; but to shew his disciples the power of faith, and what a wonder-working thing that blessed grace is. Wherefore, when the disciples wondered at that sudden blast that was upon the tree, Jesus answered not, behold an emblem of one void of moral virtues; but ‘Verily, I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig-tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done. And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer

* ‘And even that miracle which might seem the most inconsiderable, namely, his causing his disciple Peter to catch a fish with a small piece of money in its mouth, was also instructive of a duty; it being an instance of his loyalty to the supreme magistrate; for the money was expended in paying tribute, and taken out of the sea in that strange manner for no other purpose.’—*Fowler’s Design, Sc., p. 72.*

believing, ye shall receive.' Mat. xxi. 21, 22. Again, Mark saith, When Peter saw the fig-tree that the Lord had cursed dried up from the roots, he said to his master, 'behold the fig-tree which thou cursedst is withered away.' xi. 21. Christ now doth not say as you, this tree was an emblem of a professor void of good works; but, 'I have faith in, or the faith of God. For, verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.' Christ Jesus therefore had a higher, and a better end, than that which you propound, in his cursing the barren fig-tree, even to shew, as himself expounds it, the mighty power of faith; and how it lays hold of things in heaven, and tumbleth before it things on earth. Wherfore your scriptureless exposition, doth but lay* you even Solomon's proverb, 'The legs of the lame are not equal,' &c. Pr. xxvi. 7.

I might enlarge; but enough of this; only here I add, that the wonders and miracles that attend the gospel, were wrought, and are recorded, to persuade to faith in Christ. By faith in Christ men are justified from the curse, and judgment of the law. This faith worketh by love, by the love of God it brings up the heart to God, and goodness; but not by your covenant, Eze. xvi. 61. not by principles of human nature, but of the Spirit of God; not in a poor, legal, old covenant, promiseless, ignorant, shadowish, natural holiness, but by the Holy Ghost.

[*The death of Christ accomplished an infinitely greater object than the restoring of man to his original temporal holiness.*]

I come now to your seventh chapter; but to that I have spoken briefly already, and therefore here shall be the shorter.

In this chapter you say, 'that to make men holy was the design of Christ's death.' p. 78.

Ans. 1. But not with your described principles of humanity, and dictates of human nature. He designed not, as I have fully proved, neither by his death, nor life, to put us into a possession of the holiness which we had lost, though the proof of that be the business of your book.

2. To make men holy, was doubtless designed by the death and blood of Christ: but the way and

manner of the proceeding of the Holy Ghost therein, you write not of; although the first text you mention (p. 78, 79.) doth fairly present you with it. For the way to make men inwardly holy, by the death and blood of Christ, is, first, to possess them with the knowledge of this, that their sins were crucified with him, or that he did bear them in his body on the tree: 'Knowing this, that our Old Man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.' Ro. vi. 6. So he died for all, that they that live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, as you would have them, nor to the law or dictates of their own nature, as your doctrine would persuade them; 'but to him that died for them, and rose again.' 2 Co. v. 15.

There are two things, in the right stating of the doctrine of the effects of the death and blood of Christ, that do naturally effect in us an holy principle, and also a life becoming such a mercy.

First, For that by it we are set at liberty, by faith therein, from the guilt, and curse that is due to guilt, from death, the devil, and the wrath to come. No encouragement to holiness like this, like the persuasion, and belief of this; because this carrieth in it the greatest expression of love, that we are capable of hearing or believing, and there is nothing that worketh on us so powerfully as love. 'Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins.' 1 Jn. iv. 10. He then that by faith can see that the body of his sin did hang upon the cross, by the body of Christ, and that can see by that action, death and sin, the devil and hell, destroyed for him; it is he that will say, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name,' &c. Ps. ciii. 1-4.

Second, Moreover, the knowledge of this giveth a man to understand this mystery, That Christ and himself are united in one. For faith saith, If our Old Man was crucified with Christ, then were we also reckoned in him, when he hanged on the cross, 'I am crucified with Christ.' Ga. ii. 20. All the Elect did mystically hang upon the cross in Christ. We then are dead to the law, and sin, first, by the body of Christ. Ro. vii. 4. Now he that is dead is free from sin; now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall live with him, knowing that Christ being raised from the dead, dieth no more, death hath no more dominion over him; for in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God: likewise reckon yourselves also dead unto sin, but alive unto God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Ro. vi.

* 'Lay you,' brings forth to yourself. 'Lay' is here used as in 'a hen lays eggs;' such an application to this proverb is a cutting satire.—ED.

† 'To possess them.' Possess was formerly used as an active verb, but now is only used as a neuter verb; the meaning is 'to fill them with the certainty of the knowledge.'

This also Peter doth lively discourse of, ‘Forasmuch then (saith he) as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.’ 1 Pe. iv. 1. By which words he insinuateth the mystical union that is between Christ the head, and the Elect his body: arguing from the suffering of a part, there should be a sympathy in the whole. If Christ then suffered for us, we were (even our sins, bodies and souls) reckoned in him when he so suffered. Wherefore, by his sufferings, the wrath of God for us is appeased, the curse is taken from us: for as Adam by his acts of rebellion, made all that were in him guilty of his wickedness; so Christ by his acts, and doings of goodness, and justice; made all that were reckoned in him good, and just also: but as Adam’s transgression did first, and immediately reside with, and remain in the person of Adam only, and the imputation of that transgression to them that sprang from him; so the goodness, and justice, that was accomplished by the second Adam, first, and immediately resideth in him, and is made over to his also, by the imputation of God. But again, as they that were in Adam, stood not only guilty of sin, by imputation, but polluted by the filth that possessed him at his fall; so the children of the second Adam, do not only, though first, stand just by virtue of the imputation of the personal acts of justice, and goodness done by Christ; but they also receive of that inward quality, the grace, and holiness that was in him, at the day of his rising from the dead.*

Thus therefore come we to be holy, by the death, and blood of the Lord: this also is the contents of those other scriptures, which abusively you cite, to justify your assertion, to wit.

‘That the great errand of Christ in coming into the world, was—to put us again into possession of the holiness which we had lost. And that only designed the establishing such a holiness, as is seated originally in our natures, and originally dictates of the human nature.’ The rest of the chapter being spoken to already, I pass it, and proceed to the next.

Your eighth chapter tells us, ‘That it is only

the promoting of the design of making men holy, that is aimed at by the apostles insisting on the doctrines of Christ’s resurrection, ascension, and coming again to judgment.’

Though this should be granted, as indeed it ought not; yet there is not one syllable in all their doctrines, that tendeth in the least to drive men back to the possession of the holiness we had lost; which is still the thing asserted by you, and that, for the proof of which you make this noise, and ado. Neither did Christ at all design the promoting of holiness, by such principles as you have asserted in your book; neither doth the holy Spirit of God, either help us in, or excite us to our duty, SIMPLY from such natural principles.

But the apostles in these doctrines you mention, had far other glorious designs; such as were truly gospel, and tended to strengthen our faith yet farther: As,

First, For the resurrection of Christ; they urge THAT, as an undeniable argument, of his doing away sin, by his sacrifice and death: ‘He was delivered for our offences,’ because he put himself into the room, and state of the wicked, as undertaking their deliverance from death, and the everlasting wrath of God. Now putting himself into their condition, he bears their sins, and dies their death; but how shall we know, that by undertaking this work, he did accomplish the thing he intended? the answer is, ‘He was raised again for our justification.’ Ro. iv. 25. Even to make it manifest, that by the offering of himself he had purged our sins from before the face of God. For in that he was raised again, and that by him, for the appeasing of whose wrath he was delivered up to death; it is evident that the work for us, was by him effectually done: for God raised him up again. And hence it is that Paul calls the resurrection of Christ, ‘the sure mercies of David. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.’ Ac. xiii. 34. For Christ having conquered and overcome death, sin, the devil, and the curse, by himself, as it is manifest he did, by his rising from the dead; what now remains for him, for whom he did this, but mercy and goodness for ever?

Wherefore the resurrection of Christ is that which saaleth the truth of our being delivered from the wrath by his blood.

Second, As to his ascension they [the inspired writers] urge and make use of that, for divers weighty reasons also.

1. As a farther testimony yet, of the sufficiency of his righteousness to justify sinners withal: for if he that undertaketh the work, is yet entertained by him, whose wrath he was to appease thereby: What is it? But that he hath so completed that work.

* ‘As in Adam all died,’ were bereft of every good, and became obnoxious to wrath and endless misery, so ‘IN Christ,’ by virtue of his life, death, and resurrection, ‘shall all be made alive;’ they shall have that incorruptible seed implanted in their hearts, which liveth and abideth for ever. Every grace and blessing is derived to the renewed soul from its union to Christ, as its living head, through the eternal Spirit. Christ hath fulfilled all righteousness for us and in our stead, and this was the end and intent of his coming into the world; so that Christ is now become the righteousness of all them that do truly believe in him. ‘Created IN Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them,’ Eph. ii. 10.—*Mason and Ryland.*

Wherefore he saith, that the Holy Ghost shall convince the world; that he hath a sufficient righteousness, and that because he went to the Father and they saw him no more, Jn. xvi. because he, when he ascended up to the Father, was there entertained, accepted, and embraced of God. That is an excellent word. ‘He is chosen of God, and precious.’ Chosen of God to be the righteousness, that his Divine Majesty is pleased with, and takes complacency in; God hath chosen, exalted, and set down Christ at his own right hand; for the sweet savour that he smelled in his blood, when he died for the sins of the world.

2. By his ascension he sheweth how he returned conqueror, and victor over our enemies. His ascension was his going home, from whence he came, to deliver us from death: now it is said, that when he returned home, or ascended, ‘he led captivity captive,’ Ep. iv. that is, carried them prisoners, whose prisoners we were: He rode to heaven in triumph, having in chains the foes of believers.

3. In that he ascended, it was, that he might perform for us, the second part of his priestly office, or mediatorship. He is gone into heaven itself, there ‘now to appear in the presence of God for us.’ He. ix. 24. ‘Wherefore, he is able also to save them to the uttermost, that come unto God by him, (as indifferent a thing as you make it to be) seeing he ever liveth (viz. in heaven, whither he is ascended) to make intercession for them.’ vii. 25.

4. He ascended, that he might be exalted not only above, but be made head over all things to the church. Wherefore now in heaven, as the Lord in whose hand is all power, he ruleth over, both men, and devils, sin, and death, hell, and all calamities, for the good and profit of his body, the church. Ep. i. 19—23.

5. He ascended to prepare a place for us, who shall live and die in the faith of Jesus. Jn. xiv. 1—3.

6. He ascended, because there he was to receive the Holy Ghost, the great promise of the New Testament; that he might communicate of that unto his chosen ones, to give them light to see his wonderful salvation, and to be as a principle of holiness in their souls: ‘For the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.’ Jn. vii. 39. But when he ascended on high, even as he led captivity captive, so he received gifts for men; by which gifts he meaneth the Holy Ghost, and the blessed and saving operations thereof.

Lu. xxiv. Ac. i. 2.

Third. As to his coming again to judgment, that doctrine is urged, to shew the benefit that the godly will have at that day, when he shall gather together his elect, and chosen, from one end of heaven unto the other. As also to shew you what an end he will make with those who have not obeyed his gospel. Mat. xxv. 2 Th. i. 8. 2 Pe. iii. 7—11.

Now it is true, all these doctrines do forcibly produce an holy, and heavenly life, but neither from your principles, nor to the end you propound; to wit, that we should be put into possession of our first, old covenant righteousness, and act from human and natural principles.

Your ninth chapter is spent, as you suppose, to shew us the nature, and evil of sin; but because you do it more like a heathen philosopher, than a minister of the gospel, I shall not much trouble myself therewith.

Your tenth chapter consisteth in a commendation of virtue, but still of that, and no other, though counterfeited for another, than at first you have described, (chap. i.) even such, which is as much in the heathens you make mention of, as in any other man, being the same both in root, and branches, which is naturally to be found in all men, even as is sin and wickedness itself. And hence you call it here, a living up to your feigned ‘highest principle, like a creature possessed of a mind and reason.’ Again, ‘While we do thus, we act most agreeably to the right frame and constitution of our souls, and consequently most naturally; and all the actions of *nature*, are confessedly very sweet and pleasant;’ of which very thing you say, ‘the heathens had a great sense,’ p. 113, 114.

Answ. No marvel, for it was their work, not to search the deep things of God, but those which be the things of a man, and to discourse of that righteousness, and principle of holiness, which was naturally founded, and found within themselves, as men; or, as you say, ‘as creatures possessed with a mind and reason.’ But as I have already shewed, all this may be, where the Holy Ghost and faith is absent, even by the dictates, as you call them, of human nature; a principle, and actions, when trusted to that, as much please the devil, as any wickedness that is committed by the sons of men. I should not have thus boldly inserted it, but that yourself did tell me of it, p. 101. But I believe it was only extorted from you; your judgment, and your Apollo, suit not here, though indeed the devil is in the right; for this righteousness and holiness which is our own, and of ourselves, is the greatest enemy to Jesus Christ: the post against his post, and the wall against his wall. ‘I came not to call the righteous (puts you quit of the world) but sinners to repentance.’

[*Man in wretched uncertainty if he possessed no better holiness than that of Adam in his creation.*]

Your eleventh chapter is, to shew what a miserable creature that man is, that is destitute of your holiness.

Answ. And I add, as miserable is he, that hath, or knoweth no better. For such an one is under

the curse of God, because he abideth in the law of works, or in the principles of his own nature, which neither can cover his sins from the sight of God, nor possess him with faith or the Holy Ghost.

There are two things in this chapter, that proclaim you to be ignorant of Jesus Christ.

First, you say, It is not possible a wicked man should have God's pardon, p. 119, 130.

Secondly, You suppose it to be impossible for Christ's righteousness to be imputed to an unrighteous man, p. 120.

Answ. To both which, a little briefly; God doth not use to pardon *painted* sinners, but such as are really so. Christ died for sinners, 1 Ti. i. 15. and God justifieth the ungodly, Ro. v. 6—9. even him that worketh not, iv. 3—5. nor hath no works to make him godly. ix. 18. Is. xxxiii. 11. Besides, pardon supposes sin; now he that is a sinner is a wicked man; by nature a child of wrath, and, as such, an object of the curse of God, because he hath broken the law of God. But such God pardoneth; not because they have made themselves holy, or have given up themselves to the law of nature, or to the dictates of their human principles, but because he will be gracious, and because he will give to his beloved Son Jesus Christ, the benefit of his blood.

As to the second head, what need is there that the righteousness of Christ should be imputed, where men are righteous first? God useth not thus to do; his righteousness is for the 'stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness.' Is. xlvi. 12.

The believing of Abraham was while yet he was uncircumcised; and circumcision was added, not to save him by, but as a seal of the righteousness of that faith, which he had, being yet uncircumcised. Now we know that circumcision in the flesh, was a type of circumcision in the heart; Ro. ii. wherefore the faith that Abraham had, before his outward circumcision, was to shew us, that faith, if it be right, layeth hold upon the righteousness of Christ, before we be circumcised inwardly; and this must needs be so: for if faith doth purify the heart, then it must be there *before* the heart is purified. Now this inward circumcision is a seal, or sign of this: that that is the only saving faith, that layeth hold upon Christ before we be circumcised. But he that believeth before he be inwardly circumcised, must believe in another, in a righteousness without him, and that, as he standeth at present in himself ungodly; for he is not circumcised; which faith, if it be right, approveth itself also so to be, by an after work of circumcising inwardly. But, I say, the soul that *thus* layeth hold on Christ, taketh the only way to please his God, because this is that also, which himself hath determined shall be accomplished upon us. 'Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that

justifieth THE UNGODLY, his faith is counted for righteousness.' Ro. iv. He that is ungodly, hath a want of righteousness, even of the inward righteousness of works: but what must become of him? Let him believe in him that justifieth the ungodly, because, for that purpose, there is in him a righteousness. We will now return to Paul himself; he had righteousness before he was justified by Christ; yet, he choose to be justified rather as an unrighteous man, than as one endued with so brave a qualification. That I may 'be found in him, not having mine own righteousness,' away with mine own righteousness; I choose rather to be justified as ungodly, by the righteousness of Christ, than by mine own, and his together. Phil. iii.

You argue therefore, like him that desireth to be a teacher of the law, (nay worse,) that neither knoweth what he saith, nor whereof he affirmeth. But you say,

'Were it possible that Christ's righteousness could be imputed to an unrighteous man, I dare boldly affirm that it would signify as little to his happiness, while he continueth so, as would a gorgeous, and splendid garment, to one that is almost starved,' &c. p. 120.

Answ. 1. That Christ's righteousness is imputed to men, while sinners, is sufficiently testified by the word of God. Eze. xvi. 1—8. Zec. iii. 1—5. Ro. iii. 24—25; iv. 1—5; v. 6—9. 2 Co. v. 18—21. Phil. iii. 6—8. 1 Ti. i. 15, 16. Re. i. 5.

2. And that the sinner, or unrighteous man, is happy in this imputation, is also as abundantly evident. For, (1.) The wrath of God, and the curse of the law, are both taken off by this imputation. (2.) The graces and comforts of the Holy Ghost, are all entailed to, and followers of, this imputation. 'Blessed is he to whom the Lord will not impute sin.' It saith not, that he is blessed that hath not sin to be imputed, but he to whom God will not impute them, he saith, therefore the non-imputation of sin, doth not argue a non being thereof in the soul, but a glorious act of grace, imputing the sufficiency of Christ's righteousness, to justify him that is yet ungodly.

But what blessedness doth follow the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, to one that is yet ungodly?

Answ. Even the blessing of Abraham, to wit, grace and eternal life: For Christ was made the curse, and death, that was due to us as sinners; 'That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles, through [faith in] Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.' Ga. iii. 13, 14. Now faith hath its eye upon two things, with respect to its act of justifying. First, it acknowledgeth that the soul is a sinner, and then, that there is a sufficiency in the righteousness of Christ, to justify it in the sight of God, though a sinner

We have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; therefore they that believe aright, receive righteousness, even the righteousness of another, to justify them, while yet in themselves they are sinners.

Why do they believe in Christ? the answer is: that they *might* be justified, not because in their own eyes they are. They therefore at present stand condemned in themselves, and *therefore* they believe in Jesus Christ, that they *might* be set free from present condemnation. Now being justified by his blood, as ungodly, they shall be saved by his life, that is, by his intercession: for whom he justifieth by his blood, he saveth by his intercession; for by that is given the spirit, faith, and all grace that preserveth the elect unto eternal life and glory.

I conclude therefore, that you argue not gospelly, in that you so *Boldly affirm*, That it would signify as little to the happiness of one, to be justified by Christ's righteousness, while a sinner; as would a gorgeous and splendid garment to one that is ready to perish. For farther, thus to be justified, is meat and drink to the sinner; and so the beginning of eternal life in him. 'My flesh is meat indeed, (said Christ), and my blood is drink indeed; and he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal, or everlasting life.' He affirmeth it once again: 'As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.' Jn. vi. 57. Here now is a man an hungered, what must he feed upon? Not his pure humanity, not upon the sound complexion of his soul, nor yet on the dictates of his human nature, nor those neither, which you call truly generous principles: but upon the flesh and blood of the Son of God, which was once given for the sin of the world. Let those then, that would be saved from the devil and hell, and that would find a fountain of grace in themselves, first receive, and feed upon Christ, as sinners and ungodly; let them believe that both his body, and blood, and soul, was offered for them, as they were sinners. The believing of this, is the eating of Christ; this eating of Christ, is the beginning of eternal life, to wit, of all grace and health in the soul; and of glory to be enjoyed most perfectly in the next world.

Your twelfth chapter is to shew, 'That holiness being perfected is blessedness itself; and that the glory of heaven consists chiefly in it.'

Answ. But none of your holiness, none of that inward holiness, which we have lost before conversion, shall ever come to heaven: that being, as I have shewed, a holiness of another nature, and arising from another root, than that we shall in heaven enjoy.

But further, your description of the glory that we shall possess in heaven, is questionable, as to your notion of it; your notion is, that the substance of it consists 'in a perfect resemblance to the divine nature,' p. 123, 124.

Answ. Therefore not in the enjoyment of the divine nature itself: for that which in substance is but a bare resemblance, though it be a most perfect one, is not the thing itself, of which it is a resemblance. But the blessedness that we shall enjoy in heaven, in the very substance of it, consisteth not wholly, nor principally, in a resemblance of, but in the enjoyment of God himself; 'Heirs of God.' Wherefore there shall not be in us a likeness only to, but the very nature of God: 'Heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.' Ro. viii. 17. Hence the apostle tells us, that he 'rejoiced in hope of the glory of God.' Ro. v. 2. Not only in hope of a resemblance of it. 'The Lord *is* my portion, saith my soul.' But this is like the rest of your discourse. You are so in love with your Adamitish holiness, that with you it must be God in earth, and heaven.

Who they are that hold, [that] our happiness in heaven shall come by a mere fixing our eyes upon the divine perfections, I know not: But thus I read, 'we shall be like him.' Why? or how? 'For we shall see him as he is.' Our likeness then to God, even in the very heavens, will in great part come by the visions of him. And to speak the truth, our very entrance into eternal life, or the beginnings of it here, they come to us thus, 'But we all, (every one of us that shall be saved, come by it only thus) with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, *even* as by the Spirit of the Lord.' 2 Co. iii. 18.

And whereas you tell us, p. 124. That the devils themselves have a large measure of some of the attributes of God, as knowledge, power, &c. though themselves are unlike unto them.

In this you most prodigiously blaspheme.

Your thirteenth chapter is to show, 'That our Saviour's preferring the business of making men holy, before any other, witnesseth, that this is to do the best service to God.'

But still respecting the holiness, you have in your first chapter described, which still the reader must have his eye upon, it is false, and a slander of the Son of God. He never intended to promote or prefer your natural old covenant holiness, viz. that which we had lost in Adam, or that which yet from him, in the dregs thereof, remaineth in human nature; but that which is of the Holy Ghost, of faith, of the new covenant.

I shall not here again take notice of your 130th page, nor with the error contained therein, about justification by imputed righteousness.

But one thing I observe, that in all this chapter you have nothing fortified what you say, by any word of God; no, though you insinuate (p. 129 and p. 131.) that some dissent from your opinion. But instead of the holy words of God, being as you feign, conscious to yourself, you cannot do it so well as by another method, viz. The words of Mr. John Smith; therefore you proceed with his, as he with Plato's, and so wrap you up the business.

[*Christ gives a new and spiritual light.*]

You come next to an improvement upon the whole, where you make a comparison between the heathens and the gospel; shewing how far the gospel helpeth the light the heathens had, in their pursuit after your holiness. But still the excellency of the gospel, as you have vainly dreamt, is to make improvement first of the heathen principles; such good principles, say you, 'as were by the light of nature dictated to them,' p. 133. As,

'1. That there is but one God; that he is infinitely perfect,' &c.

'2. That we owe our lives, and all the comforts of them to him.'

'3. That he is our sovereign Lord.'

'4. That he is to be loved above all things,' p. 133.

Ans. 1. Seeing all these are, and may be known, as you yourself confess, by them that have not the gospel; and I add, nor yet the Holy Ghost, nor any saving knowledge of God, or eternal life: Therefore it cannot be the design of Jesus Christ by the gospel to promote or help forward this knowledge, simply from this principle, viz. Natural light, and the dictates of it. My reason is, because when nature is strained to the highest pin, it is but nature still; and so all the improvement of its light and knowledge is but an increase of that which is but natural. 'But (saith Paul) the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.' 1 Co. ii. 14.

But the gospel is the ministration of the Spirit; a revelation of another thing than is found in, or can be acquired by, heathenish principles of nature.

I say, a revelation of another thing; or rather, another discovery of the same. As, 1. Concerning the Godhead; the gospel giveth us another discovery of it, than is possible to be obtained by the dictates of natural light; even a discovery of a trinity of persons, and yet unity of essence, in the same Deity, 1 Jn. v. 1, 5, 8. 2. The light of nature will not shew us, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself. 3. The light of nature will not shew us, that we owe what we are, and have, to God, because we are the price of the blood of his Son. 4. The light of nature will not

shew, that there is such a thing as election in Christ. 5. Or, that there is such a thing, as the adoption of children to God, through him. 6. Nor, that we are to be saved by faith in his blood. 7. Or, that the man Christ shall come from heaven to judgment. These things, I say, the light of nature teacheth not; but these things are the great and mighty things of the gospel, and those about which it chiefly bentheth itself, touching upon other things, still as those that are knowable, by a spirit inferior to this of the gospel.

Besides, as these things are not known by the light of nature, so the gospel, when it comes, as I also told you before, doth implant in the soul another principle, by which they may be received, and from which the soul should act and do, both towards God and towards men; as namely the Holy Ghost, faith, hope, the joy of the Spirit, &c.

The other things you mention, viz.

1. 'The immortality of the soul,' p. 133.

2. 'The doctrine of rewards and punishments in the life to come,' p. 140.

3. 'Of the forgiveness of sin upon true repentance,' &c. p. 142.

[4. The doctrine of God's readiness to assist men by his special grace in their endeavours after virtue, p. 143.]

Ans. All these things may be assented to, where yet the grace of the gospel is not, but yet the apprehension must be such, as is the light by which they are discovered; but the light of nature cannot discover them, according to the light and nature of the gospel; because the gospel knowledge of them, ariseth also from another principle: So then, These doctrines are not confirmed by the gospel, as the light of nature teacheth them: Wherefore, Paul, speaking of the things of the gospel, and so consequently of these, he saith, 'Which things also we speak, NOT in the WORDS which MAN's wisdom teacheth, but which the HOLY GHOST teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.' 1 Co. ii. 13. As if he should say, We speak of God, of the soul, of the life to come, of repentance, of forgiveness of sins, &c. Not as philosophers do, nor yet in their light; but as saints, Christians, and sons of God, as such who have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God.

But you add (for the glory of the gospel) That we have other things, which no man could, without divine revelation, once have dreamed of. As,

That God hath made miserable sinners the objects of such transeendant love, as to give them his only begotten Son.

Ans. I must confess, If this one head had by you been handled well, you would have written like a worthy gospel minister. But you add, p. 146.

1. That when Christ was sent, it was to shew us upon what terms God was reconcileable to us, viz. By laying ‘before us all the parts of that holiness, which is necessary to restore our natures to his own likeness; - and most pathetically, moreover to intreat us to do what lieth in us to put them in practice, that so it may be to eternity well with us.’ What these things are, you mention not here; therefore I shall leave them to be spoken to under the third head.

2. A second thing you mention is, ‘That this Son of God conversed upon equal terms with men, becoming the Son of Man, born of a woman, (a great demonstration that God hath a liking to the human nature).’ But little to the purpose as you have handled it.

3. ‘That the Son of God taught men their duty, by his own example, and did himself perform what he required of them; and that himself did tread before us **EVERY step** of that way, which he hath told us leadeth to eternal life.’

Answ. Now we are come to the point, viz.: ‘That the way to eternal life is, First of all to take Christ for our example, treading his step:’ And the reason, if it be true, is weighty; ‘For he hath trod every step before us, which he hath told us leads to eternal life.’

1. *Every step.* Therefore he went to heaven by virtue of an imputative righteousness. For this is one of our steps thither.

2. *Every step.* Then he must go thither, by faith in his own blood for pardon of sin. For this is another of our steps thither.

3. *Every step.* Then he must go thither by virtue of his own intercession at the right hand of God, before he came thither: For this is one of our steps thither.

4. *Every step.* Then he must come to God, and ask mercy for some great wickedness, which he had committed. For this is also one of our steps thither.

But again, we will consider it the other way.

1. *Every step.* Then we cannot come to heaven, before we first be made accursed of God. For so was he before he came thither.

2. *Every step.* Then we must first make our body and soul an offering for the sin of others. For this did he before he came thither.

3. *Every step.* Then we must go to heaven for the sake of our own righteousness. For that was one of his steps thither.

O, Sir! What will thy gallant, generous mind do here? Indeed you talk of his being an expiatory sacrifice for us, but you put no more trust to that, than to Baptism, or the Lord’s Supper; counting that, with the other two, but things indifferent in themselves, p. 6-9.

You add again, ‘That this Son of God being raised from the dead, and ascended to heaven, is

our high priest there:’ But you talk not at all of his sprinkling the mercy seat with his blood, but clap upon him, the heathens demons; negotiating the affairs of men with the supreme God, and so wrap up, with a testification that it is needless to enlarge on the point, p. 149.

But to be plain, and in one word to tell you, about all these things you are heathenishly dark; there hath not in these one hundred and fifty pages one gospel truth been christianly handled by you; but rather a darkening of truth by words without knowledge. What man that ever had read, or assented to the gospel, but would have spoken, yet kept within the bounds of truth, more honourably of Christ, than you have done? His sacrifice must be stopt over, as the spider straddleth over the wasp, his intercession is needless to be enlarged upon. But when it falleth in your way to talk of your human nature, of the dictates, of the first principles of morals within you, and of your generous mind to follow it: oh what need is there now of amplifying, enlarging, and pressing it on men’s consciences! As if that poor heathenish, pagan principle, was the very spirit of God within us: And as if righteousness done by that, was that, and that only, that would or could fling heaven gates off the hinges.

Yea, a little after you tell us, that ‘The doctrine of his sending the Holy Ghost, was to move and excite us to our duty, and to assist, cheer, and comfort us in the performance of it.’ Still meaning our close adhering, by the purity of our human nature, to the dictates of the law, as written in our hearts as men. Which is as false as God is true. For the Holy Ghost is sent into our hearts, not to excite us to a compliance with our old and wind-shaken excellencies, that came into the world with us; but to write new laws in our hearts; even the law of faith, the word of faith and of grace, and the doctrine of remission of sins, through the blood of the Lamb of God, that holiness might flow from thence.

Your 15th chapter is to shew, That the gospel giveth far greater helps to an holy life, than the Jewish ceremonies did of old. I answer,

But the reader must here well weigh, that in the gospel you find also some positive precepts, that are of the same nature with the ceremonies under the law; of which, that of coming to God by Christ, you call one, and baptism, and the Lord’s supper, the other two. So then by your doctrine, the excellency of the gospel doth not lie in that we have a Christ to come to God by, but in things as you feign more substantial. What are they? ‘Inward principles of holiness,’ p. 159. Spiritual precepts, p. 162. That height of virtue, and true goodness, that the gospel designeth to raise us to: all which are general words, falling from a staggering conscience, leaving the world,

that are ignorant of his mind, in a muse; but tickling his brethren with the delights of their moral principles, with the dictates of their human nature, and their gallant generous minds. Thus making a very stalking-horse of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the words of truth and holiness, thereby to slay the silly one; making the Lord of life and glory, instead of a saviour, by his blood, the instructor, and schoolmaster only of human nature, a chaser away of evil affections, and an extinguisher of burning lusts;* and that not so neither, but by giving perfect explications of moral precepts, (p. 17.) and setting himself an example before them to follow him, p. 297.

Your sixteenth chapter, containeth an answer to those that object against the power of the christian religion to make men holy.

Answ. And to speak truth, what you at first render as the cause of the unholiness of the professors thereof (p. 171.) is to the purpose, had it been christianly managed by you, as namely, men's gross unbelief of the truth of it; for it 'effectually worketh in them that believe.' 1 Th. ii. 13. But that you only touch and away, neither showing what is the object of faith, nor the cause of its being so effectual to that purpose; neither do you at all treat of the power of unbelief, and how all men by nature are shut up therein, Ro. xi. 32. But presently, according to your old and natural course, you fall, first, upon a supposed power in men, to embrace the gospel, both by closing with the promise, and shunning the threatening; (p. 172.) farther adding, that 'mankind is endued with a principle of freedom, and that this principle is as essential, as any other to the human nature,' (p. 173.) By all which it is manifest, that however you make mention of unbelief, because the gospel hath laid the same in your way, yet your old doctrine of the purity of the human nature, now broken out into a freedom of will, and that, as an essential of the human nature, is your great principle of faith, and your following of that, as it dictateth to you obedience

to the first principles of morals, the practice of faith, by which you think to be saved. That this is so, must unavoidably be gathered from the good opinion you have yourself of coming to God by Christ; viz., That in the command thereof, it is one of these positive precepts, and a thing in itself absolutely considered indifferent, and neither good nor evil. Now he that looketh upon coming to God by Christ with such an eye as this, cannot lay the stress of his salvation upon the faith, or belief thereof: Indifferent faith, will serve for indifferent things; yea, a man must look beyond that which he believeth is but one with the ceremonial laws, but not the same with baptism, or the Lord's supper; for with those you compare that of coming to God by Christ. Wherefore faith, with you, must be turned into a cheerful and generous complying with the dictates of the human nature; and unbelief, into that which opposeth this, or that makes the heart backward and sluggish therein. This is also gathered from what you aver of the divine moral laws, that they be of an indispensable and eternal obligation, (p. 8.) things that are good in themselves, (p. 9.) considered in an abstracted notion, (p. 10.) Wherefore, things that are good in themselves, must needs be better than those that are in themselves but indifferent; neither can a positive precept make that, which of itself is neither good nor evil, better than that which in its own nature remaineth the essentials of goodness.

I conclude then, by comparing you with yourself, by bringing your book to your book, that you understand neither faith, nor unbelief, any farther than by obeying or disobeying the human nature, and its dictates in chief; and that of coming to God by Christ, as one of the things that is indifferent in itself.

But a little to touch upon your principle of freedom, which in p. 9. you call an understanding and liberty of will.

Answ. First, That there is no such thing in man by nature, as liberty of will, or a principle of freedom, in the saying things of the kingdom of Christ, is apparent by several scriptures. Indeed there is in men, as men, a willingness to be saved their own way, even by following, as you, their own natural principles, as is seen by the Quakers, as well as yourself; but that there is a freedom of will in men, as men, to be saved by the way which God hath prescribed, is neither asserted in the scriptures of God, neither standeth with the nature of the principles of the gospel.

The apostle saith, 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God.' And the reason is, not because, not principally because, he layeth aside a liberty of will, but because 'they are foolishness to him.' 1 Co. ii. 14. Because in his judgment they are things of no moment, but

* Would to God this legal, self-exalting, Christ-dishonouring doctrine had been confined to the times in which our author wrote, or had been then banished to hell, from whence it came; but alas! it is but too prevalent in these degenerate times, in which Arianism, Arminianism, Socinianism, &c., &c., so dreadfully infect the multitude even of professors! In the national churches, what do we hear but Moses and the law, 'This do and live;' or, in other words, do your duty as well as you can, and Christ will do the rest: thus making the gospel the sacrifice of Christ, and the work of the Spirit, of no effect. Whereas, on the contrary, unregenerate, depraved, and sinful mortals 'have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God preventing (or going before) them, that they may have a good will; and working in and by them, when they have that good will;' which is perfectly agreeable to our Lord's declaration, John xv. 5, 'Without me, ye can do nothing.'—*Mason or Ryland.*

things, as you [Mr. Fowler] have imagined of them, that in themselves are but indifferent. And that this judgment that is passed by the natural man, concerning the things of the Spirit of God, of which, that of coming to God by Christ, is the chief, is that which he cannot but do as a man, is evident from that which followeth: ‘neither CAN he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.’ Neither CAN he know them as a man, because they are spiritually discerned. Now, if he cannot know them, from what principle should he will them? For judgment, or knowledge, must be before the will can act. I say, again, a man must know them to be things in chief, that are absolutely, and indispensably necessary, and those in which resteth the greatest glory; or else his *will* will not comply with them, nor centre and terminate in them as such, but still count themselves, as you, though somewhat convinced that he ought to adhere unto them, things that in themselves are only indifferent, and absolutely considered neither good nor evil.

A farther enlargement upon this subject, will be time enough, if you shall contradict.

Another reason, or cause, which you call an immediate one, of the unsuccessfulness of the gospel, is, ‘men’s [strange and] unaccountable mistaking the design of it, - not to say worse, as to conceive no better of it, than as a science, and a matter of speculation,’ &c., p. 173.

Answ. If this be true, you have shewed us the reason, why yourself have so base and unworthy thoughts thereof: for although coming to God by Christ be the very chief, first, the substance, and most essential part of obedience thereto; yet you have reckoned this but like one of the ceremonies of the law, or as baptism with water, and the Lord’s supper, p. 7–9. Falling more directly upon the body of the moral law, as written in the heart of men, and inclining more to the teaching, or dictates of human nature, which were neither of them both ever any essential part of the gospel, than upon that which indeed is the gospel of Christ.

And here I may, if God will, timely advertise my reader, that the gospel, and its attendants, are to be accounted things distinct: the gospel, properly taken, being glad tidings of good things; or, the doctrine of the forgiveness of sins freely by grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. For to speak strictly, neither is the grace of faith, hope, repentance, or newness of life, the gospel; but rather things that are wrought by the preaching thereof, things that are the effects of it; or its inseparable companions, to all them that shall be saved. Wherefore the gospel is said to be preached in all nations, for the obedience of faith, Ro. xvi. 26. Hope also is called the hope of the gospel, not the gospel itself. So again, the gospel

is preached that men should repent, but it is not preached that men should gospel.

But your gospel, which principally or chiefly, centres in the dictates of human nature; and your faith, which is chiefly a subjecting to those dictates, are so far off from being at all any near attendants of the gospel, that they never are urged in the New Testament, but in order to show men they have forgotten to act as men. Ro. i. 19–21; ii. 14, 15. 1 Co. xi. 14.

Your last reason is, because of ‘several untoward opinions,’ the gospel is very unsuccessful, p. 174.

Ans. But what these opinions are, we hear not; nor how to shun them, you tell us here nothing at all. This I am sure, there are no men in this day have more opposed the light, glory, and lustre of the gospel of Christ, than those, as the Quakers and others, that have set up themselves, and their own humanity, as the essential parts of it.

You in answer to other things, add many other reasons to prove they are mistaken that count the gospel a thing of but mean operation to work holiness in the heart: at which you ought yourself to tremble, seeing the Son himself, who is the Lord of the gospel, is of so little esteem with you, as to make coming to God by him so trivial a business as you have done.

Your large transcript of other men’s sayings, to prove the good success of the gospel of old, did better become that people and age, than you and yours; they being a people that lived in the power thereof, but you such bats as cannot see it. That saying you mention of Rigaltias, doth better become you and yours: ‘Those now-a-days do retain the name, and society of Christians, which live altogether antichristian lives. Take away publicans, and a wretched rabble, &c. and our Christian churches will be lamentably weak, small, and insignificant things,’ p. 181.

I shall add to yours another reason of the unsuccessfulness of the gospel in our days, and that is, because so many ignorant Sir Johns,* on the one hand, and so many that have done violence to their former light, and that have damned themselves in their former anathematizing of others, have now for a long time, as a judgment of God, been permitted to be, and made the mouth to the people: persons whose lives are debauched, and who in the face of the world, after seeming serious detestings of wickedness, have for the love of filthy lucre, and the pampering their idle carcasses, made shipwreck of their former faith, and that feigned good conscience they had. From which number if you, Sir, have kept yourself clear, the less blood of the damned will fall upon your head: I know you not

* ‘Sir Johns,’ formerly the title given to the priests. It was succeeded by the title ‘reverend.’—Ep.

by face, much less your personal practice; yet I have heard as if blood might pursue you, for your unstable weathercock spirit, which doubtless could not but stumble the weak, and give advantage to the adversary to speak vilifyingly of religion.

[*Living faith essential to salvation.*]

As to your seventeenth and eighteenth chapters,* I shall say little, only I wish that your eighteenth had been more express in discovering how far a man may go, with a notion of the truth of the gospel, and yet perish because he hath it not in power.

Only in your inveighing so much against the pardon of sin, while you seem so much to cry up healing; you must know that pardon of sin is the beginning of health to the soul: He pardoneth our iniquities, and healeth all our diseases. Ps. ciii. 3. And where he saith, by the stripes of Christ we are healed, it is evident that healing beginneth at pardon, and not pardon after healing, as you would rather have it. 1 Pe. ii. 24. compare Is. liii. As for your comparison of the plaster, and the physician's portion, † I say you do but abuse your reader, and muddy the way of the gospel. For the first thing of which the soul is sick, and by which the conscience receiveth wounding; it is the guilt of sin, and fear of the curse of God for it. For which is provided the wounds and precious blood of Christ, which flesh and blood, if the soul eat thereof by faith, giveth deliverance therefrom. Upon this the filth of sin appears most odious, for that it hath not only at present defiled the soul, but because it keeps it from doing those duties of love, which by the love of Christ it is constrained to endeavour the perfecting of. For filth, appears filth; that is irksome, and odious to a contrary principle now implanted in the soul; which principle had its conveyance thither by faith in the sacrifice and death of Christ going before. ‘The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for

them, and rose again.’ 2 Co. v. 14. The man that hath received Christ, desireth to be holy, because the nature of the faith that layeth hold on Christ (although I will not say as you, it is of a generous mind) worketh by love, and longeth, yea, greatly longeth that the soul may be brought, not only into an universal conformity to his will, but into his very likeness; and because that state standeth not with what we are now, but with what we shall be hereafter: therefore ‘in this we groan, - being burdened (with that which is of a contrary nature) to be clothed upon - with our house which is from heaven.’ 2 Co. v. 1-8. Which state is not that of Adam's innocence; but that which is spiritual and heavenly, even that which is now in the Lord in heaven.

But I will descend to your nineteenth chapter, it may be more may be discovered there.

[*Justifying faith and the imputation of Christ's righteousness.*]

Your nineteenth chapter is to shew; ‘That a right understanding of the design of Christianity (viz. as you have laid it down) will give satisfaction concerning the true notion.’ *First*, ‘Of justifying faith.’ *Second*, ‘Of the imputation of Christ's righteousness,’ p. 221.

First, Of justifying faith; ‘It is (say you) such a belief of the truth of the gospel, as includes a sincere resolution of obedience unto all its precepts.’

Ans. To this I shall answer, first, that the faith which we call justifying faith, ‘Is like precious faith’ with all the elect, 2 Pe i. 1. and that which is most holy: Jude 20. but those acts of it, which respect our justification with God from the curse of the law that is due for sin; are such, as respect not any good work done by us, but the righteousness that resideth in the person of Christ; and is made ours by the imputation of grace. This faith, I say, accounteth him in whom it is, now a sinner, and without works; yea, if he have any that in his own eyes are such, this faith rejects them, and throweth them away; for it seeth a righteousness in the person of Christ sufficient; even such as is verily the righteousness of God. ‘Now to him that worketh not, but believeth.’ Works and faith are put here in opposition, faith being considered as justifying, in the sight of God from the curse. The reason is, because the righteousness by which the soul must thus stand justified, is a righteousness of God's appointing, not of his prescribing us; a righteousness that entirely is included in the person of Christ.

The apostle also, when he speaks of God's saving the election, which hangeth upon the same hinge, as this of justification doth, to wit, on the grace of God; he opposeth it to works; and that, not to this or that sort only, but even to work,

* Chap. 17: ‘How fearfully the gospel is abused by the papists.’ Chap. 18: ‘Those softish, who expect salvation without holiness; and those more so who encourage themselves by the grace of the gospel in unholiness.’—*Heads of these Chapters.*—ED.

† ‘Would that man be accounted any better than a perfect idiot, who, being sorely hurt, should expect from his surgeon perfect ease, when he will not permit him to apply any plaster for the healing of his wound? Or that being deadly sick, should look that his physician should deliver him from his pain, when he will not take any course he prescribes for the removal of the distemper that is the cause of it?’—*Fowler's Design*, p. 216. How admirably does Bunyan detect and unravel this casuistic sophistry.—ED.

in the nature of work, ‘If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.’ Ro. xi. 6. By this text, I say, the apostle doth so thoroughly distinguish between grace and works as that which soever standeth in the case, the other must be annihilated: If it be by grace, then must works be no more, ‘then it is no more of works:’ but if it be of works, then is grace no more, ‘then it is no more of grace.’

But this, notwithstanding, you urge farther; ‘that faith justifieth, as it includes a sincere resolution,’ &c.

Ans. Although, as I have said before, the faith which is the justifying faith, is that of the holiest nature, yet in the act, by which it layeth hold of justifying righteousness, it respects it, simply, as a righteousness offered by grace, or given unto the person that by faith layeth hold thereon as he stands yet ungodly and a sinner.

Faith justifieth not separate from the righteousness of Christ as it is a grace in us, nor as it subiecteth the soul to the obedience of the moral law, but as it receiveth a righteousness offered to that sinner, that as such will lay hold on, and accept thereof. Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, by being their redemption, and righteousness himself. 1 Co. i. 30.

But you add, ‘The faith which entitles a sinner to so high a privilege as that of justification, must needs be such as completh with *all* the purposes of Christ’s coming into the world,’ &c. p. 222.

Ans. By this supposition, faith justifieth not by receiving of the righteousness that Christ by himself accomplished for sinners; but by falling in with *all* good works, which because they cannot be known, much less done, by the soul at first, his faith being then, as to the perfection of knowledge of duties, weak, he standeth still before God unjustified, and so must stand until he doth comply with all those purposes of Christ’s coming into the world.

But yet again you recal yourself, and distinguish *one* purpose from the rest, as a grand one, p. 222. And that is to receive Christ as Lord, as well as a Saviour.

Ans. 1. Although the soul that in truth receiveth Christ, receiveth him wholly, and entirely as Christ, and not as chopt, and pulled in pieces: yet I distinguish between the act of faith, which layeth hold of Christ for my justification from the curse before God, and the consequences of that act, which are to engage me to newness of life. And indeed, as it is impossible for a man to be a new man, before he be justified in the sight of God; so it is also as impossible, but that when faith hath once laid hold on Christ for life, it should also follow Christ by love. But,

2. Christ may be received at first as Lord, and that in our justification, and yet not at all be considered as a law-giver, for so he is not the object of faith for our justification with God, but a requerer of obedience to laws and statutes, of them that already are justified by the faith that receiveth him as righteousness. But Christ is as well a Lord for us, as to, or over us; and it highly concerneth the soul, when it believeth in, or trusteth to the righteousness of Christ, for justification with God, to see that this righteousness lords it over death, and sin, and the devil, and hell for us: the name wherewith he shall be called, is, ‘the Lord our righteousness.’ Je. xxiii. 6. Our righteousness, then is Lord, and conqueror over all; and we more than conquerors through this Lord that loved us. Ro. viii. The author to the Hebrews calls him ‘King of righteousness,’ He. vii. because by his righteousness he ruleth as Lord and King, and can reign and lord it, at all times over all those that seek to separate us from the presence, and glory of God.*

Now, how you will brook this doctrine I know not; I am sure he stands in need thereof, that is lorded over by the curse of the law, the guilt of sin, the rage of the devil, and the fear of death and hell; he, I say, would be glad to know that in Christ there is a righteousness that LORDS IT, or that Christ, as he is righteousness, is LORD.

Wherefore reader, when thou shalt read or hear, that Jesus Christ is Lord, if thou art at the same time under guilt of sin, and fear of hell, then do thou remember that Christ is Lord more ways than one, He is Lord as he is righteousness; he is Lord as he is imputative righteousness; he is ‘the Lord our righteousness.’ Je. xxiii. 6. Of the same import is that also, ‘He is a Prince, and a Saviour,’ he is a Prince, as he is a Saviour; because the righteousness by which he saveth, beareth rule in heaven, and earth. And hence we read again, that even when he was in the combat with our sins, the devils, the curse, and death, upon the cross, he even in that place ‘made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them.’ Col. ii. 15, 16. Now in these

* ‘The righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith;’ that is, from one degree of faith to another: therefore increase in faith; live nearer to Christ; and the nearer you live to the Saviour, the farther you will be from sin; yea, he will make you, by precious faith in him, more than conqueror over all your spiritual enemies: therefore venture wholly upon Christ, and see if he will cast you out: indeed, he never will. Trust in him, hope in him, believe in him, and you will never be disappointed. All your fitness is in Christ. Believe in him, and he is yours. In him dwells all fullness. Believe in Christ, and all that Christ has is yours: his blood is yours, his wisdom is yours, his righteousness, his sanctification is yours; yea, Christ Jesus himself is yours—he is yours in this world, and in the world to come; he is yours in time, and in eternity. Even so, Amen.—*Mason and Ryland.*

things he is Lord *for us*, and the Captain of our salvation; as also in that ‘He led captivity captive;’ Ep. iv. 8. all which places, with many more, being testimonies to us, of the sufficiencie of that righteousness which saveth us from the justice of the law and wrath of God. But you respect not this his manner of lording; but will have him be a Saviour, as he giveth laws, especially those you call indispensable, and eternal, the moral law. You would have him a Saviour, as he bringeth us back to the holiness we had lost. But this is none other than barbarous quakerism, the stress of their writing also tending to no other purpose.

But tell us, ‘That you scarcely admired at any thing more in all your life, than that any worthy men especially, should be so difficultly persuaded to embrace this aecount of justifying faith, and should perplex and make intricate so very plain a doctrine,’ p. 222.

Ans. And doubtless they far more *groundedly stand amazed at such as you, who while you pretend to shew the design of the gospel, make the very essential of it, a thing in itself indifferent, and absolutely considered neither good nor evil, p. 7. that makes obedience to the moral laws, p. 8. more essential to salvation, than that of going to God by Christ, p. 9. that maketh it the great design of Christ, to put us into a possession of that promiseless, natural, old covenant holiness which we had lost long since in Adam, that maketh as if Christ, rejecting all other righteousness, or holiness, hath established only this, p. 10—16. Yea, that maketh the very principle of this holiness to consist in ‘a sound complexion of soul, the purity of human nature in us, a habit of soul, truly generous motives and principles, divine moral laws which were first written in men’s hearts, and originally dictates of human nature.’ All this villany against the Son of God, with much more as bad, is comprised within less than the first sixteen pages of your book.

But say you, ‘what pretence can there be for thinking, that faith is the condition, or instrument of justification, as it complieth with only the precept of relying upon Christ’s merits for the obtaining of it: especially when it is no less manifest than the sun at noon-day, that obedience to the *other precepts* must go before obedience to this; and that a man may not rely upon the merits of Christ for the forgiveness of his sins, and he is most presumptuous in so doing, and puts an affront upon his Saviour too, till he be sincerely willing to be reformed from them.’ p. 223.

Ans. That the merits of Christ, for justification, are made over to that faith that receiveth them, while the person that believeth it, stands in his

own account, by the law a sinner; hath already been shewed. And that they are not by God appointed for another purpose, is manifest through all the Bible.

1. In the type, when the bloody sacrifices were to be offered, and an atonement made for the soul, the people were only to confess their sins over the head of the bullock, or goat, or lamb, by laying their hands thereon, and so the sacrifice was to be slain. They were only to acknowledge their sins. And observe it, in the day that these offerings were made, they were ‘not to work at all; for he that did any work therein, was to be cut off from his people.’ Le. iv., xvi., xxiii.

2. In the antitype thus it runs; ‘Christ died for our sins; Christ gave himself for our sins; he was made to be sin for us; Christ was made a curse for us.’

‘Yea, but (say you) What pretence can there be, that faith is the condition, or instrument of justification, as it complieth with only the precepts of relying upon Christ’s merits;’ that is, first, or before the soul doth other things.

Ans. I say, avoiding your own ambiguous terms, that it is the duty, the indispensable duty of all that would be saved, First, Immediately, now to close in by faith with that work of redemption, which Christ by his blood hath purchased for them, as they are sinners.

1. Because God doth hold it forth, yea, hath set it forth to be received by us, as such. Ro. iii. 23—27.

2. Because God hath commanded us by faith to receive it as such. Ac. xvi.

And I add, If the jailor was altogether ignorant of what he must do to be saved, and Paul yet bids him then, before he knew anything else, ‘Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and he should be saved,’ that then believing, even believing on Christ for a righteousness to justify and save him, must go first, and may, nay ought to be pressed, even then, when the soul stands ignorant of what else he ought to do. Ac. xvi. 30—32.

‘But (you say) It is evident as the sun at noon-day, that obedience to the other precepts must go before obedience to this, that is, before faith in Christ.’

Ans. This you say; but Paul said to the ignorant jailor, that knew nothing of the mind of God in the doctrine of justification, that he should first believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and so should be saved. Again, when Paul preached to the Corinthians, the first doctrine that he delivered unto them was, ‘That Christ died for their sins, according to the scriptures,’ &c. 1 Co. xv. 1—3.

But what be these other precepts? Not Baptism, nor the supper of the Lord; for these you say are, as poor and inconsiderable, as that of coming to God by Christ, even all three, things in

* ‘More groundedly,’ with better foundation.

themselves neither good nor evil, but of an indifferent nature; they must be therefore some more weighty things of the gospel, than these positive precepts. But what things are they? It is good that you tell us, seeing you tacitly forbid all men upon pain of presumption, and of doing affront to Jesus Christ, that they rely not on the merits of Christ for forgiveness till they be sincerely willing to perform *them* first; yet I find not here one particular precept instance by you: But perhaps we shall hear of them hereafter, therefore now I shall let them pass. You tell us farther, ‘That such a reliance (as that of acting faith, first, on the merits of Christ for justification) is ordinarily to be found amongst unregenerate, and even the worst of men,’ p. 223.

Ans. This is but a falsehood and a slander, for the unregenerate know him not; how then can they believe on him? 1 Jn. iii. 1. Besides, the worst of men, so far as they pretend religion, set up your idol in their hearts, viz. their own good meanings, their own good nature, the notions and dictates of their nature, living that little which they do live upon the snuff of their own light, the sparks of their own fire, and therefore woe unto them.

But you add, ‘How can it be otherwise, than that that act of faith must needs have a hand in justifying, and the special hand too, which distinguisheth it from that which is to be found in such persons.’

Ans. 1. There is no act of faith doth more distinguish true faith from false, and the Christian from the painted hypocrite, than that which first lays hold on Christ, while the person that hath it stands in his own esteem, ungodly; all over like yourself, being fearful and unbelieving. Re. xxi. 8. despisers, who wonder, and perish. Ac. xiii. 40, 41.

2. And this faith, by thus acting, doth more subdue sin, though it doth not justify as subduing, but as applying Christ’s righteousness, than all the wisdom and purity of human nature, or the dictates of that nature that is found in the whole world.

But you add farther: ‘What good ground can men have for this fancy, when as our Saviour hath merited the pardon of sin for this end, that it might be an effectual motive to turn from it?’

Ans. Although you speak this in great derision to faith when it worketh right, yet know that therefore (seeing you would hear it) I say, therefore hath our Saviour merited pardon, and bestowed it on men freely, and bid them believe or receive it, and have it; that thereby they might be encouraged to live to him, and love him, and comply with his commandments. ‘For scarcely for a righteous man will one die, yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die: But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sin-

ners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.’ Ro. v. Now, as here we are said to be justified by his blood, that is, as his blood appeaseth the justice of God; so again, it is said that this blood is set forth by God for us to have faith in it, by the term of a propitiation. ‘Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (or a sacrifice to appease the displeasure of God) through faith in his blood. - To declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.’ Ro. iii. 25, 26.

Again, As we are thus justified by blood in the sight of God, by faith in it, so also it is testified of his blood, that it sprinkleth the conscience of the faithful, but still only as it is received by faith. But from what is the conscience sprinkled, but from those dead works that remain in all that have not yet been justified by faith in this blood. Now if faith in this blood doth sprinkle the conscience, and so doth purge it from all dead works, then must faith go first to the blood of Christ for justification, and must bring this home to the defiled conscience, before it be delivered from those dead works that are in it, and made capable of serving the living God. Ro. v. 7—10; iii. 24, 25. He. ix. 14; x. 19—22.

But you say, ‘you will never trust your discursive faculty so long as you live, if you are mistaken here,’ p. 224.

Tell not me of your discursive faculty: The word of God is plain. And never challenge man, for he that condemneth your way to heaven, to the very pit of hell, as Paul doth, can yet set forth a better.

Second, I come now to the second thing, viz. *the doctrine of the imputation of Christ’s righteousness*, which you thus expound.

‘It consists in dealing with sincerely righteous persons, as if they were perfectly so, for the sake, and upon the account of Christ’s righteousness,’ p. 225, 226.

Ans. 1. Any thing but truth; but I would know how sincerely righteous they were that were justified without works? Or how sincerely righteous they were whom God justified as ungodly? Ro. iv. 3—5.

2. Your explication of the imputation of Christ’s righteousness makes it respect our works rather than our persons: ‘It consists (say you) in dealing with sincerely righteous persons, as if they were perfectly so:’ That is, it justifieth their imperfect righteousness first, and so secondarily their persons for the sake of that.

But observe a few things from this explication.

1. This concludeth that a man may be sincerely righteous in God’s account, WITHOUT the righteousness of Christ; for that is to be imputed to such, and none but such.

2. This concludeth that men may be sincerely righteous, before Christ's righteousness is imputed: For this sincere righteousness is precedent to the imputation of Christ's.

3. This concludeth that a man may have true, yea saving grace in great and mighty action in him, before he hath faith in the righteousness of Christ. For if a man must be sincerely righteous first; then he must not only have that we call the habit, but the powerful acts of grace.

Besides, if the righteousness of Christ is not to be looked to first, but secondarily; not before, but after we be made sincerely righteous; then may not faith be thus acted if a man should have it, until he be first a sincerely righteous person.

4. This concludeth that a man may be brought from under the curse of the law in God's sight, before he have faith in the righteousness of Christ, yea before it be imputed to him: for he that in God's account is reckoned sincerely righteous, is beloved of his God.

5. This concludeth that a man may be from under the curse of God, without the imputation of the righteousness of Christ: For if a man must be sincerely righteous in God's account without it, then he is from under the curse of God without it.

6. This doctrine teacheth farther, that Christ came to call, and justify the righteous, contrary to his express word. In short, by this account of things, first we must be healed, and then the plaster comes.

Yea, so confident is this man in this his assertion, that he saith, 'It is not possible any other notion of this doctrine should have truth in it,' p. 226. O this Jesus! This rock of offence! But he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

But blessed be God for Jesus Christ, and for that he took our nature, and sin, and curse, and death upon him: And for that he did also by himself, by one offering purge our sins. We that have believed have found rest, even there where God and his Father hath smelled a sweet savour of rest; because we are presented to God, even now complete in the righteousness of him, and stand discharged of guilt, even by the faith of him: yea, as sins past, so sins to come, were taken up and satisfied for, by that offering of the body of Jesus, we who have had a due sense of sins, and of the nature of the justice of God, we know that no remission of the guilt of any one can be, but by atonement made by blood. He. ix. 22. We also know that where faith in Jesus Christ is wanting, there can be neither good principle, nor good endeavour. For faith is the first of all graces, and without it there is nothing but sin. Ro. xiv. 23. We know also, that faith as a grace in us, severed from the righteousness of Christ, is only a beholder of things, but not a justifier of persons, and that

if it lay not hold of, and applieth not that righteousness which is in Christ, it carrieth us no farther than to the [faith of] devils. We know that this doctrine killeth sin, and curseth it at the very roots; I say we know it, 'who have mourned over him whom we have pierced,' Zec. xii. 10. and who have been confounded to see that God by his blood should be pacified towards us for all the wickedness we have done. Eze. xvi. 63. Yea, we have a double motive to be holy and humble before him; one because he died for us on earth, another because he now appears for us in heaven, there sprinkling for us the mercy-seat with his blood, there ever-living to make intercession for them that come unto God by him. 'If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins.' 1 Jn. ii. 1, 2. Yet this worketh in us no looseness, nor favour to sin, but so much the more an abhorrence of it: 'She loveth much, for much was forgiven her.' Lu. vii. 47. Yea, she weeps, she washeth his feet, and wipeth them with the hairs of her head, to the confounding of Simon the pharisee, and all such ignorant hypocrites.

[*The Bible the only measure and standard of truth.*]

But I pass this, and come to the twentieth chapter, which is to learn us by what measure and standard we are to judge of doctrines; and that is by the design of Christianity as stated, you must know, by Mr. Fowler. Wherefore it will be requisite here again, that a collection of principles and doctrines be gathered out of this book, that the man that hath a short memory may be helped the better to bear them in mind, and to make them, if he shall be so bewitched by them, instead of the Bible, a standard for truth, and a rule for him to obtain salvation by.

First then, he must know that the principle by which he must walk must be the purity of the human nature, a divine or God-like nature, which yet is but an habit of soul, or more plainly the moral law, as written in the heart, and originally the dictates of human nature, a generous principle, such an one as although it respects law, yet acts in a sphere above it; above it as a written law, that acts even in the first principles of it, p. 7-10.

Second, He must know, that the holiness Christ designed to possess his people with, is that which we had lost in Adam, that which he had before he fell, that natural old covenant Christ-less holiness, p. 12.

Third, He must put a difference between those laws of the gospel that are essential to holiness, and those positive precepts that in themselves are indifferent, and absolutely considered neither good nor evil; but must know also that of these positive

precepts, he alloweth but three in the gospel, but three that are purely such; to wit, that of coming to God by Christ, the institutions of baptism, and the Lord's supper, p. 7-9.

Fourth, He must hold for certain, that the faith which entitleth a sinner to so high a privilege as that of justification, must needs be such as compleith with all the purposes of Christ's coming into the world, whether at present it understands them or not, and it is no less necessary it should justify as it doth so, p. 222.

Fifth, He must know, that a man may not rely upon the merits of Christ for the forgiveness of his sins, before he have done other good works first, p. 223.

Sixth, And that the right explication of the imputation of Christ's righteousness is this, that it consisteth in having to do with persons that are sincerely righteous, p. 225. For it is not possible for Christ's righteousness to be imputed to an unrighteous man, p. 120.

These things, with many like to them, being the main points by this man handled, and by him asserted to be the design of Christianity, by these we must, as by a rule and standard, understand how to judge of the truth of doctrines. And, saith he, 'seeing the design of Christianity is to make men holy, (still meaning from principles of humanity, and by possessing us again, with the often repeated holiness which we had lost,) whatsoever opinions do either directly, or in their evident consequences, obstruct the promoting of it, are perfectly false,' p. 227, 228.

Ans. Thus with one word, as if he were Lord and Judge himself, he sendeth to the pit of hell, all things that sanctify or make holy the hearts of men, if they oppose the design of *his* christianity. But what if the Holy Ghost will become a principle in the hearts of the converted, and will not now suffer them to act simply and alone upon the principles of pure humanity; or what now if faith will become a principle to act by, instead of these that are originally dictates of human nature? Or what if a man should act now as a son, rather than simply as a creature endued with a principle of reason? I question here whether these things thus doing do not obstruct, put by, yea and take the way* of his pure humanity, dictates of human nature, and instead thereof act and govern the soul by and with their own principles. For albeit, there be the dictates of human nature in the sons of men, yet neither is this nature, nor yet the dictates of it, laid by Jesus Christ as the truly christian principles in his. But you add:

'Those doctrines which in their own nature do evidently tend to the serving of THIS design of

Christianity, we may conclude are most true and genuine,' p. 229.

Ans. The holiness which you so often call the design of Christianity, being by yourself said to be that which we had lost, for this one sentence is it on which your whole book is built, p. 12, whatsoever doctrine or doctor it be that asserts it, both that doctrine is of the devil, and that doctor an angel of darkness, or rather a minister of Satan, become as a minister of righteousness. For where is it said in all the whole book of God, that ever the Lord Christ designed, yea made it his errand from heaven, to put us again in possession of the holiness which we had lost? Yet this you affirm, and tell us the business of your book is to prove it. But blessed be God, your shifts are discovered, and your fig-leaves rent from off you, and the righteousness or holiness so much cried up by you, proved to be none of the holiness of the gospel, but that which stood with perfect ignorance thereof. I might speak to what yet remains of falsehood, in the other part of this chapter; but having overthrown the foundation, and broken the head of your Leviathan; what remains falleth of itself, and dieth of its own accord.

What you say of modes or forms, and sticklers for little trifles, such as place their religion in mere externals, you may fasten them where of due they belong: Yet I tell you the least of the commandments of Christ is better than your adamitish holiness.

[*The necessity of a sound foundation.*]

Your twenty-first chapter tells us, if we will believe you, how we shall judge of the necessity of doctrine, to be embraced or rejected; also you say, it giveth us a brief discourse of the nature of fundamentals: But because your discourse of them is general, and not any one particularized, I might leave you in your generals till you dealt more candidly, both with the word of God and your abused reader.

First, Indeed you tell us of *primary fundamentals*. 'Such, as without the knowledge and belief of which it is impossible to acquire that inward righteousness and true holiness which the christian religion aimeth at; - but the particulars of these, say you, I shall not enumerate, because (as will appear from what will be said anon) it is not needful to have a just table of them,' p. 234.

Ans. Deep divinity! (1.) They are such as without the knowledge and belief of them, it is not possible we should acquire your true holiness; and yet for all that, it is not needful that we be told what they are, or that we should have a just table of them. (2.) But if they be things necessary, things without the knowledge of which it is impossible

* 'Take the way,' occupy the place.—ED.

we should be truly holy, then is it needful that we understand what they are: yea, then is it needful that they be written, and presented one by one unto us, that our knowledge of them being distinct and full, we may the better be able to obtain or acquire your glorious (so pretended) holiness.

But I know your primary fundamentals, they are your first principles of morals; not faith in the righteousness of Christ, for that is comprehended in your positive, and in themselves indifferent things: your morals are the things in themselves absolutely necessary; of an indispensable and eternal obligation, p. 8, 9. But,

Second. You tell us of points of faith that are *secondarily fundamental*; the disbelief of which cannot consist with true holiness, in those to whom the gospel is sufficiently made known.

Ans. The secondary fundamentals also, are all kept close and hid, and not otherwise to be understood, but by implication; however, the disbelief of these is not of so sad a consequence as is that of the former, because, say you, ‘They are not in their own nature, holiness,’ p. 235. Yea, he insinuateth that the disbelief of them may stand with true holiness in those to whom the gospel is not sufficiently made known.

Of these secondary fundamentals therefore, whatever is their number, this is one, even coming to God by Christ; for as in p. 7. and 9. he calleth it a positive precept, a thing that in itself is neither good nor evil; so here he speaks of such as are not in their own nature holy; not such, as that holiness is not in some degree or other attainable without the belief of them.

That one of these secondary fundamentals intended by Mr. Fowler, is, that of coming to God by Christ, I farther gather, because he saith, that ‘in the number of these, are all such doctrines, as are with indisputable clearness revealed to us,’ that is, by the holy scriptures of the New Testament, p. 235. For therein is this revealed to be a fundamental; but he saith, not a primary one, because, that in itself, it is but indifferent, and not in its own nature good. ‘Now the belief of these, saith he, though it is not in itself any more, than in higher or lower degrees, profitable, (confusion! darkness! confusion!) yet it is absolutely necessary from an external cause:’ That is, with such abundant clearness, as that nothing can cause men to refuse to admit them, but that which argueth them to be stark naught.

Ans. Then, hence it seems that the reason why you admit these secondary sort of fundamentals, is not from any internal power, but an external declaration only. 2. Nay, and you do but admit them neither, and that too, for some external cause; not because of the worthiness of the nature of the points themselves. 3. And were it not, but that

you are loth to be counted stark naught in the eyes of men, so far as I can discern, you would not at all make profession of them, with pretence as unto God; for, say you, ‘We must take notice here, that all such points [as these] (viz. these fundamentals,) are not of equal necessity to be received by all Christians, because, that in regard of the diversity of their capacities, educations, and other means and advantages, some of them may be most plainly perceived by some, to be delivered in the scriptures, which cannot be so by others, with the like ease.’

Ans. From these words I take notice of four things.

1. That by this universal (all Christians) is comprehended the Heathen and Pagan people, they give heed to, and mind to follow that light, that originally, and naturally, stirreth them to moral duties. These be they that want the education, and advantages of others, and are not in such a capacity, as they to whom these things are delivered by the scriptures.

2. That this people, notwithstanding they want a scripture revelation of these secondary fundamentals, yet have the more necessary, the first sort of fundamentals; for the secondary sort, say you, are not in their own nature such, as that holiness is not in some degree or other attainable without the belief of them.

3. That therefore, these secondary sort of fundamentals, are only necessary to be believed by them that have the indisputable (the scripture) revelation of them; and that, in truth, the others may be saved without them.

4. But yet, even those that are made capable, by education and other advantages, to obtain the belief of them, ought, notwithstanding, not to have the same respect for them, as for those of the first sort of fundamentals, because they are not in their own nature such.

But will this man know, that Christ is not only a fundamental, but the very foundation of all other fundamental truths, revealed both in the Old Testament and the New; and that his pure human nature, with the dictates of it, with his feigned adamitish holiness, is no fundamental at all; I mean no fundamental of faith, no gospel fundamental. 1 Co. iii. 14. Ep. ii. 19, 20. Yea, will he know, that from heaven there is none other name given, than the name of Jesus Christ, whereby we must be saved, none other name given under the whole heavens. Ac. iv. 12.

Oh the witcheraths, by which some men’s spirits are intoxicated! and the strength of delusion, by which some are infatuated, and turned aside from the simplicity that is in Jesus Christ! But I proceed:

Your great question, or rather your Urim and Thummim, by which you would have all men make judgment of their saveable, or damnable state,

p. 236. is, according to your description of things, most devilish and destructive. For to obey God and Christ in all things, with you, is to do it from principles purely human in the faith of this: that Christ hath designed to possess us again with that holiness we had lost. Again, to obey God and Christ, with you, is, so to obey all their laws, as respecting the first principles of morals; and our obedience to them, far more indispensable than that of coming to God by Christ. Farther, he that obeys them in all things, with your directions, must not look upon faith in the blood of Christ, and justification by his righteousness, as the main and first, but the second part of our duty; other commands, or precepts, more naturally holy and good, first being embraced, and lived in the practice of, by us.

This, I say, being the doctrine you have asserted, and the foundation on which your Urim and Thummim stands; the foundation, with your trial, are both from the devil and hell, as hath at large been proved, and discovered in this book.

And I now will add, and bid you take your advantage, that should a man with all his might, strive to obey all the moral laws, either as they are contained in the first principles of morals, or in the express decalogue, or Ten Commandments; without faith, first, in the blood, and death, and resurrection of Christ, &c. For his justification with God; his thus doing would be counted wickedness, and he in the end, accounted a rebel against the gospel, and shall be damned for want of faith in the blood of the Lord Jesus.

[*The Christian's great principles.*]

Your twenty-second chapter, saith, 'That the design of Christianity, teacheth us what doctrines and practices we ought, as Christians, to be most zealous for, or against,' p. 237.

Ans. But there is not by that, it being rightly stated, one syllable that tendeth to encourage any man, to have lower thoughts of coming to God by Christ, than of keeping the moral law. For even the first text you bring, doth utterly overthrow it. 'Contend [earnestly], say you, for the faith;' I answer then, not for the law of works, for the law is not of faith; but the man that doth these things, shall live in them, by them. 'Contend earnestly for the faith, for there are certain men crept in unawares, which were before of old, ordained unto this condemnation;' even the condemnation that is to come upon them that contend against the faith; for these ungodly men turn the grace of God into lasciviousness, and deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. Now these creeping ungodly men, may be divided in three ranks.

I. Such as by principle, and practice both, say, 'Let us do evil, that good may come: whose damnation is just.' Ro. iii. 8.

2. Such as by practice only, appear to be such, denying to profess the principle thereof, such are they that made excuse and delay, when invited to come to the wedding. Mat. xxii. 1—5. Lu. xiv.

3. There is yet another sort; and they are such as seem to deny it, both in principle, and practice also; only they do it covertly, PRIVILY bringing in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them. These 'bring upon themselves swift destruction.' 2 Pe. ii. 1.

This third sort, made of the doctrine of grace, and of the forgiveness of sins, through the faith of the righteousness of Christ, a loose and licentious doctrine, or a doctrine that giveth liberty to the flesh. By reason of these the way of truth is evil spoken of, and the hearts of innocent ones alienated therefrom. These will not stick to charge it upon the very chief of the brethren, if they shall say, 'As sin abounded, grace hath much more abounded: that they press men to do evil, that good may come of it.' Ro. iii. 8, 9. But, as I said, these vilify Christ, not with open words, but covertly; privily they bring in their blasphemy under a cloak, crying, the law, holiness, strictness, good works, &c. Besides, these clothe their doctrines with names and notions that belong not at all unto them; as of Christ, grace, the spirit, the gospel, when there is only there, the devil, and his angels, and errors; as angels of light, and ministers of righteousness. Of this last sort are you, and the subject matter of your book; for you bring into the world an anti-gospel holiness, anti-gospel principles, and anti-gospel fundamentals; and that these things might be worshipped by your disciples, you give them the name of holiness, the design of Christ, and of Christianity; by which means you remove the Christ of God, from before, and set him behind, forbidding men to believe on him, till they have practised your things first: nay, after they have practised yours, they then must come to God by him, still respecting the principles and dictates of humanity, as things of the greatest weight, things that are good in themselves; still considering that 'coming to God by Christ, is not good in itself, but so only upon the account of certain circumstances; a thing in itself of an indifferent nature, and absolutely considered neither good nor evil.'

Wherefore, Sir, laying aside all fear of men, not regarding what you may procure to be inflicted upon me for this my plain dealing with you, I tell you again, that yourself is one of them, that have closely, privily, and devilishly, by your book, turned the grace of our God into a lascivious doctrine, bespattering it with giving liberty to looseness, and the hardening of the ungodly in wickedness.

ness, against whom, shall you persist in your wickedness, I shall not fail, may I live, and know it, and be helped of God to do it, to discover yet farther the rottenness of your doctrine, with the accursed tendencies thereof.

What you say about ‘doubtful opinion, alterable modes, rites, and circumstances in religion,’ p. 239. I know none so wedded thereto as yourselves, even the whole gang of your rabbling counterfeit clergy; who generally like the ape you speak of,* lie blowing up the applause and glory of your trumpery, and like the tail, with your foolish and sophistical arguings, you cover the filthy parts thereof, as you sweetly argue in the next chapter, p. 242, saying, ‘*Whatsoever of such are commended by the custom of the place we live in, or commanded by superiors, or made by any circumstance convenient to be done, our christian liberty consists in this, that we have leave to do them.*’† So that do but call them things indifferent, things that are the customs of the place we live in, or made by ANY circumstance convenient, and a man may not doubt but he hath leave to do them, let him live at Rome or Constantinople, or amidst the greatest corruption of worship and government. These are therefore doubtless, a third sort of fundamentals, by which you can wrestle with conviction of conscience, and stifle it; by which you can suit yourself for every fashion, mode, and way of religion. Here you may hop from Presbyterianism, to a prelatical mode; and if time and chance should serve you, backwards, and forwards again: yea, here you can make use of several consciences, one for this way now, another for that anon; now putting out the light of this by a sophistical delusive argument, then putting out the other, by an argument that best suits the time.‡ Yea, how oft is the candle of the wicked put out, by such glorious learning as this. Nay, I doubt not, but a man of your principles, were he put upon it, would not stick to count those you call gospel-positive precepts, of no value at all in the christian religion; for now, even now, you do not stick to say that, that even *that* of going to God by Christ, is one of these, and that such an one, as if absolutely considered in itself, is neither good nor evil. How then, if God

should cast you into Turkey, where Mahomet reigns as Lord? It is but reckoning that it is the religion, and custom of the country, and that which is authorised by the power that is there; wherefore it is but sticking to your dictates of human nature, and remembering that coming to God by Christ is a thing of an indifferent nature in itself, and then for peace sake, and to sleep in a whole skin, you may comply, and do as your superior commands. Why? Because in Turkey, are your first sort of fundamentals found: there are men that have human nature, and the law of morals written in their hearts; they have also the dictates thereof written within them, which teach them, those you call the eternal laws of righteousness; wherefore you both would agree in your essential, and immutable differences of good and evil, p. 6. and differ only about these positive laws, indifferent things. Yea, and Mahomet also *for the time*, because by a custom made convenient, might be now accounted worshipful, and the circumstances that attend his worship, especially those of them that clash not with the dictates of your human nature, might also be swallowed down.

Behold you here then, good reader, a glorious Latitudinarian, that can, as to religion, turn and twist like an eel on the angle; or rather like the weather-cock that stands on the steeple.

‘For (saith he) our refusing to comply with either of these can hardly proceed from anything better than a proud affectation of singularity, or at best, from superstitious scrupulosity.’ p. 242.

Do but believe him therefore in what he saith, and you cannot choose but be ready with him to comply with all modes that may serve for advantage.

Besides, he saith, ‘that the word superstition, in the Greek* implieth, a frightful, and overtimorous apprehension of the divine nature; and consequently a base and under-valuing conception of it.’

So that to be tender of conscience, especially in things of divine worship, binding up the soul to the words of the everlasting testament, in such things especially, as a fool can call little, and insignificant trivial matters, rendereth a man such an one as hath a very erroneous conscience.

But he would not be understood (p. 244) as if he here intended to vilify things that are plainly commanded, or to tolerate that which is plainly forbidden, only he would have all things that may fall within the reach of these two general heads, be examined by this general rule, ‘*His description of the design of Christianity.*’

Answ. But I could tell him, that whatsoever is imposed as a part of God’s worship, is judged by

* ‘Doubtful opinions, modes and rites, eagerly opposed, is like the apes blowing at a glowworm, which affords neither light nor warmth.’ p. 239.

† These sentiments are the essential fundamentals of all state religions, be they heathen, christian, or mohamedan. This plain avowal of them might have been the cause why the author was soon after made a bishop of the Church of England.—ED.

‡ Like the vicar of Bray, near Maidenhead, who boasted of his consistency. He was under Henry VIII. a papist, then a semi-protestant; under Edward, a protestant; under Mary, again a papist; and under Elizabeth, a protestant. Still he had never ceased to be *vicar of Bray*.—ED.

a better rule than his, both as to its goodness and badness, neither can we account any thing indifferent that is a part thereof. Besides, whatsoever is reputed a part of God's worship, layeth hold on the conscience of the godly: although a ranting Latitudinarian may say, 'If the devil should preach, I would hear him, before I would suffer persecution.' As a brave fellow which I could name, in his zeal was pleased to declare.

But what trust should any man put to the rule to which you direct him for help, and relief therein; seeing that from the beginning to the end, from the top to the bottom, it is a cursed blasphemous book; a book that more vilifieth Jesus Christ, than many of the Quakers themselves: for which of them said worse of him, and make coming to God by him, a more insignificant thing, than you by your pretended design of Christianity have done.

We have therefore a more sure word of the prophets, to the which 'we do well to take heed,' 2 Pe. i. 19. by which, both your doctrine, and practice, is already judged to be naught, as will be farther discovered time enough, when you shall justify or condemn particulars.

Your twenty-fourth chapter I shall now pass by, until I can better compare you and popery, against which you there so stoutly* diggle together.

[*The scandalous lives and foolish doctrines of state priests, not the true ground of dissent.*]

Your twenty-fifth chapter carrieth in it an hideous outcry against many of *your* ministers and guides, complaining and confessing, 'That no one thing hath so conduced to the prejudice of your church of England, and done the separating parties so much service, as the scandalous lives of some that exercise the ministerial function in her,' p. 258.

Answ. I will grant it, if you respect these poor carnal people, who yet have been shamed from your assemblies, by such vicious persons you mention: but the truly godly, and spiritually judicious have left you from other arguments, of which I shall not here dilate.

But from p. 261. to the end of the chapter, you take upon you to particularize other of your ministers that are an offence to you, and to the design of your Christianity.†

1. 'Such as affect to make people stare at their high flown bombast language, or to please their phantasies with foolish jugglings, and pedantic or boyish wit; or to be admired for their ability in

dividing of an hair, their metaphysical acuteness, and scholastic subtlety, or for their doughty dexterity in controversial squabbles.' And I add, had you joined herewith, such as vilify and trample upon the blood of the Lord Jesus, preferring the snivel of their own brains before him, you had heretofore but drawn your own picture, and given your reader an emblem of yourself.

2. The second sort you blame, are 'such as seek to approve themselves to their auditries to be men of mysteries, and endeavour to make the plain and easy doctrines of the gospel as intricate and obscure as ever they are able.' I will add to these, such as take away the doctrine of faith, and that set themselves and their works in the room thereof: such as have sought to overturn the foundation, Jesus Christ, and have made coming to God by him, in itself of a far more indifferent nature than the dictates of our humanity.

3. Another sort (you say) are 'such as preach upon free grace, and christian privileges, otherwise than as motives to cite to obedience, and never scarce insist upon any duties, but those of believing, laying hold on Christ's righteousness, applying the promises, and renouncing our own righteousness,' which they that have none at all to renounce, have a mighty kindness for.

Answ. (1.) Who they are that preach free grace in your church, to excite men to uncleanness, you may know better than I. But if these words, otherwise than to cite men to obedience, be thus thrust in, of purpose thereby to speak evil of the preachers of free grace, and the exalters of the imputed righteousness of Christ, then look to it; for such venom language as this, doth but involve you within the bowels of that most dreadful prophecy, concerning the false prophets of the last days, that shall privily bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them.

(2.) The preaching of free grace, pressing to believing, and laying hold on Christ's righteousness, is the most available means under heaven, to make men holy, and righteous:‡ 1. Before God. 2. Then before men.

(3.) The preaching of these are first, and principally to beget faith, to beget life, to beget souls to God; yea, to beget in men such a principle, whereby they may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear.

(4.) But to preach free grace, doth much condemn your free will; to preach Christ's righteousness doth utterly curse, and condemn yours; and to preach the promise of grace, doth quite shut

* 'Diggle together,' probably from 'degladiation,' a combat, quarrel, or contest; a fencing match between *two friends*. —Ed.

† Fowler's picture of the want of uniformity in the preachers of his sect, all being under the 'Act of Uniformity,' is very amusing and instructive!!—Ed.

‡ Undoubtedly so; because the good works of a man who is under the influence and power of divine grace, flow from the constraining love of a covenant-reconciled God in Christ Jesus, whom the holy-making Spirit glorifies and renders precious to every true believer in him.—*Mason and Ryland.*

out a covenant of works: therefore no marvel if you, who are so wedded to these things, be such an enemy to free grace, the righteousness of Christ, and the gospel promises, that you make even these things a characteristic note (first abusing the consequences of them) of a church-troubling preacher.

(5.) You tauntingly proceed, saying, ‘such preachers also press us to renounce our own righteousness, which they that have none at all to renounce, have a mighty kindness for.’

Answ. Indeed those that have a righteousness of their own, as the pharisees, and hypocrites of old, had never much kindness for the doctrine of grace, and the ministers of Christ, but the publicans and harlots had: and therefore, these, while they that had righteousness stumbled and fell, entered into the kingdom of heaven. ‘The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you.’ But what righteousness have you of your own, to which you so dearly are wedded, that it may not be let go, for the sake of Christ? seeing also so long as you go about to establish it, you submit not yourself ‘to the righteousness of God.’ Ro.x.3. Yea, why do you taunt those ministers that persuade us to renounce our own righteousness, and those also that follow their doctrine? Seeing this was both the doctrine and practice of Paul and all others, save only those that had Moses’ veil over their hearts.

Another sort of ministers that you say are enemies to the promoting of holiness, are such as ‘are never in their element, but when they are talking of the irrespectiveness of God’s decrees, the absoluteness of his promises, the utter disability and perfect impotence of natural men, to do any thing towards their own conversion, and that insist with great emphasis, and vehemence, upon such like false, and dangerous opinions,’ p. 262.

Answ. The men that preach these things, being rightly stated, preach the truth of God, if the scriptures may bear sway; they having all been proved the truth of the gospel, both by the prophets and apostles: and when you shall think meet by argument to contradict them, either I, or some other may show you the folly of your undertaking. In the mean time let the reader take notice that here you have judged not by scripture, nor by reason, but upon a bare presumption, arising from your pride or ignorance. Wherefore pray you in your next, shew us, (1.) What is in man that the decree of election should respect as a thing foreseen of God, to prevail with him to pre-destinate him to eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. (2.) Make it manifest that in the word of God there neither is, nor can be any absolute promise contained. (3.) Shew us what ability there is in a natural man, as such, to do things

towards his own conversion; I mean things immediately tending to, and that must infallibly consummate therein, and let us see what things they are. And know that when you have well done all this, according to the scriptures of truth, that then it will be time enough to condemn the contrary for false, and dangerous opinions.

But shall I speak the truth for you? The reason of this your presumptuous exclamations, and condemnation of these things; is because they stand in the way of promoting your ignorant, tottering, promiseless, and gospelless holiness; they stand in the way of old Adam, they stand in the way of your dunghill rebellious righteousness, they stand in the way of your freedom of will, and a great rabble more of such like pretended virtues. Yea, they do, and must, and shall stand there, when you and the rest of the Socinians, and Quakers, have said their all against them.

There is yet another sort of preachers whom you condemn, and so do I as well as you, though not in your spirit, nor to advance your pestiferous principles: and they are ‘such as make it their great business, to advance the petty interest of any party whatsoever, and concern themselves more about doing this, than about promoting, and carrying on that, wherein consists the chief good of all mankind, and are more zealous to make proselytes to their particular sects, than converts (I will add first to Jesus Christ, and then) to an holy life; and press more exact and rigid conformity to their modes and forms, than to the laws of God, and the essential duties of the christian religion,’ p. 263.

Lastly, The caution which you give to ministers, because there wanteth for it, among *you* a foundation, is to be esteemed but an error, and an abuse of the words, and practices of the apostle. And as for your subtil and close incensing the power to persecute Nonconformists, know that we are willing, God assisting, to overcome you with truth and patience, not sticking to sacrifice our lives, and dearest concerns in a faithful witness-bearing against your filthy errors, compiled and foisted into the world, by your devilish design to promote Paganism, against Christianity, p. 265, 266.

[*A compliant temper may prove dangerous.*]

I come now to your twenty-sixth chapter, which is spent to prove, ‘That an obedient temper of mind, is a necessary and excellent qualification to prepare men for a firm belief, and a right understanding of the gospel of Christ,’ p. 267.

Answ. 1. Forasmuch as the obedient temper you mention, is precedent to, or before, faith, and the right understanding of the gospel, it must needs be also, that which stands with unbelief, and

ignorance of the same. Now that this should be an excellent, and necessary qualification, to a firm belief, and right understanding of the gospel, is altogether without proof, and truth. But this is affirmed for the farther promoting of your human nature, and the things that originally are dictates thereof. But,

2. The obedience, or inclination to obedience, that is before faith, or the understanding of the gospel, is so far off from being an excellent preparative, or good qualification for faith, and the knowledge of the gospel, that in its own nature, which is more than in its consequences, it is a great obstruction thereto.

For, while a man remains faithless and ignorant of the gospel, to what doth his obedient temper of mind incline? Not to faith, nor the gospel of Christ; for with these, as yet you suppose he hath not to do; therefore he inclineth to the law of morals, either as it was delivered in tables of stone from Sinai, or as written in the hearts of all the children of men, to it, under the last consideration, which is in truth, the most heathen and pagan to it, as so you intend, your obedient temper of mind should incline, p. 7-10.

Now this doctrine, being in itself of quite another nature than the doctrine of faith, and also, as such, a covenant by itself, it requireth the mind by virtue of its commands, to stand to THAT, and to rest in that; for of necessity, the heart and mind of a man can go no farther than it seeth, and hath learnt, but by this moral doctrine, the heart and mind is bound and limited to itself, by the power of the dictate to obedience, and the promise of obtaining the blessing, when the preceptive part of it is fulfilled. Hence Paul tells us, that though that ministration, that was written, and engraven in stones, (which in nature is the same with this) is glorious, yet these imperfections attended the man that was in it. 2 Co. iii.

1. He was but within the bounds of the ministration of death.

2. In this estate he was blind, and could not see how to be delivered therefrom: 'The veil is over their heart,' so that they could not heretofore, neither can they now, see to the end of that which was commanded, neither to the perfection of the command, nor their own insufficiency to do it, nor to the death and curse of God, that attended him, that in every thing continued not in [all] that was written in the book of the law to do them.

3. Every lecture, or reading of this old law, is as a fresh hood-winking of its disciples, and a doubling of the hindrance of their coming to Christ for life. 'But their minds were blinded, for until this day, remaineth the same veil untaken away in reading of the old testament; which *vail* is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when

Moses is read, the *vail* is upon their hearts.' 2 Co. iii. 14, 15.

And let the reader note, that all these things attend the doctrine of morals: the ceremonies being in themselves more apt to instruct men in the knowledge of Christ, they being by God's ordination, figures, shadows, representations, and emblems of him; but the morals are not so, neither, as written in our natures, nor as written and engraven in stones. Ga. iii. 24. Wherefore, your so highly commended obedient temper of mind, you intending thereby an hearty compliance before faith, with morals for righteousness, is so far off from being an excellent temper, and a necessary qualification, to help a man to a firm belief, and right understanding of the gospel; that it is the most ready way of all ways in the world, to keep a man perpetually blind, and ignorant thereof. Wherefore the apostle saith, that the *vail*, the ignorance, cannot be taken away, but when the heart shall turn to the Lord, that is, from the doctrine of morals, as a law and covenant in our natures, or, as it was written and engraven in stones, to Christ for mercy to pardon our transgressions against it, and for imputative righteousness to justify us from it. While Moses is read, the *vail* is over the heart; that is, while men with their minds stand bending also to do it. But mark, when it, the heart, shall turn to the Lord, or to the word of the gospel, which is the revelation of him, then the *vail* shall be taken away.

And hence it will not be amiss, if again we consider how the Holy Ghost compareth, or setteth one against another, these two administrations.

The law he calls the letter, even the law of morals, that law that was written and engraven in stones. The other ministration, he calls the ministration of the spirit, even that which Christ offered to the world, upon believing.

Again, he denieth himself to be a minister of the law of morals. He hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, or law; but of the spirit or gospel. The reason is, for the letter, or law, can do nothing but kill, curse, or condemn; but the spirit, or the gospel, giveth life. Farther, in comparing, he calls the law, the ministration of death, or that which layeth death at the doors of all flesh; but the gospel, the ministration of righteousness, because, by this ministry, there is a revelation of *that* righteousness that is fulfilled by the person of Christ; and to be imputed for righteousness to them that believe, that they might be delivered from the ministration of death. How then? Hath the ministration of God no glory? Yes, forasmuch as it is a revelation of the justice of God against sin. But yet again, its glory is turned into no glory, when it is compared with that which excelleth. 'But if the ministra-

tion of death, written *and* engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance; which *glory* was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation *be* glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the *glory* that excelleth.' 2 Co. iii. 7—10.

So then, your obedient temper of mind, forasmuch as it respecteth the law of morals, and that too, before faith, or a right understanding of the gospel, is nothing else but an obedience to the law, a living to death, and the ministration of condemnation; and is a persuading the world, that to be obedient to that ministration, that is not the ministration of the gospel, but holdeth its disciples in blindness and ignorance, in which it is impossible Christ should be revealed, is an excellent, yea, a necessary qualification to prepare men for a firm belief, and a right understanding of the gospel of Christ, which yet even blindest, and holdeth all blind that are the followers of that ministration. I come now to your proof, which indeed is no proof of this anti-gospel assertion, but texts abused, and wrested out of their place, to serve to underprop your erroneous doctrine. The first is, 'If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.' Jn. vii. 17. p. 268.

Ans. This scripture respecteth not at all the moral law, or obedience to the dictates of human nature, as an acceptable qualification precedent to faith; or that, for the sake of which God will give men faith in, and a right understanding of the gospel, but is itself an immediate exhortation to believing, with a promise of what shall follow; as who shall say, The Father hath sent me into the world to be salvation to it, through faith in my blood: My Father's will therefore is, 'that men believe in me;' and if any will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, he shall feel the power thereof, by the peace and comfort that will presently possess the soul, and by the holy effects that follow.

That this is the true exposition of this place will be verified if you consider, that to do the will of God, in a New Testament sense, is to be taken under a double consideration. 1. As it respecteth Christ. 2. Man.

1. *As it respecteth Christ*, so it concerns his completing the redemption of man by himself, by his own personal performances. Jn. vi. 38, 39. He. x. 5—10.

2. *As it respecteth man*, it doth first and immediately respect our believing on him for remission of sins and eternal life. 'And this is the will of him [the Father] which sent me (saith Christ)

that every one that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.' Jn. vi. 40. This then is the will of God; that men do believe in Jesus Christ.

Again, when the Jews asked Jesus Christ what they should do, that they might work the works of God, he did not send them first to the moral precept, or to its first principles in the hearts of men; by obeying that, to fit themselves for faith; but immediately he tells them, 'This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.' Jn. vi. 29. This is the work of God; that is, 'This is his commandment, That we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment.' 1 Jn. iii. 23. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, that is, as I have said, he shall feel, and have the authority of this faith in his heart, both to give peace and joy in his heart, and assurance, and the sealing of his soul to glory. For all these things come in upon believing *first* in Christ.

1. 'By faith we have peace with God.' Ro. v. 1.
2. 'We have joy and peace through believing.'

Ro. xv. 13.

3. 'Assurance comes also through believing.'

Jn. vi. 69. He. x. 22.

4. Yea, and the sealings up to eternal life; 'In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy spirit of promise.' Ep. i. 13.

5. Sanctification, and a right obedient temper, is not to be found in men before, but after they have believed; 'He purified their hearts by faith.' Ac. xv. 9. Yea, heaven and eternal happiness is promised to them who are sanctified by faith which is in Christ. ch. xxvi. 18.

This first text, therefore, hath been by you abused, in that you have ungodly strained it, but in vain, to make it warrant your heathenish preparations to faith.

The second scripture; 'He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.' Jn. viii. 47.

Ans. This scripture supposeth men must first be of God, before they can hear God's word; before they can hear it with the hearing of faith; and therefore nothing respecteth those that before they have faith, live in the law of works; and least of all, those that become obedient thereto, that thereby they may obtain everlasting life. For these are not of God, not of him in a New Testament sense; not sons, because they are born of men, of the will of men, of the law, and according to the wisdom of flesh and blood. Jn. i. 12, 13.

Your third scripture is, 'And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed.' Ac. xiii. 48. Which text you thus expound: 'That as many of the Gentiles as were disposed, or in a ready preparedness for eternal life, believed; that is, those which

were proselytes of the gate, who were admitted by the Jews to the hope of eternal life, and to have their portion in the age to come, without submitting to their whole law, or any more than owning the God of Israel, and observing the seven precepts of Noah," p. 269.*

Ans. 1. That obedience to the moral law is not a preparative to faith, or an excellent and necessary qualification to the right understanding of the gospel I have proved.

2. That to be a Jewish proselyte was to live in the faith of Messias to come, is the strain of all the scriptures that have to deal with them.

3. But that ordaining men to eternal life respects an act of the Jews, or that the Jews did dispense with the Gentile proselytes, in their casting off all their laws, but the seven precepts of Noah.

4. Or that God counted this a fit, or forerunning qualification to faith in Jesus Christ, neither stands with the word of God, nor the zeal of that people.

5. Besides, the words presently following seem to me to insinuate more, viz. That the Jews and religious proselytes that adhered to Paul at his first sermon, ver. 43. did contradict and blaspheme at his second, ver. 45. and moreover, that it was they that raised persecution upon him, and expelled him out of their coasts, ver. 50. When the Gentiles, even those that were more barbarously ignorant at his coming, when they heard that by Christ there was offered to them the forgiveness of sins, they believed, ver. 48. and glorified the word of the Lord: The wisdom of heaven so disposing such of their hearts, that were before by HIM, not by Jews ordained to life. 'And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.'

But you come again, in p. 269. to the scripture first urged by you, 'If any man will do his will,' &c. and you tell us, that this must also needs be implied, he shall rightly understand the doctrine too; which word (understand) you so carry, as may best help you in case you should meet with an adversary. As if any should thus object, that here you have granted that the words make promise of an understanding of the gospel; yea require in it the very first act of the will; then you readily shift it by saying, That this is implied only, suggesting

that obedience to morals is expressed, and therefore must first be thought on and done. But if one of your brotherhood stop here, and make the objection; then you add, 'It is knowledge, at least, in all the necessary points thereof, absolutely necessary and essential parts, from among which you long since did cast out, "Coming to God by Jesus Christ." Yea you add, 'That by (that which you call) the design of the gospel, it may be presumed, that whosoever considereth it, with a design of being so, (that is, of living up to human principles, and that desireth to be possessed again of the holiness he hath lost, for that is it for the proof of which you have written above 300 pages) he must needs believe the gospel to have come from God, and also be enlightened in the true knowledge of at least the necessary points of it,' viz. All moral duties contained therein, which are never a one of them as such an essential of the gospel, but are such duties as are consequential to the belief thereof.

Wherefore, although you feign it, 'this honest temper,' as you call it, will not help you, 1. To judge of the gospel without prejudice; nor 2. To evidence it with satisfaction; nor 3. Secure those in whom it is from error and delusion; no man being more brutish or heathenish, nor so void of satisfaction about it, nor more involved in error concerning it, than yourself; being truly what you charge upon others; 1. Grossly ignorant; 2. Too highly opinionate; 3. Proud in affectation; 4. Liquorish; 5. A self-lover; 6. And for your blasphemy under the just judgment of God. 'If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them.' 2 Co. iv. 3, 4.

[*'For me to live is Christ' includes in it more than good habits or holy frames of soul.]*

I am come now to your last chapter, which tells us wherein the essence and life of Christianity consisteth, viz. In a good state and habit of mind, in a holy frame and temper of soul, p. 282.

Ans. 1. It consisteth in a life of faith, when I live in the belief of this, that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me. 'The life that I now live in the flesh (saith Paul) I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.'

2. And besides, a good state and habit of mind, or an holy frame and temper of soul, in your notion of them, which respecteth purely obedience to morals, from natural impulses, or dictates of our humanity, they are rather heathenish than Christian, and being alone, end in death rather than life. 'As many as are of the works of the

* The Jews were divided into three sections: I. The descendants of Israel; II. Proselytes who conformed to all the Mosaic rites; and, III. Those who were bound to obey the seven precepts of Noah—and these, although they did not conform to the Jewish rites, yet were admitted to the worship of the true God and the hope of the life to come. According to the Talmud these precepts were—1. To renounce idols and all idolatrous worship. 2. To worship the true God, the creator of heaven and earth. 3. Bloodshed, to commit no murder. 4. Not to be defiled with fornication. 5. Rapine, against theft and robbery. 6. To administer justice. 7. Not eating flesh with the blood in it.—ED.

law, are under the curse,' he saith not they that sin against it, but they that are of the works of it, such as do justice, righteousness, charity, goodness, mercy, patience, and all kind of moral duties, from principles human, natural, or as men, they are under the curse, because they have sinned first, and also are infirm and weak in their pursuit after the perfections they desire. These follow after righteousness, but *that* flies from them; wherefore they do not obtain it, because they seek it not by faith in Christ, but as it were by the works; the righteous, good, and holy works of the law. Ro. ix. 30, 32. But you add,

'It is such a habit of mind, such a frame and temper of soul, as esteemeth God as the chiefest good, and preferreth him and his Son Jesus Christ before all the world, and that prizeth above all things an interest in the divine perfections,' &c. p. 282.

Ans. 1. God must needs be esteemed the chiefest good, by all that have but, and are ruled by, the light of nature, because they see him by his works to be almighty, merciful, and eternal. Ro. i. 20. But this may be where the knowledge of the man, the Mediator is not; therefore this, in this and in your sense, cannot be of the essence of Christianity, for that it is common to all the world. That estimation of God which is common to natural men, cannot be of the essence of Christianity, because they want that knowledge of him that comes by Jesus Christ, and so are not capable to esteem of him under a Christian consideration.

But you say, 'it is that good habit and temper of mind that preferreth God, and his Son Jesus Christ, before all the world.'

Ans. He that esteemeth God above all, must needs, at least in his judgment, so prefer him; but whereas you add, and his Son Jesus Christ, you put in them words but as a cloak, for yourself have not preferred his Son Jesus Christ, no, not before a moral law, no not before your obedience to it, although but by human principles; yea, you have accounted the command of God, by which we are enjoined by him to come to God, a thing in itself but like levitical ceremonies, or as Baptism and the Lord's Supper; a thing in itself indifferent, and absolutely considered neither good nor evil, p. 7, 8, 9.

You add; 'It is such a temper as prizeth above all things, an interest in the divine perfections; such as justice and righteousness, universal charity, goodness, mercy, patience, and all kinds of purity,' p. 282.

Ans. Seeing by these expressions you only intend moral virtues, and those that are inherent in you, and originally operations of humanity, it is evident that you have but impiously and idolatrously attributed to your own goodness so high

and blessed a title. For whatsoever is in your nature, and originally the dictates thereof, and whatsoever proficency you make therein by human principles, and helps of natural endowments; these things are but of yourself, your own justice, your own righteousness, your own charity, goodness, mercy, patience, kindness, &c. Now to call these the divine perfections, when they are only your own human virtues, bespeaks you, I say, fond, impious, and idolatrous, and shews you, in the midst of all your pretended design to glorify God, such an one who have set up your own goodness with him, yea and given it the title of his blessed grace and favour.

That scripture you mention, Ro. xiv. 17. although by the word righteousness there, is intended obedience to the moral law, yet to it by persons already justified by Christ's righteousness; hence they are said to do it in the joy and peace of the Holy Ghost, or by the joy and peace which they had by faith in Christ's righteousness, as revealed to them by the Spirit of God. Hence again, they are said in it to serve Christ, or to receive the law at his hand, which he giveth to them to walk after, having first justified them from the curse thereof by his blood.

2. The law was given twice on Sinai, the last time, with a proclamation of mercy going before, and he that receiveth it thus, receiveth it after a gospel manner. For they as justified persons are dead to the law as a covenant of works by the body of Christ, that they might live to another, even to him that is raised from the dead. Ro. vii. Ga. ii. 19. But you by this scripture intend not this doctrine, for you make justification by Christ, come after, not before obedience to the law; yea, you make obedience thereto, the essential, and coming to God by Christ, but a thing of a more remote nature, from true and substantial gospel-righteousness.

In p. 283, you speak again of the old principle, and thus you comment, 'A principle of holiness that respecteth duty, as with respect to the nature of the command, so not with respect to the duty as occasioned by certain external inducements and motives, but from a good temper and disposition of soul.'

Ans. This I say, still respecting your old principle of humanity, and the purity of your nature, the most amounts but to this: Your principle is confined to a liberty of will and affections, with respect to doing of the law of works, which many have professed to have, and do before you, and yet have come short of the glory of God. For as I told you before, I tell you now again, that the gospel-principles are the Holy Ghost and faith, which help that soul in whom they dwell to count believing in Jesus Christ the great and essential part of our Christianity, and our reckoning our-

selves pardoned for the sake of him: ‘And thus being set free from sin, we become the servants of God, and have our fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.’ Ro. vi. 22.

Your description of a child of Abraham, you meaning in a New Testament sense, is quite beside the truth. For albeit, the sons of Abraham will live holy lives, and become obedient to the substantial laws; yet it is not their subjection to morals, but faith in Jesus, that giveth them the denomination of children of Abraham. ‘Know ye, therefore, that they that are of faith are the children of faithful Abraham: They that are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham: Yea, they that are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.’ Ga. iii. 7, 9. In p. 284, you say, ‘That there is no one duty more affectionately recommended to us in the gospel than is alms-giving.’

Ans. Yes. That there is, and that which more immediately respecteth our justification with God, than ten thousand such commandments; and that is faith in Christ. Alms-deeds is also a blessed command; yet but one of the second table, such as must flow from faith going before. Faith I mean that layeth hold on Christ’s righteousness, if it be accepted of God. For before the heart be good the action must be naught; now the heart is good by faith, because faith, by applying Christ’s righteousness, makes over [a] whole Christ to the soul, of whose fulness it receiveth, and grace for grace. Jn. i. 16. Many things in this last chapter are worthy reprehension, but because you tell us, in the last two pages thereof, is the sum of all that need to be said, I will immediately apply myself to what is there contained.

You say, p. 296, ‘It is not possible we should not have the design of Christianity accomplished in us, and therefore that we should be destitute of the power of it, if we make our Saviour’s most excellent life the pattern of our lives. By our Saviour’s life, as by a parenthesis you also express, you mean, as yourself hath in short described it, ch. v. viz., ‘The greatest freedom, affability, courtesy, candour, ingenuity, gentleness, meekness, humility, contempt of the world, contentation, charity, tenderness, compassion, patience, submission to the divine will, love of God, devoutest temper of mind towards him, mighty confidence and trust in God,’ &c.

Answ. Our Saviour’s life, in not only these, but all other duties that respected morals, was not principally or first to be imitated by us, but that the law, even in the preceptive part thereof, might be fully and perfectly fulfilled for us. ‘Christ is the end of the law for righteousness;’ the end, not only of the ceremonial law, but the ten commandments too; for if the word righteousness, respecteth in special them. ‘Jesus increased in favour

with God.’ Lu. ii. 52. Mat. iii. 17. This respecteth him as made under the law, and his pleasing of God in that capacity. So also doth that, ‘In him I am well pleased.’ Now I say, as Jesus stood in this capacity, he dealt with the law in its greatest force and severity, as it immediately came from God, without the advantage of a Mediator, and stood by his perfect complying with, and fulfilling every tittle thereof. Besides, as Jesus Christ had thus to do with the law, he did it in order to his ‘finishing transgression, and putting an end to sin,’ Da. ix. 24, and so consequently as Mediator, and undertaker for the world. For his perfect complying withal, and fulfilling every tittle of the law, respected nothing his own private person, that he for himself might be righteous thereby; for in himself he was eternally just and holy, even as the Father, but it respected us, even us. For us he was made under the law, that we, by his fulfilling the law, might by him be redeemed from under the law, and also receive the adoption of SONS, Ga. iv. 4, 5. For we having sinned, and transgressed the law, and the justice of God, yet requiring obedience thereto, and the law being too weak through our flesh to do it, God therefore sent his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, who himself for us did first of all walk in the law, and then for sin suffered also in his flesh, the sentence, and curse pronounced against us by the law. For it was nothing less necessary, when the Son of God became undertaker for the sin of the world, that he should walk in obedience to the whole of the precepts of the law, to deliver us from the judgment of the law; I say it was no less necessary he should so do, than that he should bear our curse and death. For it would have been impossible for him to have overcome the last, if he had not been spotless touching the first. For therefore it was impossible he should be holden of death, because he did nothing worthy of death; no, not in the judgment of the law, to which he immediately stood. Now as Christ Jesus stood thus to, and walked in the law, it is blasphemy for any to presume to imitate him; because thus to do is to turn Mediator and undertaker for the sin of the world. Besides, whoso doth attempt it, undertakes an impossibility; for no man can stand by the moral law, as it immediately comes from the divine majesty; he having sinned first, even before he goeth about to fulfil it. And in this sense is that to be understood, ‘as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse,’ held accursed, because they have sinned first; accursed in their performances, because of imperfection, and therefore assuredly accursed at last, because they come short of the righteousness thereof.

1. Christ Jesus did never set himself forth for an example, that we by imitating his steps in

morals should obtain justification with God from the curse of that law; for this would be to overthrow, and utterly abolish the work which himself came into the world to accomplish, which was not to be our example, that we by treading his steps might have remission of sins, but that through the faith of him, through faith in his blood, we might be reconciled to God.

2. Besides, thus to imitate Christ, is to make of him a Saviour, not by sacrifice, but by example. Nay, to speak the whole, this would be to make his mediatorialship wholly to center, rather in prescribing of rules, and exacting obedience to morals, than in giving himself a ransom for men; yea, I will add to imitate Christ, as you have prescribed, may be done by him, that yet may be ignorant of the excellency of his person, and the chief end of his being made flesh: For in all these things which you have discoursed in that fifth chapter of him, you have only spoken of that, something of which is apprehended by the light of nature; yea, nature itself will teach that men should trust in God, which is the most excellent particular that there you mention. Wherefore our Lord Jesus himself foreseeing, that in men there will be a prouddness, to content themselves with that confidence, he intimateth that it would be in us insignificant, if it stand without faith in himself. 'Ye believe [naturally] in God (saith he) believe also in me.' Jn. xiv. 1. Faith in Jesus is as absolutely necessary as to believe immediately in the divine being. Yea, without faith in Jesus, whosoever believeth in God is sure to perish and burn in hell. 'If you believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.' Jn. viii. 24. And to take Jesus in morals for example, is nowhere called believing in him, neither is there one promise of eternal life, annexed to such a practice. But you say, 'If we tread in his blessed steps, and be such, according to our measure and capacity, as we have understood he was in this world.' p. 296.

Answ. I say, for a man to censure himself only to the life of the Lord Jesus, for an example, or to think it enough to make him, in his life, a pattern for us to follow, leaveth us, through our shortness in the end, with the devil and his angels, for want of faith in the doctrine of remission of sins; for Christ did nowhere make another mediator between God and him, nor did he ever trust to another man's righteousness, to be thereby justified from the curse of the law; neither did he at all stand in need thereof, without which, we must be damned and perish. Now I say, these things being nowhere practised by him, he cannot therein be an example to us. And I say again, seeing that in these things, by faith in them, is immediately wrapped up our reconciliation with God; it followeth, that though a man take the Lord Christ

in his whole life, for an example in the end, that notwithstanding, he abideth unreconciled to God. Neither will that clause, 'and be such,' help such a person at all: For justification with God, comes not by imitating Christ as exemplary in morals, but through faith in his precious blood. In the law I read, that the Paschal Lamb was neither to be eaten sodden nor raw, but roast with fire, must it be eaten. Ex. xii. Now to make salvation principally to depend upon imitating Christ's life, it is to feed upon him raw, or at most, as sodden, not sanctified and holy: But the precept is, 'Eat it roast with fire;' is to be the antitype, as accursed of God for sin, and enduring the punishment for it, Ex. xix. De. xxxiii. 2. Mal. iv. 1. The law is compared to fire, and its curse to a burning oven. Now under the curse of this fiery law, was the Lord Jesus afflicted for the sins of the world: wherefore, as so considered, our faith must lay hold upon him, for justification with God. 'This is the law of the burnt-offering: (which was the offering for sin;) It is the burnt-offering, because of the burning upon the altar all night unto the morning, and the fire of the altar shall be burning in it.' Le. vi. 9. But now I would inquire: Had Israel done the commandment, if they had eaten the passover raw, or boiled in water? Or if they had offered that offering, that was to be burnt as a sin-offering, otherwise than it was commanded? Even so, to feed upon Christ, as he is holy, and of good life only; and also, as taking him therein for an example to us, to follow his steps for justification with God; this is, to eat the passover raw, and not as roast with fire; this is, to feed upon Jesus, without respecting him as accursed of God for our sin, and so consequently to miss of that eternal life, that by his blood he hath obtained for every one that believeth on him. I have been pleased with this observation: That none of the signs and wonders in Egypt, could deliver the children of Israel thence, till the Lamb was slain, and roast with fire. Ex. xii. 31. And I have been also pleased with this: That the Father, not Moses, gave the manna from heaven, which was a type of the flesh, and blood of Christ, that whoso feedeth on, shall live for ever. Jn. vi. 32. Yea, circumcision also, which was a type of inward, and heart-holiness, was not of Moses, but of the Fathers, and principally a consequence of the faith of Abraham. Jn. vii. 22. Whence I gather, that no wonder, but the blood of Christ can save; that no kindness, but the mercy of God, can give this to us; and that no law, but the law of faith, can make us truly holy in heart. But you add, 'Those that sincerely, and industriously, endeavour to imitate the holy Jesus in his Spirit and actions, can never be ignorant what it is to be truly Christians.' Those that follow Jesus in his Spirit, must first receive that

Spirit from heaven, which Spirit is received, as I have often said, by applying first, by faith, the merits of Christ to the soul, for life and justification with God. The Spirit is not received by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith; neither comes it in the ministry, or doctrine of morals, but in and by the ministry of faith; and the law is *not* of faith. Therefore seeing you have, in p. 223. of your book, forbidden sinners to come first to Jesus for justification with God; the Spirit you talk of, however you call it the Spirit of Jesus, can be no other than the spirit of a man; which you also yourself, in p. 7, s. 9. call ‘the purity of human nature, a principle of reason, the first principles of morals, or those that are originally dictates of human nature.’ Wherefore by these words, ‘in his Spirit,’ you do but blaspheme the Holy Ghost, and abuse your ignorant reader; calling now, Quaker-like, the dictates of your humanity, and your Socinian compliances therewith, the Spirit of Holy Jesus. I conclude therefore, that the way of salvation, or the design of Christianity as prescribed by you, is none other than the errors of your own brain, the way of death, the sum and heart of Papistical Quakerism, and is quite denied by the Lord Jesus, and by his blessed Testament. And now go your ways, and imitate the Lord Jesus, and take the whole history of his life for your example, and walk in his steps, and be such as much as you can, yet without faith in his blood, first; yea, and if you stand not just before God through the imputation of his righteousness, your imitating will be found no better than rebellion, because by that, instead of faith in his blood, you hope to obtain remission of sins, thrusting him thereby from his office and work, and setting your dunghill righteousness up in his stead.

[*Fowler's false and dangerous conclusions.*]

I come now to your conclusion. First, in p. 203. ‘You press men to betake themselves to find (that which you call) the design of Christianity, accomplished in their hearts and lives.’

Ans. Seeing that the holiness that your erroneous book has exalted, is none other but that which we have lost; yea, and again, seeing you have set this in the head of, and before the righteousness of Christ, I admonish my reader to tremble at the blasphemy of your book, and account the whole design therein, to be none other but that of an enemy to the Son of God, and salvation of the world. For that holiness as I have shewed, is none other but a shadowish, Christless, graceless holiness; and your so exalting of it, very blasphemy. You proceed, saying, ‘Let us exercise ourselves unto real and substantial godliness; (still

meaning your Adamitish holiness) let us study the gospel not to discourse, or only to believe, but also, and above all things, to do well.’

Ans. Herein still you manifest, either ignorance of, or malice against, the doctrine of faith; that doctrine, which above all doctrines, is the quintessence of the New Testament, because therein, and not principally, as you feign, by doing well, is the righteousness of God revealed, and that from faith to faith; not from faith to works, nor yet from works to faith. Besides, the gospel is preached in all nations, for the obedience of faith. Ro. xvi. 26. Neither works, the law, the dictates of humanity, nor the first principles of morals, knowing what to do with the righteousness of the gospel, which is a righteousness imputed by God, not wrought by us; a righteousness given, not earned, a righteousness received by believing, not that which floweth from our obedience to laws, a righteousness which comes from God to us, not one that goeth from us to God. Besides, as I also have hinted before, the apostle and you are directly opposite. You cry, ‘above all things, do well;’ that is, work and do the law; but he, ‘above ALL, take the shield of faith, wherewith are quenched all the fiery darts of the wicked.’ Ep. vi. 16.

But you add, p. 300. ‘Let us do what lieth in us to convince our Atheists, that the religion of the blessed Jesus, is no trick or device: and our wanton and loose Christians, that it is no notional business, or speculative science.’

Ans. This you cannot do by your moral natural principles of humanity: For even some of your brave philosophers, whose godliness you have so much applauded, were even then in the midst of their, and your virtues, atheistically ignorant of the religion of Jesus. And as to the loose Christian; Christ neither hath need of, nor will he bless your blasphemous opinions, nor feigned godliness, but real ungodliness, to make them converts to his faith and grace, neither can it be expected it should, seeing you have not only dirty thoughts, but vilifying words, and sayings of his person, work, and righteousness. You have set your works before his, p. 223. calling them substantial, indispensable, and real; but coming to God by him, a thing in itself indifferent, p. 7—9. You go on, and say, ‘Let us declare—that we are not barely reliers on Christ’s righteousness, by being imitators of it,’ p. 300. You cannot leave off to contemn and blaspheme the Son of God. Do you not yet know that the righteousness of Christ on which the sinner ought to rely for life, is such, as consisted in his standing to, and doing of the law, without a Mediator? And would you be doing this? What know you not, that an essential of the righteousness he accomplished for sinners when he was in the world; is, ‘That he was conceived by the

Holy Ghost, born without sin, did all things in the power of, and union with his own eternal Godhead.' And are you able thus to imitate him? Again, the righteousness on which we ought to rely for life, is that which hath in it the merit of blood: we are 'justified by his blood' through faith in his blood. *Ro. v. 9.* Is this the righteousness you would imitate? Farther, the righteousness on which poor sinners should rely, is that, for the sake of which God forgiveth the sins of him that resteth by faith thereupon. But would you be imitating of, or accomplishing such a righteousness?

Your book, Sir, is begun in ignorance, managed with error, and ended in blasphemy.

Now the God of glory, if it may stand with his glory, give you a sight of your sins, against the Son of God, that you may, as Saul, lie trembling, and being astonished, cry out to be justified, with the righteousness of God without the law, even that which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe.

Many other gross absurdities, which I have omitted in your whole book, may perhaps, be more thoroughly gathered up, when you shall have taken the opportunity to reply. In the meantime I shall content myself with this.

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' *Jn. i. 29.*

'Even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.' *1 Th. i. 10.*

'Who when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.' *He. i. 3.*

'Christ died for our sins.' *1 Co. xv. 3.*

'God hath made him to be sin for us.' *2 Co. v. 21.*

'Christ was made a curse for us.' *Ga. iii. 13.*

'He bare our sins in his own body on the tree.' *1 Pe. ii. 24.*

'He loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood.' *Re. i. 5.*

'God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.' *Ep. iv. 32.*

'We have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.' *Ep. i. 7.*

Now unto the King, eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour, and glory, for ever, and ever. Amen.

THE CONCLUSION.

That my reader may farther perceive that Mr. Fowler, even by the chief of the articles of the church of England, is adjudged erroneous; and besides the very fundamentals of the doctrine of Jesus Christ, and that in those very principles that are in the main, I say, and that most immediately concern Christ, faith, and salvation, will

be evident to them that compare his design of Christianity, with these articles hercunto recited.

The Article [X.] concerning Free-will.

'The condition of man, after the fall of Adam, is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God: wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing* us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.'

The Article [XI.] concerning Justification.

'We are accounted righteous before God, ONLY for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith; and not for our own works, or deservings. Wherefore that we are justified by faith ONLY, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort,' &c.

The Article [XIII.] of Works before Justification.

'Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspiration of his Spirit, are not pleasant to God, for as much as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, - or deserve grace of congruity: 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.'

These articles, because they respect the points in controversy betwixt Mr. Fowler, and myself; and because they be also fundamental truths of the christian religion, as I do heartily believe, let all men know that I quarrel not with him, about things wherein I dissent from the church of England, but do contend for the truth contained, even in these very articles of theirs, from which he hath so deeply revolted, that he clasheth with every one of them, as may farther be shewn when he shall take heart to reply.

But to wind up this unpleasant scribble, I shall have done when I have farther shewed, how he joineth with papist, and quaker, against these wholesome, and fundamental articles.

Mr. Fowler's Doctrine compared with Campian the Jesuit, upon that question whether Faith only justifieth: saith Campian,

1. *Campion.* 'We (Papists) say, that as grace is put into us in justification, so also our righteousness is enlarged through good works, and is

* 'To prevent,' from 'prævenio,' to go before; 'preventing us' was formerly used for 'preparing us.' It is now obsolete in this sense, but frequently occurs in the Bible.—ED.

inherent in us; therefore it is not true that God doth justify by faith ONLY.'

Fowler, p. 221. 'Justifying faith is such a belief of the truth of the gospel, as includes a sincere resolution of obedience unto all its precepts: and that it justifieth as it doth so. - In short, is it possible that faith in Christ's blood, for the forgiveness of sins, should be the only act which justifieth a sinner?' p. 224.

2. *Campion*. 'So that faith is urged, but not faith ONLY; again, by faith is meant all Christianity, and the whole religion of Christians.'

Fowler, p. 222. 'For surely the faith which entitles the sinner to so high a privilege, as that of justification, must needs be such as complieth with all the purposes of Christ's coming into the world; especially with his grand purpose, - as Lord, and that it is no less necessary that it should justify as it doth this.'

3. *Campion*. 'Though works void of Christ are nothing; yet through grace they serve to justification.'

Fowler, p. 225, 226. 'Of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, - this is the true explication; it consists in dealing with sincerely righteous persons: as if they were perfectly so, for the sake and upon the account of Christ's righteousness. The grand intent of the gospel being to make us partakers of an inward and real righteousness; and it being but a secondary one, that we should be accepted, and rewarded, as if we were completely righteous.'

4. *Campion*. 'Speaking of faith, hope, and charity, he confesseth; that faith in nature is before them, but it doth not justify before they come.'

Fowler, p. 223. 'What pretence can there be for thinking, that faith is the condition, or instrument of justification, as it complieth with only the precept of relying on Christ's merits, for the obtaining of it: especially when it is no less manifest than the sun at noon-day, that obedience to the other precepts, [or works of love,] must go before obedience to this.' p. 224.

5. *Campion*. 'I deny (that faith ONLY doth justify) for you have not in all the word of God, that faith only doth justify.'

Fowler, p. 225. 'And for my part, I must confess, that I would not willingly be he that should undertake to encounter one of the champions of that foul cause, with the admission of this principle, that faith justifieth, only as it apprehendeth (resteth or relieth on, p. 224) the merits, and righteousness of Jesus Christ, I must certainly have great luck, or my adversary but little cunning, if I were not forced to repent me of such an engagement.'

6. *Campion*. 'Abraham being a just man, was made more just by a living faith.'

Fowler, p. 223. 'He only is a true child of Abra-

ham, who in the purity of the heart obeyeth those substantial laws, that are imposed by God, upon him.'

7. *Campion*. 'I say that charity and good works, are not excluded (in the causes of our justification.)'

Fowler, p. 214, 215. 'For we have shewn, not only that reformation of life from the practice, and purification of heart from the liking of sin, are as plainly as can be asserted in the gospel to be absolutely necessary to give men a right to the promises of it, but also that its great salvation doth even consist in it.'

Mr. Fowler's Doctrine compared with William Penn the Quaker

1. *Penn's Sandy Foundation*, p. 19. [p. 16. ed. 1684.] 'Life and salvation is to them that follow Christ the light, in all his righteousness, which every man comes only to experiment, as he walks in a holy subjection to that measure of light and grace, wherewith the fulness hath enlightened him.'

Fowler, p. 8. 'That is, those which are of an indispensable, and eternal obligation, which were first written in men's hearts, and originally dictates of human nature.'

2. *Penn*, p. 32. [p. 26. ed. 1684.] 'I really confess that Jesus Christ fulfilled the Father's will, and offered up a most satisfactory sacrifice, but not to pay God, or help him [as otherways being unable] to save men.'

Fowler, p. 55. 'Christ was set forth to be a propitiatory sacrifice for sin; I will not say that his Father (who is perfectly *sui juris*) might be put by this means into a capacity of forgiving it.'

3. *Penn*, p. 16. [p. 14. ed. 1684.] 'God's remission is grounded on man's repentance, not that it is impossible for God to pardon without a plenary satisfaction.'

Fowler, p. 84. 'There are many that do not question but that God could have pardoned sin, without any other satisfaction, than the repentance of the sinner,' &c.

4. *Penn*, p. 27. [p. 22. ed. 1684.] 'Justification doth not go before, but is subsequential to the mortification of lusts.'

Fowler, p. 14, 15. 'This blessing of making men holy, was so much the design of Christ's coming, that he had his very name from it.' observe the words are, 'He shall save his people from their sins;' not from the punishment of them. And that is the primary sense of them, which is most plainly expressed in them: 'That he shall save his people from the punishment of sin, is a true sense too; but it is secondary and implied only; as this latter is the never failing and necessary consequent of the former salvation.'

5. *Penn*, p. 25. [p. 21. ed. 1684.] 'Since therefore there

can be no admittance had, without performing that righteous will, and doing those holy, and perfect sayings; alas! to what value will an imputative righteousness amount? &c.

Fowler, p. 16. ‘Christ shall bring in an inward substantial, and everlasting righteousness, and by abrogating the outward (ceremonial) and establishing ONLY this righteousness, he should enlarge the Jewish Church, an accession of the Gentiles, being by that means made unto it.’

6. *Penn*, p. 24, 25. [p. 20. ed. 1684.] ‘Since God has prescribed an inoffensive life, as that which only can give acceptance with him; and on the contrary hath determined never to justify the wicked, &c. - - Will not the abomination appear greatest of all, where God shall be found condemning the just, on purpose to justify the wicked; and that he is thereto compelled, or else no salvation, which is the tendency of their doctrine, who imagine the righteous, and merciful God to condemn and punish his [innocent*] righteous Son, that he having satisfied for our sins, we might be justified (while unsanctified) by the imputation of his perfect righteousness. O why should this horrible thing be contended for by Christians!’

Fowler, p. 119. ‘If it were possible (as it hath been proved it is not) that a wicked man should have God’s pardon, it would not make him cease to be miserable.’

Fowler, p. 120. ‘Were it possible that Christ’s righteousness could be imputed to an unrighteous man, I dare boldly affirm it would signify as little to his happiness, as would a gorgeous and splendid

garment, to one that is almost starved with hunger, or that lieth racked by the torturing diseases of the stone, or coice.

Fowler, p. 130. ‘To justify a wicked man, while he continueth so, if it were possible for God to do it, would far more disparage his justice, and holiness, than advance his grace and kindness.’

7. *Penn*, p. 26. [p. 22. ed. 1684.] ‘Unless we be[come] doers of that law, which Christ came not to destroy, but as our example to fulfil, we can never be justified before God.’

Fowler, p. 206. ‘It is impossible we should n’t have the design of Christianity accomplished in us, and therefore that we should be destitute of the power of it, if we make our Saviour’s most excellent life, the pattern of our lives. Those that sincerely, and industriously endeavour to imitate the holy Jesus in his spirit and actions, can never be ignorant what it is to be truly Christians, nor can they fail to be so.’

8. *Penn*, p. 28. ‘Nor let any fancy that Christ hath so fulfilled it for them, as to exclude their obedience, from being requisite to their acceptance, but only as their pattern.’

Fowler, p. 148. ‘This Son of God taught men their duty, by his own example, and did himself perform among them, what he required of them. Now that he should tread before us EVERY step of that way, which he hath told us leadeth to eternal happiness, and commend those duties which are most ungrateful to our corrupt inclinations, by his own practice; our having so brave an example is no small encouragement, to a cheerful performance of all that is commanded.’

Understandest thou what thou readest?

* ‘Innocent’ instead of ‘righteous,’ ed. 1684.