

*David Brewster*  
*Book 1711*

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Dr. *Bellamy's*

VINDICATION

OF

The Original Plan of the New-England

CHURCHES :

AND,

R E P L Y

To the Rev'd Mr. MOSES MATHER'S

NEW-SCHEME.

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A careful and strict Examination  
of the External Covenant, and  
of the Principles by which it is  
supported.

## A R E P L Y

To the Rev. Mr. Moses Mather's Piece,  
entituled, *The Visible Church in Cove-  
nant with God, further illustrated, &c.*

## A V I N D I C A T I O N

Of the Plan on which the Churches in  
New-England were originally formed.

Interpersed with Remarks upon some Things,  
advanced by Mr. Sandeman, on some of the  
important Points in debate.

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By JOSEPH BELLAMY, D. D.

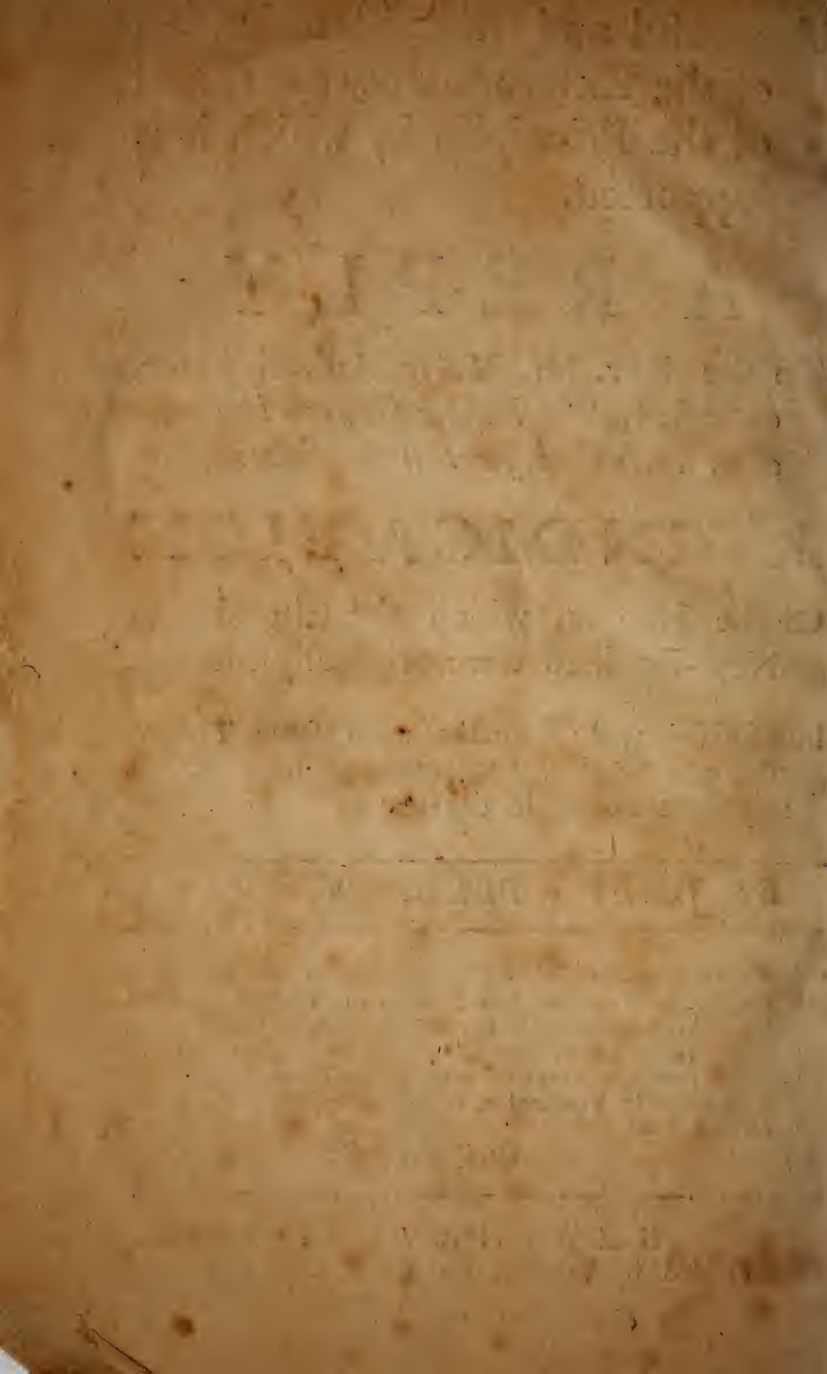
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“ I do not mention the administration of sacraments, upon this occa-  
“ sion ; because, tho' they have so noble and effectual tendency  
“ to improve men's minds in piety, and to promote Christian edi-  
“ fication ; yet I do not remember to have heard of any instance,  
“ in which they have been the *means* of men's conversion ; which  
“ is the less to be wondered at, as they are appointed for a very  
“ different end.”

Dr. Doddridge *Serm. on regeneration.*

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# C O N T E N T S.

**T**HE PREFACE, *takes a view of the sacramental controversy, and of the new scheme of religion which Mr. Mather hath advanced, to support the external covenant.*

*The introduction explains words and things, and states questions to fix the point in debate, viz. the external covenant.*

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Page.	Line.
17	19 blot out <i>it</i> after <i>do</i> .
23	10 from bottom, blot out <i>and</i> .
24	9 f. b. read <i>came</i> .
36	16 for <i>containing</i> read <i>continuing</i> .
38	5 r. <i>should</i> .
ib.	25 r. <i>resolution</i> .
42	12 r. <i>proceed</i> .
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59	4 f. b. r. <i>simple</i> .
63	2 f. b. in margin, for <i>not teach</i> r. <i>teach</i> .
65	9 r. <i>Pagan</i> .
ib.	17 for <i>to</i> r. <i>at</i> .
100	9 f. b. for <i>revealed</i> r. <i>reconciled</i> .
106	11 f. b. for <i>assent</i> r. <i>assert</i> .
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# THE PREFACE.

THE design of my writing on the sacramental controversy, has been to vindicate the plan on which the churches in *New-England*, were originally formed, when this country was first settled by our forefathers. And in order to this, I have had it in my view, to prove these three propositions, viz.

I. *That those who are qualified to offer their children in baptism, are equally qualified to come to the Lord's table ; and that, therefore, the half-way practice, which has so much prevailed of late in the country, is unscriptural.*

II. *That baptism and the Lord's-supper, are seals of the covenant of grace: and that, therefore, those who know they have no grace; cannot be active in sealing of it, consistently with honesty and a good conscience.*

III. *That there is no graceless covenant between God and man existing, suited to the state and temper of graceless men, a compliance with which, they might, as such, consistently profess and seal: And that, therefore, there is no door open for graceless men, as such, to enter into covenant with God.* I say, I have had it in my view to prove,

i. That those who are qualified to offer their children in baptism, are equally qualified to come to the Lord's-table : and that therefore the half-way practice, which of late has so much prevailed in the country, is unscriptural. And this point, theoretically considered, seems to be settled. With respect to this, Mr. Mather, in his book, entituled, *The visible church in covenant with God, further illustrated, &c.* says, p. 78. 'as to the half-way practice, I am in it, but not for it. I have no disposition to oppose the Dr. in his endeavouring to break up that *unscriptural practice.*' And since those ministers, who are in this practice, do grant it to be *unscriptural*; which, so far as I know, all of them do; nothing now remains, but to put them in mind, that the second commandment requireth the receiving, observing, and keeping pure and entire all such religious worship and

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ordinances



‘ordinances as God hath appointed in his word.’ And the commission of our Lord and Master obligeth us to *teach* his disciples to *observe all things whatsoever he hath commanded them*. And how unkind must it be in the people, to necessitate their ministers, to counteract their own consciences, by continuing in an *unscriptural* practice, in condescension to their ignorant, unscriptural notions ! But much more unkind still must it be in clergymen, who know the practice to be unscriptural, to lift up their voices on high, and raise a popular clamour against those ministers, who, at no small risque, venture to lay aside the practice, that they may approve themselves to God, and to their own consciences. But it may be said, to Mr. Mather’s honor, that he is not of the number of those, who act so unkind a part to honest men. \*

2. Another

\* Our forefathers began to settle in New England in 1620. Without the half-way practice. It was brought in 1662, forty years after ; when the first generation were generally dead, by a Synod at *Boston*. This Synod professed to believe, that none had a right to the seals for themselves, or their children but true believers, and real saints : However, they thought a less degree of grace would qualify for one ordinance, than for the other. And on this principle the half way practice was introduced. The principle they acted upon is now given up. We are all agreed, that he who is qualified to offer his children in baptism, is equally qualified to come to the Lord’s table. And so we are all agreed, that the half way practice is *unscriptural*. Some feel themselves bound in conscience to make *the scripture their only rule of faith and practice* : Others do not think themselves bound. On this point let the following texts be consulted, Deut. 4. 2. Mat. 5. 19. Luke 6. 46 and chap. 22. 19. Jam. 2. 10. Mat. 28. 20. and ch. 15. 6. Besides, we who are ministers, may do well to consider, that altho’ our congregations, while secure in sin, may be well pleased with an *unscriptural practice* ; and wish us for continuing in it, against the light of our own consciences : Yet, if they should ever be awakened out of their carnal security, if they should ever be converted, our conduct might stand in a shocking point of light, in the view of their consciences. — And yet, from sabbath to sabbath we pray, that the Spirit of God may be poured out, and that sinners may be convinced and converted — This affair doubtless gives pain to many a heart. What a pity it is, that the clergy have not a heart to unire, in what they know to be the true scriptural practice ! The honour of Christ, and of Christianity are interested in this matter. It ought to be attended to with the utmost seriousness and honesty.

2. Another point I undertook to prove, was this, viz. That baptism and the Lord's supper are seals of the covenant of grace. This was one chief point I had in view in my answer to Mr. M's former book on this controversy. And this point also Mr. M. expressly grants me in his second book. p. 58. speaking of the covenant with Abraham, he says, 'the covenant of grace was evidently and confessedly contained, set forth, and confirmed, by the particular appointment of circumcision.'—But if baptism and the Lord's supper are seals of the covenant of grace, how can those, who knowingly reject the covenant of grace in their hearts, seal it with their hands, consistently with honesty and a good conscience? Here it may not be amiss to repeat some of the articles of the creed published in my *Fourth Dialogue*, that the reader may judge for himself whether they are true or not.—'I believe, that any man, who seals any covenant, doth, in and by the act of sealing, declare his compliance with that covenant which he seals: because this is the import of the act of sealing.——I believe, that it is of the nature of lying, to seal a covenant, with which, I do not now, and never did comply in my heart; but rather habitually and constantly reject. Therefore—I believe, that, a man, who knows he has no grace, cannot seal the covenant of grace, honestly and with a good conscience.'—It belongs to Mr. *Mather*, if he means to maintain, that those, who know they have no grace, can seal the covenant of grace, honestly and with a good conscience, to say how. For as yet, he has said nothing on this point.—And indeed, we must either give up the import of sealing; or give up the covenant of grace, as the covenant to be sealed; or say that graceless men have some grace, and do in a measure truly and really comply with the covenant of grace, and so have really a title to pardon and eternal life, or we cannot be consistent: nor then neither. For to say, that graceless men have some grace, is a contradiction. And to say, they have no grace, and yet may honestly seal the covenant

nant of grace, is to deny the import of sealing. For *sealing a covenant always denotes a present consent of heart to the covenant sealed.* And, therefore, to seal a covenant which I reject with my whole heart, is a practical falshood. But if I do not reject it with my whole heart, I have a degree of true love to it. That is, I have a degree of true grace : and so am in a pardoned and justified state. But still it remains true, that those, who know they have no grace, cannot seal the covenant of grace with a good conscience, because it is a practical falshood. Indeed, men may be so far gone in wickedness, as to allow themselves in lying to God and man, but their conduct cannot be justified, when, with the assembled universe, they appear before the bar of God. For, as has been said, *sealing a covenant always denotes a present consent of heart to the covenant sealed.* In this sense it has always been understood by mankind in their covenants between one another, in *deeds*, in *bonds*, &c. Sealing denotes a present consent of heart to the contents of the written instrument. And, therefore, no honest man will seal the written instrument until in heart he consents to the contents of it. And should any man seal a written instrument, and at the same time declare before evidences, that at present he did not consent to it, it was *not his free act and deed*, the act of sealing would in its own nature be of no significance. The whole transaction would be perfect trifling.—Mr. M. says, p. 65. ‘ I am very sensible, that the Christian church has always esteemed sealing ordinances, as seals of the covenant of grace.— On God’s part, they are seals to the truth of *the whole revealed will of God.* On our part, they are seals binding us, to pay a due regard to *the whole revelation.* And accordingly, any breach of *moral rule*, or *gospel precept* has been esteemed by the church, as a breach of covenant in its members.’——He, therefore, who is habitually, totally destitute of that holiness which the law of God requires, and of that repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ to which in the gos-  
pel



pel we are invited, and lives in a total neglect of that religion which flows from the love, repentance and faith required in the law and gospel : even he does not consent to the covenant of grace in his heart, in the least degree, but lives habitually, totally and universally, in the breach of it, without ever complying with it in one single act. — And can a man conscious to himself, that this is his character, with a good conscience seal this covenant ! Or can a Christian church allow of such hypocrisy !

3. The other point which I designed to prove was this, that there is no graceless covenant between God and man existing ; that is, no covenant in which God promises religious privileges and spiritual blessings to graceless men, upon graceless conditions ; i. e. to graceless qualifications, which graceless men, while such, may have : and that, therefore, baptism and the Lord's supper cannot be seals to such a covenant. — And Mr. M. in his preface seems as if he intended to give up this point also : for he calls this graceless covenant ' a graceless phantom : ' which is really to grant the whole that I contend for. For this is the very point I meant to prove, viz. The non-existence of such a covenant. For God's covenant requires holiness and nothing else. And it promises eternal life to those who comply with it. But its blessings are not promised to graceless men, as such, nor to graceless qualifications.

However, if we will read Mr. M's book through, we shall see, that he is so far from giving up this covenant, as ' a graceless phantom,' that he has exerted himself to the utmost to save this ' graceless phantom' from non-existence. Because, without it, he knows no way in which graceless men, as such, can be admitted into the visible church of Christ. For he does not pretend, that they can make a profession of godliness : yea, he is confident, that none may warrantably make a profession of godliness unless they have the highest degree of assurance. p. 79. There must, therefore, be a graceless covenant, for graceless men, as such to profess, which requires

requires nothing more, nothing higher, than graceless qualifications, as necessary conditions of its blessings, or, graceless men, as such, cannot profess a present consent to any covenant at all ; and so cannot be admitted, as members of the visible church, which he says 'is in covenant with God ;' or have a covenant right to covenant blessings. For they who are destitute of the qualifications necessary to a covenant right to covenant blessings, can have no covenant right to them. To say, otherwise, is an express contradiction.

The method, which, in my former piece, I took to prove the non-existence of such a graceless covenant, as has been described, was (1.) to turn the reader to the covenant with Abraham, the covenant at Sinai and in the Plains of Moab, and to the gospel covenant, that he might see with his own eyes, that these were, each of them, holy covenants, which required a holy faith, a holy love, a holy repentance, a holy obedience ; and that those who have these holy qualifications are entitled to eternal life. Nor is there any matter of fact in scripture plainer than this. So that none of these, were that graceless covenant, for which Mr. M. contends : which promises its blessings to graceless men, as such. Nor has Mr. M. pointed out one unholy duty in that covenant with Abraham. Gen. 17. Nor one unholy duty in that covenant at Sinai, or in that covenant in the Plains of Moab, or in the gospel covenant. Nor has he denied, that eternal life is promised to every one who complies with God's covenant, as exhibited in these various ways, at these several times. So that my argument from the nature of the covenant, as it is to be found in the written instrument, stands unanswered.--- And let it be remembered, that this argument is conclusive, without determining the nature of holiness, or faith, or repentance, or entering at all into the disputes, which subsist between the *Calvinists, Arminians, Neonomians, Anti-Nomians*, &c. relative to the perfection of the divine law, total depravity, regeneration, &c. &c. For if it be proved,



proved, that God's covenant, to which God's seals are annexed, promises salvation to those who consent to it, and that there is a certain connexion between a real compliance with it and eternal life, then Mr. M's external covenant, to which he says the seals are annexed, which does not promise salvation to those who consent to it, nor establishes any certain connexion between a real compliance with it and eternal Life, is essentially different from God's covenant, and so is strictly speaking, 'a graceless phantom,'---But (2.) in order to prove the non-existence of a graceless covenant, I introduced the doctrines of *the perfection of the divine law* and of *total depravity*, into the argument, as thus, since the divine law requires holiness and nothing but holiness, and since the unregenerate are totally destitute of the holiness required, there is therefore no covenant existing, between God and man, with which, the unregenerate, while such, do comply, in the least degree. Upon which Mr. M. declares 'that he is become sensible, that our different sentiments in this particular (terms of communion) is in a great measure, owing to our thinking differently, upon other important points.' And so he has offered to the public his own scheme of religion, which may be summed up in these *eight articles*.

1. *That self-love is essential to moral agency.* And,
2. *That this self-love, which is essential to moral agency, is, by the divine law, required of us, as our duty.*
3. *That this self-love, which is essential to moral agency and our required duty, is, in our present guilty state, absolutely inconsistent with that love to God, which the law originally required of Adam before the fall, and which is still required in the moral law.*
4. *That our natural total depravity arises merely and only from its being thus inconsistent with this self-love to love God.*
5. *That in these circumstances it is contrary to the law of God, and so a sinful thing, for us to love God.*
6. *That our natural total depravity not being of a criminal nature, doth not disqualify us for sealing ordinances.* As  
it

*it entirely ceases to be our duty since the fall to love that character of God which was exhibited in the law to Adam.*

And more especially,

7. *That now since the fall we are naturally inclined and disposed, our total depravity notwithstanding, to love the new character of God which is revealed in the gospel, so that we shall, without fail, love it as soon as known, without any new principle of grace.* For these things being true, it will follow,

8 *That unregenerate Sinners, who are awakened and externally reformed, must be considered, as being in the temper of their hearts, as well affected to the gospel, did they but know it, as the regenerate ; and their religious desires and endeavours, as being of the same nature and tendency. And therefore they may enter into covenant with God and attend sealing ordinances, with as much propriety as the regenerate.*

This is the sum and substance of his scheme. And in this scheme of principles we may see the fundamental grounds of his thinking differently from us, in the particular point under consideration. viz. The terms of Communion.

The design of the following sheets is, first of all, to review Mr. M's external covenant, to see if its true and real nature can be known. And then to shew its inconsistency with the doctrines of the perfection of the divine law, and of total depravity, as held forth in the public formulas approved by the Church of *Scotland*, and by the Churches in *New-England*. After which, the leading sentiments of his scheme of religion shall be considered, his mistakes be pointed out, and the opposite truths be briefly stated and proved from the word God. That the nature of ancient apostolic Christianity may be ascertained from the infallible oracles of truth. To the end, that the right road to Heaven may be kept open and plain, for the direction of awakened sinners, and for the confirmation and comfort of young converts.

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# The INTRODUCTION.

*Several phrases explained and questions stated.*

**I**N order to prevent and cut off all needless disputes; and that the reader may clearly understand the following sheets, the meaning of several phrases shall be explained. Particularly,

1. By a *conditional covenant* is meant, a covenant, which promises its blessings upon some certain condition; so that no one can claim a covenant right to its blessings, if destitute of the requisite qualifications.

2. By the *covenant of works* is meant, that covenant, which promises eternal life upon condition of perfect obedience, thro' the appointed time of trial, and threatens eternal death for one transgression.

3. By the *covenant of grace* is meant, that covenant which promises pardon, justification and eternal life thro' Jesus Christ to all who repent and believe the gospel; i. e. to real saints and to no others.

4. By a *graceless covenant* is meant, a covenant which promises its blessing, to graceless men, as such, on certain conditions, or qualifications, which are professedly graceless, and which may take place in graceless men, while such.

5. By *complying with a covenant* is meant, doing that, or having those qualifications, which, according to the tenor of the covenant, entitles to its blessings. Thus, for instance, Adam could not have been said to have complied with the covenant of works which he was under, until he had persevered in perfect obedience, thro' the whole time of trial. For nothing short of this would have entitled him to a confirmed state of holiness and happiness, i. e. to eternal life; as all grant. And, thus, a sinner cannot be said to have complied with the covenant of grace, whatever legal terrors he has had, and



whatever pains he has taken in religion, until by the first act of saving faith he is united to Jesus Christ ; for nothing short of this entitles him to pardon, justification and eternal life, according to the gospel. As is written, *Joh. 3. 18, 36. He that believeth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him.* Indeed Mr. M. says, p. 29 ‘ that no man, short of perfection, can ‘ be properly said to have complied with the gospel.’ But our Saviour declares, with great solemnity, *Joh. 5. 24. Verily, verily I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation ; but is passed from death to life.* So that, on the first act of saving faith, a sinner becomes entitled to eternal life. *Gal. 3. 26, 29. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ. And if ye be Christ’s then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.* Again, a man may be said to have complied with any supposed graceless covenant, when he has the graceless qualifications, to which the blessings of that covenant are promised, but not before. So that, if a ‘ fixed resolution to forsake all known sin, and practise ‘ all known duty’ is a requisite qualification to the blessings of this covenant, then no man has a covenant right to the blessings of it, until he is ‘ come to this fixed resolution ;’ i. e. if there is an external covenant, ‘ distinct from the covenant of grace,’ promising to the visible church all the ‘ external means of grace, and the strivings of God’s holy spirit, in order to render them effectual for salvation,’ by which the visible church is constituted : And if this ‘ fixed resolution’ is absolutely necessary to church-membership, and so to a title to these promises, then no man has a title to these promises, or is qualified to be admitted a member of the visible church, until he is, in fact, ‘ come to this fixed resolution :’ but whenever he is ‘ come to this fixed resolution,’ he ought to be considered, as having complied with the external covenant ; and so, as having a covenant right to its blessings. Mr. M. says, p. 64. that I have ‘ a  
‘ very

‘ very singular notion about the nature of covenanting ;  
 ‘ as if it required a *present compliance with EVERY thing*  
 ‘ required by the covenant into which they enter.’—  
 This I never said.—But indeed I do think, that it is a  
 contradiction in terms, to say, that *a covenant promises cer-*  
*tain blessings to those, and to those only, who have certain qua-*  
*fications ; and yet some who have not the required qualificati-*  
*ons have a covenant right to the blessings promised.* Nor am  
 I ‘ singular in this notion,’ for all mankind think so too.  
 However, ‘ that no man short of perfection, can be pro-

‘ perly said to have complied with the gospel,’ is a very  
 ‘ singular notion,’ indeed ; and, in effect makes the co-  
 venant of works and the covenant of grace, precisely one  
 and the same thing. But to proceed,

6. By entering into covenant, and engaging to per-  
 form the duties which the covenant requires, a man  
 binds himself to be doing the duties required by the co-  
 venant, in the manner in which he engages to do them,  
 as long as the covenant is in force. To say otherwise,  
 is to say, that a man binds himself, and yet does not  
 bind himself, which is an express contradiction. Thus  
 the Israelites at Mount Sinai, and in the Plains of Moab,  
 bound themselves and their posterity to observe all the  
 rites of the ceremonial law, so long as that should be in  
 force : But when the ceremonial law was abrogated, they  
 were no longer bound to observe its rites. And thus, if  
 Mr. M’s *external covenant*, does in fact require religious  
 duties to be done in a graceless manner, so long as sin-  
 ners remain graceless, and no longer ; then as soon as  
 ever sinners are converted, they are free from the bonds  
 of this covenant, as much as the Jews were from the  
 ceremonial law, at the resurrection of Christ : and so are  
*then at liberty to enter into the covenant of grace, and*  
*to engage to live by faith on the Son of God, and to be holy*  
*in all manner of conversation, pressing towards perfection, the*  
*mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus :*  
*but not till then.* Agreeable to the Apostle’s reasoning  
 in *Rom. 7. 1, 2, 3.* But if this external covenant, which  
 requires



requires duties to be done in a graceless manner, is, in fact, binding for life ; if it is, in this sense, an *everlasting covenant*, as was the covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. then, no man, who has entered into it, is at liberty, while he lives, to cease performing duties in a graceless manner. *For the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the law to her husband, so long as he liveth ; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress : but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law ; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.* Mr. M. may now take his choice. He may say, that his external covenant which requires duties to be done in a graceless manner is binding for life, or it is not. If it is not binding for life, then it is self evident, that it is not an *everlasting covenant*, like that in Gen. 17. If it is binding for life, then he, who enters into it, binds himself to perform all duties in a graceless manner as long as he lives. This difficulty against his scheme he has not removed. Nor has he ventured to look it fairly in the face. See p. 30, 31, 32.

7. By an *unconditional covenant* is meant, a covenant which promises its blessings to all whom it respects, without any condition at all ; so that no qualification at all, of any kind, is necessary in order to a covenant right to all its blessings. Thus God's covenant with Noah and with his seed, and with every living creature with him, even with the fowl and with every beast of the earth, that *all flesh should no more be cut off by the waters of the flood*, is of the nature of an *unconditional grant*, conveying the promised security to all, without respect to any qualification whatever.

*Question 1.* Is Mr. M's external covenant *conditional*, or *unconditional* ? If unconditional, then no qualification whatever is requisite in order to a covenant right to all its blessings. Pagans, Turks, Jews, Deists, Hereticks and the Scandalous, have as good a right, as such, to partake

partake at the Lord's table, as to hear the gospel preached — If *conditional*, then,

*Question 2.* Doth Mr. M's external covenant require, as a condition of its blessings, holy exercises of heart, or unholy exercises of heart, or no exercise of heart at all, nothing but external bodily motions, considered as unconnected with any volition ? If holy exercises of heart, then no graceless man, as such, hath a right to its blessings. If unholy exercises of heart, then it is a graceless covenant, which he says is 'a graceless phantom.' If no exercise of heart at all, nothing but external, bodily motions ; then our hearts have nothing to do with it ; and we need not concern our selves about it ; for it is not a thing of a moral nature ; and so has no concern in the business of religion.

Had Mr. M. first of all acquired determinate ideas himself, and then given an exact definition of his external covenant, which he has, in a public manner, been called upon to do, it would have rendered his readers work easy : but now it is so difficult to know what he means, that even his most learned admirers are not agreed, whether his external covenant is conditional, or unconditional. However, let us hear him explain himself.

## SECTION I.

*The nature of Mr. M's external covenant, as stated and explained by himself, under the notion of a conditional covenant.*

AS our author has no where particularly enumerated the peculiar privileges and blessings of his external covenant, which those and those only are entitled to, who are in it ; nor particularly stated its conditions ; nor so much as let us know with certainty whether it be conditional,

conditional, or unconditional ; so there is no way but to look thro' both his books, and pick up here and there what we can, in order to determine what he means, and consider it in every point of light in which he sets it.

And *First*, we shall consider it as *a conditional covenant*. And in this view of it we may observe the following things.

1. In his first book, p. 58. he expressly declares, ' that the external covenant between God and the visible church is distinct from the covenant of grace.' And he speaks of this, as what he had thro' his whole book been ' endeavouring to establish.' And in his second book, p. 60—64. he undertakes to prove this point over again at large ; that it is ' of a different tenor,' and made for ' a different purpose,' from the covenant of grace. I mention this, because some think, that he means the covenant of grace by his external covenant.

2. He affirms over and over, ' that the external covenant has no respect to a gracious state of heart.' And it is a chief design of both his books to prove this point ; that so he may prove that unregenerate, graceless men, as such, may be qualified to enter into it, and may have a covenant right in the sight of God to all its blessings. So that, professedly, no conditions are required, but those which are graceless ; no qualifications are requisite, but those which are unholy ; for he affirms, that the unregenerate are ' totally depraved,' and in ' a state of enmity against God.' p. 52. And that they do not perform ' any truly, holy obedience.' p. 17. So that, his external covenant, if conditional, is a graceless covenant.

But it is conditional, for

3. He says, in his first book, p. 21. ' That none but ' such as profess the Christian religion, and will endeavour to conform his practice to the rules of it, ought to ' be admitted into the church.' And accordingly, p. 42, 43, 44. insists that the ' disorderly and vicious' should be debarred. But if it is a conditional covenant, and if it requires merely graceless qualifications as the condition of its privileges, then it is a graceless covenant. For  
that



that covenant which promises its blessings to graceless men, on graceless conditions, is a graceless covenant.

4. If Mr. M's external covenant promises certain blessings and privileges upon some certain conditions ; so as that those who are so and so qualified may be members of the visible church, and no others, then it is of great importance to know precisely, what these conditions, what these qualifications are, as otherwise no man can possibly determine, whether he hath them, and so whether he may lawfully join with the church, and seal the covenant. And this is more necessary on Mr. M's scheme, than on any other, because he holds, which we do not, that no man may enter into covenant with God in a public profession of religion, and join with the church, unless he *infallibly knows*, that he has the necessary qualifications, unless he is as certain of it as a man called to give evidence in a civil court is of a fact which he sees, and to the truth of which he can make oath before the civil magistrate. p. 79. But if men must be thus certain, that they have the requisite qualifications; before they can with a good conscience join with the church, then they must, in this high sense, be certain, what qualifications are requisite. Yea, there are four things, concerning which they must have the same degree of certainty as they have about any fact which they see with their eyes, before they can, on his plan, with a good conscience, join with the church. (1.) That the Bible is the word of God, because this is the grand charter of all church privileges. (2.) That Mr. M's external covenant is contained in the Bible, and is that, on which, the visible church is constituted. Because otherwise no man has any right, on this plan, to join with the church. (3.) What qualifications are necessary according to this external covenant to fit them to join with the church and attend sealing ordinances. And then, (4.) They must be as certain that they have these qualifications, as that ever they saw the sun.—Now he thinks, that on our scheme, many true saints will be kept back from the

Lord's

Lord's table ; but on his scheme, it is evident, that no one graceless man, whose conscience is awake, and who knows any thing considerable about his own heart, can join with the church : because there never was, nor will be any such sinner, who can say, that he is as certain of these four things, as he is of a fact which he has seen with his eyes, and of the truth of which he can make oath before the civil magistrate. \*

But at present the only question is this, viz. What are the qualifications which are requisite to full communion in the visible church, according to Mr. M's external covenant ? The covenant of works requires perfection, as the condition of its blessings : The covenant of grace requires repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, as the condition of *its* blessings : But what does Mr. M's external graceless covenant require, as the condition of *its* blessings ? What qualifications are requisite to bring a man into this covenant, and to give him a right to all the privileges and blessings of it, in the sight of God ? If this question cannot receive a satisfactory answer, on Mr. M's scheme, then his scheme can never be practised upon. He gave no satisfactory answer to it, in his first book, as was shewn in the VIth section of my reply to it. He has now made another attempt to answer

\* Mr. Mather, in his Preface, says, " I am not so fond of my own judgment, or tenacious of my own practice, but that I stand ready to *give them both up*, when any one shall do the friendly office of sitting *light before me*."—He himself, therefore, cannot swear to the truth of his scheme ; he has not " that certain knowledge " of it, that he has " of a particular fact, about which he is called to give an evidence, in a civil court." It is only his " prevailing opinion." P. 79. And if his external covenant is a mere human device, his practice upon it is what God hath not required at his hands. He has no warrant to put God's seals to a covenant devised by man. And, according to his scheme, he ought not to act in this affair without absolute certainty. To be consistent, he ought to act no more on his plan, until he is infallibly certain, that it is his duty. For, to use his own argument, p. 79. " if it being a real duty is that which gives us a real right to *act* ; then it being a known duty is that which gives us a known *right*." And I may add, " this is a self-evident proposition."—But more of this, in *Sec. XI.*



answer this question in his second book. Let us hear his answer, and consider it.

He says, p. 64. 'That perfection is expressly required in this external covenant.'—What!—as a condition of its blessings! as a necessary qualification to full communion in the visible church! which was the only point in hand.—If so, then no mere man since the fall might join with the visible church.

He says, p. 64. 'This covenant requires the holy obedience of a gracious state.'—What! again, I say, as a condition of its blessings! as a necessary qualification to full communion in the visible church! the only point in hand. If so, then no graceless man, as such, can be admitted into the visible church.

He says, p. 65. 'This covenant requires the utmost endeavours of the unregenerate.'—What!—still I repeat it, as a condition of its blessings! as a necessary qualification to full communion in the visible church! the only point in hand. If so, then no unregenerate man, who has not as yet used his utmost endeavours, can, as such, be admitted into the visible church, which will keep out every unregenerate man, because no such unregenerate man ever existed.

Again, having spoken of the convictions, that the unregenerate may have, he says, p. 65. 'Under these convictions, he may come to a fixed resolution, to forsake all known sin, and to practise all known duty; set himself to seek an interest in Christ, and to seek needed influences of divine grace. And he may confirm these resolutions upon his own soul, by a solemn covenant of dedication of himself to God; engaging by divine assistance to obey the whole will of God, one particular of which is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And I will add, that he may confirm this covenant between God and his own soul by gospel seals. It cannot be denied, that the natural powers of our souls do render us capable of such covenanting with God. And the only question is, whether God has required this of sin-

ners. This is the question in dispute.'----Upon which, the following observations may be made.

1. Was this the covenant in *Gen. 17* ? Was Abraham 'under conviction ?' Had he come to such unregenerate 'fixed resolutions ?' Did he bind himself in some future time to believe ? No, just the reverse. Abraham had been converted above twenty years before this transaction in *Gen. 17*. And had both believed, and obeyed, in a saving manner, thro' all this period. So that 'the question in dispute' is not whether Abraham entered into this covenant in *Gen. 17*. for Mr. M. does not pretend he did. And therefore the covenant with Abraham, *Gen. 17*. and this covenant of Mr. M's are not the same, but very different. His external covenant, therefore, is, as he declares, 'distinct from the covenant of grace,' and 'of a different tenor,' and for 'a different purpose.' For nothing was more remote from Abraham's mind, then to enter into covenant, and bind himself to a course of unregenerate duties, in order to obtain converting grace. 'Of this there is no dispute.' So that 'this is not the question in dispute,' whether Mr. M's external covenant is the same with that covenant into which Abraham personally entered, *Gen. 17*. Where then in all the Bible will Mr. M. find his external covenant, as above defined ? For no such covenant was ever exhibited by the God of Israel. Besides,

2. It may be enquired, what does Mr. M. mean, by 'engaging to obey the whole will of God ?' For, (1.) does he mean, that men, who know they have no grace, when they join with the church, do covenant and promise, that they will, from that time and forward, as long as they live, *be perfectly holy* ? and so, in fact, 'obey the whole will of God ?' But this is to promise to do, what they infallibly know they shall not do ; which is a piece of scandalous immorality. For such promises are no better than wilful lies. And this therefore cannot be the thing he means. Or, (2.) does he mean, that a sinner, under conviction, enters into covenant with God, that

that he will, in fact, repent and believe, the moment he joins with the church, and from that time and forward, as long as he lives, persevere in a life of faith and holiness, pressing forward toward perfection? But this, again, is not much better than wilful lying. For it is to promise, that which he has no sufficient reason to expect, that he shall do, as he has no heart to do it, and no title to 'the divine assistance,' to give him a heart to do it. And, besides, if he expected to be converted so soon, he might wait only one week longer, and so be converted before the next sabbath; and thus put an end to all controversy about the affair. This, therefore, I suppose, is what no awakened sinner ever meant, when he joined with the church; and what Mr. M. would not have them to mean. And therefore (3.) all that awakened sinners can mean, or that Mr. M. can be supposed to intend, that they should mean, when they 'engage to obey the whole will of God' is no more, than that they should 'endeavour' to do it; as he expressed himself in the first book. P. 21. 'And I will allow, that 'none but such as profess the Christian religion, and 'will endeavour to conform his practice to the rules of it, 'ought to be admitted into the church.' And if this be his meaning, why did not Mr. M. answer the questions, which were put to him, in my former piece, p. 51. 'But, pray, how much must they endeavour?' &c. &c. And, besides, if this is all, if all they mean is to bind themselves to unregenerate, unholy, graceless duties and endeavours, then it will follow, that these graceless duties, ~~and~~ according to Mr. M. are the 'whole will of God.' For they engage 'to obey the whole will of God.' And, on the present hypothesis, unregenerate duties are all they engage. And therefore these unregenerate duties are all that God requires of them. But will Mr. M. say this? No, by no means. For he expressly declares p. 27. 'nothing short of perfection may be looked upon as the whole of what is required.' What, then does Mr. M. mean? In his *Preface*, he says, 'I have endeavoured both



both in this, and in my former piece, 'to set my sentiments in a plan and intelligible light.' We believe he has 'endeavoured' to do it, but yet he has not done it. For no consistent meaning can be put upon his words. But,

3. Perhaps it will be said, that Mr. M. has with great plainness exactly stated the requisite qualifications for church-membership, in these words "a fixed resolution to forsake all known sin and practise all known duty," if we only understand his words in their plain, common, literal meaning.—But is this his meaning? or will he stand to it? For (1.) the candidate for admission is to come to a fixed resolution to forsake "all known sin." But enmity to God, impenitence and unbelief are "known sins," as all acknowledge, but gross *Antinomians*. (2.) And to practise "all known duty." But to repent and believe the gospel, to love God and our neighbour, to lead lives of universal holiness, are "known duties." For all who profess to believe the Bible to be the word of God do in fact acknowledge these to be duties indispensably required of all the disciples of Christ; yea, of all to whom the gospel comes; gross *Antinomians* excepted. To be sure, our Saviour affirms, that *no man can be his disciple unless he doth deny himself, take up his cross and follow him*. And (3.) the candidate for admission into the visible Church is to come to "a fixed resolution" to do all this; to a resolution which is 'fixed' in opposition to one that is *unfixed*; so that his *goodness shall not be like the morning cloud and early dew, which quickly passeth away*. Or like the stony and thorny ground hearers in the parable, Mat. 13. All whose religion came to nothing, because their resolutions were not 'fixed.' Now will Mr. M. stand to this, that none ought to be admitted into the visible church, but those, who are thus indeed and in truth 'come to a fixed resolution to forsake all known sin, and practise all known duty?' And who are so infallibly certain, that they are come to this 'fixed resolution,' that they could give oath to it, with the same assurance as they could to any matter of fact which they see with their



their eyes ? Without which assurance, according to him, no one can with a good conscience make a public profession of religion, and enter into covenant with God. P. 79. If he will, every unregenerate man in the world will be secluded, as will appear before we have done.

Look thro' the Bible, and you will find no class of unregenerate men, so very self-conceited, as to be habitually confident, that they have 'a fixed resolution to forsake all known sin and practise all known duty,' but the Pharisees. They could say. *All these things have I done from my youth up. And lo, these many years do I serve thee neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment.* And the very reason and ground of their confidence was their ignorance of the true nature of the divine law. As it is written, *for without the law sin was dead, And so I was alive without the law once.* For every sinner, who knows himself to be unregenerate, under genuine conviction, knows, that he is *under the dominion of sin, dead in sin*, having no heart to repent, and forsake "all known sin," and to turn to God, and to the practice of "all known duty." For in this unregeneracy consists, viz. in having *no heart to turn from sin to God.* And even every sinner, who is only a little orthodox in his head, knows, that, according to scripture, the resolutions and religion of unregenerate sinners, instead of being "fixed," is like that of *the stony and thorny ground bearers* ; and like *the morning cloud and the early dew, which quickly passeth away.* Besides, the Pharisees really thought, that they were godly men. So that, indeed, there is not one single instance of a man, in scripture, who, knowing himself to be unregenerate, yet thought himself, as such, come to such a 'fixed resolution ;' much less, that was 'infallibly certain' of it.

But to be more particular.

If none may be admitted into the visible church but those, who are come to this 'fixed resolution,' and who are quite certain that their resolution is 'fixed,' then what will Mr. M. do with infants ? For, according to this rule, if his own reasoning is conclusive, when disputing  
against

against us, all infants ought to be secluded. For we have no evidence concerning any one in particular, that it is come to this 'fixed resolution.' For thus he reasons against us, in his first book, p. 15. 'None can suppose, that every male among Abraham's seed, in all succeeding generations, were truly gracious, by the time they were eight days old.' And in his second book, p. 63. he says, 'Nor can the proof of it, which I before offered, be evaded without asserting, that Abraham had sufficient grounds, for a rational judgment of charity, that all his seed would be in a gracious state, by the time they were eight days old.' This he says, in order to prove, that saving grace is not a necessary qualification to church-membership, even in the adult. And it equally proves, that such a 'fixed resolution' is not necessary. 'For none can suppose, that every male, among Abraham's seed, in all succeeding generations, were come to this fixed resolution, by the time they were eight days old.' But as he adds, p. 63. 'There was an express command to confirm the covenant with them at the age of eight days; which is an incontestible evidence, that a gracious state'—And we may add, that such 'a fixed resolution'—'was not considered, as necessary in order to their being taken into covenant, and becoming compleat members of the visible church.'

Again, This rule of admission into the visible church laid down by Mr. M. must, according to his own way of reasoning, have secluded, in a manner, the whole congregation of Israel, who entered into covenant at Mount Sinai. For they were not come to this 'fixed resolution to forsake all known sin.' For he observes, p. 71. 'How soon did they corrupt themselves, when Moses was gone up into the mount,' and fell into that 'known sin' of idolatry. And therefore to use his own words, and to turn his own reasoning against himself, p. 71. "It is beyond the utmost stretch of charity, to suppose, that the people who then entered into covenant, were come to 'a fixed resolution to forsake all known sin.'

Indeed,

Indeed, it is certain they were not. And therefore it is certain, according to Mr. M's way of reasoning, that such a fixed resolution was 'not respected' in the external covenant, as a necessary qualification: much less, an infallible certainty that they had it. And this consequence he seems to have been aware of, when he said, p. 71. 'No, it is plain, God proceeded to take them into covenant by MERE SOVEREIGNTY; even as in his covenant with Abraham, he included his infant seed.' And so, again, speaking of the Israelites covenanting in the Plains of Moab, he says, p. 72, 73. 'By ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGNTY, God extends this covenant, and this oath, even to such, whose consent to it was not so much as asked---and as the consent to this covenant was not so much as asked of some that were taken into it, it is abundantly evident, that they were not taken into it, as gracious persons.' And we may add, that it is equally evident, that they were not taken in, as persons 'come to a fixed resolution to forsake all known sin, and to practise all known duty.'---And thus we see Mr. M. if his reasoning is conclusive, has confuted his own scheme, and has proved that his external covenant, which requires such 'fixed resolutions,' in order to enter into covenant with God, was not the covenant on which the visible church was constituted. And he has found out a *new way*, never before heard of, of taking the adult into covenant, 'without asking their consent, by mere sovereignty;' even as infants are taken in, without respect to any qualification in them whatsoever.---Because it is said in Deut. 29. *Neither with you only do I make this covenant, &c. but also with him that is not here.* Just as it is among us, when a minister is ordained, and some of the members of the church are necessarily absent on the ordination-day, the covenant between the pastor and the church is made with the whole church, the consent of the absent members being taken for granted. Or else these words have respect to those who were then unborn, even to



to all future generations, who were comprised in that covenant, just as infants were. But to return,

Mr. M. so far forgets himself, as entirely to give up not only the necessity of such 'a fixed resolution,' but of any qualification whatsoever; and even expressly declares, that his external covenant is *absolute* and *unconditional*, and that herein it differs from the covenant grace. p. 60, 61, 62. But if his external covenant is merely an absolute and unconditional grant of certain privileges & blessings; then since the wall of partition between Jew and Gentile is removed by Christ, it gives the whole Gentile world as much right to the Lord's-table, as to the word preached, without respect to any qualification whatever. For a Pagan, a Turk, or a Jew, while such, have a right to hear the gospel preached, for the grant is unconditional. *Go preach the gospel to every creature.* And if all the privileges of the visible church of Christ were made as common, by a grant equally unconditional, a Pagan, a Turk, or a Jew would have, as such, as good a right to baptism and the Lord's-table, as to hear the gospel preached. So now the visible church of Christ becomes invisible, being absorbed and swallowed up in the world, without any mark of distinction, according to Mr. M.

It may be observed that our author says, that in my former piece I have 'wholly misrepresented his sentiments,' and given his scheme the 'bad name of a graceless covenant.' And if he all along meant that his external covenant was a mere absolute, unconditional grant, which has 'no respect to a gracious state of heart,' nor to any other qualification whatever, then I own, I have 'wholly misrepresented his sentiments' in my former piece. But then he ought as frankly to own, that he has in his former piece 'wholly misrepresented' them also: and that he has carried on the same misrepresentation in this second book, in which he speaks of his external covenant, not as a mere unconditional grant, but as a mutual covenant between God and the visible church, which is to be entered

tered into by us, and sealed on our part ; in order to which some qualifications are absolutely necessary on our side, viz. That we “ Come to a fixed resolution to forsake all known sin, and practise all known duty.”—But I submit it to the judgment of the judicious candid reader, whether the truth of the case is not this, that Mr. M. himself does not distinctly know what his external covenant is ; and however ingenious he may be, yet it is beyond his abilities to give a consistent account of this creature of his own imagination. For let his external covenant be conditional, or unconditional, it is merely a creature of his own imagination. For if it is conditional, the conditions of it are merely unholy, graceless duties ; and so it is a graceless covenant, which is a ‘ graceless phantom,’ as was proved in my former piece. And if it is unconditional, it wholly destroys the visible church, as it leaves no mark of distinction between the church and the world. And Philip had no right to say, *If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest* ; for Believe, or not believe, he had an equal right to baptism. And so baptism must cease to be an external badge of a christian. Let a Pagan Indian, merely that he may be in the fashion, demand baptism for himself and his children, and unqualified as he is, we have no right to refuse him ; for he has the same right to baptism as to hear the gospel preached. But that the covenant with Abraham was really the covenant of grace, which Mr. M. owns is a conditional covenant, I have proved in my former piece. But let us hear Mr. M. speak for himself.

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## S E C T I O N II.

*Mr. M's external covenant, represented by him as an unconditional covenant, examined in this view of it.*

OUR author says, p. 59, 60, 61, 62. ‘ Whoever reads that covenant with Abraham, recorded Gen. 17. with attention, must unavoidably see’ N. B.

E

— ‘ That

—‘ That altho’ the covenant of grace is set forth in it.’ For he says, p. 57. ‘ the covenant of grace was contained ‘ in every dispensation of God to mankind; each of them ‘ contained promises of eternal salvation to believers.’— But to proceed.---‘ Yet, that covenant, as then made ‘ with Abraham was not strictly the covenant of grace.’ I grant, that besides pardon, grace and glory, temporal good things were promised in that covenant. And so they are under the gospel. Mat. 6. 33. But God’s fatherly care of believers in the world is one of the blessings of the covenant of grace, in the strictest sense. But this is not the thing. Mr. M. has respect to the nature of the promise, which being *unconditional* is inconsistent with the covenant of grace, and therefore cannot be reconciled to it, the blessings of which are promised only *conditionally, if we believe*; but the blessings of this covenant in Gen. 17. are promised unconditionally, *believe, or not believe*. For thus Mr. M. says, ‘ it has some ‘ peculiarities which are not RECONCILABLE with it.’ And this appears from that ‘ chief promise contained in ‘ the covenant : *And I will establish my covenant between ‘ me, and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for ‘ an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy ‘ seed after thee.*’ But pray, why is not this ‘ chief promise reconcilable’ with the covenant of grace? This is the reason Mr. M. gives, because ‘ this promise is as full, ‘ as express, as absolute and unconditional to his seed, as ‘ it was to Abraham.’ Nay, but the apostle Paul, when preaching pure gospel, said to the jailor, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.* Act. 16. 30. So that the promise was as full, and express to ‘ his seed, as it was to the jailor himself.’—But Mr. M. will say, that this promise to the jailor and his house was *conditional*; but the promise to Abraham and his seed was ‘ absolute and unconditional.’ And this being so, it not only is not the covenant of grace, but it cannot be ‘ reconciled’ with it. I believe Mr. M’s external covenant is in its very nature so inconsistent with the covenant of grace,



grace, that it cannot be 'reconciled' with it. But the whole Christian world, the Anabaptists excepted, have till now thought, that the covenant with Abraham was the very covenant of grace itself. But it seems, it is so inconsistent with it, in Mr. M's view of it, as 'not to be reconcilable with it,' because the covenant of grace promises the heavenly Canaan to us and to our seed, and that God will be a God to us and them conditionally, if we and they believe; but the covenant in Gen. 17. promised the earthly Canaan, and that God would be a God to Abraham and his seed 'unconditionally.'

But Mr. M. goes on.

'This difference between the tenor of the covenant of grace and the covenant with Abraham, could not escape the Dr's notice; but being resolved to make out his scheme, he puts in a supplement into the covenant, which has not the least countenance from the covenant itself, or from any other place in the bible. p. 65. *God speaks to the pious parent in that ordinance (baptism) saying, I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed, i. e. IF THEY WILL TAKE HEED TO WALK IN MY WAYS.* This last conditional clause, is a mere arbitrary addition to the covenant with Abraham, invented only for the sake of making *that* reconcilable to the covenant of grace.— But no such clause is ever once represented as belonging to the covenant of grace, or to the covenant with Abraham.' To which we reply, that,

*The assembly of divines, in their larger catechism, say, that the covenant of grace was made with Christ as the second Adam, and in him with all the elect, as his seed.* And yet in order to enjoy the blessings of this covenant it was necessary on Christ's part, that *he should make his soul an offering for sin.* And on our part, that we should become Christ's seed by a true and living faith. If Christ had not died, or if we do not believe in him, God had not been obliged by covenant to make him *heir of all things*, or us to be *joint heirs with him.* So the covenant of grace, in a shadow, was made with Abraham, who was a type of

of Christ, and with all his seed. And yet in order to enjoy the blessings of this covenant, it was necessary that Abraham should renounce idolatry, and separate himself from an idolatrous world, and *walk before God and be perfect*, in the sense in which good men are said in scripture to be *perfect*, Gen. 6. 4. Job 1. 1. And that he should *command his children and his household after him* to follow his example : This was necessary on Abraham's part. And it was necessary that his seed should *keep the way of the Lord, to do justice and judgment ; that the Lord MIGHT bring upon Abraham that which he had spoken*. Gen. 18. 19. If Abraham on the divine call had refused to leave *Ur of the Chaldees*, and to take Jehovah for his God ; or had he afterwards returned to his native country and to his false gods, and persisted in idolatry, he would not have been made the *beir of the holy land*, the type of the heavenly inheritance. If his seed had finally refused to leave Egypt, and to give up the gods of Egypt, and to follow the Lord to the holy land, God would not have been obliged by covenant to give them the enjoyment of it. Therefore, altho' the covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. was expressed in the form of an absolute and unconditional promise, to him and to his seed ; yet it is manifest that conditions were implied, both with respect to him, and to them.

And in this view of the Abrahamic covenant, as a conditional covenant, the divine conduct can be justified, in swearing, concerning that generation whose carcases fell in the wilderness, that they should never *enter into his rest* ; because they did not *believe his word*, nor *obey his voice*, as their father Abraham had done. *So they could not enter because of unbelief*. Whereas had God been obliged, by an absolute, unconditional promise, to bring them into the land of Canaan, he had been, what they were ready to charge him with, really guilty of *a breach of covenant*.

And in this view of the Abrahamic covenant, as a conditional covenant, the conduct of Moses can be justified, in that speech of his to the two tribes and half tribe,

in Num. 32. 6---15. Wherein he expressly declares, that if *they should turn away from the Lord*, as their fathers had done, whose carcases were fallen in the wilderness, they would be destroyed themselves, and be the means of destroying all the congregation. *For if ye turn away from after him, he will yet again leave them in the wilderness, and ye shall destroy all this people.* Whereas had God been obliged, by an absolute, unconditional promise, to bring them into the holy land, and put them in actual possession of it, there could have been no more danger of their destruction, than there is that the earth will be destroyed by a second general deluge, notwithstanding God's covenant with *Noah*. Gen. 8. 11, 12. See also Deut. 7. 12.

And in this view of the Abrahamic covenant, as a conditional covenant, the divine conduct can be justified, in the present rejection of the seed of Abraham, who have been cast off 1700 years, notwithstanding God had said, *I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, for an EVERLASTING covenant: For because of unbelief they were broken off.* For there is no standing in God's church but by faith. As it is written, relative to the Gentile converts, who had been grafted into the good olive, *and thou standest by faith.* Rom. 11. 20. For God might consistently reject the seed of Abraham, if they refused to walk in the steps of Abraham, provided they were taken into covenant in this view. But if God had taken them *for better, for worse*, without any proviso, and absolutely and unconditionally engaged to be their God, in an *everlasting covenant*, so far as I am able to discern, he would have been obliged to keep them for his covenant people, notwithstanding their rejecting the Messiah by unbelief.

But as Mr. M. is so confident, that the Abrahamic covenant was *absolute and unconditional*, to him and to all his seed, and that all the blessings comprised in that chief promise of it, *I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed*, were made sure to them, without this 'conditional clause, *if they will take heed to walk in my ways*, which he says, 'is a  
 : mere



‘ mere arbitrary addition to the covenant with Abraham, ‘ invented only for the sake of making that reconcilable ‘ with the covenant of grace.’ Therefore it may not be amiss to stop a few minutes, and take a view of some of the consequences which will unavoidably follow from his notion of this covenant, and from his manner of reasoning in support of it.

1. If the covenant with Abraham is ‘ unconditional,’ and so ‘ not reconcilable’ with the covenant of grace ; then the covenant of grace was not ‘ contained’ in it ; unless it ‘ contained’ in it something not ‘ reconcilable’ with itself : i. e. unless two covenants were contained in that one covenant in their own nature so inconsistent, as not to be ‘ reconcilable’ to each other. The Abrahamic covenant is ‘ absolute and unconditional,’ and therefore it is not the covenant of grace, says Mr. M. And he may as well say, *Therefore the covenant of grace is not implied in it at all*, nor in any sense whatever ‘ set forth’ in it. For nothing is ‘ contained,’ or ‘ set forth’ in it, which is neither expressed, nor implied. But the covenant of grace is neither expressed, nor implied ; because there is no condition expressed, nor implied. Thus Mr. M. has secluded, and wholly shut the covenant of grace out of the Abrahamic covenant. For to shut out all conditions, is to shut out all conditional covenants. But,

2. If the covenant of grace was not implied in that covenant with Abraham in Gen. 17. because that implied no condition, but was absolute and unconditional to him and to his seed ; then for the same reason the covenant of grace was not implied in the covenant with Abraham in Gen. 12 and in Gen. 13. and in Gen. 15. For in each of these (which are all the) places, the promises are to Abraham and to his seed, and are delivered in the form of absolute and unconditional promises, exactly, precisely after the same tenor of the covenant in Gen. 17. Pray, reader, stop here, take your bible, turn to the cited chapters, and see with your own eyes. And when you have read these chapters, then,

3. Turn to the first promise made by God after the fall, Gen. 3. *The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head.* And see, and consider, that this also was in the form of an 'absolute, unconditional' promise, and respected their posterity as much as it did Adam and Eve. Therefore, by parity of reason, Mr. M. must say, that it was not the covenant of grace, nor 'reconcilable' to it. And

4. To say, that any conditions are implied, if Mr. M's way of reasoning is just, 'is a mere arbitrary addition to the covenant' with Adam and with Abraham, 'invented only for the sake of making it out,' that there ever was any covenant of grace at all, from the beginning of the world to the days of Abraham. For no 'conditional clause' is ever once expressly inserted in the covenant with Adam or with Abraham, from the first revelation of it until that in Gen. 17. And therefore, if Mr. M's reasoning is just, there was no covenant of grace exhibited in all this period of two thousand years. And therefore,

5. As the covenant of grace, if these things are true, never had been revealed, from the beginning of the world to that transaction in Gen. 17. And as that was not the covenant of grace, nor 'reconcilable to it;' so circumcision, which was appointed as a seal of that covenant in Gen. 17. and of no other, was not appointed to be a seal of the covenant of grace in any sense whatever. For at that day, no covenant of grace had ever been exhibited. For every promise, which had been made to Adam, or to Abraham, was as absolute and unconditional as that in Gen. 17. and respected their seed as much as themselves. And therefore,

6. Circumcision not being, in fact, in its original intention, a seal of the covenant of grace, the apostle Paul considering it as such in Rom. 4. cannot make it such: It is true, he calls it *a seal of the righteousness of the faith*, and goes about to illustrate and confirm his doctrine of justification by faith, a doctrine peculiar to the covenant of grace, from God's dispensations to Abraham; and even goes so far, as to say in so many words, that *the gospel*  
was

was preached to Abraham ; but if Mr. M. is right, in all this he was mistaken. The covenant with Abraham was not the gospel, was not the covenant of grace, nor indeed 'reconcilable to it.' Its seal, therefore, was not the seal of the covenant of grace : it was not a seal of the righteousness of the faith. For the covenant of grace is 'conditional,' and 'wholly a personal affair ;' but the covenant with Abraham was 'unconditional,' and made the 'seed joint-heirs with the parent.'—Therefore, if these things are so, it will follow,

7. That the visible church originally was set up before any covenant of grace existed, upon a covenant 'of a different tenor,' and 'for a different purpose.' And as the visible church is the same now, under the gospel dispensation, as it was under the Abrahamic, it must be considered, as ~~containing~~ the same thing still. A visible church built on an external, unconditional covenant. And

8. As the visible church is thus founded merely and only on this unconditional covenant, so no qualifications at all are requisite in order to our being compleat members of it, in good standing, even in the sight of God. Yea, we may be taken in 'without our consent,' even in adult age. And to use Mr. M's own words respecting the Israelites at Mount Sinai, in application to the whole Christian world, Papists and Protestants, Arians, Pelagians, Socinians, Arminians, Antinomians, Drunkards, Adulterers, Thieves, Liars, &c. &c. p. 71. 'It is plain, God has proceeded to take us all into covenant, by mere sovereignty, even as in his covenant with Abraham he included his infant seed,' no more respect being had to any qualification whatever, in the adult, than in infants of eight days old. And therefore,

9. All our churches in *New-England* are wrong, even every one of them, essentially wrong ; and Mr. M's among the rest, in obliging our people, even such as have been baptised in infancy, to make a profession of their faith, and to give their consent to some covenant, or other, requiring either gracious, or graceless obedience :

for



for neither the one nor the other is requisite to full communion in the visible church, because that is founded on an unconditional covenant, which requires no qualifications at all of the adult any more than of infants eight days old. And therefore,

10. As on this unconditional covenant no qualifications whatever are requisite to a compleat standing in the visible church ; so, by necessary consequence, no crimes, how gross soever, can constitutionally expose any one to excommunication, or to be debarred from church privileges. For, if any crime whatever could regularly expose one to excommunication, then a freedom, at least, from that crime, would be a qualification absolutely necessary in order to a compleat standing in the visible church ; which would suppose, that the church was not founded on a covenant absolutely unconditional.

If, therefore, we will come into Mr. M's external covenant, considered as an unconditional covenant, unless we are inconsistent with ourselves, we must give in to all these necessary consequences ; and so excommunicate even excommunication itself out of the Christian world, and fling open the doors of the church to all comers, how heretical and vicious soever they be.

But on the other hand, if we consider the covenant with Abraham, in Gen. 17. as the covenant of grace, and so implying the conditions of that covenant, as St. Paul did, as was proved in my former piece, then not one difficulty will lie in our way. That objection relative to infants, and that relative to the Sinai covenant, and to the covenant in the plains of Moab were answered in my former piece, in sect. vii. and nothing *new* is offered by Mr. M. but what is obviated at first sight, only granting, a condition to be understood in the covenant, in Gen. 17; tho' not expressed. And we must be obliged to grant this, with respect to every exhibition of the covenant of grace, from the beginning of the world to that day, all which were delivered in the form of absolute, unconditional promises : or else be driven to the dire necessity of say-

ing, that, from the beginning of the world, to that day<sup>s</sup> no covenant of grace had ever been revealed.

Thus we have finished, what is needful, on Mr. M's external covenant, considered, as an unconditional covenant. Should any say, that it is certain, that Mr. M. cannot intend, that his external covenant should be an unconditional one. The reply is ready, viz. That it is certain, that no man can tell, by what he has published, what he does mean. But granting, he meant, as for my part, I understood him to mean, when I wrote my answer to his first book, that his external covenant should be a conditional covenant; then the conditions are *gracious* or *graceless*. If *gracious*, then no graceless man, as such, can be admitted into the visible church. If *graceless*, then his external covenant is a *graceless covenant*. This is its nature, and by this name it ought to be called, to the end, its name may point out its nature, and distinguish it from every other covenant.

Indeed, it must be granted that every man has a right to give a name to his own child. And Mr. M. has given a name to his covenant; he has called it *the external covenant*: but perhaps on reconsideration he may think, that there is no propriety in giving it this name. (1.) Because his covenant consists not in *externals* only, but also in *internals*, viz. in 'a fixed resolution' to forsake all known sin, and practise all known duty. For 'a fixed resolution' is an internal thing, as much as saving grace. (2.) Because this name does not at all distinguish it, from the covenant of works, or covenant of grace, which are, both of them, external covenants, as much as is his covenant. But it is the design of different names, to distinguish things of different natures. The covenant of works was an external covenant, as it was administered to Adam, 'peculiarly worded to suit his circumstances.' p. 67. There was no internal duty expressly required. The only sin, expressly forbidden, was an external one, viz. *Of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat.* Eating is an external act; and this was the only action expressly

expressly mentioned in the covenant of works, as it was administered to Adam. There is therefore much more propriety, in calling that, an external covenant, than there is in calling Mr. M's covenant by this name. And so the covenant of grace, as it is administered in the gospel, free from the shadows, rites and ceremonies of the old dispensation, is as external a covenant, as Mr. *Matther's*. For it requires, that we not only *believe in our hearts*, but also *confess with our mouths*; that we not only *believe*, but also are *baptized*, and attend the Lord's supper, *doing this in remembrance of him*. Yea, the gospel requires of professors all external duties to God and man; and particularly, every external duty relative to church order; with much greater plainness than did the old testament; and even descends so low, as to require church-members to *work with their hands*. The name of an external covenant, therefore, is not at all adapted to distinguish Mr. M's covenant from the covenant of works, or from the covenant of grace. And yet what he means is really and essentially different from both. For they both require holiness and nothing else, as qualifications to the enjoyment of the blessings promised in both. But this covenant requires no holiness at all to qualify for the enjoyment of all its peculiar blessings. It requires, to this end, nothing but graceless duties. The name, therefore, of a graceless covenant is the most natural, expressive and distinguishing name in the world. Mr. M. seems to think, that it might do, to call it, by the name of '*the externals of the covenant of grace*.' But, I think, this name, by no means, will do. For the faith and obedience of the covenant of grace is a holy faith and obedience. In order therefore for any faith and obedience to be *the externals of the covenant of grace*, they must be, *professedly and to appearance*, a holy faith and obedience. But the faith and obedience of Mr. M's covenant, requisite to a title to all its blessings, are professedly such as a graceless man may have, which is professedly a graceless faith and obedience. For he affirms that all unregenerate sinners are

totally



‘totally depraved.’ Again, Mr. M. altho’ in his former book, he had said, p. 7. that ‘after my most careful inquiry, I must own myself at a loss in determining what ‘they’ (protestant divines in general) ‘mean, by *being under the external administration of the covenant of grace* :’ yet now in his second book, p. 61, he is even willing, if this would give content, to call his covenant, by the name of ‘the external administration of the covenant of grace.’ But this is a very improper name : for when he takes a man into the church, and administers the covenant, the covenant which he administers to the man, is not the covenant of grace, but professedly ‘a covenant distinct from the covenant of grace.’ It ought, therefore, by no means to be called *the external administration of the covenant of grace*. However, it may, with no small propriety be called, *the external administration of a graceless covenant*.

Objection. The external covenant ought not to be called a graceless covenant, because it is designed as a means of the conversion of sinners ; and tends in its own nature to promote their conversion.

Answer. The external covenant in its own nature does not tend to promote the conversion of sinners, but the contrary ; for sinners are never converted without conviction of sin : for there can be no sound conversion, without true repentance. And there can be no true repentance without true conviction of sin. But there can be no true conviction of sin without a knowledge of the true rule of duty. And the law of God, which requires holiness, and nothing but holiness, is the only rule of duty, that God ever gave to man ; by this, *law is the knowledge of sin* : This *law is the school-master*, which God has appointed to *bring us to Christ*. Now to send us to school, to another school master than that which God has appointed, tends not to our conversion, but to our delusion. But Mr. M’s external covenant is another school-master than that which God has appointed, essentially different from it, and in its own nature inconsistent with it.

SECT.

## SECTION, III.

*The perfection of the divine law, and total depravity, inconsistent with the notion of an external covenant appointed by God for the unregenerate, as such, to enter into, requiring graceless qualifications, and nothing else, as the conditions of its blessings.*

**A** LAW, which is a universal rule of life, to saints and to sinners, extending to the whole of our moral conduct, at all times, which forbids all sin, and requires us to be holy as God is holy, is inconsistent with any law, or rule, or covenant, which requires any sin, in matter, or manner, at any time, of any man, saint or sinner, on any pretence whatsoever. If, therefore, God has given such a holy law, as above, he cannot be the author of such an unholy covenant. For it is written, Jam. 3. 11. *Doth a fountain send forth, at the same place, sweet water and bitter?* And again, it is written, Jam. 1. 13. *Let no man say, when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.* But for God to require sin, and bind his creatures by a most solemn covenant to sin, and promise them peculiar blessings if they will sin, in the manner his covenant requires, is tempting to sin, in a most powerful manner, with great and strong temptations — But,

1. As to the *perfection of the divine law*, the assembly of divines at Westminster say, ‘ That the law is perfect, and bindeth every one to a full conformity in the whole, man unto the righteousness thereof, and unto entire obedience FOR EVER; so as to require the utmost perfection of every duty, and to forbid the least degree of every sin.’ *Larger cat.* in answer to Q. 99, proved by Psal. 19. 7. Jam. 2. 10 Mat. 5. 21—48.

2. As to *total depravity*, they say, ‘ The sinfulness of that estate whereinto man fell, consisteth in the guilt of Adam’s first sin, the want of that righteousness wherein he was created, and the corruption of his nature; whereby he is utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite

‘ opposite unto all that is spiritually good : and wholly  
 ‘ inclined to all evil, and that continually ; which is  
 ‘ commonly called original sin, and from which do pro-  
 ‘ ceed all actual transgressions. Rom. 5. 12—19. Rom.  
 ‘ 3. 10---19. Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3. Rom. 5. 6. Rom. 8. 7.  
 ‘ 8. Gen. 6. 5. Jam. 1. 14, 15. Mat. 15. 19.’ Answ.  
 to Q. 25.

As to the *doings of the unregenerate*, they say, ‘ Works  
 ‘ done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of  
 ‘ them, they may be things which God commands, and  
 ‘ of good use both to themselves and others ; yet because  
 ‘ they proceed ~~ed~~ not from a heart purified by faith, nor  
 ‘ are done in a right manner according to the word, nor  
 ‘ to a right end the glory of God, they are there-  
 ‘ fore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man  
 ‘ meet to receive grace from God. And yet their ne-  
 ‘ glect of them is more sinful and displeasing to God.  
 ‘ 1 Cor. 13. 3. Isa. 1. 12.’ &c. *Conf. faith*, chap. 16.  
 To which agree *the 39 articles of the Church of England*.  
 ‘ Works done before the grace of Christ, and the inspi-  
 ‘ ration of his spirit, are not pleasant to God, &c.—  
 ‘ Yea, rather, for that they are not done as God hath  
 ‘ commanded and willed them to be done, we doubt not  
 ‘ but that they have the nature of sin.’ *Article 13*. To  
 which also agrees Mr. *Stoddard*. ‘ If men do not act from  
 ‘ gracious motives and for gracious ends, they do not  
 ‘ the thing that God commands ; there is no obedience  
 ‘ to God in what they do ; they don’t attend the will of  
 ‘ God.’ *Nature of conversion*, p. 7. Yea, he adds, p. 9.  
 ‘ There is an *opposition between saving grace and common*  
 ‘ *grace*. If one be opposite to the other, then they differ  
 ‘ specifically. Those dispositions that have contrariety  
 ‘ one to the other, that are at war one with the other,  
 ‘ and would destroy one another, are not of the same  
 ‘ kind : And truly these are so. Common graces are  
 ‘ lusts and do oppose saving grace.’ So again in his  
*Safety*, (3d. edit.) p. 106. ‘ Man in his natural state is an  
 ‘ *enemy to this (the gospel) way of salvation*. As man is  
 an



‘ an enemy to the *law* of God, so to the *gospel* of Jesus Christ.’ And in p. 146. ‘ All those religious frames and dispositions that are in natural men, are nothing else but the various shapings of self-love.’ And again, p. 148. ‘ Self-love is the very root of original sin.’ And again, p. 162. ‘ Every unhumiliated sinner is striving against the work of humiliation : They are opposing of it, either by endeavours to set up a righteousness of their own ; seeking in that way to escape condemnation, instead of yielding to God they are flying to their strong holds, sheltering themselves in their prayers, reformations, desires, &c. or else by wrangling, as a person pursued runs away till overtaken, and then he fights ; So the sinner when he sees that he cannot save himself, is contending with God, objecting against divine proceedings, thinks that God’s dealings are very hard measure. Rom. 9. 19.’ And p. 168. ‘ Their best works are not only sinful, but properly *sins*.’ Thus far Mr. Stoddard. And thus we see what the ‘ old divinity’ is, as to the *perfection of the divine law, total depravity, and works done by unregenerate men.*

Yea, Mr. M. himself, in words, at least, grants each of these points. For, (1.) as to the *perfection of the divine law*, he sets himself to prove, p. 27. ‘ that the law is not abated.’—‘ And therefore nothing short of perfection may be looked upon as *the whole of what is required.*’ And (2.) as to *total depravity*, he repeatedly asserts it thro’ sect. 2 and 3, and particularly says, p. 8. ‘ That Adam did totally deprave his nature, by his first sin, and *wholly lost the moral image of God* in which he was created.’ And he says, p. 18. ‘ Mankind at this day, antecedent to their exercising faith in Christ, are in much the same condition as Adam was, after he had sinned.’—‘ The unregenerate sinner—is in the likeness of fallen Adam.’ And he speaks of them, p. 52. as ‘ such whose hearts are in a state of enmity against God.’ And (3) as to *the doings of the unregenerate*, he says, p. 17. ‘ As love to God is the leading principle of all acceptable obedience ;

‘ so

‘ so, Adam having rendered himself incapable of loving God, he was of course, incapable of yielding any truly holy and acceptable obedience to the will of God.’ And p. 55. ‘ Sinners under conviction—really aim—to establish their own righteousness which is of the law.’ Which, no doubt, he will grant is a very wicked thing, being the great sin of the unbelieving Jews, for which, among other things, they were finally cast off by God. Rom. 9. 32. Now, therefore,

1. The question is not, whether all the holy commands of God’s law, and holy exhortations of the gospel, are given to the unregenerate, and binding on them; so as that they are wholly inexcusable, and altogether criminal, in every neglect. This I affirm to be the truth. And this Mr. M. grants.

2. The question is not, whether the unregenerate do, in any one instance, perform one act of holy obedience, i. e. of obedience, which has the least degree of holiness in it. Mr. M. allows they do not: for he asserts, that they are ‘totally depraved,’ thro’ sect. 2 and 3.

3. The question is not, Whether the law is at all abated, as to the unregenerate, so as to cease requiring them to perform every duty in a holy manner. For Mr. M. insists upon it, that ‘the law is not abated.’ p. 27. Yea, he ‘asserts, that whatever God commands to be done, he requires the ‘performance to be, not in a gracious, but in a *perfect manner.*’ p. 38.

4. The question is not whether a sinful manner of attending on the means, which God useth for the conversion of sinners, may not be less sinful and less dangerous, than a total neglect. This is granted. And therefore,

5. The question, and the only question is, whether a sinful manner is not sinful? Or in other words, whether the sinful manner itself, is required? and so is strictly speaking, a duty. In this we differ. And accordingly Mr. M. considers this, as a fundamental error, in my former piece. p. 35. ‘That God requires holiness, and nothing but holiness.’—The argument then stands thus,

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To require the unregenerate to perform duties in a sinful manner, is to require them to break God's law : But Mr. M's external covenant requires the unregenerate to perform duties in a sinful manner : therefore Mr. M's external covenant requires men to break God's law.

That covenant which requires men to break God's law is not from God : But this external covenant requires men to break God's law : therefore it is not from God.\*

There are but three ways to get rid of this argument, either, (1) to deny the perfection of the divine law, or (2) to deny total depravity, or (3) to be inconsistent. The church of *Scotland*, and the churches in *New-England*, in their public formulas, not choosing to take either of these ways, were necessitated to leave Mr. M's external covenant out of their scheme of religion, and to affirm ' that sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace.' But each of these three ways, to get rid of this argument, and to establish the external covenant, Mr. M. has taken. For,

1. To this end, p. 35, he denies the perfection of the divine law, viz: ' That God requires holiness, and nothing but holiness.' And that,

2. In express contradiction to himself : For, p. 34. he says, ' I assert, that whatever God commands to be done, he requires the performance of it to be, not in a gracious, but in a perfect manner.' Which is evidently to require ' holiness and nothing but holiness.' For a perfect manner of performing every duty, perfectly ex-

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cludes

\* If God's law requires holiness, and nothing but holiness, the apostle's words are strictly true. Rom. 8. 7. The totally depraved, are not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. But as the external covenant is of a nature opposite to the law of God, and suited to the carnal mind, as it requires graceless, unholy, sinful duties ; therefore the totally depraved, as such, may be subject to it. And so the carnal mind, which is totally opposite to God's law, may be in conformity to the external covenant ; and likewise lays a foundation for love. And therefore the carnal mind naturally loves the external covenant. And what we love, we wish to be true.

like



cludes all sin. And if God requires this ‘perfect manner,’ he does, by so doing, forbid the contrary. Every imperfection, therefore, is forbidden. And accordingly, he says, p. 28. That ‘the imperfections found in believers are sinful.’ Surely then, the total depravity found in unbelievers, is sinful also ; and yet he pleads, p. 33. *That if God, consistent with the law of perfection, may require the imperfect obedience of the believer, he may also require such doings, endeavours and strivings, as take place in sinners, while unregenerate, and entirely destitute of holiness.* Now, I readily grant, that if God may consistently require the imperfections of believers, which are sinful ; he may also require the unregenerate to seek and strive, in that sinful manner, in which they do. For if he may consistently require sin, in the one, he may in the other also. But Mr. M. tells me, that God forbids sin in both ; for he says, ‘I assert, that whatever God commands to be done, he requires the performance to be, not in a gracious, but in a *perfect manner.*’ Which forbids the imperfections of the believer, and the total sinfulness of the ‘totally depraved.’ Inconsistencies of this kind, good as his natural genius is, run thro’ his book, whenever he has occasion to speak on this subject : and he brings many texts of scripture to keep himself in countenance : as if it were possible, that a book inspired by God, should contain such inconsistencies. Whereas, could it be proved, that the bible ever required any sin, or any action to be done in a sinful manner, it would be such an argument, that it did not come from him, who is perfectly and unchangeably holy, and who does, and who cannot but hate sin, even all sin, at all times, and in all persons, with perfect hatred, that I should not know how to answer it. For it looks like the most glaring contradiction in nature, that God should command, call, invite, urge, persuade, and beseech us to do, what he perfectly hates. And to say, that the true and living God, does not perfectly hate all sin, at all times, is, as all will grant, wickedly

wickedly to reproach the Holy One of Israel. Psa. 50. 21. *Thou thoughtest I was altogether such a one as thyself : but I will reprove thee, and set thy sins in order before thee.*

The Pharisees took great pains in religion, they *fasted twice in the week.* And they thought they performed their duties, in the manner, in which, God required. *All these things have I done from my youth up. Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment.* For if the law required them to do duties in the manner in which they did, then, in doing as they did, they did their duty. So they were not sinners, in their own view ; rather, they were *righteous*, and *needed no repentance.* For they had nothing to repent of. For they had 'forsaken all known sin, and practised all known duty.' So that their consciences acquitted them. *As touching the righteousness of the law, I was blameless.* It was impossible they should be brought to repentance, while they viewed things in this light. It was almost impossible to beat them out of their scheme. Therefore publicans and harlots stood a better chance for conversion than they did, as our Saviour declares. Mat. 21. 31, 32. \* For altho' the strivings of an awakened sinner, with the law of perfection in his view, may 'be useful to promote conviction of sin ;' yet the strivings of a sinner, with a law in view, which requires him to do as he does, instead of being 'useful to promote conviction of sin,' tends to establish him on his own righteousness. For in doing, as he does, he does 'all known duty,' and so is *blameless* : and so is *righteous*, and so *needs no repentance*, no atonement, no pardon, no Christ, no grace, and

\* ' But this is, I think a great mistake,' saith a late writer, 'they were not Pharisees that these words were spoken to, but Sadducees.' Referring to Mat. 21. 31. But, it is plain, from ver. 45, that the Pharisees thought themselves to be the men, and that they were not mistaken. For, the Evangelist saith, *and when the chief Priests and Pharisees had heard his Parables, they perceived that he spake of them.* Read from ver. 28-45.

and if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain. So this scheme issues at last in infidelity.

Our author says, p. 52. 'God has repeatedly commanded sinners to consider their ways,'—Very true, so he has. But has God ever once commanded them to consider their ways, in an impenitent, self-righteous, self-justifying, Christ-rejecting manner! In which manner sinners always do consider their ways, so long as they remain under the reigning power of an impenitent, self-righteous, self-justifying, Christ-rejecting spirit: i. e. so long as they remain unregenerate. For, *in this spirit unregeneracy consists.* But as soon as ever sinners begin to consider their ways, in a penitent, self-condemning, God-justifying, Christ-prizing manner, they really begin to comply with 'the repeated commands, to consider their ways,' which God has given to sinners. And these sinners are now not unregenerate, but regenerate. Thus holy David did. Psal. 119. 56. *I thought upon my ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies.* And these are they, Mat. 11. 12. *Who take the kingdom of heaven by force.* For the great truths of the gospel viewed, as such sinners view them, will always be attended with answerable effects. Mat. 13. 23. *But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it, which also beareth fruit.* But stony and thorny ground hearers bring forth no fruit. While the vail is on the heart, the gospel produces no fruit, but when the vail is taken away, then divine truths are seen in their GLORY, and then every answerable affection is BEGOTTEN. 2 Cor. 3. 15.---18. But every unregenerate sinner is blind to the holy beauty of Christ's holy religion. For as Mr. Stoddard says, 'as man is an enemy to the law of God, so to the gospel of Jesus Christ.' Therefore as St. Paul says, 2 Cor. 2. 14. *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.* Therefore Christ told Nicodemus, Joh. 3. *Except a man be born again he CANNOT*



CANNOT SEE *the kingdom of God* : i. e. cannot understand and embrace christianity. These, then, are the men, who *take the kingdom of heaven by force*, and not they whom Mr. M. describes, as 'going about to establish their own righteousness which is of the law,' who, as he rightly observes, 'never do accomplish what they aim at.' See p. 54, 55.

But is it not indeed surprizing, that Mr. M. should, (p. 52.) urge those words of the apostle, as an exhortation to impenitent, Christ rejecting strivings, such as are all the strivings of impenitent, Christless sinners, in 2 Cor. 5. 20. *As tho' God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God?* For, the apostle's exhortation is, *be ye reconciled to God* : and his argument is, God is now ready thro' Christ to be reconciled to you. Now, supposing this exhortation was given to the unregenerate, as Mr. M. would have it ; if they believed that God was ready to be reconciled thro' Christ : i. e. if they believed the gospel to be true, why should they not return home to God immediately, as the prodigal son did to his father, as soon as ever he came to himself ? But Mr. M. would have them, instead of returning to God now, in compliance with the apostle's exhortation ; rather put it off a while, and strive 'to obtain those discoveries of God thro' Christ, by which they would be reconciled to God.' p. 53. Nay, but the apostle had just made all those 'discoveries' to them, which are contained in the gospel on that subject. And adds, *Behold now is the accepted time ! now is the day of salvation !* And if they had no prejudice against the truth, why should they not receive it, at first hearing ? And if they believed him, what could hinder their immediate return to God, unless they were at heart utterly disinclined to a reconciliation to him, let him be ever so willing on his part ? And if they were utterly disinclined to a reconciliation to God in their hearts, none of their strivings could be considered, as being of the nature of a compliance with that

exhortation, *be ye reconciled to God*. But if they were so prejudiced against the truth, as not to receive it, when clearly held forth before them, by an inspired apostle, how could they be said to 'strive to discover' it? For a man does not strive to discover, what he shuts his eyes against, when held up clearly before him. And so long as this disinclination to God and the truth remains total in a sinner, it is of the nature of a total rejection of the divine exhortation, *be ye reconciled to God*. And as soon as the least degree of love to God takes place in the heart, the sinner can no longer be considered as unregenerate, if the unregenerate are 'totally depraved,' as Mr. M. says they are. \*

But Mr. M. supposes, p. 54. that Act. 8. 9 will be to his purpose: *And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did*. True, they did so, and what was the consequence? Our blessed Saviour, who knows all things, tells us, viz. That every one, who, *with a good and honest heart*, heard the word, did understand it, and bring forth fruit, while stony and thorny ground hearers fell away. Luk. 8. Now, the question is this, Was it not the duty of every one of them to have a good and honest heart, and so to hear with a good and honest heart the first time? Yes, says Mr. M. for 'I assert, that whatever God commands to be done, he requires the performance to be in a perfect manner.' But what then are these texts to his purpose, and a thousand more such like? For there are a thousand in the bible, as much to his purpose as these.

3. But the bottom of the business with Mr. M. is this, that altho' in words, he says, that the unregenerate are 'totally depraved;' yet he does not seem rightly to understand the scripture doctrine of total depravity, as held

\* See the *Nature of spiritual blindness considered*. *Essay on the nature and glory of the gospel*, lect. x.

held forth in our confession of faith : but really to suppose, that unregenerate sinners, are naturally inclined, while unregenerate to love God, even God's true and real character, as revealed in the gospel ; so that as soon as ever they ' discover ' what that character is, they will love it, even *without any new principle of grace*, even as naturally as Jacob loved Rachel the first time he saw her. But as to that character of God, which is revealed in the law, he supposes, that sinners, never can, and never will love it : because, ' to love it is the same thing as to love their own misery. ' But as to the character of God, which is revealed in the gospel, they need *no new principle of grace*, in order to love it, any more than Jacob needed a new principle, in order to love Rachel. p. 43---48. And this being supposed, awakened sinners may, from natural principles, long and most earnestly desire to ' discover ' this new character of God which is exhibited in the gospel ; and so seek after this ' discovery ' with proper, direct desires after it, for itself. And these desires he, therefore, considers, as being in nature, kind and tendency, the same with what he calls the gracious desire of those whom he esteems regenerate. These seekings and strivings he, therefore supposes to be required, in the same sense, and for the same purpose, as the seekings and strivings of the true saint. p. 33, 34. To establish these sentiments, is one chief design of his book. And thus far, I fully agree with him, that there is no difference in kind, between the religious exercises of the unregenerate, and the religious exercises of his regenerate man. And in this view, I wonder not at his zeal against this fundamental sentiment of *a specific difference*, as clearly held forth in President Edwards's *treatise concerning religious affections*. p. 36, 37, 38, 39, 40. For his regenerate man has professedly *no new principle of grace*. And accordingly he appears, in fact, to have no more grace than his unregenerate man has. For he is as great an enemy



enemy to God's law, and to the holy nature of God; therein exhibited, as the unregenerate. p. 41, 42, 43. And the God he loves is professedly of a different character, even of a character so different, that the unregenerate will naturally love it, as soon as they 'discover' it, and its favourable aspect towards them, *without any new principle of grace.* p. 43. 44—48. And this is the true reason, 'ninety nine in a hundred' of his regenerate men are so at a loss about their good estate, that they cannot see their way clear, to make a profession of Godliness. p. 79, 80. Which renders his external covenant as necessary for them, as for the unregenerate; for if the door is not opened wide enough, to take in the unregenerate, as such, his regenerate man cannot with a good conscience, come into the visible church. For as Mr. Stoddard, in order to prove the doctrine of the *specific difference between common and saving grace*, rightly observes, in his *Nature of saving conversion*, p. 8. 'If the difference between saving grace and common, lay in the degree, *no man could judge that his grace is saving.*' And thus he goes on to reason, 'Men may know that they have saving grace, 1 Joh. 3 14. 2 Cor. 7. 10. But if the difference lay in the degree, how should man go about to determine that their grace was saving? the man may know that he has a greater degree of confidence, sorrow, and zeal than formerly he had; he may have reason to think that he goeth beyond some other professors in these things; but upon what foundation can he determine that he hath them in such a degree as to secure his salvation? Where has God revealed what degree is saving, and what is not saving? What warrant has any man to judge himself in a safe condition, if there be several degrees of grace that are not saving? What rule can any minister lay down to guide men in this matter? Men must needs be left in a *perpetual uncertainty, and remain in the dark, about their eternal state,*' Thus far Mr. Stoddard. But  
of

of these things more hereafter, when we come to consider the *new scheme of religion*, which Mr. M. has advanced, in order to support his external covenant.

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## S E C T I O N. IV.

Isai. xlv. 19. *I said not unto the seed of Jacob, seek ye me in vain.*

Mat. vii. 7. *Ask, and it shall be given you : Seek, and ye shall find.*

*A view of the exhortations, and promises of the gospel : and the true reason pointed out why the doings of the unregenerate do not entitle to the blessings promised.*

OUR author, p. 34, says, ‘ If it should be asked, whether there are any promises of salvation to these endeavours of the unregenerate ; I readily answer, there are none. The absolute authority of God is not such a limited thing, that he can lay no commands upon his creatures, without adding a promise to the performance: divine Sovereignty is not incumbered with such a tether.’ These words have led me to take a view of the divine exhortations and promises thro’ the old and new-testament, a few of which may be transcribed.

## EXHORTATIONS TO SINNERS.

## PROMISES annexed.

Lev. 6. 2—6. *If a soul sin--- he shall restore--he shall bring his trespass-offering unto the Lord -the Priest shall make an atonement for him, &c.*

Lev. 6. 7. *And it shall be forgiven him.*

Lev. 26. 40. 41. *If they shall confess their iniquity---if then there uncircumcised hearts be humbled, & they then accept the punishment of their iniquity :*

Lev. 26. 42. *Then I will remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham, will I remember ; and I will remember the land.*

1 K. 8. 47, 48. *If they shall be hink themselves, and repent, & make supplication unto thee--and so return unto thee with all their heart--and pray unto thee toward--the house which I have built for thy name ;*

1 King. 8. 49 *Then hear thou their prayer---in heaven thy dwelling place---and forgive thy people, &c.*

Prov. 1. 23. *Turn you at my reproof :*

Prov. 1. 23. *Behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you.*

Prov. 2. 3, 4. *If thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding : if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her, as for hid treasures :*

Prov. 2. 5. *Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord ; and find the knowledge of God.*

Prov. 28. 13. *Whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, i. e. his sins,*

Prov. 28. 13. *Shall find mercy.*



## EXHORTATIONS TO SINNERS.

## PROMISES annexed.

Isai. 55. 6. *Seek ye the Lord, while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.*

Isai. 45. 19. *I said not to the house of Jacob, seek ye me in vain.*

Ver. 7. *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord,*

Isai. 55. 7. *And he will have mercy on him, and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.*

Mat. 7. 7. *Ask—*

Mat. 7. 7. *And it shall be given you.*

—Seek—

Mat. 7. 7. *And ye shall find.*

—Knock—

— And it shall be opened unto you.

Mat. 7. 8. *For every one that asketh - - -*

Mat. 7. 8. *Recieveth.*

—and he that seeketh,

— findeth.

—and to him that knocketh

— it shall be opened.

Luk. 18. 14. *He that humbly himself, - - -*

Luk. 18. 14. *Shall be exalted.*

Mar. 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized,*

Mark 16. 16. *Shall be saved.*

Act. 3. 9. *Repent & be converted*

Act. 3. 19. *That your sins may be blotted out.*

These texts are a true specimen of the whole tenor of the sacred writings on this subject, and let the candid reader

reader stop, and look over them two, or three times, and consider and think for himself; and these and such like remarks will rise in his mind of themselves; or, at the least, the truth of them will appear plain, as soon as mentioned.

1. There are directions given to sinners, in the holy scriptures, in and by which, a full answer is given to that question, *what shall we do to be saved?* and beyond dispute, it is their duty and interest to follow God's directions, immediately, and without the least delay. \*

2. There are promises made to sinners, without exception, entitling them to all the blessings of the gospel, upon their complying with God's directions.

3. These promises are not of the nature of general encouragements, rendering it hopeful, yet leaving it uncertain, whether sinners should obtain, if they comply with the directions given them by God: but they are as plain, full and express promises, as any in the bible, and do establish a certain and universal connection, thus, *Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy.* This promise extends universally to all who *confess and forsake their*

\* Q. If a full answer is given to that question by God himself, why do awakened sinners continue to repeat it? Why do they still say, *What shall we do to be saved?* If God has answered the question, why are they at a loss? -----

A. God's answer does not suit their hearts, and so they are deaf to it. God speaks, and speaks plain enough, but they do not hear. God cries, *Hear, and your soul shall live* — They have ears, but they are uncircumcised. Pagan ears; and so in hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand. For every good and honest heart hears the word, understands it, and brings forth fruit. Their deafness and blindness is wholly of a criminal nature. Thus, when the famine came, the prodigal son cried, *What shall I do?* The right answer was plain and easy to a good and honest heart. But he hated to go home. For as yet his heart was opposite to it. Therefore he said, *I will go and join myself to a citizen of that country, and feed his swine.* But when he came to himself, he instantly felt it thro' and thro' his heart, that it was his present duty and interest, immediately, to *arise and go to his father.* And nothing but the vicious state of his heart prevented him knowing this before.

their sins; and establishes a certain connection, *they shall have mercy.* But that there never was one who failed, and never will be one who will fail, who complies with God's directions, is evident from the testimony of him, who came from the Father's bosom, and knew the mind of God, and came into this world, to reveal it unto us. For he says, not only *Ask, and it shall be given you*; but he adds, *For every one that asketh, receiveth.* From which we have as full evidence, as we have that Jesus is the Son of God, that there never was, and never will be one single instance among mankind, who, according to this direction, ever did *ask*, or ever will *ask*, for the blessings of the gospel, and fail of receiving: *For every one that asketh receiveth.* So again, *Hear and your Soul shall live; Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; Whosoever will, let him come; Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out, &c. &c. &c.* all prove the same point. — Besides all this, and that which confirms the point still farther, is, that destruction is threatened *only* to those who refuse to hearken to God's directions. Prov. 1. 24, 25. *Because I have called and ye refused, I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity.* But on the other hand, ver. 23. *Turn at my reproof, and I will pour out my spirit unto you.* — And,

4. These promises do establish a certain connection between the first act of compliance with these directions, and the blessings of the gospel. Indeed where one act of compliance takes place, sinners will continue in a course of compliance. As for example. When the prodigal son returned home to his father, he was upon the first act, upon his first return, received as a child, and entitled to all the privileges of such. But then it is equally true, he never left his father's house and turned prodigal again, as he had done before; but on the contrary, he brought forth fruit meet for repentance. And as he was thus received on his first return, so it is in all instances. For *whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy.*

And



And again, *Ask, and it shall be given you ; for every one that asketh receiveth.* If the first act of compliance with these directions should not entitle to the blessings promised, by parity of reason, the second act of compliance might not entitle. And so it might come to pass, that some who comply with God's directions, might fail of the blessings promised, contrary to the plain tenor of all the promises. See Joh. 4. 14. and 5. 24. Mat. 10. 42. Act. 2. 38. and 16. 31. Eph. 1. 13, 14. Phil. 1. 6:

5. These promises make it certain, that among all the unpardoned sinners in the world, whatever pains they have, any of them, taken in religion, yet there is not one, who ever, in any one single act did comply with God's directions. For had they complied, they would have been pardoned. For God himself has said it : *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy on him ; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.* And our blessed Saviour, in his sermon on the Mount, directs us to pray for pardon. *When ye pray, say—Forgive us our debts.* And then soon declares, *Ask, and it shall be given you.* And then to put his meaning for ever beyond dispute, he adds, *For every one that asketh receiveth.* He, therefore, whose sins are not pardoned, never yet, in the whole course of his life, did, so much as once, confess and forsake them, and ask God to forgive him, according to divine direction : no not once. To disbelieve this point, is, in effect, to disbelieve the whole of divine revelation. For he that believeth not this, hath made God a liar. —

Now if these things are true, we may hence learn,

1. That Mr. Sandeman's scheme, relative to directions to be given to sinners, is not agreeable to the word of God. For he says, ' Let all the prophets and apostles be consulted upon the question, what is required of us in order to acceptance with God ? we shall find their unanimous reply to be, *every thing, or nothing.*' For, according to Mr. Sandeman, the sinner is pardoned before repentance, and faith is not an *act*, but a mere *passive*

*five*

five thing. So, therefore, 'nothing' is to be done by the sinner, in order to pardon and justification. For no volition, act, or exercise of mind whatever is needful in order to it. And so, no direction at all is to be given. For Mr. Sandeman speaking of the atonement, says, 'All its true friends will join in affirming, that Christ came to render *impenitent sinners accepted unto everlasting life*, by the works which he himself wrought, and thus by the *discovery of preventing goodness, to lead them to repentance.*' — Thus they are *regenerated by light*, according to Mr. Sandeman. — But, from what has been said, nothing can be plainer, than that both the old testament and the new, do give directions to sinners, to do something. Thus when those, who were *pricked at the heart* on the day of Pentecost, asked Peter and the rest of the apostles, saying, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* Peter did not say, 'be perfect;' nor did he say, 'do nothing:' but he said, *Repent and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins.* So again, a few days after, *Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.* And when the trembling jailer put the question to the apostle Paul, *What shall I do to be saved?* his answer was, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* To say, therefore, that there is 'nothing' to be done in order to salvation, and so no directions to be given to sinners, is directly contrary to the holy scriptures.

Mr. Sandeman's scheme, in a few words, is this: That we are to give instruction to the unregenerate, but no exhortation at all. We are to hold up the truth to their view, with its evidence, that it may strike their minds, give them hope, and beget love. For regeneration is wrought by light, and is the effect and fruit of faith. But no call, no invitation, no direction, no exhortation is to be given; because no volition is to take place before justification. For the single belief of the simple truth, in which simple belief no volition is implied, is the only thing implied in that faith by which we are justified. But no means can be proper to be used for the producti-

on of this faith, but merely holding up the simple truth, with its evidence to view. This, therefore, is the whole the preacher has to do. And the truth, as soon as known, gives hope, and so begets love to itself. Just as the news of a large importation of corn, in an island perishing with famine, as it spreads thro' the island, gains credit, gives hope of relief, and begets love to that which is to relieve them. And all Godliness consists in love to that which relieves us.---This is Mr. Sandeman's scheme.---N. B. (1.) he has the same notion of total depravity and regeneration, with Mr. M. viz. That the carnal heart is at enmity only against that character of God, which is exhibited in the law : but as to that character, which is revealed in the gospel, the carnal, unregenerate heart is disposed to love it, as soon as known. Just as the news of the importation of corn, in such a famished island, will be agreeable to every inhabitant, who hears it, and understands it. (2.) In both Mr. Sandeman's and Mr. Mather's scheme, we need no *new principle of grace*, in order to love God, any more than the famished inhabitants of the island, needed new stomachs, in order to love bread. And therefore (3.) the regenerating, sanctifying, influences of the holy Spirit, on both schemes, are absolutely needless. For, (4.) as we are not to be reconciled to that character of God, against which we are at enmity, but only to a character, which is so agreeable to our hearts, in our natural state, that it will beget love to itself, as soon as known, on which account we need no new principle of grace, in order to love it ; so, for the same reason, the regenerating, sanctifying influences of the Spirit, are needless. Even as it was with *Jacob*, when he went to *Padan-aram*, to get a wife ; the state of his mind being such by nature, that he would love *Rachel*, as soon as seen, he therefore needed no supernatural influence to dispose his heart to love her. (5.) On both schemes the sinner is pardoned before repentance. For he believes, first ; then he is justified ; and then



then he hopes ; and then he is regenerated, and loves ; and then he repents. But to return,

2. From what has been said, we may also see, that Mr. Mather is equally mistaken, in insinuating, that sinners may comply with the exhortations and directions of God to sinners, and yet be entitled to no promise. For God has, as we have seen, in the most plain and express manner, annexed promises to his exhortations and directions. Our author says, ‘ The absolute authority of God, is not such a limited thing, that he can lay no commands upon his creatures, without adding a promise to the performance.’ But the creed of even all the ancient patriarchs, short as it was, had this for one article, that God was *A rewarder of those who diligently seek him.* Heb. 11. 5, 6. And under the Jewish dispensation, God affirms, that *He never said to the house of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain.* Isai. 45. 19. And when the Son of God appears in flesh, he speaks plainer still, *Ask, and it shall be given you ; seek, and ye shall find ; knock, and it shall be opened.* And to fix and settle us forever in the belief of this point, he goes on to reason thus, *Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone ? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent ? If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father who is in heaven, give good things to them that ask him ?*---‘To them that ask him’---be they who they will of all the human race. For the gospel is by divine order, to be preached to every creature. And *whosoever will let him come ; and he that cometh shall in no wise be cast out.*----The warrant to come to the throne of grace, is founded in the blood of the Son of God : for he has *opened a way into the holiest of all, by his own blood.* And the invitations of the gospel are given to all, without exception. *Go ye into the high-ways, and as many as ye find, bid to the marriage.* Any sinner, therefore, on this side hell, has a good warrant to come to the throne of grace, to confess his sins to God, and to ask forgiveness in the name of

Christ. And no sinner, who hath done so, in the manner in which God has directed, ever went away from the throne of grace unpardoned: but it has always happened to him, as it did to the prodigal son, *when he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and had compassion on him, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.* Of the truth of this, we have the same evidence, as we have, that Jesus is the Messiah. For he hath said, that *every one that asketh, receiveth.* Therefore,

3. From what has been said on this subject, we may learn, that these words of Mr. Stoddard, before quoted, are strictly true. Speaking of the unregenerate sinner, he says, ‘they do not the thing that God commands: there is no obedience to God in what they do: they don’t attend the will of God.’ \* For if they did attend God’s directions, and obey the divine exhortations, and *ask, and seek, and knock*, as they are commanded, they would obtain. The only reason their prayers are not answered, the only reason *they ask, and receive not*, is, *because they ask amiss.* i. e. because they ask not as God directs them, but in a manner contrary to his directions.

So

\* ‘Men in their natural condition are guilty of a world of sin.—  
 • Their very religion is iniquity. Isa. 1. 5.—They pray for holiness, but oppose it. Joh. 5. 32 *They have not the love of God in them.* They praise God because of his excellency, but they don’t believe him to be such an one; it is a burden to them that they suspect it, and they wish he were not such an one. They wish God did not see their hearts, and had not power to avenge himself. There is nothing but hypocrisy in all they do. They confess their sins, and bewail their iniquities, but they have no Godly sorrow. They put up earnest requests for holiness, but don’t sincerely desire it. They strive against sin, and all the while are cherishing of it. They have pangs of affection, but no love. They have some affection to saints, but hate real holiness. They are zealous against some sins, but hate none. They are striving for salvation, but refuse the offers of it. Sometimes God tries them, by convincing them of the great danger of their damnation, and they shew a dreadful wicked, rebellious spirit, that they are scared to see themselves. There is a great deal of the spirit of the devil in them.’ Stoddard’s *Nature of conversion.* p. 96, 97, 98.

So again, the only reason they seek, and do not find, is, because they seek amiss. i. e. as Mr. M. expresses it, 'aim at what can never be accomplished, even to establish their own righteousness,' and will not submit themselves to the righteousness of God. For he that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them, shall have mercy. \* And, therefore,

4. The true reason and the only reason, that the doings of the unregenerate do not entitle them to the blessings promised in the gospel, is, because in all they do, there is no one act of compliance with God's directions. For if it is true, that *whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy*; then it is equally true, that he, who hath not found mercy, never did confess and forsake his sins, according to the divine direction. If it be true, that *every one that asketh, receiveth*; then it is equally true, that the unpardoned sinner never did ask pardon at the hands of God, in the sense of the text. For to say, that *I have confessed and forsaken my sins, I have asked pardon in the name of Christ, according to the divine direction*; yet *I have found no mercy, God hath not forgiven me*, is, if we may use the language of inspiration, to *make God a liar*.

Therefore,

To say, that the unregenerate, in their endeavours, do

\* Great pains have been taken to misrepresent and blacken this point. It hath been said, that we affirm, that the unregenerate are not required to *seek*, or *strive*, or *pray*. Whereas, in truth, we affirm, That the unregenerate are required to *seek*, and *strive*, and *pray*: But then, we add, that 'they do not the thing that God commands.'—The question; therefore, is not, whether God requires the unregenerate to *seek*, and *strive*, and *pray*: But the only question is, whether they 'do the thing that God commands.' This is the point in dispute. St. Paul has declared for our side of the question, in as strong terms as ever we used, in Rom. 8. 7, 8. *The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God; neither indeed can be.*—And dare any Christian allow himself to hate, and to blacken a doctrine taught by an inspired apostle? Or is the doctrine so odious to any, that they will not believe, that he did ~~not~~ teach it, however strongly his words express it?



do the things that God commands them to do, and that yet there is no promise to their doings, is expressly to contradict the word of God. For he *never said to the house of Jacob, seek ye my face in vain.*—And, therefore,

The question between Mr. M. and us is not, whether God has required the unregenerate, to *ask*, and *seek*, and *knock*, and *strive*, and *labour*. It is granted, that he has. And it is affirmed, that God has promised the blessings of the gospel, to a compliance with these directions, in God's sense of them. But it is also proved, from Mr. M's own words, that the unregenerate, 'as such' to use Mr. Stoddard's words, 'do not attend the will of God: do not the thing that he commands;' because as Mr. M. says, 'There is no promise of salvation to their endeavours,' Whereas *God promises salvation, to those who comply with his directions.*

Now, therefore, let Mr. M. either take sides with the *Arminians*, and say, that *there are promises to the doings of the unregenerate*: or let him join with Mr. Stoddard, and say, that 'they do not the thing that God commands: there is no obedience to God in what they do; they don't attend the will of God.'—Or let him openly, and plainly declare, 'that God has directed sinners what to do, that they may be saved; but it is not best that sinners should be urged to follow those directions, which God has given them, which if they do follow, they surely will be saved. And that, therefore, he is determined, to direct them, to do, as they do; altho' there is no promise to their doings. Yea, altho' it is certain before hand, that they *never will accomplish the thing they aim at.*'

A Minister of Christ is sent to preach the gospel to the Indians, and,

*Question 1.* Is it not the duty of the Indians to assemble, and hear him?

*Answer.* Yes; it is their duty to assemble, to hear the gospel preached. If the God of nature speaks to men, men ought to hear.---But,

Q. 2. Is it not their duty to come to hear with good and honest hearts, the first time they come?

A. Yes, it is as really their duty to come and hear with good and honest hearts the first time, as it is at any succeeding time. For it is as really the duty of Pagans to be well disposed toward the true God, who made them, and ready to hearken to his voice, as it is the duty of any of the human kind. Rom. 1. 20, 21, 28.

Q. 3. But if they have all of them, pagan hearts, shall they come and hear with their pagan hearts, in a pagan manner, rather than not come and hear at all?

A. If they come with pagan hearts, in a pagan manner, they sin greatly. If they refuse to come, their sin is greater. If they come with pagan hearts, in a pagan manner, they are in great danger of turning a deaf ear to the gospel, to their own destruction. But if they refuse to come <sup>at</sup> all, their perdition is certain. So then it is for their interest to come with pagan hearts, in a pagan manner, rather than not to come at all. Rom. 10. 14.

Q. 4. Is the missionary authorized by the commission of Christ to baptize these Pagans, as well as preach the gospel to them?

A. The commission of Christ authorizes him to preach to them, while Pagans; but not to baptize them until they become believers. Mark 16. 15, 16.

Q. 5. Suppose two Indians, in other respects equal, one has heard the gospel twenty years, the other never heard of it, both die Pagans in heart, which will be most miserable after death?

A. He that hath heard the gospel. For he that knows his master's will, and does it not, shall be beaten with many stripes. Luk. 12. 47, 48.

Q. 6. If so, why is not a birth and education in the heathen world to be preferred?

A. In a land of gospel light there is some hope of salvation from eternal misery: In Pagan darkness there is

no hope at all. Luk. 10. 10, 11, 12. Act. 4. 12. Eph. 2. 11, 12.

Q. 7. Is there then greater probability of the conversion of some sinners than of others ?

A. According to the rule by which mankind judge of likelihood, viz. That like things have been wont to take place in like circumstances, it is more likely that some sinners will be converted than others. Thus, more were converted among the posterity of Abraham, from his day to the day of Christ, than in any other nation in the world, thro' that period. So more were converted among those who attended the ministry of John baptist, of Jesus Christ, and of his apostles, than among those who never heard them. So there is more hope of the conversion of the children of godly parents, who are in a pious manner devoted to God in baptism, and who are brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord ; than there is of the conversion of the children of ungodly parents, who are brought to baptism merely to be in the fashion, and who are brought up according to the course of this world, in the service of diverse lusts and pleasures, to live in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. And so it is more likely that they will be converted, who live under an orthodox, pious, faithful minister, and under the watch and care of a church, whose members walk with God, and the light of whose holy examples shines all around them ; than they, who live under an unsound, ungodly, unfaithful minister, and in the company of carnal and loose professors, who join to hate and to blacken the true doctrines of the gospel, and to ridicule a life of strict piety. And so it is more likely that they, who are under deep and genuine legal conviction will be converted, than they who are quite secure in sin ; and more likely that awakened sinners, who forsake bad company, and every external vicious practice, and spend much time in reading God's word, in hearing good preaching, in meditation, in secret prayer, and withal confess their faults to those they have ill-used, and make restitution.



restitution to those they have injured.---More likely, I say, that awakened sinners will be converted, who take this course, altho' moved thereto merely by legal terrors, and self-righteous hope, being still *dead in sin*, contrary to God and to all good in the inmost temper of their hearts.---More likely, I say---than if they, with *Cain*, fled from the presence of the Lord, and ran to taverns, and to frolicks, and gave up themselves to drinking and debauchery, on purpose to stifle their convictions and drown the clamours of their consciences.—In a word, there is no doubt, but that there is much more, even an hundred, or a thousand times more likelihood, that some sinners will be converted than others. Yet still it remains true, as it is written, Mat. 19, 30. *But many that are first, shall be last ; and the last, shall be first.* See also Luk. 13, 29, 30. Thus *Cain* was the eldest child of Adam, but he was lost, while *Abel* was taken. And thus the Jews were God's peculiar people, but they were cast off ; while the Gentiles were called. And thus *Judas*, one of Christ's own family, is lost ; while a persecuting *Saul*, brought up among the Pharisees, is saved. That *no flesh might glory in the presence of God.* 1. Cor. 1. 26—31.

Q. 8. Is there really any hope at all, in the sinner's case, that he will be converted and saved, but what results merely from the sovereign grace of God ?

A. The same sovereign grace, which passed by the fallen angels and provided a Redeemer for fallen man, even the Son of God to die in our stead, must as freely give us a Sanctifier, or we perish. The same sovereign grace that appoints our lot in a land of light, that prevents us with the external means of grace, that begins the work of conviction, that drives the reluctant sinner to an external reformation and to a close attention to eternal things by legal terrors, even the same sovereign grace must carry on conviction till it is deep and thoro', and give repentance unto life, or the work will never be done. For the sinner, left to himself, will catch hold of some false hope, or go back to security ; and so finally,  
if

if left to himself, will infallibly perish.—And he deserves to be left to himself. He is under the curse of the righteous law of God, and may be justly given up to ruin. There is nothing but the sovereign grace of God to prevent it. And so there is really no hope in his case, but what at bottom results merely from the sovereign grace of God. Rom. 11. 5, 6, 7. Eph. 2. 1—5. Tit. 3. 3, 4, 5.

Q. 9. Is it for the advantage of the sinner, in this state, to tell him, that God requires him to do as he does, so that in doing as he does, he does what God requires ?

A. No : This is not to tell him the truth, nor would this tend to promote his good, but his hurt ; even to settle him down on his own righteousness, while dead in sin, as has been before shown.—Rather, when an awakened sinner has been in his closet two or three hours ; meditating, crying and praying, in great anguish, driven on by the fears of hell and self-righteous hopes ; yet still wholly impenitent, so that if there was no hell, he would never make another prayer, or shed another tear for his sins, but rather go back to them with pleasure ; when he rises from his knees, I would have his conscience cry out against him, in such language as this, ‘ Oh, thou ungodly, impenitent, guilty wretch ! thou hast done nothing all this while, as it ought to be done. Thy heart is still a heart of stone, wholly opposite to God and to all good. This is thy proper character ; and therefore the wrath of God still abideth on thee.’—For this is the very truth.

Q. 10. What directions then ought to be given to such a sinner ? And what ought we to say to him ?

A. Say all the things that God has said. Hold up the perfect law of God close to his conscience, to shew him his duty and his sin : for the law is the school-master which God has appointed to bring us to Christ. Hold up the gospel way of salvation, with all its evidence to his conscience, that he may understand and believe it ; for faith cometh by hearing. And let the whole tenor of all our discourse, to the sinner, be, to explain, and to enforce the

the exhortation of John baptist, of Jesus Christ, and of his apostles, in those remarkable words, **REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL.** This will tend to increase genuine conviction of all sin and guilt, and to prevent delusive and false hopes, and to shut him up to the faith.

We are to dwell largely on the being and perfections of God, and our original obligations to him, who is by nature God, and our Creator. We are particularly to explain the nature and reasonableness of the divine law, and to answer the sinner's objections against it. We are to exhibit to his view the sin which he stands charged with in the divine law, and the curse he is under for it, and the only way of obtaining pardon thro' the blood of Christ. In a word, we are to open to his view the whole plan of the gospel, the infinite riches of God's grace, the nature and sufficiency of Christ's atonement, the readiness of God to forgive repenting sinners who come to him in the name of Christ, the calls and invitations of the gospel, the dreadfulfulness of eternal misery in the lake of fire and brimstone; the glory and blessedness of the heavenly state, the shortness and uncertainty of time, the worth of his soul, the dangers which attend him from the world, the flesh and the devil, the inexcusable guilt of final impenitence, the aggravated punishment of gospel sinners, &c. &c. &c. And so bring into the view of his conscience every argument and motive to repent and to return to God thro' Jesus Christ.

Just as any plain man of common sense would do, who was sent after a run-away son, who had risen against his father, and made an attempt on his life, and then run off; for which his father had disinherited him, and was determined he should be disinherited for ever, unless he would return, and before the whole family, on his knees, confess his fault, and take the whole blame to himself, and justify his father's resentments, and freely own and acknowledge that it was good enough for him to be cast off by his father, and no blemish but a beauty in his character to disinherit such a son: And in this view, ask



forgiveness, as of mere free grace. Common sense would teach such a man, in all he said, to this rebellious, run-away son; to vindicate his father's character and conduct, and to prove to him that all the blame was in him, and that it was his duty and interest, without the least hesitation, or one objection, on the first invitation, to do as did the prodigal in the parable, when he came to himself, viz. *Arise and go to his father.* And so long as the run-away son should refuse to do this, common sense would teach any plain man to consider him as impenitent; and to look upon all his tears and cries as selfish and hypocritical. — But should the run-away son not only refuse to return, but begin, in his own justification, to plead, and say, 'My father's character, and my father's government, are not objects of love. He has disinherited me. To love him would be the same thing as to love to be disinherited; which would be to love my own disgrace and poverty; which would be to love my own misery; which is impossible. To say, that this conduct of his is not a blemish, but a beauty in his character, would be a sin: For I ought to love myself and to stand for my honor, and for my right. Such a submission he shall never have from me.' However, if he will receive me to favour, and restore me to the inheritance, impenitent as I am, I will forgive what is past, and be reconciled for the future.' Common sense would declare such a son, not only impenitent, but obstinately impenitent, and intollerably haughty. And, in this view, any plain man would tell him, in the most peremptory language, that there was no hope in his case, unless he would humble himself, and come to a deep and sound repentance. Thus John baptist, Jesus Christ and his apostles called sinners to repentance; and never once gave, impenitent sinners, as such, the least ground to hope for pardon, but expressly said, *Except ye repent, ye shall all perish.* And to the true penitent, they gave no ground to hope for pardon, on the foot of his own righteousness. For it was a settled point, that *without shedding*

*ding of blood there is no remission.* And, indeed, that repentance is not genuine, in which we do not, from the heart, give up every self-justifying plea, take all the blame to ourselves, and accept the punishment of our iniquity, with a disposition to look only to free grace thro' Jesus Christ, for that pardon and salvation which the gospel offers.

N. B. In this plan of dealing with an awakened sinner, two things are taken for granted, viz. (1.) That total depravity and moral agency are consistent. And (2.) That repentance unto life is consistently, both, the sinner's duty, and God's gift. Ezek. 18. 31. and chap. 36. 26. Aet. 2. 38. Aet. 3. 19. Aet. 5. 31.

*Objection.* The run-away son, in the similitude, is a moral agent with respect to all the duties required of him by his father ; and so is wholly to blame for his disaffection to his father, and may be considered and treated accordingly : but the unregenerate sinner is not a moral agent, with respect to that love to God, which is required in the law, or to that faith and repentance, which are called for in the gospel. That is, he cannot love God, believe, or repent. And therefore he cannot be considered, as being wholly to blame for his disaffection towards God, and for his unbelief and impenitence, or treated accordingly. For 'to love God as exhibited in the law, is the same thing as to love his own misery.' And to believe in Christ and repent before he has had 'a discovery of Christ,' is as impossible as it is to love an object of which we have no idea. To exhort the unregenerate sinner, therefore, as we would exhort such a run-away son, is absurd and inconsistent. p. 42, 43.

*Ans.* It is true, that, in thus dealing with the awakened sinner, we consider him, while unregenerate, as a moral agent, possessed of every qualification essential to moral agency. For we think that unregeneracy consists, not in being destitute of any of those natural faculties which are essential to moral agency, but only in being destitute of a heart to do our duty, and in having an heart

heart opposite thereto. Joh. 3. 6. Rom. 8. 7. But want of inclination and disinclination to that duty which God requires of us, instead of lessening blame, is that for which we are blame-worthy. Luk. 19. 27. We consider the unregenerate sinner, therefore, with respect to love to God, and faith in Christ, and with respect to all duties required in law and gospel, as a moral agent, to whom the commands of the one, and the exhortations of the other may, with propriety, be given; and who is wholly to blame in not obeying the one, and in not complying with the other. And all we shall, at present, say, in answer to the objection, is, that if the unregenerate sinner is not a moral agent, with respect to the divine law, then he does not deserve the curse of it, for not *continuing in all things*: Which to say, is to contradict, Gal. 3. 10. And if he is not a moral agent, with respect to the gospel, the external revelation of it being enjoyed, then he is not to blame for impenitence and unbelief, nor does he deserve any punishment for these crimes: Which to say, is to contradict, Mat. 11. 20—24. Luk. 10. 3—12. Joh. 3. 18, 19. Joh. 16. 9. In a word, if the unregenerate sinner is not a moral agent with respect to law and gospel, then the old and new testament, which consider and treat him as such, are not from God. To say, therefore, he is not a moral agent, is, in effect, to give up divine revelation. That is, to say, that the unregenerate sinner is not wholly to blame, in not loving God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself; and that the unregenerate sinner, who lives under the light of the gospel, is not wholly to blame for impenitence and unbelief, is to deny the first principles of the scripture scheme of religion, and, in effect, to give up the whole of it. And to give up the bible, rather than to take that blame to ourselves, which belongs to us, is the very essence of infidelity, and that which constitutes it so great a crime. Joh. 3. 19, 20.—See President *Edwards* on *freedom of will*, part 3. sect. iv.



## SECTION V.

Gal. iii. 10. *For as many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse : For it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*

*Impenitent, self-righteous, christless sinners are under the curse of the law of God : But this is inconsistent with their being in covenant with God, in good standing, in his sight, by any works which they do, while such.*

**W**E will premise a few things, and then particularly explain and prove the above proposition, and shew the inconsistency between the covenant of works, and Mr. M's external covenant, considered as conditional.

1. God the Creator, and moral Governor of the world, did originally deserve supreme love, and universal, perfect obedience from his creature man. This was implied in that law given to Adam, *In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.*

2. God is in himself as amiable now, as he was before the fall of man ; as worthy to be loved, honored and obeyed ; for he is the same now, that he was then. There is no alteration in his nature, and he has done nothing to forfeit his character ; if, therefore, before the fall he was worthy of love, he is equally worthy since. To say, that there was originally any blemish in the divine Character ; or to say, that he has brought any blemish upon himself, in any instance of his conduct, since the beginning of the world, is to deny his divinity. It is to say, that he is not by nature God : He is not, and never was an absolutely perfect being. A denial of the divinity of Christ is the foundation of the *Arian* heresy. But we must deny the divinity of God the Father, we must deny the divinity of the Godhead itself, or we can never justify the least degree of disaffection toward the Deity in our hearts : but must take the whole blame to ourselves. For if God is in himself the same infinitely amiable

amiable Being, he has been from everlasting, and if all his conduct has been like himself, perfect in beauty, without a blemish ; if we do not love him with all our hearts, the whole fault must be in ourselves, and not at all in him.---And on the other hand, if God has, in any instance, done amiss, not conducted in that perfect, in that amiable and glorious manner, which became him, who is by nature God ; it must be owned, that we have just cause to love him less, and in some degree, at least, to dislike him ; and our conduct in so doing may be vindicated. Nor can God be just when he speaketh, or clear when he judgeth, if he looks upon us and treats us, as being wholly to blame, in not loving him with all our hearts. But if the blame is not wholly in us, it is partly in him. And if there is the least blemish in his character, or conduct, then he is not so perfect as he might be ; he is not absolutely perfect. That is, he is not God.---Therefore,

3. The denial of the divinity of the one only, true, and living God, is the only foundation on which, consistently, fallen man can be justified more or less, in not perfectly conforming to the divine law. For, if it is granted, that the divine Character was originally, absolutely perfect, and that the whole of his conduct towards us from the beginning of the world has been absolutely perfect too, then every thing in God, and belonging to God, conspires to render him a perfectly amiable, and lovely Being, and to oblige us to love him with all our hearts, and to render us criminal and without excuse in the least neglect, or defect. Nor can there be any excuse invented but what must issue in a denial of his divinity. For if the fault is not wholly in us, it is partly in him : and if partly in him, then he is not absolutely perfect ; i. e. he is not God.---And to say, that, by the fall, man ceased to be a moral agent, is, by fair construction, subversive of the whole of divine revelation. For,

4. It is a dictate of common sense, that we do not need a surety to pay a debt for us, which we ourselves

do not owe. And, therefore, if the divine law was not binding on fallen man, antecedent to the consideration of Christ's undertaking to answer the demands of the law in our stead, then there was no need that he should have undertaken to answer the demands of the law in our stead. For there was no need, that our surety should pay a debt for us, that we ourselves did not owe, and never could have owed had he never undertaken in our behalf. An atonement might have been needed for Adam's first offence ; but if Adam and all his race, on the apostasy, ceased to be moral agents, & so ceased to be bound by the moral law to perpetual, perfect obedience, as Mr. M. maintains ; (p. 50) there was no need of an atonement for the *many offences*, which have taken place since the fall : for these *many offences* are not *sins* ; for where there is *no law*, there is *no transgression*. And *sin is not imputed, where there is no law*. And thus, if we give up the law, we must give up the gospel too ; and, to be consistent, become infidels complete. But,

5. If God the creator, and moral governor of the world, was originally an absolutely perfect Being ; and if he deserved the supreme love and the perfect obedience of his creature man before the fall, and if he deserves the same since the fall ; and, if we, retaining our original natural faculties, by which, before the fall, man was a moral agent, remain the same still ; then may we consistently believe the bible to be the word of God. For, on these hypotheses, the divine law may be vindicated, which, relative to fallen man, and that considered as unregenerate and Christless, says, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*. And if this law was worthy of God, then it might be worthy of God to appoint his Son to be made a curse, to redeem us from the curse of the law.—But of this I have spoken particularly heretofore ; § and so need not enlarge. Therefore, We

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§ *Essay on the Nature and Glory of the Gospel.* Sect. III. and IV. To which essay I am constrained so frequently to refer the reader, in order to avoid re-publishing things which I have already written in that book.



We proceed to explain and prove the proposition before laid down, viz. That *impenitent, self-righteous, Christless sinners are under the curse of the law of God; but this is inconsistent with their being in covenant with God, in good standing in his sight. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, &c.* And,

1. By *sin* is meant, 'any want of conformity unto, or transgression of the law of God.'---This definition of sin, which is given by the *Assembly of Divines at Westminster*, is taken out of those two texts. 1 John 3. 4. *Sin is a transgression of the law.* Gal. 3. 10. *Cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things, &c.*

2. By *the law* is meant, God's holy law, which requires holiness and nothing but holiness. For if the law of God required *sin*, then *sin* would be not only 'a transgression of,' but also 'a conformity unto' the law of God. An absurdity essential to Mr. M's scheme. An absurdity his scheme can no sooner get rid of, than the *Ethiopian can change his skin.*

The holiness required in the divine law is summed up in love. 'The sum of the ten commandments is, thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c. and thy neighbour as thyself. So we were taught by our catechism, when we were children. Nor am I able to express my sentiments with more plainness and precision on the subject, than was done in my former piece. p. 25, 26. 'The law of Moses, which was the rule of duty in the covenant into which the Israelites entered, required nothing but holiness. That covenant which was externally exhibited, and externally entered into, was so far from being a graceless covenant, that it required nothing but true grace and real holiness; nothing but love, with all its various exercises and fruits, in heart and life; love to God and man; of this we are expressly assured by One who came from God, and infallibly understood the nature of that dispensation. Mat. 22. 36---40. *Master, which is the great commandment of the law?* Said a Pharisee to our Saviour, our,

our referring to the law of Moses. *Jesus said unto him,*  
*thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.*  
*this is the first and great commandment; and the second is*  
*like unto it, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.* Thus  
 he had answered the Pharisee's question. But he  
 proceeded to add another sentiment, which overthrew  
 the Pharisaic scheme by the roots. *On these two com-*  
*mands hang all the law and the prophets:* for if the law  
 obliged the Jew to perform every duty in a holy man-  
 ner, out of love; and required no other kind of obe-  
 dience but this; if *all the law and the prophets hang on*  
*these two commands;* so that radically love was all; so  
 that this holy love was *the fulfilling of the law,* R m.  
 13. 8, 10; then the Pharisees who were entirely des-  
 titute of this, were equally destitute of that kind of  
 religion required in the Mosaic law, and so their scheme  
 was torn up by the roots.—It is not only a fundamental  
 maxim in the scripture scheme of religion, that *love*  
*is the fulfilling of the law;* but it is expressly affirmed,  
 that without love the highest gifts, and the greatest  
 attainments, the most expensive deeds, and the most  
 cruel sufferings are nothing, and will profit nothing.  
 The apostle Paul carries the point so far as to say,  
*Tho' I speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have*  
*not charity, I am as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal;*  
 as destitute of true and real virtue. *And tho' I have*  
*the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and have*  
*all knowledge; and tho' I have all faith so that I could re-*  
*move mountains, and have no charity, I am nothing.* And  
 to carry the point as high as it can possibly be carried,  
 he adds; *And tho' I bestow all my goods to feed the poor,*  
*and tho' I give my body to be burned and have not chari-*  
*ty, it profiteth me nothing.* For in his view charity, or  
 love was the sum total of all virtue—Therefore, where  
 there is no love, there is no virtue: Not the least de-  
 gree of conformity to God's nature and law.' For  
 the apostle never dreamt, that that *self-love* which reigns  
 in the hearts of devils, and of wicked men, was any part

of that *charity* in which he made all true virtue to consist. For then it could not have been said of the vilest sinner, that he *hath no charity*; whereas the apostle supposes this might be true, of some eminent professors, who even gave *all their goods to feed the poor, and their bodies to be burned*, that they *had no charity*. Besides, if that self-love is a part of what the divine law requires, then that which is the principle of all enmity against the Deity, is matter of duty: than which, nothing can be more absurd. †—But to proceed,

3. By a *sinner*, in the proposition, is not meant merely, one that has sinned, and does sin every day, for this is true of *saints*. But by a *sinner* is meant one who is wholly destitute of that holiness which is required in God's law. One who has been *born only of the flesh*, and so is only *flesh*: who hath not been *born of the spirit*, and so hath not the *spirit of Christ*. Whose character is given by the Holy Ghost, in Rom. 8. 7. 8. *The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be: So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God*. For that the Holy Ghost meant to comprehend all unregenerate sinners, is evident from the next words. Ver. 9. *But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you*. So then, all those, in whom, the spirit of God dwelleth not, are *in the flesh*; which is the character of every Christless sinner. For if any man have not the *spirit of Christ*, he is none of his. So that, by a sinner is meant, one who is dead in sin, and an enemy to God. A character, in the sight of God, infinitely criminal; as is evident from this,

† When it is said, *thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself*, this neither justifies the selfish spirit of wicked men, nor requires the exercise of a like temper with respect to their neighbour; but only teaches us, that as our neighbour's welfare is worth as much as our own, (*cæteris paribus*) so it ought to be as dear to us, as our own ought to be. Even as it is among the angels in heaven, and as it must always be in creatures under the perfect government of pure benevolence. For this will be exercised towards beings, in proportion to their true worth. See President Edwards on the nature of true virtue.



this, that his law dooms persons of this character to eternal misery ; which is a punishment infinitely dreadful.

4. By an *impenitent, self-righteous* sinner is meant a sinner, who being really of the character just stated, yet instead of confessing and forsaking, is habitually disposed to *cover his sins, and justify himself in his wickedness*. Even as our first parents covered their nakedness with fig-leaves, and did all they could to hide themselves from God, and said all they could to justify themselves. The last words which Adam spake when called before his Judge, previous to the sentence passed upon him, were designed to excuse himself, and to lay the blame upon God, who had given him such a tempter ; and upon her who had tempted him. The words are very remarkable. *The woman, which thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.* And yet Mr. M. represents Adam, in these words, as making ‘a full confession of his guilt.’ p. 17. And as being so humbled, ‘as that he was prepared to receive a discovery of redeeming mercy with all his heart.’ p. 47. It is a dangerous thing to flatter sinners into a good opinion of themselves. Adam first covered his nakedness with fig-leaves, before God came, to call him to an account : for he could not endure to see himself. And when God came, he fled, and he hid himself from the presence of the Lord amongst the trees of the garden : for he could not endure to be seen by God. *For he that doth evil hateth the light.* And when he was forced to come forth, and appear before his Judge, he came with guile in his mouth, saying, *I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself.* For it was not the nakedness of his body, but a guilty conscience, which made him hide himself. But he could not bear to own his sin. He dreaded to have it brought into view : and when closely examined and pinched to the very heart, so that he could not conceal the fact which he had done ; yet then he would cunningly put into his confession, every extenuating circumstance, that as much as possible, the blame might be cast off from himself, wherever else it might fall.

fall, Ungrateful wretch ! to blame his kind Creator, and bountiful Benefactor ! *The woman, which thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.* Nothing is owned, but merely the external act ; the bad intention, the proud, wicked, rebellious heart is kept out of view : their aspiring to be *as God's* : their believing the serpent's lies before the God of truth, &c. &c. But here we have a specimen of the true nature of impenitence. This disposition to *cover their sin* took place in our first parents on their fall, and it has spread thro' all their guilty race. And mankind have proceeded so far, as even to invent new schemes of religion, not revealed in, but contrary to the holy scriptures, to cover their sins and to justify themselves in their wickedness. Nor may be it amiss to mention one or two schemes of this sort, that we may see how the charge exhibited in the divine law against the sinner is evaded, and himself freed from blame, and justified in his own conscience. Thus,

*The charge* exhibited in God's holy law against the sinner is, that *he sins and deserves eternal damnation, for not continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them.*—But—the sum of the ten commandments is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart—and thy neighbour as thyself.—The *Arminian* pleads, and says, ' No man can be obliged to keep this law. For no man can exercise principles which he has not. For that implies a contradiction. \* But we have lost our power, ' of

\* By a principle of love is meant, a disposition to love, or a heart to love. But to say, I have no heart to love God, and therefore I am not obliged to love him, is to say, that the more depaved I am, the less to blame I am. He who has no heart at all to honor his father and his mother, is, on this hypothesis, blameless. Let the parents be ever so worthy, if the child has no heart to love and honor them, he is free. So a dishonest man, who has no heart to pay his debts, is not obliged ; and a covetous riggard, who has no heart to give to the poor, is not bound. For, on this hypothesis, our inclination is our rule of duty, and not the law of God. Not what is right and fit, and, as such, is required by God, the sole Monarch of the universe, is my duty ; but only that which suits my own heart. So *Pharaoh* said, *Who is the Lord ? I know not the Lord, nor will I obey his voice.* Pharaoh had no principle of love and obedience, and so he was not obliged. So he felt,—But the God of the Hebrews imputed it to him for sin.

‘ of yielding perfect obedience in Adam. We cannot  
 ‘ love God with all our heart, and our neighbour as our-  
 ‘ selves. We are not to blame for not doing what we  
 ‘ cannot do. And, therefore, we are not to blame, nor  
 ‘ do we deserve the *curse*, for *not continuing in all things*  
 ‘ *written in the book of the law to do them*. This law is too  
 ‘ severe for a fallen world. Christ has died for us ; and  
 ‘ so the law is abated. And if we do as well as we can,  
 ‘ we shall be saved. For it would be unjust for God to  
 ‘ require more of us than we can do, and then damn us  
 ‘ for not doing.’—Thus they reason, and thus they be-  
 lieve, and thus their sins are covered even from the sight  
 of their own consciences, and they stand justified in them-  
 selves.——Again,

*The charge exhibited in God’s holy law against the sin-  
 ner is, that he sins, and deserves eternal damnation, for not  
 continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them.*  
 —But ‘ the sum of the ten commandments is, Thou shalt  
 ‘ love the Lord thy God with all thy heart—and thy  
 ‘ neighbour as thyself.’---The *Antinomian* pleads, and says,  
 ---‘ This law is not in force with respect to fallen man  
 ‘ at all : And so I am not in the least to blame for not  
 ‘ continuing in all things written in it. For to love that  
 ‘ character of God, which is exhibited in his law, is the  
 ‘ same thing as to love my own misery. But to love my  
 ‘ own misery is to take pleasure in pain ; which is an  
 ‘ express contradiction, and in its very nature absolutely  
 ‘ impossible ; and even inconsistent with my continuing  
 ‘ to exist, as a sensible being, and a moral agent. And,  
 ‘ besides, it is contrary to the law of God, which requires  
 ‘ me to love myself. That law, therefore, which was  
 ‘ given to Adam in innocence, and which obliged him  
 ‘ to love that character of God, which was exhibited in  
 ‘ it, is entirely set aside since the fall ; and is binding on  
 ‘ no child of Adam, more or less, as a rule of duty.  
 ‘ For it is not the duty of any one to love that character  
 ‘ of God, which is exhibited in the moral law. Nay,  
 ‘ it is now since the fall contrary to the law of God to  
 ‘ do



do it. For the law of God requires us to love ourselves; but to love that character of God, which is exhibited in the moral law, is the same thing, as to love our own misery. And, therefore, instead of its being a duty, it is a sin, repugnant to the law of God, to love that character of God, which is exhibited in the moral law; and so it ought not to be done.——

Moreover, no unregenerate unbeliever can love that character of God, which is revealed in the gospel, because he doth not know it. For an unknown object cannot be loved. For to love an object of which we have no idea, is to love nothing, which is a contradiction, and in its own nature absolutely impossible.---

Wherefore, before Christ is discovered to the soul by the spirit of God, while unregenerate, no man is in duty bound to love, either the character of God, exhibited in the law, or the character of God revealed in the gospel. Nothing, therefore, remains for unregenerate, unbelievers, to do, as their present duty, but to reform their external practice, use the means of grace, and strive, and do their utmost, as unregenerate sinners may do, while such. Of such therefore it may be said, that they forsake all known sin, and practise all known duty. Such, then, who are come to a fixed resolution thus to do, are qualified to enter into covenant with God, and to attend sealing ordinances. For their being destitute of faith, repentance and love, is their calamity, but not their sin.'---Thus *Antinomians* reason, thus they believe, and thus their sins are covered even from the sight of their own consciences, and they stand justified in themselves. And thus we see, what is meant by an *impenitent, self-righteous* sinner, viz. a sinner, obstinate in his disaffection to the Deity, who covers his sins, and justifies himself in his wickedness. To proceed.

5. By a *christless* sinner is meant, a sinner, who doth not receive, but doth in his heart reject Jesus Christ; and so is not interested in him, and the blessings purchased by him; and so remains at present under the curse of the

the law and the wrath of God, as truly and really as if Christ had never died ; according to those words, in Joh. 3. 18, 36. *He that believeth not is condemned already—and the wrath of God abideth on him.*—But, in this sense, every impenitent, self-righteous sinner, is a christless sinner ; for this plain reason, because they do not receive, but reject Christ. As it is written, Luk. 5. 31. *The whole need not a physician, but the sick.* For sinners never feel their want of Christ, or look to God thro' him for pardon, in those things, in which, they justify themselves ; or for divine assistance, in those things, which they think themselves not bound in duty to do. For instance, an *Arminian*, as he does not think himself to blame, for not loving God with all his heart ; so he never means to ask pardon of God in the name of Christ, as being to blame for this. He only blames himself, when he neglects to do as well as he can, in his own sense of the phrase ; and feels guilt and need of pardon only in these instances. But as to the law of perfection, as he thinks himself not bound by that ; so he thinks himself not to blame for not continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them ; and so no atonement, no sanctifier, no repentance, no pardon are needed in this case.—So again, an *Antinomian*, as he doth not believe it to be his duty to love that character of God which is exhibited in his holy law ; so he never confesseth his sin in not doing of it, or asks pardon of God, or dreams that he needs any pardon, in this case ; or any Redeemer to atone for this sin, or any Sanctifier to enable him to do this duty. For, if it is not his duty to love that character of God, which is exhibited in his holy law, then he needs no assistance to do it. For we need divine assistance only to enable us to do our duty. And if it is not his duty to love that character of God, which is exhibited in his holy law, then he is guilty of no sin in not loving of it ; and so needs no Christ, no atonement, no repentance, no pardon in the affair : And thus, that Christ, that pardon, that grace which are offered in the gospel, he doth not need ;

need ; and so doth not receive, but reject. Yea, he rejects all, as an abuse. For, to tell a sinner, he needs a pardon, in that, in which, he justifies himself, will affront him ; he will think himself abused ; he will think himself implicitly charged with guilt, in that, in which, he is not guilty. And so instead of desiring the pardon, he will reject the offer, as an abuse. And thus do all impenitent, self-righteous sinners, with respect to that pardon and to that sanctifying grace, which the gospel offers. As they need neither the one nor the other, so they reject both, with all their hearts. *For the whole need not a physician, but the sick.*

And in every instance, in which men justify themselves, they depend, so far as they have any dependance, for acceptance in the sight of God, not on the atonement of Christ, but on their own innocence. For their plea is, NOT GUILTY. Here they join issue ; and appeal to the judgment seat of God. Luk. 18. 9--13. And, therefore,

If the divine law doth require mankind to *be perfect, as our Father, which is in heaven, is perfect*, notwithstanding our fallen state : if the law of God requires perfection of us, as much as it did of Adam ; if we are to blame, and deserve eternal death, for *not continuing in all things*, as really as Adam did for eating the forbidden fruit ; and if on this hypothesis, and in this view, *Christ was made a curse, to redeem sinners from this curse* ; yet, if we plead NOT GUILTY ; if we affirm that we are not bound by this law ; if we affirm that in our fallen state it is not possible that we should be bound by it ; if we join issue on this point, and appeal to the judgment of God : if God brings us in GUILTY, at the great day, it will be too late then, to *shift our plea*. It will be too late to say, that our dependance was on the atonement of Christ. For it may be retorted,—‘ If you were not guilty, you needed no atonement. But this was your plea, NOT GUILTY. And you appealed to the judgment seat of God. It is too late therefore now to pre-  
tend



‘tend you depended on the atonement. Your first plea ‘precludes this.’—They must therefore have their trial, and stand, or fall, for eternity, on their first plea, of NOT GUILTY.—And therefore it will come to pass, that every impenitent, self-righteous sinner will be condemned, unless they can make their first plea good, at the bar of God. If the Judge will give up his law, they may be acquitted. But if he abides by what is written, viz. *As many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; as it is written, cursed is every one, that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them;* there will be no hope in their case, at that day. And, therefore, all who, either on the *Arminian*, or on the *Antinomian*, or on any other plan, do, in heart, reject the perfect law of God, for their rule of life in this world; will perish for ever in the next.

And thus we see, what is meant by an *impenitent, self-righteous, Christless sinner*. Now in the proposition it is said, that ‘impenitent, self-righteous, Christless sinners are *under the curse* of the law of God.’—But,

6. By the *curse* of the law is meant, the curse threatened in the law of God; even all the curses written in God’s book, comprising ‘all the miseries of this life, and death itself, and the pains of hell for ever.’

7. When it is said, that they are *under* this curse, it is intended, that they are already condemned to all this by the law of God, and are liable to have the curse executed, in its utmost rigour, i. e. to be struck dead, and sent to hell, at any moment. They are reprieved, moment by moment, by the sovereign pleasure of their Judge.

That Christless sinners are thus *under* the curse of the law, is evident not only from the tenor of the law itself, but also from the whole course of the divine conduct. For, according to this rule, God hath dealt with Christless sinners, in all ages of the world. As to *the miseries of this life*, he inflicts them upon them, according to his sovereign pleasure. As to *death itself*, he inflicts it just when he pleases. And as soon as the Christless sinner is

dead, in an instant, he is in hell, and must endure *the pains of hell forever*. Therefore, from the tenor of the divine law, and of the divine conduct, it is evident, that God is at liberty, with respect to them, to kill and damn, any Christless sinner, at what moment he pleases. And therefore he is not bound not to do so. And therefore there is no covenant between God and the sinner existing, obliging God to bestow any favour, on any one Christless sinner, now in the world : but he may strike dead and send to hell, justly and without breach of covenant, any christless sinner who draws the breath of life. Thus, in this sense, *impenitent, self-righteous, Christless sinners are under the curse of the law*.

8. And this is true of self-righteous, Christless sinners; without exception, as the apostle affirms, *As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse*. Be they circumcised Jews, or baptized Gentiles ; or be they both circumcised and baptized too, as doubtless many were in the churches of *Galatia*, to whom he was writing : Yet neither their circumcision, nor their baptism, at all altered the case. For the circumcised and the uncircumcised, the baptized, and the unbaptized, are all equally under the curse of the law, if of a self-righteous character. For they reject Christ, and so can have no interest in him ; as by divine constitution none are interested in him, but those who receive him. Joh. i. 12. and 3. 18. And, therefore, they must stand or fall by mere law. But the law says, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things*.

The law doth not say, ‘ cursed is every uncircumcised Gentile ;’ nor doth the law say, ‘ cursed is every unbaptized Pagan :’ but thus it is written, ‘ cursed is every one :’ be he Jew, or Gentile ; be he Christian, or Pagan ; be he circumcised, or baptized, or neither ; if he be self-righteous, and Christless, he is cursed. For these things alter not the case at all. Rom. 2. 25, 28, 29. *For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law ; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made*

*uncircumcision.* For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh : but he is a Jew which is one inwardly : and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. Therefore baptized sinners, if they are Christless, are as much under the curse of the law, as those who are unbaptized : and so, are as liable to ‘ all the miseries of this life, to death itself, and to the pains of hell forever.’ And God is as much at liberty to strike dead and send to hell, at any moment, self-righteous, Christless sinners, who are baptized, as those who are unbaptized. He is not bound by covenant to the one, any more than to the other. But, as to life, and to the outward means of salvation, and to the strivings of the Spirit, he is at perfect liberty, to have mercy on whom he will have mercy. This is certain from the whole tenor of the divine conduct. For we all know, that baptized sinners are as liable to sudden death as the unbaptized. And when they die, there is an end to all the outward means of salvation, and inward strivings of the Spirit, and nothing before them, but the pains of hell forever. So that there is no covenant between God and them in the way ; there is nothing of this kind to hinder ; but God is at perfect liberty to execute the curse of the law, on any Christless sinner, at any moment he pleases. For they are all in his hands, held up over hell by the thread of their lives, justly condemned, at his sovereign disposal. And accordingly, he lets one drop into hell now, and another then, just as he pleases, from day to day, from hour to hour, continually. And this hath been his constant course of conduct in all ages past. And thus every Christless sinner is under the curse of the law.—But here, it may be inquired, for what crime, or crimes, are they thus, by the law of God, sentenced to eternal woe ? To which, the answer is plain. For,

9. This curse self-righteous, christless sinners are sentenced unto by the divine law, for not yielding a perfect obedience



obedience to it, continually, every day. Cursed is every one that *continueth not in all things*. So that the law of perfection is binding on the unregenerate, christless sinner. And in the judgment of him, whose judgment is always according to truth, they deserve eternal woe, for every instance of defect, in thought, word, or deed; in matter or manner. And that whether they were from eternity elected to salvation, or not; and whether Christ died with an absolute design to save them, or not; and whether they enjoy the strivings of God's spirit, or are given up to their own hearts lusts: Yea, and whether they enjoy the benefit of a written revelation, or not. Rom. 1. 18—21. *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness, and unrighteousness of men.—So that even the heathen are without excuse; because when they knew God, only by the light of nature, and tradition, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful.* Rom. 3. 9. *For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.* Ver. 19. *That every mouth may be stopped, and ALL THE WORLD may become guilty before God.* For the curse extends to every one, to every Christless sinner of Adam's race. So that the divine law is binding on fallen men, previous to the consideration of the grace of the gospel. And mankind are under so great obligations to perfect obedience, that in the judgment of him, *who is over all God blessed forever*, they deserve eternal woe, for any one defect, for not *continuing in all things*. For such is the infinite dignity of the Deity, such his infinite worthiness of supreme love and universal obedience, in being what he is in himself, and our Creator, that, on these original grounds, it is infinitely criminal, not to love him with all our hearts, and obey him in every thing. Nor doth our original apostasy in Adam, or our present depravity, or our guilt and exposedness to eternal destruction, exempt us from the divine law, as our rule of duty, or from its curse for every transgression. Nor is God obliged in justice to grant us any relief: for this law, itself, is the rule of justice; *holy, just and good*. Rom. 7. 12.

Thus

Thus stands the matter in the sacred writings. This *divinity* how *new* soever it may appear to those who never before attended to it, was taught of old by Moses, Deut. 27. And afterwards by the apostle Paul, Gal. 3. 10. Or rather the God of Israel is the true author of this system. It was of old revealed, in the law of Moses ; it was afterwards honoured with the highest honours, on the cross, by the blood of God's own Son. And it was considered as fundamental in that scheme of religion, which the apostles preached and wrote under divine inspiration. And to be an enemy to this law, is to be an enemy to God himself, who is its author, and whose image it bears ; and to his Son, who died to do it honour.

To say, that this law ceases to be binding, is to say, that God ceases to be God, or that we cease to be his creatures. For if God is God, and we are his creatures, we ought to glorify him as God, and pay the honour to him, that creatures owe to their creator, unless he has done something to forfeit our love and obedience, or we cease to be moral agents. But to say, that the supreme Majesty of heaven and earth has hurt his character, by any part of his conduct, is to say, that he is not an absolutely perfect Being : which is the same, as to say, that he is not God. Nor can we throw the blame off from ourselves, by saying, that we cease to be moral agents, without casting it on our Maker. For either he is to blame for continuing this law in force, armed with its curse ; or we are to blame for breaking this law, and deserve the threatned woe. And to say, that it is not in force, is expressly to contradict divine revelation, which says, *Curse is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*—But,

10. For God in his holy law to require holiness, and nothing but holiness, of the Christless sinner, and curse him for the least defect, is inconsistent with requiring of him some thing besides holiness, viz. Sin ; and promis-

ing

ing by covenant to bless him, with great blessings, on condition he performs the sinful action required. For this is to bless, and to curse, the same man, at the same time, for the same action. Those very actions of the Christless sinner, who hath no righteousness, but his own, in which to appear before God, which, by the law he is under justly deserv'd and really expose him to present damnation, cannot, at the same time, qualify him, in the sight of the same God, (considered as searcher of hearts) for any blessings whatever. For that which merits God's eternal curse, considered in it self, cannot, considered in it self, qualify for God's blessing : unless that which is in it self infinitely odious in the sight of God, is a meet qualification for a token of the divine favour. Besides, he who is, by divine constitution, at this present moment, liable to be struck dead and sent to hell, without time to breath one breath more, for doing as he does ; cannot by divine constitution, be entitled to any one blessing, by those doings ; for this would imply two divine constitutions, in their own nature inconsistent, both in force at the same time, the one cursing, and the other blessing, the same sinner, at the same time, for the same action. Which is the same thing, as to suppose a thing to be, and not to be in the same sense, at the same time. Which is an express contradiction.

*Objection.* If this reasoning is just, then God is at liberty to kill and damn all the ungodly now at this present time, before the elect are called in ; and so before Christ has *seen his seed*, and the *travail of his soul*. And so God was at liberty to have killed and damned every unregenerate sinner in the congregation of Israel, while in Egypt ; and so the promise to Abraham, that at the end of 430 years his seed should be brought out of Egypt, might have never been fulfilled. Or he might have killed and damned every unregenerate sinner, in any period afterwards, and the very ancestors of the Messiah himself might have been cut off. And so that great  
promise



promise to Abraham, *in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed*, might have never been accomplished.

*Answer.* Christ Jesus may have a covenant right to *see his seed*, and *the travail of his soul* ; and yet the self-righteous sinner may be under the curse of the law, in perfect consistency. Both these are scripture doctrines, and both are perfectly harmonious. God may not be at liberty, with respect to Christ Jesus, to kill and damn every unregenerate sinner now in the world ; because this would be inconsistent with his promise to him : But yet, with respect to unregenerate sinners themselves, God is at liberty ; because God hath made no promise to unregenerate sinners, as such, by which, they can, any one of them now on earth, claim a covenant right, to an exemption from the curse of the law, one single moment.

Again,

Abraham might have a covenant right to a posterity, in number like the stars and like the sands, because God promised this to him : And so, on the same ground, he might have a covenant right to the land of Canaan, and to all the blessings comprised in God's covenant with him ; and yet such of his posterity, as refused to walk in his steps, and rejected the covenant of grace, and remained under the curse of the law, might have, for their parts, no covenant right to any one blessing ; but rather lie exposed to all the curses written in God's book. And that, this was in fact the case, is plain from the whole tenor of Lev. 26. Deut. 27. and ch. 28.

Now, if these things are true, then it will follow,

1. That Christless sinners, as they have no covenant right to *any good*, being by the curse of the law already sentenced to *all evil* ; so all the good which they do receive from God, before they are united to Christ by faith, are, as to them, the fruits of the mere sovereign grace of God, which he is at liberty, with respect to them, to continue, or take away, at pleasure. Thus it is, as to life and all the comforts of life. And thus it is, as to all the outward means of salvation, and the inward

strivings

strivings of the spirit. Every christless sinner, being under the curse of the divine law, God is at full liberty, with respect to them, to strike them dead, and send them to hell, at any moment ; and to put an eternal end to *all the good* which they enjoy, and let in *all evil* upon them like a flood.—See this sentiment illustrated at large thro' the 20th chap. of Ezekiel.—And if this is true, then,

2. The carnal, unregenerate, christless Israelites, under the Mosaic dispensation, being under the curse of their law, agreeable to Deut. 27. 26. and Gal. 3. 10. had, considered as such, no covenant right to one blessing of the Abrahamic covenant, no, not so much as to draw a breath, or live one moment in the promised land, where all the peculiar blessings of that dispensation were to be enjoyed ; but God was at full and perfect liberty, with respect to them, to strike them dead and send them to hell, at any moment ; and so for ever separate them from that good land, and from all the worldly good things, and religious advantages, which were there to be enjoyed. And on this hypothesis, and on this hypothesis alone, can the divine conduct toward that people be vindicated. For in fact he always did strike dead and send to hell impenitent sinners, under that dispensation ; at what time he pleased, according to his own sovereign pleasure, just as he hath done ever since. And that he had a right so to do, by the constitution which they were under, is evident from Lev. 26. Deut. 27. and chap. 28. and Ezek. 20.

And accordingly we may observe, that, by the divine appointment, the whole congregation of Israel were obliged to acknowledge this, as soon as ever they entered into the holy land, in a most public, solemn and affecting manner, saying, with united voices, AMEN. Deut. 27. 2—26. And as soon as they entered into the holy land, they did acknowledge it, according to the divine appointment. Josh. 8. 30---35. So that, while in an impenitent, unpardoned state, they, by their own acknowledgement, were under the curse of their law, at  
the

the sovereign mercy of their God. And thus the Mo-  
saic dispensation was *of old* understood; but in later ages,  
the Pharisees, by their false glosses, put another sense up-  
on their whole law, justifying themselves, & supporting  
their claims of having *God for their father*, whereby the  
nation were prepared to reject the gospel of Jesus Christ.  
Whereas, had they retained the ancient meaning of their  
law, like a school-master, it might have led them to  
Christ. — As this view of things, if agreeable to truth,  
will, without more ado, settle the present controversy;  
so it is worthy of a particular consideration.

3 No unregenerate Christless sinner hath, as such, any  
right, in entering into covenant, to promise and engage  
'to obey the whole will of God *by divine assistance*.' Be-  
cause they have no title to 'the divine assistance,' for any  
one holy act. — Indeed, it is their duty 'to obey the whole  
will of God;' and they are justly liable, in the judg-  
ment of him, whose judgment is according to truth, to  
the *curse* threatened, if they *continue not in all things*; and  
that on the foot of mere law, which promiseth no assist-  
ance at all, to any sinner. And while sinners reject Christ  
and the grace of the gospel, they have, by the divine con-  
stitution, no title, to any inward assistance of the holy  
Spirit, at all, on the foot of the covenant of grace. *For  
all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus, yea, and in him  
amen.* 2 Cor. 1. 20. But as to those who are out of  
Christ, they are *under the law*; and *sin hath dominion over  
them.* Rom. 6. 14. This is their standing, and this is  
their true and real state. They are bound to perfect o-  
bedience. They are considered as moral agents. They  
are held to be *without excuse.* Rom. 1. 21. They stand  
*guilty before God.* Rom. 3. 19. They reject the grace of  
the gospel. Eternal death is threatened for every trans-  
gression, by the divine law, Gal. 3. 10. And the gospel  
doth not *make void*, but *establisth the law.* Rom. 3. 31.  
As it is written, *he that believeth not is condemned already,*  
and *the wrath of God abideth on him.* Joh. 3. 18. 36. And  
so every impenitent, Christ-rejecting sinner lies at the  
N sovereign



sovereign mercy of God ; as it is written, Rom. 11. 7. *The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.*

Death and damnation may fill them with terror, and beget reformations, tears, vows and promises ; and so, in the language of the apostle, they may *bring forth fruit unto death*. For DEATH coming into the view of their consciences, begets all the religious exercises of their hearts, and is the father of the children they bring forth. And this, according to St. Paul, is the state of all those who are *married to the law*. For *sin still hath dominion over them while under the law*. But when once they are *married unto Christ*, they become *temples of the Holy Ghost*, and so now they *bring forth fruit unto God*. God is the father of all the holy exercises of their hearts, he *works in them to will and to do*, and so all christian graces are not only called, but in reality are, *the fruits of the Spirit*.——Law, death and hell will not beget one holy exercise in an unregenerate heart ; rather, they will irritate the corruption of the carnal mind. Rom. 7. 5, 8, 9. Hence the sinner, who, while ignorant of law, death and hell, hath a good heart, as he imagines ; when these come into view, his goodness is lost, his heart grows worse ; and so far as he can discern, he grows worse and worse, 'till all his hope of acceptance with God, on the foot of law, languishes and dies. So that *the law, which was ordained unto life*, and by which life was originally to be obtained, he finds *to be unto death* ; as it is written, Rom. 7. 8, 9. *Sin taking occasion by the commandment, raged the more, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once, and had a good opinion of myself : but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.* For it is not the design of God, by legal conviction to make the heart better, or so much as to excite one holy thought, or holy desire in the unregenerate sinner ; but rather to give such light to the conscience, as that all those thoughts and desires, which used to be accounted holy, may appear to have no holiness in them, but to be of a nature

contrary

contrary thereunto : to the end, that the sinner, who is, in fact, dead in sin, and at enmity against God, may come to know the truth ; and so find himself condemned, lost and undone, by the very law, by which he sought and expected life. Thus, as by the covenant of works sinners have no title to any divine assistance ; so while unregenerate God doth in fact never assist them to one holy act. Nor under genuine conviction do they seem to themselves to grow better, but on the contrary to grow worse and worse, until they find themselves perfectly destitute of every good thought, and of every good desire, and in a state of mind, 'wholly opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil,' in the language of our confession of faith : or in the more accurate and expressive language of scripture, until they find themselves *dead in sin*, and at *enmity against God*. i. e. until they see themselves to be, as in fact they are, and as in fact they always were, before they saw it.--But to see themselves dead in sin, and enemies to God, and wholly inexcusable and altogether criminal in being so, and on this foot justly condemned, is what, above all things, impenitent, self-justifying sinners are averse unto. And, therefore, their hearts, instead of concurring to promote this conviction, do resist the light, and twist and turn every possible way to evade it : and often even rise and fight against it, with horrid, blasphemous thoughts. And it is seldom that awakened sinners are brought to a thorough conviction.\* More generally they have some partial conviction, and some short terrors, and then false humiliations, and then false light and joy, which lasts awhile, and then all their inward religion is at an end. Or else, without receiving any comfort, true or false, they gradually loose their convictions, and go to sleep again, as secure as ever. *For strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leads to life, and few there be that find it.*--But to return,

IF

\* 'It is not enough for men to see that they can do nothing of themselves. Men may say that, when they only find need of assistance, and not of the infusion of a principle of grace into them.'

If self-righteous, christless sinners, while under the curse of the law, have no title to divine assistance for any one holy act ; and if, as was before proved, the divine law requires holiness and nothing but holiness ; then they have no warrant to ‘ enter into covenant to obey the whole will of God *by divine assistance*.’—It is true, the gospel offers pardon to impenitent, self-righteous sinners, for not continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them :—but impenitent self-righteous sinners plead NOT GUILTY, in manner and form, as set forth in the divine law : and so reject the pardon offered.—And it is true, the gospel offers the sanctifying influences of the holy spirit to impenitent, self-righteous sinners, to enable them to love that character of God, which is exhibited in his law, and which is honored on the cross of Christ, but they do not desire to love it, and therefore the assistance offered is rejected. Now when they have thus rejected the only assistance, which God ever offered, to obey the very law, which he hath given to be the rule of their lives, for them, under these circumstances, ‘ to enter into covenant to obey the whole will of God *by divine assistance*,’ is a piece of hypocrisy suited to the character of none, but such, as are, in fact, ‘ totally depraved’ ; and yet, at the same time, near, or quite *totally blind*, as to their true character and real state.

A woman, however poor and low in the world before marriage, and however insufficient to be trusted by any of her neighbours ; yet no sooner is she married to a rich man, who loves her, and whom she takes delight to obey and honor, but, with his approbation, she may trade largely at any merchant’s shop, for any thing she needs, and may warrantably promise, ‘ by the assistance of her husband,’ to make good pay ; nor will the merchant, who knows her husband’s riches, and his love to her, and his approbation of her conduct, be backward to trust her. And thus it is with the poor bankrupt sinner, who is in himself *not sufficient for one good thought*, as in him there *dwelleth no good thing*, as soon as he is married



ed to Christ Jesus, *in whom all fulness dwelleth*, and of *whose fulness he receives, and grace for grace*, he may now enter into covenant with God, and warrantably promise 'by the assistance of Christ Jesus,' to love God, and walk in all his ways with an upright heart.—But should a woman of an whorish heart enter into covenant with a man of honor and of a great estate, before the priest, and as soon as the ceremony was over, even on the very same day, leave his bed and board, and run off, and prostitute herself to her former gallants, and refuse to return, and continue to refuse although invited thereto by her husband, yea obstinately refuse notwithstanding repeated invitations and repeated offers of pardon and forgiveness, until he being justly provoked should advertise her in all the public papers, and forbid all to trust her on his account, for that he would hold himself unobliged to pay any of her debts, or to afford her 'any assistance,' until her naughty heart should be humbled, and she should confess her iniquity, and justify him in this token of his displeasure, and ask forgiveness for her crimes, and return to her duty with true matrimonial affection.—And should she, on seeing what her husband had done, declare, that 'to love such a husband is the same thing as to love to be advertised as a run-away in the public papers, which is to love disgrace itself, which is in its own nature impossible, and even contrary to the law of God—which requires us to love ourselves. In this view, therefore, I can never return, nor is it my duty to return. For I ought to have a regard to my own reputation. Until, therefore, he will recall this advertisement, and assume a different character, I can no more love him than I can love my own misery.'—And in this temper should she go on, giving her heart to her lovers, and making herself common to all comers, until, being overtaken with extreme poverty, she is reduced to great distress. And then, instead of returning to her husband and humbling herself before him, as in duty she is bound, should she apply to her neighbours for relief, and put on a bold

bold face, and promise ; by the assistance of her husband' to make good pay : Would they regard her words ! Would they trust her on his account ! Rather, would they not be filled with indignation at her impudence, and be ready to say—' Woman, first of all make  
 ' up matters with your husband, before you presume to  
 ' be trusted on his account ; for what warrant have you,  
 ' in your present circumstances, to promise to make good  
 ' pay *by his assistance*, to which you have no title, to  
 ' which you know you have no title, and to which the  
 ' public knows you have no title, by the advertisement  
 ' in the public papers ? No, no, thou wicked woman,  
 ' thy word is not to be taken. Thou art not worth a  
 ' penny in the world. The man whom thou callest thy  
 ' husband, thou hast run away from, and he declares  
 ' that he will hold himself unobliged to pay any of thy  
 ' debts, or to grant thee the least assistance.'—She cries, she laments bitterly, she says, —' I desire to love him, I  
 ' wish I could love him, I long to love him, I try to love  
 ' him, but I cannot. I do all I can to love him, but it is  
 ' above my power. But this I can say, that I am wil-  
 ' ling to *do my utmost*, and I am come to a *fixed resoluti-*  
 ' *on* to try every day to love him, and I am willing to  
 ' bind myself by the most solemn covenant to do so.  
 ' And more than this, he cannot reasonably require at  
 ' my hands, in my present circumstances'——Her husband happens to stand at the door, and hears all the talk, and goes off in high indignation, saying to himself--- ' What ! can she find a heart to love her gal-  
 ' lants, but no heart to love me ! am I so vile in her  
 ' eyes ! is it such an impossible task to love such an one  
 ' as I am ! is this more than she can do ! is this more  
 ' than I can justly require at her hands ! am I to be  
 ' pacified with her hypocritical tears, and deceitful vows !  
 ' and an unreasonable man to demand more at present !  
 ' shall other men thus have her whole heart, & shall I bear  
 ' this contempt at her hands !---far be this from me---  
 ' I will assert my proper dignity---that woman shall no  
 ' longer be called my wife---I will get a bill---I will  
 ' put

‘put her away forever.’——And common sense would approve and justify his conduct.

Thus the Most High God, whose character is perfect in beauty, without a blemish, might justly resolve, with respect to every impenitent, self-righteous self-justifying sinner. And he might justly strike them dead, & send them to hell, in a moment. For every plea they make to justify themselves, in not loving God, casts the blame on him; even every argument they use for their justification, is to his condemnation. For if the fault is not in them, it is in him. If they are not to blame for not loving him, it is because he is not worthy of their love. For if God is in himself, and in all his conduct, absolutely perfect, even perfect in beauty, without a blemish, then we must be inexcusable, and wholly criminal in not loving him with all our hearts. And if there is the least blemish in the divine character, or in any part of his conduct, then he is not an absolutely perfect Being. That is, in other words, he is not God. The divinity of the only true and living God, is, therefore, denied, in every self-justifying plea. Which is a crime aggravated beyond expression. A sinner, therefore, in such a temper, is an enemy to the true God, and justifies himself in it, and all his pretences to love and obedience are hypocritical: and he ought to be told it, in the plainest manner. But to flatter sinners along in their self-justifying, God-condemning disposition, how much soever it may please them at present, directly tends to their eternal ruin.—But, thus much is certain, at least, that they have no title to ‘any divine assistance;’ and so have no warrant to make promises as though they had. Nor is their promise, in this view of it, of any worth, or at all to be trusted. To conclude,

The professed design of Mr. M’s first book, was, as he declares, p. 58. to prove that there is ‘an external covenant between God and his visible church, as such, distinct from the covenant of grace. And that those who are in it, (p. 59) ‘have a promise of the means of grace, and the strivings



strivings of God's holy Spirit, in order to render them effectual for salvation.' And agreeably hereunto, he has in this second book endeavoured to persuade us, that impenitent, self-righteous, Christless sinners (p. 65, 66.) may warrantably 'while such, and as such, bind themselves, in covenant 'by divine assistance to obey the whole will of God.'---Whether what has been offered in the foregoing section, is sufficient to prove, that this external covenant is not from heaven, but of men, is submitted to the consideration of every judicious reader.—And we are now at liberty more particularly to examine the new scheme of religion, which he has advanced in order to support his external covenant, which is to be the principle business of most of the following sections.

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## S E C T I O N VI.

Rom. viii. 7. 8. *The carnal mind is enmity against God : for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.*

Quest. I. *Are we, as fallen creatures, at enmity against God, merely as conceiving God to be our enemy ? Or,*

Quest. II. *Are we enemies only to false and mistaken ideas of God ? Or,*

Quest. III. *Is the carnal mind enmity against God's true and real character, and that notwithstanding the revelation which God has made of his readiness to be <sup>revealed</sup> to us, if we repent and return to him through Jesus Christ ? If so,*

Quest. IV. *What contrariety is there between the carnal mind, and God's true and real character ?*

**A**CCORDING to our author, p. 50. 'Adam, after the fall, before the revelation of a Mediator,' was not bound by the divine law to love God. The divine law bound him to 'punishment' for what was past ; but 'its binding authority respected not his obedience'

dience,' for the time to come. For Adam by the fall ceased to be a moral agent. For it now became inconsistent with a principle essential to moral agency, to love God. For, p. 5. 'a principle of self-love is essential to us as moral agents.' But, p. 10. 'to delight in God under those circumstances was the same thing as to delight in his own misery.' Which is inconsistent with that self-love which is essential to moral agency. Therefore, p. 10. 'Adam by becoming guilty was totally depraved.' Being totally deprived of his moral agency, and wholly incapacitated for moral conduct. His depravity, however, was not of a criminal nature. For, p. 12. 'this inconsistency of love to God, with the natural principle of self-love, was the *true reason*, and the *only reason*, why Adam could not love God after the fall.' For, p. 44. 'could he have seen, after he had sinned, that he had still the same, or as much ground of confidence toward God, as he had before—he would have continued still to exercise the same delight in the divine perfections, as he had done before.' So that he was as well disposed to love God after the fall, as he was before, had he been in as good external circumstances. His different affections were entirely owing to his different external circumstances. For God was his friend before the fall. But now, p. 9. 'in every view, it must appear to him, that God could deal no otherwise with him, but to execute the curse, unless he should act contrary to his own perfections.' And therefore as soon as God's readiness to forgive sin was manifested, there was nothing in his heart to prevent his loving God as much as ever. And so it is with us. p. 44. 'There is all the reason why our hearts should return to the love of God, and confidence in him thro' Christ, as why Adam should love God in his primitive state. There is nothing in our fallen circumstances to prevent it.' p. 47, 48. *Without any new principle of grace.* For this being the true state of things, p. 43. 'regeneration may be wrought by light.' For as soon as we believe

believe God's readiness to be reconciled to us we shall love him of course.—But before faith and regeneration, we are in the same state of total depravity that Adam was before the revelation of a Mediator. p. 18. 'Mankind at this day, antecedent to their exercising faith in Christ, are in much the same condition as Adam was, after he had sinned.' Particularly, p. 20. 'we are under the same inability of loving God that Adam was.' And therefore as it was not Adam's duty to love God after the fall; so the unregenerate are not bound in duty to love that character of God, which was exhibited in the moral law given to Adam; for to do so, is the same thing as to love their own misery. Which to do is inconsistent with moral agency, and 'contrary to the law of God,' which requires us to love ourselves. p. 41, 42, 43. And the gospel does not require us to love that character of God, which is exhibited in the moral law. p. 43. 'For the love of God which the gospel teacheth, 'is love of that divine character which is exhibited to us in a Mediator, and *no other*.'—But this character the unbeliever hath no idea of, and so cannot love it. p. 43. 'To suppose, that the soul sees, and loves this character, 'before a believing view of Christ takes place in the 'heart, is to suppose the soul to see and not to see at the 'same time.'—And as we are not moral agents with respect to law or gospel, while unregenerate, and unlightened, nor bound in duty at present to love God, believe, or repent; so the external covenant, which requires unregenerate endeavours, and promises the strivings of the holy Spirit to render external means effectual to salvation, comes in here to our relief. And our 'total depravity,' and our 'enmity against God,' not being of a criminal nature, are no bar in the way of our admission to sealing ordinances. And, therefore, although a man, who steals but a shilling, and justifies himself in it, must be debarred; yet he who is totally depraved, and an enemy to God, and justifies himself in it, may be admitted.---This is the sum of Mr. M's scheme.---Now, that



that we, while unregenerate, are moral agents, has been already proved. And the nature of that enmity against God, which is in the carnal mind, is to be considered in this section, which may be done in answer to the questions proposed ; and then the way will be prepared to consider the nature of that reconciliation to God, to which the gospel calls us, which is to be the subject of the next section. Now, therefore, let us attend to the questions.

Question I. *Are we, as fallen creatures, enemies to God, merely, as conceiving God to be our enemy ?*

Answer. As likeness of nature lays the foundation for liking ; so contrariety of nature is the original ground of dislike ; or that in which enmity radically consists. \* And, therefore, our enmity to God does not arise merely from conceiving God to be our enemy.—Here let these things be considered.

1. If our enmity against God arises merely from conceiving him to be our enemy, if we have no contrariety of heart to God, but what arises merely from conceiving that he dislikes us ; then God's dislike to us must have taken

\* There are some sinners who do not know enough about God, sensibly to love him, or hate him, or to have any exercises of heart relative to him. *God is not in all their thoughts.* They never hated him, in their *lives*, they will tell you ; nor did they ever feel any love to him, or delight in him. The divine Character, as yet, never came near enough to their view to give them pleasure or pain. *The fool saith in his heart there is no God.* They wonder, therefore, what can be meant by the apostle's words, *The carnal mind is enmity against God.* Surely, say they, he does not mean, that every natural man hates God, for I never hated him in my life. For let our sinful nature be ever so contrary to God's holy nature, yet the contrariety will not be felt until the true and real character of the holy One of Israel begins to come into clear view. *For without the law sin was dead : but when the commandment came, sin revived.* This contrariety which is between our sinful nature and God's holy nature, is the thing chiefly intended in the text. And the sense is, *The carnal mind is contrariety to the holy nature of God, as appears from this, that it is not subject to that law, which is a transcript of God's moral character, neither indeed can be, which proves the contrariety to be total, and fixed.* And as is the tree, such is the fruit ; so then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God. For God cannot be pleased with what is contrary to his own holy nature. And therefore, upon the whole, to be carnally minded is death. Which was the point to be proved. See Rom. 8, 6, 7, 8, 9.

taken place while we were perfectly holy. Or our belief that God is our enemy is a groundless sentiment, originally injected into the human mind by the devil, the father of lies, as Mr. Sandeman supposes; but for which, we should naturally love God, be perfectly pleased with his character, and from our childhood grow up truly friendly to him. And if either of these be true, then,

2. In order to our reconciliation to God, we need not to be born again, we need no change of nature, we only need to believe that God is become our friend: And so we may be reconciled to God by this belief. For it is an old maxim, *Remove the cause, and the effect will cease.* And in this view the old *Antinomian* scheme relative to total depravity and regeneration is consistent.—This faith, therefore, is the first act. And by this faith we are regenerated: That is, a belief of God's love to us, removes the grounds of our enmity to him, and begets love, repentance, and every christian grace.

Mr. Sandeman's scheme, which is nothing else than the old *Antinomian* scheme refined, and dressed up in a new attire, teaches, that the truth to be believed, in justifying faith, is, 'that there is forgiveness with God thro' the atonement for impenitent sinners.' A belief of this begets hope, and love, and repentance, and every christian grace. For on his scheme, *forgiveness takes place before repentance*, as it does necessarily on the *Antinomian* scheme, whatever shape it assumes. For on this scheme, as our enmity against God arises from conceiving God to be our enemy; so our love arises from conceiving God to be our friend. And therefore we must first of all conceive God to be our friend, before love can exist: And so before repentance can exist. And so justification must necessarily take place, before repentance. This is a difficulty which neither the more ancient, or the later *Antinomian* writers know how to get rid of.

And thus faith, even that faith by which we are justified, takes place, in order of nature, before regeneration. For it is the cause of it. But the cause, in order of na-

ture, is always before the effect. But if faith takes place before regeneration, it is, in its own nature, not a holy, but a graceless, unregenerate act. For it is the act of a graceless, unregenerate heart. And so faith is not 'a saving grace, but a *saving sin*.—But can we be *married to a holy Saviour by an unholy act*? By an act, in its own nature, *perfectly opposite to his mediatorial character*? Can we receive Christ by an act of *rejection*? Can we be united to Christ by an act of *disunion*? Can we become one with Christ by an *act of sin*?—Perhaps, it may be thought that Mr. Sandeman gets rid of this difficulty, by teaching, that faith is not an *act*; that there is no volition, or exercise of heart implied in it. But nothing is gained, if while we avoid one difficulty, we run upon another as great.

For, if it is not an *act*; if no volition or exercise of heart is implied in it, then we are *married to Christ*, 'without our consent'; just as Mr. Mather supposes that the Israelites, on the plains of Moab, were taken into covenant, 'without their consent.' But this is inconsistent with the very notion of marriage; which is a transaction, which implies the mutual consent of both parties. And, therefore, on this scheme, the marriage union, as it takes place among mankind, could not be used, with any propriety, to represent our union to Christ by faith. For if the soul is *married to Christ* at all, the consent of our hearts must be implied. Or to use Mr. Stoddard's words, 'When the soul *marries to Christ*, he doth it with a spirit of love.—This act of faith doth include all other graces.—It is virtually all grace.' *Nature of conversion*, p. 19---24. See Rom. 7. 4. 2 Cor. 11. 2. Eph. 5. 29, 30. Joh. 16. 27.---But can we be married to Christ by an act of sin? But if justifying faith is the act of an unregenerate heart, dead in sin, totally depraved, then it is an *act of sin*. For as is the tree, such is the fruit; as is the fountain, such are the streams; as is the heart, such are its acts.——Besides,

If justifying faith is the act of an unregenerate sinner, then it is the act of an impenitent sinner. And then  
pardon



pardon is, in order of nature, before repentance. And so it is not necessary, that we repent of our sins, in order to our being forgiven. Which is contrary to the whole tenor of scripture, and to the plainest and most express declarations of Almighty God. Pray, reader, stop a minute, take your bible, and turn to, and read, Lev. 26. 40, 41, 42. 1 Kin. 8. 47---50. Psal. 32. 3, 4, 5. Prov. 28. 13. Isai. 55. 7. Jer. 4. 4. Ezek. 18. 30, 31, 32. Luk. 3. 3. and 5. 31, 32. and 13. 5. and 24. 47. Act. 2. 37, 38. and 3. 19. and 5. 31. and 10. 21. And then lay your hand on your heart, and say,---Does God offer to pardon impenitent sinners while such? Did the Son of God die that pardon might be granted to impenitent sinners, as such? Or can God, consistent with the gospel, forgive the impenitent, while such, and as such, any more than if Christ never had died? If any doctrine tends to delude sinners, it is this, that they may expect pardon without repentance. They have no heart to repent; they wish to escape punishment; they hope they shall escape: if they can believe that they shall escape, it will give them joy. This doctrine is suited to give joy to an impenitent heart. But to teach impenitent sinners, that they may expect pardon without *repentance toward God*, is as contrary to scripture, as it is to teach them, that they expect pardon without *faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*. This doctrine of *pardon before repentance* had been taught; yea, it had spread far and wide. This occasioned *the assembly of divines at Westminster* expressly to assert the contrary. *Confession of faith*, chap. xv. ‘Repentance is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.’—In fine,

If the first act of justifying faith is an unregenerate, graceless, sinful act; so are all succeeding acts of the same faith. And if so, then to *live a life of faith on the Son of God*, as the holy apostle Paul says, he did, Gal. 2. 20. is to live a life of unregenerate, graceless, sinful acts. For it is an agreed point, that the first act, and the succeeding acts of justifying faith are of the same nature and kind.

kind. And so a life of faith, is a life of sin ; a course of unregenerate, graceless acts. And this graceless faith will bring forth selfish, graceless fruits. All our love and joy will arise merely from self-love ; in a belief, that our sins are pardoned, and that God loves us. The holiness, justice and goodness of the divine nature, exhibited in that law, which is holy, just and good, (Rom. 7. 12.) which Christ loved and honored, living and dying ; instead of appearing perfect in beauty, without a blemish, in our eyes, can never be thought of with pleasure. We never can say with *David*, *O, how love I thy law ! It is my meditation all the day.* Psal. 119. 97. In a word, as our faith is of the *Antinomian* kind ; so our whole hearts will be all over *Antinomian*.---No wonder, ' ninety nine in a hundred ' of such converts are in the dark about their good estate ; and feel, as much need of an [external, *feel* graceless covenant, as tho' they never had been converted, - A late writer, in order to prove, '*fide nos regenerari*, that we are regenerated by faith,' quotes Gal. 3. 26. *Ye are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ.* But this text speaks not of *regeneration*, but of *adoption*. Again he refers to Joh. 6. 53. *Except ye eat of the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.* Just as if *eating and drinking* were acts of the *dead*, and not of the *living*. Just as if the *dead* might eat and drink, while they are dead, and by so doing be made alive. However, this is certain, that, that is a dead corpse, and not a living man, which neither eats nor drinks. He who does not live a life of faith in Christ, is dead in sin. Yet, still *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*, are acts of spiritual life, and not of spiritual death.

However, it is granted, that there is a kind of faith, which may be exercised by a graceless, unregenerate, impenitent sinner. For such an one, altho' he rejects Christ Jesus with his whole heart, yet he may firmly believe that God loves him, and that his sins are forgiven, and be ravished in this belief.---But the thing believed is a lie. And all the affections which result from this belief are

are founded in delusion.—And yet, this is the very thing which is sometimes called *regeneration by faith*, and *beholding the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*. And it was one chief design of President Edwards's *treatise concerning religious affections*, to shew the difference between true religion and this kind of delusion.—But to return.

3. If a belief that God is become our friend, without any change of nature, will reconcile us to God, then *satan, transformed into an angel of light*, is able to do the business. For when the sinner is terrified with the thoughts of death and hell, *satan* can bring to his mind such texts as these, *Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee. O, thou of little faith, wherefore dost thou doubt!* And at the same time strike the sinner's imagination with a view of heaven, of God upon a throne, of Christ sitting at his right hand, till every doubt is banished, and until the sinner cries out in transport, *I believe, I believe*.—And,

4. If our enmity against God arises only from conceiving God to be our enemy, then all those graceless deluded sinners, who believe that God loves them, are truly regenerate. That is, the love to God, which they experience, in this belief, is true love. For, as the cause of our enmity is believing God to be our enemy; so in every instance where the cause is removed the effect will cease. But in all deluded sinners, who believe that God loves them, the supposed cause of enmity is removed, and accordingly they really think that they love God.—Thus gross *Socinians*, who deny the eternity of hell torments, who believe the universal salvation of devils and damned, and in this belief view God as the friend of the whole intelligent system, all made up of love to his creatures, do, in this view of his character, love him, and so are all of them, on this scheme, truly reconciled to God. Rather, these men, if they were instructed in these principles from their childhood, and believed them, were never totally depraved. For they always loved God. And accordingly we find they universally deny the doctrine of total depravity; and say, that it is natural for  
all



all mankind to love God ; and that, in fact, they all would love him, were his true and real character brought into their view. And so would the devils too, on this scheme, were the divine character what the *Socinians* suppose it to be. And while *Socinians* love God, viewed as they view him ; *Antinomians*, of the grossest sort, whose faith professedly consists, in a belief, that God loves them, are often full of love to God, in this view of him. And why may not *Socinians* and *Antinomians* have charity for each other ? For their schemes are not so different in reality, as in appearance. For both look upon God as a lovely being ; and both love him ; and both profess to love him ‘ for the transcendent excellency of his perfections.’ The one does this, because God loves all, and so loves him ; the other, because, altho’ God does not love all, yet he loves him in particular. And why is not the love of the one, of as good a kind, as the love of the other ? And the Pharisees, concerning whom Christ declared, that *the love of God was not in them*, Joh. 5. 42. And who hated and crucified the Son of God, ought also to be received to charity, on this scheme ; for they really believed that God was their father and their friend, and in this belief, they experienced this kind of love, of which we are speaking.—Yea, our charity ought to be more extensive still, for,

5. On this scheme they who are totally depraved, have as much of a principle of grace, as they that are regenerate. That is, sinners are at heart as well disposed to love God, before regeneration, as after. For after regeneration they are disposed to love God only considered as one that loves them ; and before regeneration they are disposed to love God considered and viewed in this light. For it is written, *Sinners love those that love them* ; and they need no *new principle of grace* to incline them to it. And so the unregenerate only need *light* to see that God loves them ; and could they but have this *light* they would love God as much as others. And, therefore,

6. On this scheme, *satan’s charge against Job*, that he

was at heart no better than other men, was true and just ; and the high commendation which God had given of him, that there was *none like him in the earth*, was without reason. *And the Lord said unto satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil ? Then satan answered the Lord, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought ? Hast thou not made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side ? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land.* As if he had said, ‘ no wonder he loves God, while God is so full of love and kindness to him. And who is there under the like circumstances, that would not love God as much as he does ?’ *But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face ;* ‘ just as we fallen spirits have done, ever since we were turned out of heaven. And therefore this Job, who is commended as *a none such*, has in reality no more grace in his heart than we have.’ And if the enmity of fallen creatures against God arises only from conceiving him to be their enemy, and their love only from conceiving God to be their friend, satan’s reasoning was just. All Job’s seeming superior goodness was entirely owing to the more abundant tokens of the divine love ; and therefore he would have turned to be like the devil, in an instant, if God had only *touched all that he had*. He would have *curst God to the face*.—Indeed,

7. On this scheme, Adam had no more grace before the fall than he had after ; but his different affections toward the Deity were entirely owing to the different external circumstances which he was under. For, on this scheme, before the fall God loved him, and so he loved God ; and after the fall, had God continued to love him, he would have continued to love God also. For the ‘ true reason and the only reason’ why Adam could not love God after the fall, was because, as he thought, God was become his irreconcilable enemy. As soon as he found out his mistake, and perceived that God was ready

dy to be reconciled, he returned to the love of his Maker, without any 'new principle of grace.' Before the fall, that principle of self-love, which, according to Mr. M. was 'essential to him as a moral agent'—'naturally inclined him to love God with all his heart as his greatest good.' And after the fall, this same principle did as naturally incline him to hate God with all his heart as his greatest evil. p. 9. His love and his hatred arose from the very same principle. And his different affections were entirely owing to his different external circumstances. As soon, therefore, as his external circumstances were altered, and God became friendly again, he immediately returned to the love of God, without any new principle of grace; 'there was nothing in his fallen circumstances to prevent it,' according to Mr. M. Adam, therefore, on this scheme, had no more grace before the fall than after. It is true, the fall made an alteration in his external circumstances, which different external circumstances occasioned different affections; even as it was with the Israelites at the red sea, when Pharaoh and his hosts were drowned, and their expectations of a prosperous journey to the land of Canaan were raised very high, they were full of love, and joy, and praise: but three days after, when they came to the waters of *Marah*, they *murmured*: and that from the same principle, from which they before rejoiced. It is true, they had different affections toward God at these different times; but 'the true and only reason' was, their different external circumstances, for they had no more grace at the one time, than at the other. And thus it was with Adam, on Mr. M's scheme.—Yea—

8. On this scheme, there is no essential difference between the nature of satan, and the nature of Gabriel; but their different affections, and different conduct, arise merely from the different external circumstances which they are in. For there is no higher principle than self-love in either. The one looks on God as an enemy, and so hates him, merely in that view. And the other looks upon  
 God



God as a friend, and so loves him, merely in that view. And thus their natures are exactly alike, and their different affections and conduct arise merely from the different external circumstances, which they are under. And thus satan stands justified in his enmity against God; and thus the holy angels are degraded to a level with devils. For satan might say, ‘to love God, in my circumstances would be to love my own misery: but to take delight in misery, to take pleasure in pain, is a contradiction; and is in its own nature impossible. Therefore, I am not to blame. And as to the angels, who dwell in heaven, *do they fear God for nought*, in the paradise above, surrounded with every blessing? Far from it. *But let God put forth his hand now, and touch all that they have; and they will curse him to his face, just as we do.*’

Thus much in answer to the first question: and to prepare the way for the second, we may observe that Mr. M. says, speaking of Adam, after the fall, p. 9. ‘In every view it must appear to him, that God could deal no otherwife with him, but to execute the curse, unless he should act contrary to his divine and glorious perfections.’ And p. 10. ‘To delight in God in this case was the same thing as to delight in his own misery.’ And p. 12 ‘This was the true reason, and the only reason, why Adam could not love God after the fall.’—But Adam soon found he was mistaken; for it soon appeared that God knew how to open a way to pardon sinners, ‘consistent with his divine and glorious perfections.’—Therefore,

Question II. *Are we, as fallen creatures, enemies only to false and mistaken ideas of the Deity?*

Answer. If we are enemies only to false and mistaken ideas of the Deity, then it will follow, that we have no enmity against God’s true and real character, even *none at all*; but rather are in a disposition to love it, as soon as known. Nor shall we need any inward influence of the holy Spirit, at all, to dispose us to the knowledge of it; for

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we shall not be averse to the knowledge of it, as not being at all prejudiced against it. In this case, we shall not hate the light, but love and receive it with all our hearts, of our own accord. And therefore if the external manifestations of God's true character are sufficiently clear, we shall know it, and we shall love it. And, on this hypothesis, had God given mankind, from the beginning of the world, an external exhibition of his true character, sufficiently full and plain, all mankind would have known and loved him, from the beginning of the world. So that the great and general depravity of mankind, and the wickedness which hath overspread the earth, in all ages, have been entirely owing to God's not giving a sufficient external revelation of his true and real character to the children of men. But they are not to blame for this. If there be any blame at all, it lies at his door, who hath neglected to let his true and real character be known. For had he but revealed it to mankind, they having no prejudice against it, but being naturally disposed to love it, would of course have attended to the revelation with good and honest hearts, and would have understood it, and have brought forth fruit accordingly. How to justify the divine conduct, in this view of things, I do not know. Nor can I tell how to justify the conduct of Moses and the prophets, of Christ Jesus and his apostles, who were commissioned to reveal God's true character to men, in suffering both God, and themselves for his sake, to be hated, when things, if this scheme is true, were so circumstanced, that if they had but plainly told the truth, all would have understood it, believed it, loved and obeyed it; and they would have been the most universally beloved, of any persons in the world. If mankind, with respect to God's true and real character, stand affected, as Mr. *Sandeman* represents, even as the inhabitants of an island perishing with hunger do, with respect to a large importation of corn, the news of which would spread like lightning from end to end of the island, and give hope and joy to all the inhabitants at once, then had

Jesus

Jesus of Nazareth and his apostles plainly revealed the Father's character to mankind, the news would have spread over the earth, & would have filled the world with joy; and these bringers of good tidings had been the delight of all nations.—Why then did they suffer themselves to be hated, persecuted, murdered, for nothing!--Yea, for worse than nothing!--even for secreting the true and real character of God, which they were sent expressly to reveal.

To say, that they did plainly reveal God's true and real character, but mankind did not understand them right; is to say, that either the revelation was not on a level with the natural capacities of mankind, and so was not plain enough, not so plain as it ought to have been to answer the end; and so these divine teachers were blame-worthy: or else their not understanding the revelation aright, must be owing to their being at enmity against God's true and real character, which was revealed. For if the revelation was plain enough, and if they had no prejudice to blind their minds, they must have understood it. Nothing could have prevented a right understanding of the revelation but bad and dishonest hearts, by which they were inclined to hate the light and truth itself. For every good and honest heart would have understood the revelation, believed and loved it, and brought forth fruit. Luk. 8. 15.—We therefore proceed,

Question III. *Is the carnal mind enmity against God's true and real character; and that notwithstanding the plain and most express revelation, which God has made of his readiness to be reconciled to us, if we repent and return to him thro' Jesus Christ?*

Answer. If God would forgive us without repentance, we should like him: As, in this, he would yield us every point in contest, and, implicitly, take the whole blame to himself. Or, in other words, if God would give up his law, we would give up our enmity against him; as in this, he would do as we would have him do, and, implicitly, become altogether such an one as we are. Or, which amounts to the same thing, if God will give up  
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that character of himself exhibited in the moral law, and allow us to hate it, and yet love us, then we will like him ; as in this, he would justify us in our wickedness. But if he asserts his own dignity, abides by his law, and vindicates the honor of his character exhibited in it, and obliges us from the heart to acknowledge him to be wholly right and ourselves to be wholly wrong, to repent, and take the whole blame to ourselves, and ask forgiveness as of mere grace thro' Jesus Christ, then his character will not suit a carnal mind. In a word, if God will forgive us without repentance, then we can love him without any change of nature ; but otherwise our enmity will remain. For his offering pardon, in the name of Christ, upon repentance, will not pacify the heart of an impenitent, self-justifying sinner, and enduce him to become a willing and obedient subject to the divine government.

Before the foundation of the world, the fall of man being foreseen, God had contrived a method, in which he might consistently with his perfections, pardon and receive to favour the true penitent. And no sooner had man fallen, but he revealed his designs of mercy to our first parents, that they might inform their posterity ; and instituted sacrifices as a shadow of the great atonement. So that all mankind were under sufficient external advantages from the beginning of the world, to have known, that *God is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him.* And yet soon it came to pass not only that *Cain* slew his brother, but that *the whole earth was filled with violence.*

After the flood, mankind, in a body, soon cast off the true God, and idolatry spread over the face of the earth. *For they did not like to retain God in their knowledge.* At this time, that he might not leave himself without witness, God took one nation, and set them up as a beacon on a hill, in the sight of all the nations ; and to them, in the sight of all the world around them, he exhibited his true and real character, and laid them under every possible

ble obligation to love him, and to walk in his ways, that they might be to him, *for a people, and for a name, and for a praise, and for a glory*, in the sight of all the nations; that they might yet have opportunity to return to the true God; but the nations around hated the God of Israel, and even the Israelites *would not hear*. Jer. 13. 10. Yea, the Israelites cast off their God, whom they did not like, and joined with the heathen around them, in the worship of *Baal, Ashtaroth and Dagon*, gods whom they did like; and this notwithstanding God himself used all external means that were proper, and the most wisely adapted, to induce them to love him, and to walk in his ways, from the day he took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, always giving them the highest assurances of his readiness to forgive all past offences, and in the highest sense to be a God to them, if they would walk in his ways indeed, but *they would not hear*. So that after the experiments of many ages, and a great variety of means contrived and used by infinite wisdom, God was at length obliged to cast them off. But not until he had tried every external means, which, with propriety, could be tried. Not 'till he could say, *What more could have been done to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?* For he sent unto them all his servants the prophets, rising early and sending; and they stoned one, and killed another. At last he sent to them his only Son, and they slew him. And in them we have exhibited a true specimen of human nature, in its present fallen state. ‡

Since

‡ *As face answereth to face in water, so doth the heart of man to man.*—If they were in Cain's circumstances, and God should suffer them, they would do as he did. If they were in Pharaoh's circumstances, and left of God, they would be as cruel, false and hard-hearted as he. If they were in the like circumstances with Doeg, though they condemn him for his hypocrisy, flattery and cruelty, they would do every whit as bad as he, if they were in like circumstances as Judas was, whatever indignation they have against him, they would be as false, and impudent, and as very traitors as he. Yea, if they were under the circumstances that the *fallen angels* are, they would be as *very devils* as they:—That original sin that reigns in every natural man is the fountain of every abomination.

Mr. Stoddard's *Nature of conversion*, p 95, 96.

Since the Jews have been cast off, God has sent the gospel to the Gentiles, and for seventeen hundred years has been making experiments on them, as of old he did on the Jews ; and such has been their opposition to God and Christ and Christianity in all ages, that, agreeable to revelation made to *John* in the *Isle of Patmos*, the true church of Christ hath been in circumstances, either like *a woman in travail, with a great red dragon before her, ready to devour her child as soon as born ;* or like *a woman obliged to flee, as upon eagles wings, into a wilderness to hide herself from the face of the dragon.* Rev. 12. ; or like *two witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, who are killed from age to age, for the testimony they bear to God and the truth, and in whose sufferings they that dwell upon the earth rejoice.* Rev. 11. And now, after a course of the most obstinate rebellion, for almost six thousand years, it is become a question among us rebels and enemies, whether we are at enmity against God's true and real character, or not ! After we have cast off the true God, and set up false gods all over the earth—after we have stoned the messengers of God, and killed his prophets, and murdered his Son—and after his followers have, according to his prediction, been *hated of all men for his name's sake.*—Even now, after all these exercises and fruits of enmity, it is become a question, whether we are, or ever were, properly and strictly speaking, enemies to God's true and real character !—So slow of heart are we to understand our own true character and real state.—But that the carnal mind is enmity against God's true and real character, may be proved by these arguments, viz.

1. If the carnal mind is enmity against God himself, then the carnal mind is enmity against God's true and real character : But the carnal mind is enmity against God himself : as is asserted by the inspired apostle. For he says, *The carnal mind is enmity against God.* But to be enmity against false and mistaken notions of the Deity, is not to be enmity against God. For to hate falsehood is not to hate the truth. To hate false gods, is not to



hate the true God. But that Being whom Paul called God, was the true God. To deny this, is to give up the whole of divine revelation. To say, that Paul's God was not the true God, is, to say, that the God of the bible is not the true God.

2. That which is opposite unto a true and real transcript of the moral character of God, is opposite to his true and real character : But the carnal mind is opposite unto the divine law, which is a true and real transcript of the moral character of God. This is the apostle's argument. For in order to prove that the carnal mind is enmity against God, he says, *for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.*

3. To be at enmity against false and mistaken notions of God is no sin, and deserves no punishment ; but rather is virtuous and praise-worthy : for even God himself hates all false gods, and all mistaken notions about the true God. But if the scripture account of things be true, that enmity against God and Christ, which mankind have discovered, is the most inexcusable wickedness : for it is spoken of by our blessed Saviour, as such, Mat. 10. 16. 25. and chap. 23. 29—36. Joh. 15. 22—25. And, as such, it deserves the wrath of God. Luk. 19. 27. *But these mine enemies, which would not that I should reign over them, bring hither, and slay them before me.* Besides, had not the Pharisees been at enmity against the true and real character of God and of his Son, and inexcusably to blame on that account, those words of Christ to them, had been very abusive. Mat. 23. 33. *Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell ?* But if they were as venomous as serpents, and as spiteful as vipers, toward the true God and his Son, the damnation of hell was good enough for them.

Remark I. If the carnal mind is enmity only against mistaken ideas of God, but disposed to love God's true and real character, as soon as known, then nothing more is needful to bring us to love God perfectly, even with all our hearts, than a right speculative idea of him, commonly

ly called, doctrinal knowledge, or head knowledge. For if we are naturally disposed to love God's true character, then, as soon as we know it, we shall love it, just as Jacob loved Rachel, the first time he saw her. And our love will, on this hypothesis, increase, in exact proportion to our doctrinal knowledge. And we shall need the regenerating influences of the holy Spirit, to give us an heart to love God, no more than Jacob did, to give him an heart to love Rachel. An external revelation of God's true character, sufficiently clear and plain, is all that will be needful to beget perfect love to God in our hearts. And then we may be regenerated, and perfectly sanctified by light, without any internal influences of the Spirit of God at all. And this is what *Pelagians* and *Socinians* really mean.

Rem. 2. If the carnal mind is enmity against God only as conceiving him to be our enemy, as one who will damn us; then a belief that he is our friend, and will save us, will cause our enmity to cease, and beget love, without any change of nature in us. And then again, we may be regenerated by light. And this is what *Antinomians* really mean. And were there any evidence from scripture, sense or reason, of the fact to be believed, no spirit would be needed in this case. But because there is no evidence from scripture, sense or reason, as the celebrated Mr. Marshal honestly owns, therefore some spirit is needed. But not the Spirit of God. For it is not the office of the Spirit of God, to enable us to believe, *that to be true, which was not true before we believed it*. But God is not our reconciled friend while out of Christ. Nor does pardon ever take place before repentance. When the unregenerate impenitent sinner has it discovered to him, that God loves him, and is reconciled to him, the thing discovered is a lie; and the father of lies is the author of the discovery. But of this heretofore, in *A blow at the root of the refined Antinomianism of the present age*.

Rem. 3. If the carnal mind is enmity against God's true and real character, as exhibited in the moral law, and as honoured



honoured with the highest honors on the cross of Christ, notwithstanding the fullest and plainest declarations of God's readiness to be reconciled to us thro' Christ, if we repent and return to God thro' him, then the clearest possible speculative idea of this character, will not beget love, the greatest possible degree of doctrinal knowledge will not render God amiable in our eyes. For if the true and real character of God itself is odious to a carnal heart, the idea of that character will excite, not love, but dislike: If the true & real character of Jesus was odious to the heart of a Pharisee, the idea of that character would excite, in the Pharisees heart, not love, but dislike. So reason teaches. And so the fact was, *They have both seen and hated both me and my Father.* The longer Christ lived, the more he preached, the plainer he spake, the more the Pharisees hated him. For his character was perfectly opposite to theirs. But every impenitent, self-righteous sinner hath the heart of a Pharisee. Therefore Christ's words to Nicodemus are equally true with respect to all mankind in their natural state. John 3. 3. *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*—For,

Rem. 4. Spiritual life is, according to scripture, communicated by God to the dead soul, to enable it to see and act in a spiritual manner. For, according to scripture, we are *dead in sin*; as perfectly dead, as the body of Christ was when it lay in the grave. And the same power which raised that from the dead, doth raise us from spiritual death. Eph. 1. 19—23. and 2. 1—10. And we know, that a dead corpse must be restored to life, in order of nature, before it can see or hear. So the scripture teaches us, that spiritual life is necessary to enable us to see and act in a spiritual manner. For those who are spiritually dead are spiritually *blind*. They cannot *discern*, they cannot *know* spiritual things, *spiritually*. 1 Cor. 2. 14. They are *foolishness* to them, and a *stumbling-block*. 1 Cor. 1. 18, 23, 24. As the *vail on Moses face* hid the glory of it from the congregation of Israel; (Exod. 34. 29—35.) so the spiritual glory of God and the things of God are hid



hid from the natural man by a *veil on his heart*. 2 Cor. 2. 13—18. For that enmity to divine things, in which spiritual death consists, implies spiritual blindness Rom. 8. 7. Eph. 4. 18. For an idea of the glory of God is always attended with love to God. 2 Cor. 3. 18. Enmity against God, therefore, implies that we are blind to his glory : yea, that his true and real character instead of appearing glorious, and giving pleasure to the mind, appears odious, and excites disagreeable and painful sensations. Rom. 1. 28. Joh. 15. 18---25. It is not the design of the gospel to accomodate the divine character to the taste of the carnal heart. Rom. 3. 31. But on the contrary, the flesh must die ; it must be put to death ; it must be *crucified*. Gal. 5. 17---24. And a new, divine, spiritual life must be communicated to the soul, to enable it to see and act in a spiritual manner. For Joh. 3. 3, 5. *Except a man be born again he cannot see, nor enter into the kingdom of God*. He must be born again, or he cannot see the glory of christianity, or cordially embrace it. A man may be a Pharisee, as was Nicodemus ; so a man may be a Socinian, a Pelagian, an Arminian, or an Antinomian, without regeneration : but no man can be a christian *except he be born again*. Experience and fact confirm the truth. For when Christ was on earth *he spake as never man spake* ; and yet the spiritual glory of christianity was hid from their eyes. Mat. 11. 20---25. For altho' *he came*, not to those who had been bred up in pagan darkness, but *to his own people*, who had received their education under Moses and the prophets ; yet *his own received him not*. Not one received him, not one believed in his name, but such as *were born of God*. Joh. 1. 11, 12, 13. So that it was indeed a universal maxim among the apostolic converts, *That whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, (not will be, but gegenetai) hath been born of God*. 1 Joh. 5. 1. For this word, in this tense, ever hath this signification, in the writings of this apostle, as every man of learning may see, who will look into the original. See 1 Joh. 2. 19. and 3. 9. and 4. 7. and 5. 1.

4, 18. and Joh. 8. 41. and 9. 32.---None therefore, but those to whom *good and honest hearts* are thus given, *understand the word, and bring forth fruit.* Ezek. 36. 26, 27. Luk. 8. 12---15. But these *all with open face (the veil being taken off) beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image.* 2 Cor. 3. 13---18. For the truth being spiritually understood, i. e. seen in its glory, is cordially believed. 2 Cor. 4. 3---6. And the truth being seen in its glory and believed produces every answerable effect in heart and life. Joh. 17. 17. 1 Cor. 4. 15. 1 Pet. 1. 3, 23. Jam. 1. 18. Thus this matter is represented in the sacred writings. A more particular explanation of this subject may be seen, *Essay on the nature and glory of the gospel*, sect. XII. The nature of that *spiritual life* which is communicated in regeneration, and how it *opens the eyes to see the beauty of God's moral character*, is explained with great accuracy, by that great philosopher, and eminent divine, President *Edwards*, in his *Dissertation on the nature of true virtue*, p. 121, 122, 123, 124, 125.

Question IV. *What contrariety is there between the carnal mind, and God's true and real character?*

Answer. Without entering largely into this question, on which a volume might be written, it will be sufficient for the present purpose, only to say, that the contrariety between the carnal mind and God's true and real character, is the same, as is the contrariety between sin and holiness. For the contrariety between God's nature and ours arises merely from this, viz. that God's nature is holy, and our nature is sinful. \* And that this is the truth,

\* But, (1.) sin is as contrary to holiness, as holiness is to sin. And therefore, our sinful nature is as contrary to God's holy nature, as God's holy nature is to our sinful nature. And (2.) our contrariety to God is as universal as is our sinfulness. If we are totally depraved, our contrariety to God is total. (3.) Contrariety to the doctrines and duties of revealed religion, in which God's moral character is exhibited, is contrariety to God's moral character. Every objection against the doctrines, and all backwardness to the duties of religion, are so many expressions of contrariety to God's true and real character. (4.) If the true God and the true scheme of religion suited the human

truth, is evident from this, that originally God's nature and the nature of man were alike. As it is written, Gen. 1. 26. *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.* Ver. 27. *So God created man in his own image.* And therefore there was no contrariety between the holy nature of God and the nature of man, originally. When man began to exist, he viewed things as God did, and was affected accordingly. And as God loved his own character, exhibited in that law, which he gave to Adam; so Adam loved it too. There was then no principle of enmity against God in his heart; no disposition to dislike the strictness of the law, or the severity of the penalty, upon the most mature deliberation. Yea, he was perfectly pleased with both. For as God perfectly loved his own law; so Adam, being like God, created in his image, perfectly loved it too. So that there was originally no contrariety to God in Adam's nature. And therefore there is no contrariety, now, in man's nature to

God,

human heart, mankind would as naturally be united in love to the one true God, and to the one true scheme of religion; as they are in love to the world. Had mankind liked the true God, they never would have set up a false god; and had they liked the true scheme of religion, they never would have invented a false one. (5.) Love to a false god, and to a false scheme of religion, is the exercise of a spirit of contrariety to the true God, and to the true religion. (6.) Love to God's moral character, properly expressed, was the only thing which exposed the prophets, Jesus Christ, and his apostles, to be hated, reviled and murdered. (7.) Christ on the cross shews, that the enmity of the carnal mind against God, is mortal enmity. (8.) The Jews expressed and justified their enmity against Christ, both at once, by calling him by reproachful names. Joh. 8. 48. *Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan and hast a devil.* Mean time saying, Mat. 23. 30. *If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.* So while they hated and crucified him, who was foretold by all the prophets; they thought themselves doing God good service. (9.) They knew they hated Jesus, and had they known him to be true God, their contrariety to the true God would have been ascertained to their consciences. (10.) Let God's true and real character be agreed upon, and we shall no longer differ about the character of man. (11.) God's true and real character would be agreed upon, if we did not hate to admit the truth. (12.) The contrariety of our sinful nature to God's holy nature is the source of all the heresies in the world.—Men love to have a God and a religion to suit their own hearts.



God, but only and merely, so far as man's nature is become sinful. For as before sin took place in the human heart, there was no contrariety to God in human nature ; so now there is no one thing in human nature, that is contrary to God, but sin ; nor is there any root of bitterness, but wickedness.—But nothing, which is now, or which originally was essential to moral agency, is of the nature of sin. For Adam was a moral agent, when he had no sin ; when he was in the image of God. Besides, if something essential to moral agency were sinful, it would be a sin to be a moral agent. There is therefore in the essential properties of a moral agent no contrariety to the divine nature. For there is nothing in the universe that is contrary to the holy nature of God, but sin. And whatsoever is contrary to the holy nature of God, is sin. To say, that there is something in us, which is opposite to the holy nature of God, which is not sin, but a duty ; is to say, that opposition to God himself, is not sin, but a duty. And if opposition to the holy nature of God, is not sinful, there is no sin. For if it is no sin to be opposite to the holiness of God, there can be no sin. For if opposition to the holy nature of God is lawful, by fair construction, God is legally dethroned, his law is vacated, we are become gods, too big to be under any government. For if it be lawful for us to oppose God, much more to oppose all other beings. So that, to say, that opposition to the holy nature of God is not sinful, is, itself, perfect wickedness. Yet, according to Mr. M. that self-love, which, in us, is opposite to the holiness of the divine nature, and absolutely inconsistent with the love of God, is not sinful, but a duty. This is the most shocking sentiment in his book. It is, in effect, to say, that it is our duty to be at enmity against God.-----Besides,

Adam rebelled against his Creator, while God was his friend ; prompted not by despair, but in a belief of satan's lies, *Ye shall be as Gods, ye shall not surely die*, he took and eat, contrary to the express prohibition of his Maker. And we his posterity, for near six thousand years, have  
gone

gone on in rebellion, while God has offered to be our friend again. And his inspired prophets have been abused, and his Son has been crucified, in this our world; while sent to invite us to a reconciliation, and to offer us a pardon. Thus stands the fact, as recorded in the sacred writings. And thus our contrariety to God began, when sin began. Nor is there any thing in our nature contrary to the holy nature of God, but sin. And we began to be sinners, while God was our friend. And we have continued in our rebellion, thro' a long succession of ages, while God has been offering pardon all the time.

Therefore,

1. The carnal mind is as really contrary to the holy nature of God, as the holy nature of God is to the carnal mind. For sin is as contrary to holiness, as holiness is to sin. And yet God is willing to forgive us thro' Christ; but we are not willing to be reconciled to him:

And therefore,

2. The enmity of the carnal mind against God is entirely of a criminal nature, and comprises in it the sum of all wickedness: For as a conformity to God's holy nature is the sum of all holiness; so a contrariety to God's holy nature is the sum of all wickedness. To say, that a contrariety to the holy nature of God is not sinful, is, in effect, to say, that there is no sin on earth, or in hell. And indeed Mr. M. gives a broad hint, p. 50. that in hell there is no sin in all their enmity against the Deity. And if his scheme is true, he must be right in this. But to use arguments to justify ourselves, in our enmity against God, which will equally justify the devil, is to carry the point as far as the devil himself can desire it should be carried. Nor can any thing better please the devil, than to find himself justified, in his enmity against God and his Son, by the professed friends of both.

3. If the enmity of the carnal mind against God is entirely criminal, and the sum of all wickedness, then while we justify ourselves in it, we are disqualified for sealing ordinances by it, if any sin, as such, can disqualify

us. For to say, that a small sin, persisted in, disqualifies for sealing ordinances, and yet the greatest sin does not ; to say, for instance, that stealing one shilling from our neighbour, considered merely as an injury done to him, without repentance, disqualifies for sealing ordinances, and that yet a state and course of enmity against God, persisted in, does not, is to *strain at a gnat, and to swallow a camel.*

4. But if it be really true, as Mr. M. says, that ‘ to love that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law, is the same thing as to love our own misery : ’ And if ‘ this is the *true* reason, and the *only* reason ’ we do not love God ; then our enmity against God is not in the least degree criminal. And so it doth not in the least degree disqualify us for sealing ordinances. Especially, if we are heartily disposed to love that character of God, which alone it is our duty to love ; so that, without fail, we shall love it, as soon as we know it ; and that *without any new principle of grace.*—Thus the enemies of God are taught, to think themselves blameless in their enmity against God : And thus they are emboldened to approach the table of the Lord.—But what communion can there be, between him, who loved the character of God exhibited in the moral law, and became incarnate, and lived, and died to do it honor ; and such an *Antinomian* law-hating heart ! Prov. 29. 27. 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15.

## SECTION VII.

2 Cor. v. 20. *We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

Question. *Doth the gospel call fallen man to be reconciled to that character of God, which fallen man, as such, is at enmity against ; or, only to be reconciled to another character of God, which fallen man, as such, is not at enmity against, but is naturally disposed to love as soon as known ?*

OUR author undertakes to prove, (p. 40, 41, 42, 43.) that it is not the duty of fallen man ‘ to love that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law.’

But



But that instead of its being a duty, it is a sinful thing to do so ; as it is ‘ inconsistent with the character of God, ‘ and the character of man ; contrary to both law and ‘ gospel ; to nature and grace.’ Because ‘ to love this character is the same thing as to love our own misery.’ —And he also undertakes to prove, (p. 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48.) that fallen man, as such, from the mere principles of nature, is disposed to love that character of God which is exhibited in the gospel, *which is the ONLY character the gospel teaches us to love* ; so that we shall love it, as soon as known, *without a new principle of grace*. And therefore the common doctrine of the necessity of a ‘ new principle of grace’ is wrong, and ‘ regeneration is wrought by light.’

The question relative to this scheme of religion, which we would now propose to examination is this, *viz. Doth the gospel call fallen man to be reconciled to that character of God, which fallen man, as such, is at enmity against ; or only to be reconciled to another character of God, which fallen man, as such, is not at enmity against, but is naturally disposed to love as soon as known ?*—We will in the first place, offer some arguments to prove, that the gospel doth call fallen man to be reconciled to that character of God, which, as such, he is at enmity against, and then consider what Mr. M. has said to the contrary.

Argument 1. The gospel called Adam, immediately after his fall, to be reconciled to that very character of God against which he was at enmity, or it called him to no reconciliation at all. For to say, that the gospel called him to be reconciled to a character against which he was not at enmity implies a contradiction. For it supposes a thing to be, and not to be, at the same time. For a call to a reconciliation supposes enmity. Therefore the gospel did not call Adam after his fall to be reconciled to God at all, or else it called him to be reconciled to that character of God against which he was at enmity. But to say, that the gospel did not call Adam to be reconciled to God at all, supposes that God was willing to be reconciled to Adam, but did not desire  
Adam

Adam to be reconciled to him. For if the gospel which was preached to Adam by God himself did imply no call to Adam to be reconciled to God, then it is plain God did not desire Adam to be reconciled to him; for he did not call him to it; he did not invite him to it: that is, he did not desire, that Adam should be reconciled to that character of himself which he had exhibited in his law. But if he did not desire him to be reconciled to that character of himself which he had exhibited in his law, he was willing he should continue to hate it. But if God was willing, that Adam should continue to hate that character of himself which he had exhibited in his law, then he did really hate it himself. For if God loved it, he would desire Adam to love it; for he would desire Adam to be like him, and after his image. But to say, that God hated that character of himself which he had exhibited in his law, supposes an essential change in God's moral character. For God loved that character before Adam fell, as will be granted.

Remark 1. In this Mr. M's scheme is consistent with itself, viz. In supposing no change of nature necessary to be in us in order to our reconciliation to God; because the change of nature necessary to a reconciliation between God and us, has already taken place on God's side. His nature is changed, and so there is no need that ours should be changed. We only need to know the change which has taken place in God's nature, in God's moral character, and all will be well. The breach will be made up, friendship will commence, *without any new principle of grace in us.*

Rem. 2. In this also the scripture scheme is consistent with itself, viz. In supposing a change of nature necessary to take place on our part, in order to our liking the divine character. Because, according to scripture, no change of nature has, or ever will take place on God's side. For it is a scripture maxim, that contrary natures are an abomination to each other. Pro. 29. 27. *An unjust man is abomination to the just; and he that is upright*

*in the way is abomination to the wicked.* Therefore contrary natures cannot like and take pleasure in each other. 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15. *For what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion hath light with darkness? And what concourse hath Christ with Belial?* But our sinful nature is contrary to God's holy nature. Rom. 8. 7. *The carnal mind is enmity against God.* And therefore regeneration is necessary. Joh. 3. 3. *Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.* And a new nature is communicated in regeneration. Joh. 3. 6. *That which is born of the Spirit is spirit.* The old nature is taken away, and a new nature is given. Ezek. 36. 26. *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh.* And this new nature lays a foundation for delight in God and in his ways. Ver. 27. *I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes.* Psal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven but thee? And there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee.*

Rem. 3. There are two kinds of delight in God, which may take place in the human heart, viz. (1.) Delight in a mistaken idea of God. (2.) Delight in God's true and real character. True delight, is delight in God's true and real character. And false delight, is delight in a false and mistaken idea of God. Deists and Socinians believe, that God designs to make all his creatures finally happy : this is their idea of God. And they delight in this idea. The impenitent, law-hating *Antinomian*, believes, that God designs to make him finally happy : this is his idea of God ; and he delights in this idea. The Christian believes, that God has a supreme regard to the Deity, and designs to assert the dignity of the divine nature, and the infinite evil of sin, in the just punishment of every transgression, without exception, in the criminal, or in his surety. And so to maintain the honor of his law, which is the image of his heart, a transcript of his moral perfections ; and to pardon none but penitent believers ; and to grant pardon only as an act of mere, pure grace, and only thro'

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the atonement of Christ, who hath born the curse of the law, died the just for the unjust. This is his idea of God. And he delights in this idea. It gives him pleasure to see God exalted, the law honored, sin punished, the sinner humbled, grace glorified. This is a glorious way of saving sinners. Christ crucified, in this view, is, in his eyes, *the wisdom of God*. It appears to be wisdom, *truly divine*, to be at such infinite expence, to do honor to that character of God, which is exhibited in the law. For that character appears to be truly divine, and so to be worthy of this infinite honor. *It is wise to pay infinite honor to that which is infinitely glorious. But it is foolish to render honor to that which is odious, and dishonorable.* To a regenerate heart Christ crucified is, therefore, *the wisdom of God*, but to others *foolishness and a stumbling block*. 1 Cor. 1. 18, 23, 24. and 2. 14.—These sentiments are explained and proved at large, in my *Essay on the nature and glory of the gospel*. And this is what Mr. M. misrepresents and cries out against, *as new divinity*. p. 40, 41, 42.

Rem. 4. Every unregenerate sinner, be his doctrinal knowledge what it will, is, in the temper of his heart, an infidel. For it is incredible, that infinite honor should be done to that which appears worthy of no honor at all. But the divine law, and the divine character therein exhibited, to a carnal heart, appear worthy of no honor at all. For they appear not amiable, but odious. For Rom. 8. 7. *The carnal mind is enmity against God*. Therefore, a cordial belief of the truth of the gospel is peculiar to the regenerate. 1 Joh. 5. 1. *Whoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God*. Therefore,

Rem. 5. It is not strange, that an unregenerate man, when the true gospel of Christ is explained and set in a clear light before his eyes, should cry out, ‘This is *new divinity* to me.’ For it may truly be quite *new* to him : A system of sentiments he never believed to be true. But it is strange, that the true gospel of Christ should appear to be *new divinity* to an old saint.—But it is time to proceed.

Arg. 2. God the Father loves that character of himself, which he exhibited to Adam in his law : But the gospel calls us to be like God ; to be conformed to his image : Therefore the gospel calls us to love that character of God which is exhibited in his law.—That God the Father loves that character of himself, which he exhibited to Adam in his law is evident from this, viz. That character which is exhibited in the law was God's true character ; as Mr. M. grants, p. 41. “ The divine character exhibited in the moral law, was that which was exhibited to Adam in his state of innocency, and— it was God's true character.” Indeed, it was God's true and real character, or else God gave himself a character contrary to truth in the moral law : which none will dare to say. But if that character of God, was God's true and real character, then it will follow, that God loved that character then. For all will grant, that God loved his own character. But if God loved that character then, he does love it still, unless his nature is changed. But that God is immutable, *the same yesterday, to-day, and forever*, needs no proof to those who believe the bible. But if God still loves that character of himself, which he exhibited in his law, since the fall, as much as he did before, then in order to our being like God and in his image, we must love it too. For if he loves it, and we hate it, then we are not like him, but are contrary to him : are not of the same spirit, but of a spirit and disposition contrary to him. But the gospel calls us to be like God ; and in a true and real conversion we are changed into the *same image* ; as all grant. And therefore the gospel calls us to be reconciled to that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law, which he always did, and always will love, and without the love of which we are not like God, but contrary unto him ; are not in his image, but are in the image of the wicked one, who doth now, and always will hate that character of God, which is exhibited in his law.

Arg. 3. God the Son, in character of mediator, loves  
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that character of God, which is exhibited in the law, and against which the carnal mind is at enmity : But the gospel calls us to be like Christ in the temper of our hearts : therefore the gospel calls us to be reconciled to, and to love that character of God which is exhibited in his law, against which all unregenerate sinners are at enmity.--- That God the Son, in character of mediator, loves that character of God which is exhibited in the law, is evident, because he is *the express image of his Father's Person*. Heb. 1. 3. But his Father loves that character, as has been proved ; and therefore he loves it as much as his Father does.--- And besides, he became incarnate, lived and died to do honour to the divine law, and to the divine character therein exhibited. But the gospel calls us to be like Christ, to be of the same spirit, to imitate him, and follow his example : But if we hate that character of God which is exhibited in the law, we are not like Christ, we are not of the same spirit, we do not imitate him, nor follow his example ; but we are of a temper contrary to him, and like the devil.

Remark 1. To hate that character of God which is exhibited in the law, is to hate Christ Jesus and his righteousness. For Christ Jesus loved that character, and lived and died to do it honor : and in this his righteousness consisted ; and for this his Father *was well pleased in him*. Therefore,

Rem. 2. Those who are at enmity against God the Father, are also at enmity against God the Son. For to hate the law, is to hate the gospel. Because the gospel vindicates the honor of the law. Thus the Pharisees, who hated the true character of God the Father, which was exhibited in the law of Moses, likewise hated the character of Jesus Christ, exhibited in explaining and vindicating that law in his public ministry, and in detecting and condemning the false glosses which they had put upon it. *They have both seen and hated both me and my Father*. For if God's character exhibited in his law is odious, then the character of Christ, as mediator, is odious also.



also. Because Christ's mediatorial character consists in supreme love to that character of God which is exhibited in the law, exercised and expressed in his life, and in his death.

Rem. 3. To expect acceptance with God on the account of the righteousness of Christ, which consists in love to that character of God which is exhibited in the law, while we allow ourselves to hate that character, and really believe that the gospel does not call us to love it, implies this gross inconsistency, viz. That we acknowledge, that love to that character is above all things acceptable to God, and that yet God does not desire us to love it. It was his will that Christ should love and honor it to procure the salvation of his disciples, but his disciples may lawfully hate it. Moreover, to depend on Christ's righteousness. i. e. on Christ's loving that character and doing it honor, while we allow ourselves to hate it, and affirm, that 'it is contrary to the character of God and 'to the character of man; contrary to the law and to 'the gospel; contrary to nature and to grace,' for us to love it; is grossly inconsistent. For it is to depend on that as our justifying righteousness in the sight of God, which, if it were in us, would be a sin. For *sin is a transgression of the law*. But Mr. M. says, that it is 'contrary to the law of God for us to love that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law. p. 41, 42. Thus men are taught to trust in the righteousness of Christ for justification in the sight of God, while they allow themselves to hate that righteousness of Christ, and to believe it would be a sinful thing in them, to love what he loved, and to be holy as he was holy, and righteous as he was righteous.—But, if we think it lawful to hate that character of God which is exhibited in the divine law; then we think ourselves innocent in hating of it. And so our real dependence for acceptance with God in this case, is not on Christ's righteousness, but on our own innocence.

By the law given to Adam it appears (1) That God

was disposed to punish sin. (2) That, in his view, it became him, as moral governor of the world, to punish sin. (3) That it was his fixed determination that sin should not go unpunished. And by the cross of Christ, it appears in a still clearer light, (1) That God is disposed to punish sin. (2) That, in his view, it becomes him, as moral governor of the world, to punish sin. (3) That it is his fixed determination that sin shall not go unpunished.—But a determination, in all instances, to punish sin in the criminal, and never to accept a surety to die in his room, is not, and never was any part of God's revealed character.—However, if God's disposition to punish sin is not an amiable disposition, it never was and never will be an object of love, whether exhibited in the law, or in the cross of Christ.—But if it is a beauty in the divine character, it always was, and always will be, an object of love, whether exhibited in the law, or in the cross of Christ.—To say, that the holiness and justice of the divine nature are glorious, when the surety is the sufferer ; but odious, when the criminal himself is punished, is the grossest absurdity, and the most bare-faced hypocrisy.

Arg. 4. The regenerating, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, are necessary in order to that reconciliation to God, to which the gospel calls us, as is evident from Joh. 3. 3—6. But the regenerating, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit are not necessary in order to our loving a character, which while unregenerate, we are not at enmity against. For, (1) There is no need of the regenerating influences of the Spirit, in order to all that *preparatory work*, which is before regeneration ; as all grant. (2) After this *preparatory work* is completely finished, according to Mr. M. ' The unregenerate sinner ' is capable of receiving the light of the knowledge of ' the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ : ' while unregenerate, he means, for he adds ' by which his soul will be regenerated.' p. 51. Thus the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ is actually seen, according to Mr.

M.

M. by the unregenerate sinner, while unregenerate. And therefore there is, according to him, no need of the regenerating, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit to bring the sinner thus far. Nay, in fact, the sinner comes thus far, while unregenerate. And, (4) being brought thus far, the sinner now needs *no new principle of grace*, as he says, p. 47, 48. For indeed it is natural for all mankind, to love that which appears glorious and amiable in their eyes. Nor is any assistance needed in this, according to Mr. M. no, not so much as external means, 'it will have this effect without the necessity of an exhortation.' p. 52. Just as it was natural for Jacob to love Rachel, as soon as he saw her, 'without the need of an exhortation.' And, much less did he need any supernatural assistance of the Spirit of God in the affair. Yea, according to Mr. M. the reconciliation will be perfect, on the first discovery, so that an exhortation to be reconciled to God will never more be needed. Thus it is evident, that, on Mr. M's scheme, the regenerating, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, are entirely needless in order to a sinner's loving that character of God, against which, Adam was no more at enmity, after his fall, than he was before he fell, which Mr. M. supposes is exhibited in the gospel. And therefore (5) regeneration, in his sense of it, may 'be wrought by light,' without any sanctifying influences of the Spirit at all. For as God's supposed new character may appear glorious and amiable to one, who is at enmity against God's old character; so this new character may for the same reason be loved, by one, who is at enmity against his old character. That is, by the *carnal mind*. For this NEW GOD teaches his votaries, that it is 'contrary to the character of God, and 'contrary to the character of men; contrary to the law 'and to the gospel; contrary to nature and to grace,' to love that character of God, which is exhibited in the divine law, *holy, just and good* as it is, against which the carnal mind is at enmity. And this doctrine is so perfectly agreeable to a carnal heart, that if we may have the fa-



your and love of the Almighty on this plan, Mr. M. might well say, p. 43. 'That there is nothing in our fallen circumstances to prevent our returning to the love of God,' and that *without any new principle of grace.*

Arg. 5. All the holy inhabitants of heaven love that character of God, which is exhibited in his holy law, as it is set forth in the clearest and strongest point of light, in the eternal misery of the damned. For they all join to cry *Hallelujah*, while *their smoke ascendeth for ever and ever.* Rev. 19. 1—6. But if we are not by the gospel brought to a reconciliation to the same character, we cannot join in the worship of heaven, nor with any comfort live among them. 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15.—But if Mr. M's scheme is true,

Arg. 6. The breach between God and the sinner may be made up, and a perfect reconciliation take place, without the sinner's ever repenting of that enmity against God, which is in his heart, as a fallen creature. Yea, it is lawful for the sinner to continue in that enmity. Yea, it is his duty. For Mr. M. says, that it is 'contrary to the law of God' to love that character of the Deity, which is exhibited in the moral law. p. 40, 41, 42. And therefore when Christ came to *call sinners to repentance*, he had no intention, that they should repent of their enmity against his Father's character, exhibited in that holy law, which he loved and obeyed in his life, and honoured in his death; but was free and heartily willing they should go on in their enmity to it, to all eternity. For Mr. M. says, p. 43. 'The love of God which the gospel teacheth,' is not love to the divine character exhibited in the law, but 'love of that divine character which is exhibited to us in a Mediator, and NO OTHER.' But if God the Father loves that character of himself which is exhibited in his holy law, and if God the Son loves that character, and if all the holy inhabitants of heaven are like God and his Son, and love that character too, then converts on Mr. M's scheme, when

when they arrive to heaven, if they ever should arrive there, could not join with the church above, or make that profession of love to God, which all the rest of the inhabitants do there; but would need an external graceless covenant in that world, in order to join in full communion there, as much as they do in this world here below, in order to join in full communion here.

But it is time now to attend to Mr. M's reasoning, and this is the sum, and this is the whole force of his argument, on the strength of which his whole scheme stands, and which he has repeated over and over again.

*Objection. To love that character of God which is exhibited in his law, is the same thing as to love our own misery. But to love our own misery is to take pleasure in pain; which is a contradiction, and in its own nature impossible. Contrary to the character of God, and to the character of men; contrary to the law and to the gospel; contrary to nature and to grace.* p. 10, 12. 41, 42, 43.

Answer 1. Our author says, p. 11. 'That the primary reason why God is to be loved, is the transcendent excellency of the divine perfections.' \*

But 'the transcendent excellency of the Divine Perfections' is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever.—And therefore that character of God, which is exhibited in the law, is as 'transcendently excellent' since, as it was before the fall. And therefore *this reason of love* remains in FULL FORCE to us in our guilty state.

Ans. 2.

\* If 'all the ground and reason there is for fallen man, to exercise dependence on God,' i. e. for eternal life, 'arise from the covenant of grace; as Mr. M. says, p. 12. Yet all the ground and reason that mankind have to love God, does not arise 'from the covenant of grace.' For God was in himself infinitely worthy of our love, antecedent to a consideration of the gift of Christ, otherwise the gift of Christ to answer the demands of the law, in our room, had been needless; for there was no need our surety should ever pay a debt for us, which we ourselves never owed.—And it was as 'repugnant to the law, and as much 'presumption' to expect eternal life before the fall, as since, without perfect obedience, on the foot of law. This kind of *dependence* was never required, by the law, of Adam, or of any other man. It was no mere his duty before the fall, than it was afterwards.

Ans. 2. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, and all the holy inhabitants of heaven, love that character of God, which is exhibited in his law; and yet they do not love misery it self, or take any pleasure in the pains of the damned, considered merely as pain.—If God did take pleasure in the pains of the damned, considered merely as pain; if this were the character which he exhibits of himself in his law; then to love this character would be the same thing as to love misery. So that this is implicitly, and by fair construction, imputed to the Father of the universe, when it is said, that ‘to love that character of God which is exhibited in the divine law, is the same thing as to love our own misery.’—But to say, that God and the holy inhabitants of heaven take pleasure in the pains of the damned, considered merely as pain, is to impute to them a spirit of *disinterested malice*. But to justify our enmity against God by such an imputation is exceeding impious.—But on the other hand, if God may love that character of himself, which is exhibited in his law, and yet not love misery it self; then were we *regenerate*, were we made *partakers of the divine nature*, we might be like God; and be affected as the holy inhabitants of heaven are; and so might love that character of God which is exhibited in the divine law, and not love misery in ourselves, or in any other beings.

A wise and good father, when he inflicts just punishment on a haughty, stubborn child for some heinous crime, approves and loves his own conduct, and the character which he exhibits therein; but yet he does not love his child’s misery, it self, or take pleasure in his pain, as such, or desire his child to take pleasure in it. And if the proud, haughty, stubborn, impenitent child should say, ‘To love a whipping father is the same thing as to love to be whipped. But to love to be whipped is to love misery. But to love misery is a contradiction, and in its own nature impossible, and contrary to the law of God, which requires me to love myself;’ every  
obedient



obedient child in the family would be able to see the fallacy of the argument. And love to their father's honor would make them love him for vindicating his honor in the just punishment of such a son. Nor is there a father on earth, hearing such language as this from a child, but that would think it proper and fit, that his uncircumcised heart should be so humbled, as to accept the punishment of his iniquity, before he pardoned him. Nor would he forgive him, until he should feel and say, ' I deserve to be whipped. It is good enough for me. ' It becomes my father to do it. Nor is it a blemish, ' but a beauty in his character, to be disposed to chastize such a haughty wretch as I am.'—For the father approves of his own disposition to punish his child. He knows that it becomes him. And until his child knows it too, he cannot but disapprove of him, as a stubborn, impenitent child. And yet no father ever desired his child to love misery. Nay, on the contrary, did the child love to be whipped, did whipping give the child pleasure, it would cease to be of the nature of a punishment. It would gratify the child, and frustrate the father.—To say, in this case, that ' to love a whipping father is the same thing as to love to be whipped,' is to say, that the father whips the child, merely for the pleasure of whipping of it, and takes delight in its misery, for itself : and so is guilty of *disinterested malice*, which no man ever was guilty of, and which to charge on the Deity is the highest blasphemy. For if the father loves his own character, and delights in his own conduct toward his child, without loving the child's misery, itself ; then nothing hinders, but that the child might love his father's character and conduct too, without loving its own misery. For a more particular answer to this objection, see *Essay on the nature and glory of the gospel*, p. 32, 33, 34, 35, 36.

## SECTION VIII.

Gen. i. 27. *So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him.*

Question. *How was it possible for Adam, before the fall, to love that character of God which was exhibited to him in the law, consistently with the love of his own happiness?*

The difficulty which attends this question may come into view, if we consider,

1. **T**HAT a state of eternal misery is infinitely worse than not to be. Existence itself is desirable, to mere nature, only as it implies a capacity for the enjoyment of happiness. Nature dreads annihilation, as thereby all happiness is lost for ever. But it is better to be without happiness, than it is to be, not only, without happiness, but miserable. Pure misery is worse than non-existence. Hence abandoned, guilty sinners often wish for annihilation. And had Adam, for the first transgression, been threatened with annihilation, it might have been thought of with less horror and dread. But misery is a dreadful thing. And eternal misery is infinitely dreadful, infinitely worse than not to be. How therefore could Adam think of that dreadful word DEATH, as implying eternal misery, and yet love that Being, who had threatened this, for the first transgression? Yea, and love that very character exhibited in the threatening itself? How could love to this character consist with his love to his own happiness?—It is true, God had been kind to him, in giving him a happy existence, surrounded with many delights: But this happiness and these delights, to be enjoyed for thousands of ages, were lighter than a feather compared with eternal misery.—And it is true, he might remain happy for ever, in case of perfect obedience. And this was a glorious prospect.—But what if he sinned? What then? DEATH! ETERNAL DEATH! never ending woes were threatened, as his just desert.—But why eternal death for one offence? Where was the wisdom, justice, or goodness of this? This is the language of self-love,

love, as it now takes place in fallen man. And if, as Mr. M. says, 'this principle of self-love was essential to moral agency' in innocent Adam, it must have been the language of his heart before the fall. — But,

2. One bad property entirely approved of, and constantly exercised, will render any moral character devoid of beauty. If there is no moral beauty in the divine character, he is neither worthy of supreme love, or capable of being the supreme good. A law, a fixed law, is an expression of the fixed character of the law-giver. If God's disposition to punish sin with eternal misery, appeared in Adam's eyes to be a bad property in the Deity, it was not possible he should love him with all his heart. It was as impossible before his fall as after, even, as it is as impossible to love a tyrant before we fall into his hands, as afterwards. And if Adam could not love the divine character before his fall, then he could take no delight in him. For an odious character, instead of giving pleasure, gives pain. And if Adam neither loved the divine character, nor delighted in it, before the fall, he was in the same state and temper of mind, before, as he was after the fall. And if so, then he was not created in the image of God, but came into existence as much depraved as we are.

3. To say, that this dark side of the divine character was out of his view before he fell, and that he viewed the Deity only in the character of an almighty benefactor, and his friend; and therefore in this view of things, 'the love of God and self-love were consistent:' is really to say, that Adam before the fall did not love God's true and real character, as exhibited in the law which he was under. But rather, that character was so entirely out of his view, that he had no exercises of heart about it, good, or bad; for it, or against it: which amounts to the same thing, as to say, that he was never actually friendly to God's true character, even before the fall. But rather had he fully known it, and taken a deliberate view of it, with application to himself, he would have disliked it, even then. And this must, with as much reason,

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then



then, as afterwards, have been the language of his heart ;  
 ' To love this character of God is to love my own misery ; but to love my own misery is impossible. For  
 ' to take pleasure in pain implies a contradiction.'

4. Mr. M. says, p. 42. ' For a principle of self-love  
 ' is essential to our nature. Take away all self-love,  
 ' and a total indifference to pleasure and pain will take  
 ' place in us ; and then, we become incapable of being  
 ' influenced by promises and threatenings, rewards and  
 ' punishments ; which strips us of our moral agency.  
 ' But to love God in our guilty state, according to the  
 ' character of him in the moral law, does thus totally  
 ' exclude all self-love from its proper place and exercise  
 ' in the heart. For to be well pleased in God as a holy  
 ' and righteous Being, from the perfections of whose  
 ' nature, it becomes *absolutely necessary*, that he should  
 ' make us for ever, compleatly miserable, \* is directly  
 ' repugnant to, and absolutely inconsistent with the least  
 ' degree of regard to our own well-being. There can  
 ' be

\* Q. 1. Was it *absolutely necessary from the perfections of the divine nature*, that fallen Adam should be miserable for ever ? i. e. that his sin should be punished in his own person ?—Or, Q. 2. Did God *by the law given to Adam* lay himself under an *absolute necessity* to make Adam miserable for ever ? i. e. to punish his sin in his own person.—If so, then the *doctrine of substitution*, of one dying in the room of another, is *absolutely inconsistent* with the perfections of the divine nature, and with the tenor of the divine law.—Which to say, saps the very foundation of divine revelation ; and demonstrates that the God, who appeared to Adam after the fall, was not the same God that had appeared to him before.—The God of the law, and the God of the gospel are two Beings, *absolutely inconsistent* with each other.—The truth is—1. That God's disposition to punish sin according to its desert, is, and ever was, and ever will be essential to his nature : But to punish sin, in all instances, in the criminal himself, without ever admitting a surety, is not essential to his nature.—But—2. God's disposition to punish sin according to its desert is set in as clear and strong a point of light in the gospel, as in the law ; in the death of Christ as if every sinner had been punished in his own person.—3. This disposition is a beauty in the divine character, or a blemish.—If it is a beauty, then it is, and always was, and always will be an object of love.—If a blemish, then it is not an object of love, as exhibited in the law, or in the gospel ; in the death of the criminal, or of his surety.—But if it is a blemish, it is more odious, as exhibited in the gospel,

‘ be in nature no such sort of regeneration as to bring  
 ‘ the heart under such circumstances, to exercise true  
 ‘ love to God.’—Therefore, if these things are true,

5. ‘ It was, in the nature of things impossible, that  
 Adam before the fall, should deliberately and understandingly love that character of God which was exhibited to him in the law he was under. For it implied ‘ love to his own misery’ to love it one time as really as another, before his fall as well as afterwards. Thus when a wise and good father threatens to whip his child in case he commits some particular crime, which he warns him against; to love the character of that father exhibited in that threatening is as really contrary to self-love before the crime is committed as it is afterwards. For it is precisely the same thing to love a character exhibited in a threatening, as it is to love the same character exhibited in the execution of that threatening. For the character exhibited is precisely the same. But to love the same character is the same thing. And if it implies a ‘total indifference to pleasure and pain’ to love this character, at one time, it does also equally at all times. For love to it, is always, at all times, and under all circumstances, precisely one and the same thing. So that, if Mr. M’s reasoning is just, Adam came into existence with a spirit of enmity to God in his heart. Nor was it possible in the nature of things, that he should ever have had it in his

gospel, than in the law.—4. As a regard to a parent’s honor renders the parent’s disposition to maintain his honour, in the government of his house, a beauty in the eyes of a child; so a regard to the honor of the Deity renders his disposition, to maintain his honor, in the government of his kingdom, a beauty in the eyes of every regenerate soul. But the holiness and justice of the divine nature are disagreeable in the eyes of every one, who is under the government of supreme self-love. For mere self-love has no regard for God.—However, 5. A carnal heart, which is enmity against God’s true and real character, from a mere selfish spirit may be greatly pleased with the idea of *an almighty reconciled father and friend, determined to make him happy for ever*, and may cry out, *This God is transcendently excellent and glorious*; But God does not sustain this character, with respect to any impenitent sinner. It is true, many impenitent sinners have such ‘a discovery,’ but the thing discovered is a lie, and the father of lies is the author of the discovery. And yet they mistake this lie, for *glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ*.

his heart, to love that character of God which was exhibited in the law which he was under. Nor is it possible, that we his posterity should ever be brought to love it. 'There can be in nature no such sort of regeneration.' Therefore Adam was not created in the image of God, nor are any of his posterity recovered to the image of God by the regenerating, sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. And thus divine revelation is sapped at the very foundation. For one of the first facts revealed, is, in its own nature absolutely impossible, viz. That Adam was created in the image of God. Because, for Adam to love that character of God, which was exhibited in that law, which Adam was under, was 'inconsistent with the least degree of regard to his own well-being.'——Besides,

6. If it is inconsistent with that regard to our own well-being, which we ought to exercise, in our guilty state, to love that character of God; it is equally inconsistent with that regard to our neighbour's well-being, which we ought to exercise. For it is an agreed point, that we ought *to love our neighbour as ourselves*. And it is as 'contrary to the law of God' to delight in our neighbour's misery as in our own. So that,

7. Unless a universal salvation of devils and damned takes place, it will eternally be 'absolutely inconsistent' with that regard which we ought to have to our selves and to our neighbours to love the Deity. And therefore, if Mr M's reasoning is just, all holy beings in the intellectual system must join in a general revolt, unless the Deity entirely lays aside his moral character, exhibited in the moral law; and grants a general release to all the damned.—And thus,

8. The doctrine of the eternity of hell torments must be given up, or God's moral character is wholly ruined. For it is as bad a piece of conduct in the Deity to damn my neighbour, as it is to damn myself. For my neighbour's welfare is worth as much as my own. And it is as 'contrary to the law' to love my neighbour's misery, as to love my own misery. It never was, therefore, if

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Mr. M's reasoning is just, any part of God's moral character, to be disposed to punish sin with *everlasting punishment*, as Jesus taught, Mat. 25. 46. And so Jesus was not the Christ. — Or, else the *Socinians* are right, and we must join with them, and say, that God never did think ; (1) That he was God, i. e. an infinitely glorious and amiable being, infinitely worthy of the supreme love and universal obedience of his rational creatures. Or, (2) That sin was an infinite evil. Or (3) that sin did deserve an infinite punishment. Nor (4) did he ever intend to punish it with *everlasting punishment*. And (5) if sin is not an infinite evil, an infinite atonement never was needed, or made. And so (6) our Saviour is not God. — And thus a denial of *the divinity of God the Father*, issues in the denial of *the divinity of God the Son*. And having framed in our fancy a God to suit our hearts, the *Holy Ghost*, as a sanctifier, becomes needless. For we can love this God, *without any new principle of grace*. — And thus, if Mr. M's reasoning is just, and if we will pursue it, in its necessary consequences, we are *Socinians*, or *infidels* : and the odds between *Socinianism* and *infidelity* is not great.

Thus the difficulty is stated. And the answer to it is as follows.

This must be admitted, as a self-evident maxim, that that regard to the welfare of our selves and of our neighbours, which is inconsistent with the love of God's moral character, is of the nature of opposition to God. But opposition to the moral character of God is not a duty, but a sin. That self-love, therefore, 'which is absolutely inconsistent with the love of God' is criminal. And therefore it was so far from being 'essential to moral agency' in innocent Adam, that it did not belong to, but was inconsistent with his character. He loved happiness, but he placed his chief happiness in God's glory : *of whom, and by whom, and to whom are all things, to whom be glory for ever*. Nor had he any separate interest of his own, independent of God, and in opposition to his honor and glory, nor the least degree of a selfish spirit. For himself

himself, his soul and body, his all, was offered up as a living sacrifice to God, without reserve. And it was no more inconsistent with Adam's love of happiness to love God for saying, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die* ; than it was inconsistent with God's goodness for God to love his own character exhibited in this threatening. It is in its own nature, and by the consent of all mankind, perfectly consistent, to give up and sacrifice a lesser good to a greater, if the greater can be secured in no other way : while yet, at the same time, the lesser good, which is given up, is valued according to its worth. If God acted a consistent part in exercising a greater regard to his own honor, than to Adam's welfare, in giving out that threatening, *In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die*, then it was equally consistent in Adam to be affected as his Maker was. If the Deity was consistent with himself, then Adam, who was created in his image, was consistent also. If the holiness and justice of the divine nature, exhibited in that threatening, were perfect in beauty, without a blemish, in the eyes of infinite goodness, they must likewise appear so in Adam's eyes, while he had no other kind of regard for his own welfare, than had his Creator. That is, so long as he continued to be in the image of God. And if love to God and to his own happiness were originally consistent in Adam, when in the image of God, they may be equally consistent in any of Adam's sons, who are anew restored to that image of God which Adam lost. And the holiness and justice of the divine nature, as exhibited in the divine law, may appear to be perfect in beauty, with application to ourselves ; and God appear to be infinitely lovely, in his disposition to punish sin according to its deserts ; and yet our own eternal welfare be at the same time prized according to its worth, and the salvation of the gospel appear infinitely precious, and the fruit of grace infinitely great and absolutely free ; and the gospel way of salvation worthy of God. But were not the divine character exhibited in the divine law perfect in beauty, without a blemish, it ought to have been laid

laid aside in disgrace, and not honored with the highest honors on the cross. If 'to love God is the same thing as to love misery,' if to love God is 'contrary to the law of God,' then that law which requires this, is an absurd, inconsistent, tyrannical law, not worthy of God, nor worthy to be honored by the blood of his own Son.—For a more large and particular view of this subject the reader is referred to my *Essay on the gospel*. sect. vi.

Mr. M's reasoning implies, that, in Adam before the fall, there was really 'no principle of holiness,' no disinterested regard to the Deity : and that his whole soul was under the government of self-love, even the same 'principle of self-love' which governed him after the fall. And therefore as soon as God's favour was lost, and he exposed to destruction, this favorite principle of self-love became 'inconsistent with the love of God,' and continues to be so, until God appears to be our friend again. And so Adam had no 'principle of holiness' to loose, nor is there any such thing for us to expect.

Mr. M. says, p. 48. 'But when we inquire of them, what they mean by this *new principle* which is implanted in the soul by regeneration; they can give no account about it'—Yes, we can give as distinct an account about it, as we can of a 'principle of self-love.' It is that *image of God in which Adam was created, restored anew*. It is true, that in Adam this *holy principle* was not a confirmed habit, but liable to be lost by the first sin ; but in believers, who are united to the second Adam, the 'principle of grace' is a confirmed habit and shall never be lost. It becomes confirmed in consequence of the first act of saving faith. Eph. i. 13, 14. \* But its nature is the

\* As Adam was created in the image of God to prepare him for holy acts and exercises of heart ; so the same image of God is restored in regeneration to prepare us for the first holy act. As there was a holy principle in Adam before the first holy act ; so there is a holy principle in the regenerate sinner before the first holy act.—And, as Adam's holy principle was not a confirmed habit in its first existence, but was to have been confirmed on his acting up to the covenant he was under ; so the holy principle given in regeneration is not a confirmed habit in its first existence, but immediately becomes confirmed as



the same. For there is but one kind of true holiness in the universe. For the holiness of Christ is of the same nature with the holiness of God the Father. Christ is the express image of his Father. And of his fulness we receive, and grace for grace. In regeneration, therefore, we are restored anew to that image of God, in which Adam was created. So that this 'principle of grace' is that whereby we are inclined to a disinterested, supreme regard to the Deity, an infinitely worthy being; and so disposed

soon as the regenerate sinner complies with the covenant of grace in the first act of saving faith. And thus, as Adam would have been entitled to eternal life on his compliance with the covenant of works; so the regenerate sinner is entitled to eternal life on his compliance with the covenant of grace. For a confirmed habit of grace is eternal life. i. e. Life never to end—life everlasting. Joh! 5. 24. *He that believeth hath everlasting life.* Hence the promises of the gospel are not made to the holy principle, passively considered, but to its acts and exercises; even as the blessings of the first covenant were not promised to that image of God, in which Adam began to exist, but to his active compliance with that covenant. And thus, that faith, by which we are *married to Christ*, is not an unregenerate, sinful act; but, as our catechism expresses it, 'a saving grace.' But if faith is before regeneration, the act of a sinner, *dead in sin*, 'totally depraved,' it is not 'a saving GRACE;' but a *saving SIN*. Or else it is not an *act*, but a mere *passive thing*, and implies no *consent of will*.

'*Question.* But here it may be doubted, and objected against this position. If we cannot believe till we are quickened with spiritual life, as you say, and cannot be justified till we believe, as all say, then it will follow, that a regenerate soul may be in a state of condemnation for a time and consequently perish, if death should befall him in that juncture.' Thus Mr. Flavel states the objection, and thus he answers it.

'*Solution.* To this I return; that when we speak of the *priority* of this quickening work of the spirit to our actual believing, we rather understand it of the priority of *nature*, than of *time*, the nature and order of the work requiring it to be so; a vital principle must, in order of nature, be infused, *before* a vital act can be exerted. First make the tree good, and then the fruit good: And admit we should grant some priority in *time* also to this quickening principle, before actual faith; yet the absurdity mentioned would be no way consequent upon this concession: for as the vital act of faith quickly follows the regenerating principle, so the soul is abundantly secured against the danger objected; God never beginning any special work of grace upon the soul, and then leaving it, and the soul with it, in hazard; but preserves both to the finishing and completing of his gracious design.' Mr. Flavel's *Method of grace* *Serm. 5.*

disposed to love that character of him exhibited in his law, in which his infinite dignity is asserted, in the threatening of an infinite punishment for sin. Even as self-love is 'that principle' whereby a fallen creature is inclined to a supreme regard to himself, and to his own honor and interest, separate from, independant of, and un subordinate to God and his glory. Which self-love is, in kind; different from, that love of happiness which is essential to every holy being. The one is contrary to the holiness of the divine nature, and the source of all our enmity against the Deity. The other is in perfect harmony with the divine nature and consistent with the perfect love of the holiness and justice of God, as exhibited in his law.

Mr. M. says, p. 48. 'But if this be true, that there must be a gracious principle implanted in the heart of a sinner, before he is capable of any gracious acts; then for the same reason, there must be a corrupt principle implanted in the heart of a holy creature (*Adam* for instance) before he is capable of any sinful acts.'—The scripture teaches us, that *God created man in his own image*, whereby he was prepared to holy acts and exercises; but the scripture does not teach us, that God afterwards *created man in the image of the devil*, to render him capable of sinful acts. And therefore 'if we would acquiesce in the plain scripture account of these things, we should readily allow,' that it was needful in order to prepare Adam for holy acts, that he should be *created in the image of God*; yet it was not necessary 'for the same reason, that there should be a corrupt principle implanted in his heart; before he was capable of any sinful act.'—For sin begins in that which is merely negative; i. e. it begins in *not loving* God with all the heart; in ceasing to exercise that regard to the Deity which is his due. Or in not having such a sense of his worthiness of love and regard as ought to take place in the heart. But a sense of God's infinite worthiness of supreme love and perfect obedience may cease to fill and govern the whole soul, without a previous implantation of a corrupt principle. It did so in Adam. For had he remained

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under the entire government of supreme love to God, he would not have eaten the forbidden fruit ; and as supreme love to God ceased, supreme self-love took place of course : but it never was in Adam's heart before. He now, for the first time, began to have a frame of heart answerable to satan's words, *Ye shall be as Gods ; ye shall not surely die.* And so he took and eat. In consequence of which, this principle of supreme self-love became a confirmed habit, and his whole heart was disposed to justify himself in it. And thus Adam became totally depraved.

Remark 1. Holiness, as it originally took place in human nature, had God for its author : and it was produced by a *creating power, in the image of God* CREATED *be him.* So it is restored by the same power. Eph. 2. 10. *We are his workmanship* CREATED *in Christ Jesus unto good works.*—But that which is God's gift, Ezek. 36. 26. *A new heart will I give you.* Is also the sinner's duty, Ezek. 18. 31. *Make you a new heart.* For total depravity and moral agency are consistent : otherwise those words, Eph. 2. 1. *Dead in sin,* would be an express contradiction.—To say, that the doctrine of *created holiness* is absurd, is to say that the bible is not the word of God : for this is one of the first doctrines taught in that book. *In the image of God created be him.*

Rem. 2. As Adam, while in the image of God, viewed the divine character exhibited in the moral law, in the same glorious point of light, in which God himself did, in which view the image of God in Adam partly consisted, and which view he totally lost by the fall ; so this view of the divine character is restored, when the image of God is renewed in regeneration. As it is written, Col. 3. 10. *The new man is renewed in knowledge, after the image of him, that created him :* i. e. that view of divine things, which is like that view which God hath of them, and which is *the image of his knowledge,* and which was originally in man before the fall, and was lost by the fall, is *renewed,* is caused to exist anew, by the same power by which it at first existed, when *God created man in his own image.* 2 Cor. 4. 6. *For God who commanded the light*



*light to shine out of darkness, (saying, Gen. 1. 3. Let there be light, and there was light.) By the same creating power, hath shined into our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

Rem. 3. Habitually to view things as God does, and to be affected, and act accordingly, (i. e. comprising both habit and act,) is the whole of that image of God, to which saints are recovered by the power of the Holy Ghost, imperfectly in this world, and perfectly in the world to come. And this image of God is the same, in kind, with that which Adam lost. For the essential rectitude of the divine nature is the original standard. The moral law is a transcript of this original. This law was written on Adam's heart. The mediatorial righteousness of Christ is the law perfectly fulfilled. So Christ is the express image of his Father. And saints are the express image of Christ. And so there is but one kind of true holiness in the universe. And this is that, which will lay the foundation for the perfect and eternal union, which will take place among all holy beings, in the kingdom of heaven. God on the throne, and every creature there in his proper place, by universal consent, all of the same spirit.

Rem. 4. The false kinds of holiness, exhibited in all false schemes of religion, differ, in kind, from the holiness of heaven, which implies love to that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law, to which all unholy beings are in a state of total opposition. For graceless men, who are pacified merely in a belief that they are safe, are, in any other view, of the same temper toward the Deity with the damned. For supreme self-love governs every apostate creature, who is totally destitute of true love, of disinterested benevolence to the most high God, the Creator and Lord of heaven & earth.

#### S E C T I O N IX.

Mat. xxviii. 19. *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son; and of the Holy Ghost.*

*The Christian creed; the Arminian creed; Mr. M's creed. Remarks on each.*

**T**HAT which is commonly called *The apostle's creed*, altho' not compiled by the apostles, yet is confessedly

fedly of very ancient date. And the three principal articles of it are these. (1.) *I believe in God the Father, almighty maker of heaven and earth.* (2.) *I believe in Jesus Christ his only Son.* (3.) *I believe in the Holy Ghost.* Which doubtless had reference to the *form of baptism* appointed by our blessed Saviour. He, therefore, who believes aright, and in a right manner, concerning Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, has the true Christian faith, and is himself a true Christian; and so is qualified to be active in offering up himself and his seed to God in Christian baptism. But some of the chief things, which, in the inspired writings, we are taught to believe concerning the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are these, which may be expressed in the following articles, in contrast with the *Arminian* creed, and with Mr. M's.

<i>The Christian creed.</i>	<i>The Arminian Creed.</i>	<i>Mr. Matther's Creed.</i>
1. Concerning God the Father.	1. Concerning God the Father.	1. Concerning God the Father.
I Believe that the moral character of God exhibited in the moral law is perfect in beauty without a blemish. And that our disaffection to the Deity is absolutely inexorable & infinitely criminal; and justly deserves the penalty threatened, infinitely dreadful as it is. In which view, the divine law is holy, just and good; worthy of the highest honor; and the salvation of the gospel from step to step, from beginning to end, is of mere grace.	I Believe that it would have been unjust in God to have held mankind after the fall bound by the moral law, without any abatement. And that therefore, some relief was in justice, due to a fallen world. And therefore, the relief granted is not wholly of grace; nor ought it be acknowledged as such by us.	I Believe that the moral character of God exhibited in the moral law is not to us an object of love; and that it is not a duty, but a sin, for us to love it: even contrary to the law of God. Because to love it is the same thing as to love our own misery. However God has given his Son to fulfil this law, and to vindicate and maintain the honor and dignity of his character exhibited in it; that sinners might be pardoned while at enmity against it. p. 28, 41, 42, 43.
2. Concerning God the Son.	2. Concerning God the Son.	2. Concerning God the Son.
I believe that Jesus Christ, in character of Mediator between God and man, loved the most	I believe that Christ died to purchase an atonement of this unjust law; and to procure	I believe that the character of God exhibited in the gospel is so accommodated to the state & temper

*The Christian Cread.**The Arminian Cread.**Mr. Matber's Cread.*

sal character of his Father, exhibited in the moral law, and lived and died to do it for us; nor; that thro' him penitent believers might be saved, consistently with the divine justice and to the glory of divine grace. And in this view Christ crucified is the wisdom of God and the power of God.

3. *Concerning God the Holy Ghost.*

I believe that fallen man is so disaffected to the character of the Father and the Son, that no means whatsoever are sufficient to reconcile us to God, without the regenerating influences of the Holy Ghost. So that except we are born again we cannot see the kingdom of God. But in consequence of the regenerating influences of the Holy Ghost by which the veil is taken off from our hearts, we behold the glory of the Lord, and every answerable affection is excited in us. And God and Christ are loved more than wives and children, than houses and lands; yea, than our own lives. Whereby we are disposed and prepared to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow Christ: and publickly join with his people, and espouse his cause.

salvation for us on terms which we are able to comply with, by his assistance.

3. *Concerning God the Holy Ghost.*

I believe that all men have sufficient assistance to comply with the terms of salvation, as it would be unjust to require more than we can do, without granting needful assistance to enable us to do it. And thus the injury done to us by the law is made up by the gospel. And in this view the divine character appears amiable in our eyes. And all mankind might love it, did they but know it without any new principle of Grace. See *Dr. Stebbins*, on the operations of the Spirit. *Dr. Whitby* on the five points.

temper of our hearts, that we shall love it as soon as known, without any new principle of grace; and even while we are at enmity against that character of God exhibited in the law. p. 22, 41—48.

3. *Concerning God the Holy Ghost.*

I believe that all needful assistance of the holy spirit is promised to all baptized persons, to render external means effectual to salvation. But *light* is all that is needful. For no kind of regeneration will bring the human heart to love that character of God which is exhibited in the law; and the character of God exhibited in the gospel will naturally be loved, as soon as known, by every one, without any new principle of grace. But not loved very much; for I believe, that not more than one convert in a hundred, can say, with a good conscience, that he loves God at all. And so saints as well as sinners stand in need of the external covenant. First book, p. 59, 60. Second book, p. 43—48, 78, 79, 80, 81.



Remark 1. According to the *Arminian creed* mankind are the injured party, Christ died to get justice done us ; and simply to have justice done us is all we need to bring us to be at peace with God. Let the terms of salvation be as low, as in justice they ought to be ; let us have all that assistance which in justice we ought to have ; and we need no more : the rest we will do ourselves. But for God to do us justice is not an act of grace.

2. According to *Mr. Mather's creed*, the divine law, antecedent to a consideration of the gift of Christ, requires us, on pain of eternal death, to do, that which is not our duty to do : yea, that, which, to do, in us, would be a sinful thing, viz. to love God with all our heart. And so Christ fulfilled a law in our stead, which it was not our duty to fulfil : yea, a law, to obey which, in us, had been a sinful thing.—But to pay a debt for us, which we ourselves did not owe, was needless : and to honor a law which requires sin, is a sinful thing.

3. The divinity of God the Father is the first article of the *Christian creed*, and so much the foundation of the whole Christian system, that if this is denied, the whole will sink of course. Or in other words, that God the creator and moral governor of the universe is an absolutely perfect, an infinitely glorious and amiable Being, infinitely worthy of supreme love and universal obedience from his creature man, is the foundation on which the law stands, and on which the whole gospel scheme is built. To deny this point, is, in effect, to deny the whole of divine revelation. Atheism is at the bottom of infidelity. The contrariety of the carnal mind to God's true and real character is at bottom of Atheism. *The fool saith in his heart there is no God.*

4. It was wise in God, even at the expence of the blood of his own Son, to assert and maintain the honor of a law, which is a transcript of his moral character, and which all his apostate creatures join to hate ; because in this he does justice to himself, and to his government, while he shews mercy to sinners.—But enmity against the divine law renders us blind to the wisdom, glory, and

and grace of the gospel, and is the cause of unbelief. 1 Cor. 1. 18. and 2. 14. Compared with Rom. 8. 7. and 3. 25. and 7. 12. Joh. 8. 42, 43.

5. He who understands and believes the Christian creed, and who is affected and acts accordingly, is a Christian, qualified for baptism, and entitled to eternal life. Mat. 13. 23. Mar. 16. 16. Joh. 17. 3.

6. He who believes the first article of the Christian creed, with a living faith, has what Paul means by *repentance toward God*. And he who believes the second article of the Christian creed, with a living faith, has what Paul means by *faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*. A belief of both which is implied in that faith by which a sinner is justified. Luk. 3. 3. and 5. 31, 32. and 18. 14. and 24. 47. Act. 20. 21. Rom. 3. 19—26. And this faith is the first grace, and the sum, seed and root of all Christian graces. Mat. 13. 23. And is peculiar to the regenerate. Rom. 8. 7. 1 Joh. 5. 1. 1 Cor. 1. 18. and 2. 14. Joh. 1. 13. Luk. 8. 11—15. And is eternal life begun in the soul. Joh. 17. 3.

7. The love of the truth is the life of faith; or in other words, love to the truth believed is of the essence of a living faith, and that wherein it specifically differs from the faith of devils, or a dead faith. Joh. 16. 27. 2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12. Jam. 2. 26. And therefore,

8. There is a universal, inseparable connection between a living faith, and a holy life, (which renders assurance attainable by believers in common. Mat. 13. 23. Jam. 2. 17, 18. 1 Joh. 2. 3.) So that those words are strictly true, 1 Joh. 2. 4. *He that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a LIAR, and the truth is not in him.*

But,

9. The *faith of devils*, attended with a *lying profession*, is not that qualification for baptism, which our Saviour had in view, in Mar. 16. 16. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*

10. The gospel may be, and ought to be preached to all in common, even to every creature, let their character be ever so vicious, as a means of their conversion: but baptism

baptism is not to be administered to adults until they believe, and profess their faith in Christ and obedience to him. Mar. 16. 15, 16. Act. 8. 37. Rom. 10. 9, 10.—For,

11. The adult person, in the act of offering himself to God in baptism, practically declares, that he devotes himself to God thro' Jesus Christ, and so *puts on Christ*. Gal. 3. 26, 27. But a false and lying profession is condemned by God in the old testament. Psal. 78. 36, 37. Eccl. 5. 5. and by Jesus Christ in the new. Luk. 6. 46. Mat. 22. 12. Luk. 14. 25—35. 1 Joh. 2. 4. Rev. 2. 2. 9. And is a means, not of salvation, but of destruction. Act. 5. 1—11.

12. The adult person, who is unqualified to offer himself in baptism, is equally unqualified to offer his infant child in baptism. For he, who is without a heart to devote himself to God, is equally without a heart to devote his child to God.

13. Pride, in ambitious minds, may excite very strong inclinations to make a false profession; but a well enlightened conscience never will dictate this, as matter of duty.

14. It is the indispensable duty of every one, to whom the gospel comes, to become a real Christian without delay: and then without delay to make a public profession of christianity: and then to attend the seals. But to seal the covenant of grace with our hands, while we reject it in our hearts, is to act deceitfully with our Maker. And to invent a new covenant which God never exhibited, and a new scheme of religion to support it, which God never revealed, suited to the hearts of those, who reject the covenant of grace, and who are under the curse of the covenant of works, is to find a resting place for the wicked.

## S E C T I O N X.

*Mr. Matber's scheme of religion inconsistent with itself.*

OUR author professes in his *preface* not 'to be fond of his own judgment;' but to stand 'ready to give it up' when any one will do 'the friendly office of setting light before him.' And he desires, that if there be any  
material



'material mistakes' in his scheme, they may be 'pointed out' It is therefore to be hoped, that he will not be displeased, if in addition to the *light* already set before him, some of the various inconsistent sentiments of his scheme are contrasted, whereby he may be farther assisted to discern, that his scheme must be wrong some where : for the truth is ever consistent with itself.

1. In his first book, he says, p. 59. 'A child dedicated to God in baptism is thereby brought into covenant with God, and has a promise left to it, of the means of grace, and the strivings of God's holy Spirit, in order to render them effectual for salvation.' But in his second book, he says, p. 51. That they must 'submit to a sovereign God.' But if they have 'a *covenant right* to the strivings of the holy Spirit,' if they have 'a promise,' then they do not lie at God's sovereign mercy in the case ; but may plead the *covenant* and *promise* of God.

2. In his first book, p. 8. he endeavours to prove that the covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. was not the covenant of grace, because 'it might be broken.' Which implies, that it had some condition, which if not fulfilled, all the blessings of it would be forfeited. But in his second book, p. 60, 61, 62. he endeavours to prove, that the covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. was not the covenant of grace, because it had no conditions, but all the blessings of it were promised to Abraham and his seed 'absolutely and unconditionally ;' on which hypothesis this covenant 'could not be broken.'—But his two books are not only inconsistent with each other, but this last book is inconsistent with itself. And to the instances which have already been taken notice of in the preceding sections, some few more may here be pointed out.

3. That man must be a moral agent, possessed of every qualification essential to moral agency, previous, and in order to his being bound by God's law, is a fundamental point with Mr. M. p. 6, 50, &c. That man may be bound by the moral law to be a moral agent, to have the qualifications essential to moral agency, is with him another fundamental point. p. 6. But as these two fun-

damental points in his scheme are inconsistent with each other, so they cannot both be true. He says, 'Self-love is essential to moral agency ;' and yet this essential qualification of a moral agent 'is a duty required of us by God's law. But according to him the law cannot bind us unless we are already moral agents. Therefore it cannot bind us to be moral agents. For then a man need not be a moral agent, previous, and in order to his being bound by the moral law ; which yet he maintains.

4. He says, p. 10. 'That Adam, by becoming guilty was *totally* depraved,' and yet according to him Adam's depravity was not *total*, for he still continued to exercise *that love to himself, which the law of God requires*, in a conformity to which the image of God consisted in which he was created. p. 6. and p. 12. 'Perhaps' he also continued to exercise toward God 'the love of esteem and benevolence.'

5. He says, p. 6. That the divine law requires us 'to love God with all our hearts,' and that it also requires us 'to love ourselves.' And he adds, that this 'self-love is absolutely inconsistent with the love of God.' So that, according to him, the divine law requires of us in our guilty state, two *duties, in their own nature, absolutely inconsistent*. And therefore he boldly affirms, that it is 'contrary to the law of God' for us while in our guilty state to love God with all our hearts ; and yet he says, p. 51. That God has 'given us his law to shew us what our duty is.' And that we are *justly condemned to eternal misery* for not obeying of it. And this law, he calls 'a glorious law,' and the character exhibited in it he calls 'glorious ;' and even supposes that the Son of God became incarnate, lived and died to 'honor this law,' and to 'vindicate and maintain the honor and dignity of the divine character exhibited in it.' p. 22, 26, 27. 28. Whereas for God to give us a rule of duty, requiring things in their own nature absolutely inconsistent, on pain of eternal death, would be an infinite reproach to the Deity. And to give his Son to die to do honor to such a law would be inconsistent with all his perfections. And yet

yet he asserts that the gospel, which is supposed to reveal this shocking scene, is 'glorious,' and even 'more glorious than the law;' whereas if his scheme is true, there is no glory in law, or gospel; unless it be glorious to require inconsistencies on pain of eternal death; and glorious to do the highest honor, before the whole intellectual system, to a law, in its own nature, contradictory.

5. He represents the divine law, as requiring things not only inconsistent in their own nature with each other; but also inconsistent with our moral agency. For he says, p. 5. 'A principle of self-love is essential to us as moral agents.' And yet he asserts that this 'self-love must be totally excluded from any place,' in the heart of a guilty creature, if he loves God. p. 10. For 'Love to God and self-love are absolutely inconsistent.' And so, according to him, the moral law requires of us that love to God, which is inconsistent with our being moral agents. p. 50. 53. And yet, according to him, if we are not moral agents, we cannot be bound by the moral law to any obedience at all. Therefore,

6. He is necessitated to maintain, that man by the fall ceased to be a moral agent, and that it was no longer his duty to love God, for the law did not bind him, 'its binding authority respected not his obedience.' This was the state of Adam before the revelation of a Mediator, 'because it was inconsistent with self-love to exercise true love to God.' p. 50. And he asserts, p. 18. That 'Mankind at this day, antecedent to their exercising faith in Christ, are in much the same condition as Adam was after he sinned.' Particularly, he says, p. 20. 'That they are under the same inability of loving God that Adam was,' viz. It is 'absolutely inconsistent with that self-love which is essential to moral agency.' And therefore the unregenerate are not moral agents, nor bound by the moral law to obedience. And *where there is no law, there is no transgression.* And therefore Adam's total depravity, which took place after the first sin, was not of a criminal nature: And the same is true of the unregenerate now, who 'are under the same inability



inability of loving God that Adam was.' And therefore total depravity does not disqualify for sealing ordinances.

And yet in direct contradiction to all this, he affirms, that the unregenerate, while such, are moral agents, bound by the law to the same perfect obedience, which was required of Adam before the fall. p. 53. ' This I will readily grant, man is a moral agent, bound by the moral law, to love God with all his heart ; and therefore God may consistently require this of him, and man is *wholly* to blame for not loving.' For, p. 27. ' nothing short of perfection may be looked upon as the whole of what is required.' For he adds, ' to suppose that God has receded from his original demand of perfection, made in the law, — implies that this law was not good,' which is ' evidently a reflection upon the divine Being, whose law it is,' and ' a reproach upon Christ, who has honoured that law.' And accordingly he affirms, p. 51. That ' God has given his law to shew us what our duty is ;' and he adds, p. 52. ' That by the law is the knowledge of sin.' Which supposes, that ' the binding authority of the law does respect our obedience,' as much as it did Adam's before the fall. And that therefore we are moral agents with respect to the law of perfection, as really as he was. And that therefore it is not inconsistent, in any child of Adam, with that self-love, which is essential to moral agency, to yield a perfect obedience to the moral law. And that therefore we are not at all depraved by nature. For this supposed inconsistency, he says, ' is the true reason, and the *only* reason' of the depravity of our nature. For had it not been for this inconsistency, Adam would have continued to love God after the fall as he did before. p. 44. ' He would have continued still to exercise the same delight in the divine perfections, as he had done before.' And yet he had said, p. 10. ' That Adam by becoming guilty was totally depraved.' And if he was totally depraved, and if total depravity and moral agency are consistent, if God ' may consistently require us to love God with all

all our hearts,' and if we 'are wholly to blame' for not loving; then our total depravity is totally criminal. But to persist obstinately in this crime, that is, to continue impenitent, and unreconciled to God, after all the means used with us by God himself, disqualifies a man to be active in sealing God's covenant, for the same reason, that obstinacy in any other crime does. Or if he will say, 'To love God is the same thing as to love misery,' and so our depravity is a calamity, but not a crime; then he must say, that we cease to be moral agents, and the law ceases to bind us: which, to use his own words, 'implies, that this law was not good, which is evidently a reflection upon the divine Being, whose law it is, and a reproach upon Christ, who has honored that law.'

7. Mr. M. is very zealous for a *preparatory work*, and to have the unregenerate sinner *strive*. p. 47—54. But without any consistence with himself. For on his scheme, what can the sinner consistently strive to do? not to love that character of God which is exhibited in the law; for this, according to him, is the same thing as to 'love his own misery,' which is 'contrary to the law,' and in its own nature impossible. Not to love that character of God which is revealed in the gospel; for the unlightened sinner is by him supposed not to know it; p. 43. And to love an unknown character, implies a contradiction, and so is absolutely impossible. What then would Mr. M. have the sinner do, or drive to do? Let us attend to his own words, p. 51, 52. God 'has given us his law, not only to shew us what our duty is; but also to let *light* before us, whereby we may obtain a proper conviction of our guilt. *By the law, is the knowledge of sin.* He has repeatedly commanded them to *consider their ways*; and calls upon them to exercise their reason. *Come now and let us reason together saith the Lord.*' But if God has given us his law to shew us what our duty is, and if by the law is the knowledge of sin, and if we consider this, and if we exercise our reason on the subject, then we must conclude, that it is, now, every day,

the

the duty of all mankind to love that character of God which is exhibited in the moral law ; and that it is the duty of all to whom the gospel comes, to love that character of God which is revealed in the gospel ; and that it is exceeding sinful to live in the neglect of these duties. But if a sinner should thus begin to *consider* and *exercise his reason*, Mr. M. would soon stop him, by saying, *The unlightened do not know that character of God which is revealed in the gospel, and so cannot love it : and to love that character of God which is revealed in the law, is the same thing as to love their own misery, which is contrary to the law, and ought not to be done.*—What then shall the sinner do ? or what shall he strive to do ? Mr. M. says, (p. 51.) that ‘ Such a conviction of our guilt, and just desert of suffering the curse of the law, as shall humble us, and bring us to submit to a sovereign God, is necessary to fit and prepare our hearts to close with Christ.’ But by what means shall such convictions be obtained ? How will you convince the sinner, that he deserves eternal damnation for *not continuing in all things written in the book of the law to do them*, particularly, for *neglecting to love God*, while he firmly believes, that ‘ the love of God and self-love are absolutely inconsistent ? ’ and that, therefore, it is ‘ contrary to the law ’ which requires self-love, to love God. The more the sinner *considers*, and *exercises his reason*, the more clearly will he see the inconsistency of these things.—Or, will Mr. M. tell the sinner, as in p. 53. to strive ‘ to obtain those discoveries of God thro’ Christ, by which he will be reconciled to God ? ’—But, why, seeing on Mr. M’s scheme, the sinner has no prejudices against this character of God to combat & strive against, but is naturally disposed to love it, as soon as known ; why, if this be the case, should not *the discoveries*, already made in the bible, be immediately received and embraced ? Did not Jacob love Rachel the first time he saw her ? or did he spend two or three months, or as many years, after the first sight of her person, *striving for a discovery of her beauty* ?

8. Mr. M. says, p. 9. That to Adam after his fall it must



must appear 'in every view, inconsistent with the divine perfections,' that he should escape the curse of the law. But in these circumstances, p. 10. 'To delight in God was the same thing as to delight in his own misery;' and therefore, he adds, 'That Adam, by becoming guilty, was totally depraved.' Because now 'the love of God and self-love were absolutely inconsistent.' And he says, p. 10. 'This was the true reason, and the *only* reason, why Adam could not love God after the fall.' And therefore as soon as a door of hope was opened by the revelation of a Mediator, Adam instantly returned to the love of God. 'And there is nothing in our fallen circumstances to prevent' our doing so too. p. 44. And that *without any new principle of grace*. p. 48. But if these things are true, it will follow, (1) that as soon as any man believes, that there is forgiveness with God for sinners through Jesus Christ, he will cease to be totally depraved: because now 'the true reason and the only reason,' of his total depravity is removed: And, therefore, (2) every man who believes the gospel to be true is regenerate. And, therefore, (3) every man who knows, that he believes the gospel to be true, does with equal certainty know that he is regenerate. Because this belief and regeneration are infallibly connected, according to Mr. M. But, (4) according to him, 'none but such as profess the Christian religion ought to be admitted into the church.' And (5) according to him, none ought to profess, that they believe the gospel to be true, unless they are infallibly certain, that they do believe it to be true. For, speaking of the profession which is made when any join with the church, he says, p. 79. 'Suppose a man brought into a civil court, as a witness to a particular fact; and being sworn, should positively declare the thing to be fact: and after he comes out of court, his neighbour should ask him, whether he had any certain knowledge of the fact, about which he had given his evidence; and he should say, *No, I am not certain of it; but I hope it is so, it is my prevailing opinion; altho' I must confess, I have many doubts and fears,*

' *whether*

*‘ whether there is any truth in it, or not. Would not all mankind agree, to call such a one, a perjured person, who had taken a false oath ?’* No one, therefore, according to his scheme may profess, that he believes the gospel to be true, unless he is infallibly certain of the fact, that he does believe it to be true. But if regeneration and this belief are infallibly connected, then this professor must be infallibly certain of his regeneration, and so not one soul, on Mr. M’s scheme, may, or can be admitted into the church, as graceless. And thus his scheme overthrows itself.

Nor is there any way to avoid this, but for Mr. M. to say, *A man may be infallibly certain of the truth of the gospel, and so of God’s readiness to be reconciled to sinners, as therein revealed ; and yet after all remain totally depraved, and an enemy to God.*---But to say this, would be to give up the fundamental principle on which his whole scheme is built, viz. that ‘ the true and the only reason’ of total depravity, is the apprehension, that it is inconsistent with the divine perfections, to forgive sin. In which view ‘ self-love and the love of God are inconsistent.’ And if this is given up, his whole scheme sinks of course. For if this is not *the true and only reason* of total depravity, he is wholly wrong from the foundation to the top stone. And if an apprehension, that it is inconsistent with the divine perfections to forgive sin, is *the true and only reason* of total depravity, then a belief that God can consistently forgive sin, would at once regenerate us. For it is an old maxim, *Remove the cause and the effect will cease.* Every man, therefore, according to Mr. M. who believes the gospel to be true, is at once reconciled to God. Nor may any be received into the church, until they believe it to be true. And so no graceless man, as such, can be admitted into the church. Because no infidel, as such, may be admitted. And all but infidels are regenerate, if Mr. M’s scheme is true. And then the scheme of religion which he has advanced, in order to support the external covenant, were it true, would effectually overthrow the grand point he had in view.

## SECTION XI.

*The extraordinary methods Mr. Maiber has taken to support his scheme, and keep himself in countenance.*

THE ordinary methods of supporting religious principles, by scripture and reason, which Mr. M. has taken to support his external covenant, we have already attended to. And I think Mr. M. is much to be commended for coming out boldly, like an honest man, and giving the public such an honest account of his scheme of religion, by which he designed to support what he had advanced in his former piece concerning the external covenant. If every writer on that side of the question would do the same, the controversy would soon come to an end.

But there are various other methods, which Mr. M. has taken to keep himself in countenance, and to persuade his readers that his scheme is right, and that the plan is wrong on which the churches in New-England were formed, when this country was first settled: and particularly, that the *synod at Say-Brook* were wrong, in that resolve, which they unanimously came into, viz. *‘That none ought to be admitted as members, in order to full communion in all the special ordinances of the gospel, but such as—credibly profess a cordial subjection to Jesus Christ:’* Various other methods, I say, of a different nature, and which are not so commendable.

1. One extraordinary method he takes to keep himself in countenance is to pretend, that I had ‘wholly misrepresented his sentiments,’ and given his scheme ‘the bad name of a graceless covenant,’ and pointed ‘all my arguments not against ‘any thing that he had written,’ nor so much as ‘essayed to confute one single argument’ that he had offered. This pretence is very extraordinary. (1) Because if his covenant is not a *graceless covenant*, it will not answer the end by him proposed. For if it does not promise its blessings to graceless men, as such, upon graceless conditions; then graceless men, as such, with only graceless qualifications, cannot enter into it. For he affirms, that none can consistently profess a compli-



ance with the covenant of grace, without the most full and perfect assurance. p. 78. 79, 80. (2) This pretence is very extraordinary, because he had in his first book, p. 58. declared his external covenant, in express terms, to be 'distinct from the covenant of grace;' and in this second book sets himself professedly to prove the same point over again. p. 60, 61, 62. But if his external covenant is 'distinct from the covenant of grace,' it is either the *covenant of works*, or a *graceless covenant*, or a *covenant which requires no conditions at all*: for no other sort of covenant can be thought of. But if Mr. M's external covenant is absolute, and unconditional, then a Pagan, a Turk, or a Jew, as such, hath as good right to the Lord's-table, as to hear the gospel preached. And if his external covenant is the same with the covenant of works, then no mere man since the fall is qualified to join with the church. And if his external covenant is the covenant of grace, then no graceless man, as such, is qualified to enter into it and seal it. It is, therefore, nay it must be a *graceless covenant*, or nothing at all. (3) This pretence is very extraordinary, because Mr. M. was so pinched with what I had advanced against his scheme, that he had no way to get rid of my arguments, but to deny first principles, and give up the doctrines contained in the public approved formulas of the church of Scotland, and the churches in *New-England*, and advance a *new scheme* of religion never before published in *New-England*. And why did not he point out at least *one single argument* of his, which he judged to be unanswered? Or why did not he mention *one single instance*, wherein I had represented his covenant to be more *graceless* than it was? Or what need was there, if I had said nothing to the purpose, to expose himself and his cause, by the publication of such a system of *new notions*, to make all the country stare? \*

## 2. The

\* Mr. M. offered five arguments, in his first Book, p. 7 8. to support his external covenant. These five arguments the reader may find answered, in my former piece. p. 16, 17, 18, 65, 65, 69. And if he will  
read

2. The loud out-cry which he makes of *new divinity*, *new divinity*, is another of the extraordinary methods which he takes to keep himself in countenance. And it is very extraordinary in him, to raise this cry, on this occasion, in answer to me, and that when he himself was writing such an answer. (1) Because I was justifying the *old scheme*, on which our churches in this country were originally settled, *the good old way*; and he wrote with a design to bring in a *new scheme*, called by the name of the *external covenant*, both name and thing unknown in all the public formulas approved by our churches, and absolutely inconsistent with some of the fundamental articles of our *confession of faith*, and *catechisms*. (2) Because, in order to justify *the good old way*, and confute his *new scheme*, I built my arguments on the *good old protestant* doctrines of *the perfection of the divine law*, and *total depravity*, as held forth in scripture, and in our public formulas, without any one new sentiment; yea, without expressing old sentiments in stronger language, than the language of scripture, and of that confession of faith, which Mr. M. himself professes to believe. While on the other hand, Mr. M. was writing not only in the defence of a *new scheme*; but endeavouring to justify it by a whole system of *new divinity*, never before advanced, so far as I know, in *New-*  
*England*:

read my piece thro' he may find the two points fully proved, which I undertook to prove, on which the whole controversy turns, viz. That there is but one covenant, of which baptism and the Lord's-supper are seals, even the covenant of grace; and that the doctrine of an external graceless covenant is unscriptural.—Some wonder why Mr. M. did not make a particular reply, and wonder more why, instead of a particular reply, he should advance such an inconsistent, absurd, shocking scheme of religion, in support of the external covenant, which instead of supporting, rather tends to sink it. For, say they, if the external covenant cannot be supported without going into this scheme of religion, we will give it up.—But I wonder not at Mr. M's conduct in all this. The external covenant cannot be supported, but by overthrowing the scripture scheme of religion, and establishing Mr. M's scheme in its room. His scheme of religion is absolutely necessary to support his external covenant.—Without the introduction of Mr. M's new scheme of religion, my former piece can receive no answer at all. He could not be silent. He must take this way, or none at all.

*England:* However, it is not entirely new. It was some years ago published in London, by Mr. Cudworth, and an answer to it was printed in Boston, 1762, in *An Essay on the nature and glory of the gospel*, before referred to.

3. Another extraordinary method, which he takes to keep himself in countenance, is to impute the most absurd and odious doctrines to those whom he opposes, which neither they, nor any christian writer ever believed to be true. Particularly, *That the enmity of the carnal mind against God consists in disinterested malice. That in regeneration new natural faculties are created in us. That the unregenerate, being without these new natural faculties, let their hearts be ever so good, are under a natural impossibility of harkening to the call of the gospel. That we must be willing to be damned in order to be prepared for Christ. That Christ has no hand in our reconciliation to God.* To be sure, I was never acquainted with any man, or any book, which held these points.—Should it be affirmed concerning a very poor, and very lazy man, that *alibo' he is convinced in his conscience, that it is his duty and interest to be industrious; yet the more he thinks of it, the more averse he feels to it:* Would this amount to saying, that this lazy man has a *disinterested malice against industry.* Or should it be affirmed concerning the unregenerate, that *God hath not given them eyes to see, nor ears to hear;* would this amount to saying, that they are destitute of eyes and ears, considered as natural faculties, and so can neither see nor hear; and therefore are not at all to blame for their spiritual blindness and deafness.—Or should a wise and good father, when his impudent, haughty child, about to be corrected for a crime, insolently say, *Well, father, if you do whip me, I shall never love you again as long as I live:* Should a wise and good father say to such a child, 'You deserve to be whiped, nor will I ever forgive you until you will own that it is good enough for you, and that it is not a blemish, but a beauty in your father's character to be disposed to maintain good government in his house.' Would that amount to saying, that *the child must be willing to be whiped in order to prepare him for a pardon?*—Or



if, by the regenerating influences of the holy Spirit, communicated thro' Jesus Christ, the only Mediator, as the fruits of his purchase, the holiness and justice of the divine nature are viewed as a beauty in the divine character, by the true penitent, will it hence follow, 'That  
' there was no need of Christ to die, or to be exalted,  
' that thro' him, *repentance and remission of sins*, might be  
' given unto us, consistently with the divine law.'—It is true, that there is no need of Christ to make us amends for the injury done us in the divine law, and so to reconcile our angry minds to the Deity, and bring us to forgive our Maker. Such a Christ would suit the *taste* of a carnal heart. But a true penitent, having a *new taste*, already grants that God and his law are wholly right, perfect in beauty, without a blemish, prior to the consideration of the gift of Christ: and this prepares him to see the wisdom and grace of God, in giving his Son to die upon the cross, in the manner, and for the purpose, set forth in the gospel. Rom. 3. 25. 1 Cor. 1. 18.

4. Another extraordinary method M. M. has taken, is to insinuate that the sacramental controversy turns on these absurd doctrines. Whereas, in truth, he cannot produce an instance of any one writer, on our side of the question, who ever believed these absurd doctrines, much less ever built his arguments on them. Let him read Mr. Richard Baxter, Dr. Watts, Dr. Guise, Dr. Doddridge, Mr. Henry, Mr. Flavel, and look thro' the *Westminster confession of faith*, and *catechisms*, and read over President Edwards, Mr. Green, and others in these parts of the world, who have wrote on the subject, and he will not find a syllable to countenance him, in such an insinuation. Nay, the chief of the arguments used, by writers on our side of the question, are conclusive, to prove that baptism and the Lord's supper are seals of the covenant of grace, and of no other covenant, without entering into any dispute about the perfection of the divine law, total depravity, regeneration, &c. &c. The point is so clear and plain, that *Calvinists, Arminians, Neonomians, Arians, &c.* have agreed in this, while they have differed in almost every thing.

thing else. If we may believe Dr. *Increase Mather*, it was, in his day, the 'common doctrine' of *protestants in opposition to papists*, 'that it is only a justifying faith, which giveth right to baptism before God,' how much sœver they differed in other matters. And as to all the orthodox, the celebrated Dr. *Van Maftricht*, in his treatise on regeneration, says, 'As to the baptism of *adults*, that, if *rightly* administered, doth, by the consent of *all the orthodox*, certainly presuppose regeneration as already effected' — But this leads me to observe,

5. Another very extraordinary method Mr. M. takes to keep himself in countenance, is by misrepresenting that plan, unanimously agreed to by the *synod at Say brook*, and on which the churches in New-England, in general, were formed, at the first settling of the country, which alone I was endeavouring to justify, 'as a very groundless and unreasonable notion of the *Anabaptists*, in which Dr. Bellamy and a few others have joined with them.' p. 66. And at the same time claiming the *Westminster assembly*, Mr. *Shepard*, Mr. *Jonathan Dickinson*, and Mr. *Peter Clarke* as friends to *his external covenant*. So that one would think, that scarce any are on our side of the question, but the *Anabaptists*. Now this is very extraordinary in Mr. M. (1) because in his former book, he speaks a very different language, well knowing how the matter really stands. p. 59. 'Shall I then prevail with them, to lay aside all prejudice, all attachment to *received maxims*, all veneration for *great names*.' For he had before him the sentiments of the protestant world collected, by the late learned Mr. *Foxcroft*, in an *appendix* to president *Edwards's Inquiry*, &c. And he well knew that *received maxims* and *great names*, stood in the way of his *new scheme*. (2) It is very extraordinary that he should say, that *his external covenant* is included in the *covenant of grace*, described by the *assembly of divines at Westminster*. p. 61. When, as has been before shewn, the doctrines of the *perfection of the divine law*, and of *total depravity*, as held by that *assembly*, are inconsistent with the *existence of his external covenant*. And in their *confession of faith*,

*faith*, chap. 29. they lay, ‘ *all ungodly persons* as they are  
 ‘ unfit to enjoy communion with him, so are they un-  
 ‘ worthy of the Lord’s-table, and cannot without great  
 ‘ sin against Christ, while they continue such, partake of  
 ‘ these holy mysteries, or be admitted thereto.’—Where-  
 as, the very professed design of his external covenant is  
 to open a door, that *ungodly men*, as such, *should be admit-*  
*ted to partake of these holy mysteries.* And (3) it is equally  
 extraordinary that he should pretend that Mr. *Jonathan*  
*Dickinson* was a friend to his external covenant, when in his  
*Dialogue on the divine right of infant baptism*, he proves  
 that the covenant with Abraham Gen. 17. was the co-  
 venant of grace itself, in opposition to the *Anabaptists*,  
 who, with Mr. M. maintain the covenant with Abra-  
 ham Gen. 17. was not the covenant of grace. And  
 having proved that covenant, to be the covenant of grace,  
 then proceeds, on this hypothesis, to prove *the divine right*  
*of infant baptism.* Dr. *Gill* wrote an answer to this piece  
 of Mr. *Dickinson*’s. Mr. *Peter Clark* wrote a reply to Dr.  
*Gill*, in which he spends above a hundred pages in prov-  
 ing the covenant in Gen. 17. to be ‘ a pure covenant of  
 grace,’ in answering Dr. *Gill*’s objections, which are the  
 same for substance with Mr. M.’s *five arguments* in his first  
 book; p. 7. 8. and in establishing infant baptism on  
 this foundation. And he expressly affirms, p. 208. ‘ *Ex-*  
 ‘ *cept a man be born again he cannot enter into the kingdom of*  
 ‘ *God.* And if without regeneration no man can enter  
 ‘ into the kingdom of God, then surely not into cove-  
 ‘ *nant with God.*’ But the unregenerate, as such, can  
 enter into covenant with God, on the plan of Mr. M.’s  
*external covenant.* And yet Mr. M. pretends that there  
 is ‘ no material difference’ between these authors and his  
 scheme. But (4) it is more extraordinary still, that Mr.  
 M. should bring in Mr. *Shepard*, as a friend to his *exter-*  
*nal covenant*, when the piece he refers to, p. 61. is not  
 wrote on Mr. M.’s scheme, but on a scheme essentially  
 different. And when Mr. *Shepard* in his *sermons on the*  
*parable of the ten virgins* has so plainly declared his mind.

These



These are his very words. Attend to them, candid reader, and say, was Mr. *Shepard* in Mr. M's scheme?

‘ We may see hence one just ground of that diligent  
 ‘ and narrow search and trial, churches here do or should  
 ‘ make of all those whom they receive to be fellow-  
 ‘ members. The Lord Jesus will make a very strict  
 ‘ search and examination of wise and foolish, when he  
 ‘ comes, and will put a difference between them then.  
 ‘ May not men, nor churches imitate the Lord Jesus  
 ‘ according to their light now? If indeed all the con-  
 ‘ gregation of the baptized were holy, then as *Korah* said,  
 ‘ *They take too much upon them.* If Christ at his coming,  
 ‘ would make neither examination, nor separation, not  
 ‘ only of people baptized at large, but of professors, and  
 ‘ glorious professors of his truth and name; if churches  
 ‘ were not set to discern between harlots and virgins,  
 ‘ foolish virgins and wise, as much as in them lies, that so  
 ‘ some of the glory of Christ may be seen in his churches  
 ‘ here, as well as at the last day; then the gate might  
 ‘ be opened wide, and flung off the hinges too for all  
 ‘ comers; and you might call the churches of Christ,  
 ‘ the inn and tavern of Christ to receive all strangers, if  
 ‘ they will pay for what they call for, and bear scot and  
 ‘ lot in the town, and not the house and temple of Christ  
 ‘ only to entertain his friends. But (beloved) the church  
 ‘ hath the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and what  
 ‘ they bind and loose, following the example and rule of  
 ‘ Christ, is bound and loosed in heaven, and they judge  
 ‘ in the room of Christ. 1 Cor. 5. 4, 5. 2 Cor. 2. 11.  
 ‘ Whom the church casts out, and bids depart to satan,  
 ‘ Christ doth. Whom the church receives to it self,  
 ‘ Christ doth. We should receive in none but such as  
 ‘ have visible right to Christ, and communion of saints.  
 ‘ None have a right to Christ in his ordinances, but such  
 ‘ as shall have communion with Christ at his coming to  
 ‘ judge the world. Hence if we could be so eagle-eyed,  
 ‘ as to discern them now that are hypocrites, we should  
 ‘ exclude them now, as Christ will, because they have  
 ‘ no right. But that we cannot do, the Lord will there-  
 ‘ fore

fore do it for his churches. But yet let the churches learn from this, to do what they can, for the Lord, now.—The apostle gives a sad charge, Heb. 12. 15. *Look diligently, lest a root of bitterness grow up.* The apostle doth not say, 'tis no matter what roots you set in Christ's garden; only when they spring up, & begin to seed & infect others, then have a care of them; but look there be not a root there.—*Look diligently to it* It's ill counsel to the gardener to say, have a care to weed your garden; but 'tis no matter, God looks not that you should be careful of your seed, so long as it be seed. Nay, the Lord that forbids me to suffer weeds to grow, forbids my carelessness in sowing what seeds I please.—It is the judgment of some divines, that the first sin of Adam, and his wife, was in suffering the serpent to enter into the garden, uncalled for. *The ruin of a church may be, the letting in of some one ill member.*

Objection. *But the primitive church never received in any with such strict confessions, and large examination; three thousand in a day were admitted.*

Ans. I remember a godly divine in answering an objection of late repentance from the example of the thief; having whipt it with many other rods, at the last lashed it with this, *it's an extraordinary case*; and hence not to be brought in for an ordinary example. Hence he speaks thus, when therefore the time comes that Christ shall come and be crucified again, and thou one of the thieves to be crucified with him, and it fall out that thou be the best of the two, then shalt thou be saved by Christ, that despising Christ now, puts off thy repentance till then; so I say here, there is somewhat imitable and ordinary in the apostle's example, in admitting three thousand in a day, but something unusual, and far different from our condition now; and therefore that I would say, when the time comes, that the spirit is poured out on all flesh; and that time is known to be the spring-tide, and large measure of the Spirit, when ministers are so honoured as to convert many thousands at a sermon; and so God and reason

' call for quickness; when elders of churches are as  
 ' sharp-sighted as the apostles, when the conversion of  
 ' men also shall be most eminent, and that in such places  
 ' where 'tis death, or half-hanging, to profess the Lord  
 ' Jesus; as that they shall be prickt at their hearts,  
 ' gladly receive the word, lay down their necks on the  
 ' block, cast down all their estates at the churches feet,  
 ' out of love to God's ordinances; when men shall not  
 ' have christian education, the example and crowd of  
 ' Christians, from the teeth outwardly, to press them to  
 ' the door of the church, as those times had not; then  
 ' for my part, if three hundred thousand were converted,  
 ' I should receive them as gladly, and as manifestly, as  
 ' they receive Christ. But truly there is such little tak-  
 ' ings now, that we have leisure enough to look upon  
 ' our money, and the hypocrisy of the world gives us  
 ' good reason to stay and see.' Mr. *Shepara's sermons on*  
*the parable, &c.* part 2. p. 184, &c. This sermon was  
 preached at *Cambridge*, near *Boston*, about the year 1640,  
 and so about 130 years ago, ten years after they began  
 to settle *Boston*, by one of the most Godly and most cele-  
 brated ministers then in the country, a few years before  
 his death. And this passage shews us the spirit of the  
 Godly in *New-England*, in those early days. And to all  
 Godly people in the country the name of Mr. *Shepard* is  
 precious to this day, and Mr. M. knew it; and there-  
 fore, to keep himself in countenance, thinks fit to bring  
 in him as a friend to *his external covenant*. But is not  
 this an extraordinary method? To omit the rest, we  
 will mention but one instance more.

6. Another extraordinary method Mr. M. takes to  
 support his scheme, is to bring arguments against us,  
 built on principles, which he himself does not believe to  
 be true; and which, if they were true, would infallibly  
 overthrow his own scheme. Nay, and persists in such  
 arguments, after their fallacy has been pointed out, with-  
 out saying one word in excuse for such a piece of conduct.

Thus he insists upon it, that if infants may have the  
 seal



seal of the covenant without saving grace, then also may the adult. And therefore saving grace is not needful to qualify any one for sealing ordinances. And therefore the covenant to be sealed is not the covenant of grace, but an external covenant 'distinct from the covenant of grace,' which only requires, as a necessary qualification for sealing ordinances, that sinners should be under such 'convictions,' as to 'come to a fixed resolution to forsake all known sin, and practise all known duty.'—But have all infants these *convictions*, and such a *fixed resolution*? Does he believe they have? Is there any evidence of it? No, he does not believe they have. Nor is there any evidence, that there ever was one infant, since the world began, that had these *convictions*, and such a *fixed resolution*.—What then does Mr. M. mean! Does he mean to give up infant baptism? no, by no means. What then does he mean? Odd as it is, he means to confute our scheme by an argument which confutes his own, i. e. by an argument, built on a principle, which he himself does not believe to be true, viz. *That the same qualifications are necessary in infants, as in the adult, to qualify them for baptism.* For Mr. M. does not believe this principle to be true. For he does not believe that infants need any qualification at all. And yet he does believe that the adult must have some qualification. Now how extraordinary is it, for a man of learning, to conduct thus; and to go on and persevere in this conduct without a blush, or the least excuse, in the sight of all the country, after the absurdity had been pointed out before his eyes, in my former book, p. 64, 65, 66.

And thus again, he insists upon it, that if saving grace is necessary, then no man can with a good conscience join with the church, without assurance, an assurance equal to that certainty which we have of facts, which we see with our own eyes, and to the truth of which we can give oath before any civil court. p. 78, 79. But 'ninety nine in a hundred of true believers' are destitute of this assurance, he says, p. 80. and therefore saving grace is  
not

not needful. Nothing more is needful then to come to a fixed resolution to forsake all known sin and practise all known duty.—But does Mr. M. believe, that no man can with a good conscience, join with the church, without being thus infallibly certain, that he has the requisite qualifications? for on the supposed truth of this proposition is his argument built.—But does Mr. M. believe this proposition? does he teach his people to believe it? had all his church-members this high degree of intallible assurance, that they had the requisite qualifications, when they joined with the church? and have they *this* infallible assurance every time they attend sealing ordinances? an assurance equal to that certainty, which they have, that they ever saw the sun shine! That they *'are come to a fixed resolution to forsake all known sin, and practise all known duty'*? Does he insist upon it in his public preaching, and in his private instructions, that without this high degree of assurance, without this infallible certainty, they cannot with a good conscience come to baptism or to the Lord's table? that *'they are guilty of gross prevarication, and double-dealing with God,'* if they do. p. 82. Because no man ought to come without this infallible certainty, that he has the requisite qualifications?—I say, does Mr. M. believe these things himself? or does he teach them to his own people? I appeal to his conscience. I appeal to his people for my witnesses. Mr. M. does not believe that men must have this infallible certainty, that they have the requisite qualifications, in order to attend sealing ordinances, with a good conscience. Nor does he teach this doctrine to his people.—What then does he mean, in all he says upon this subject to us? Why, he means to confute our scheme, by an argument, built on a principle which he does not believe to be true. And which, were it true, would effectually overthrow his own scheme. And all this, after the fallacy of this manner of reasoning had been pointed out before his eyes, as clear as the sun, in Mr. Edwards's last piece on the sacramental controversy, to which no answer has ever been made.—Now is it

not extraordinary, that a man of so good sense, should urge against us arguments built on principles, which he himself does not believe; and which, if they were true, would effectually overthrow his own scheme? For no unregenerate man in this world is, or ever was, or ever will be, while such, infallibly certain, as he is of what he sees with his eyes, that his resolution to forsake all known sin and practise all known duty is 'fixed,' so that his religion will not prove like that of the stony and thorny ground hearers. For if the common protestant doctrine of the *saints perseverance* is scriptural, yet Mr. M. does not believe the doctrine of the *perseverance of graceless sinners* in their religious resolutions is taught in scripture. So that there is no possible way, in which, an awakened sinner can be certain that his resolution is 'fixed,' without an immediate revelation from heaven, to give him this assurance. But Mr. M. does not believe, that an immediate revelation from heaven ever was, or ever will be made for this purpose. But he well knows, that without any such a revelation, Peter was able to say, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee.* And he well knew, that the saints in the apostolic age are spoken of, without exception, as having received the *spirit of adoption, whereby they cried abba, Father*; with an assurance that they were the children of God. Rom. 8. 14. 15, 16. Nor is there one instance, among all the apostolic converts, that can be mentioned, of a *doubting saint*. Nor does it appear, by the acts of the apostles, or by their epistles, but that assurance did in those days attend the first acts of faith among all their converts. See Acts 2. 41—47. and 8, 39. and 10. 44—47. and 16. 30—34. For, to use the apostolic language, *Being justified by faith, they had peace with God, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God: because the love of God was shed abroad in their hearts by the holy Ghost.* Rom. 5. 15. *And they knew that they had passed from death to life.* 1 Joh. 3. 14. And this renders the conduct of Mr. M. so much the more extraordinary, that he, with so much zeal, should push an argument, which, were it well grounded, is much more against his own scheme,



scheme, than it is against the apostolic practice. For it does not appear, but that their converts universally *knew that they were passed from death to life.* Whereas it is capable of full proof, that no one unregenerate man ever did know, that his religious resolutions were 'fixed.' So that his goodness should not be as the morning cloud and as the early dew, which quickly passeth away.

Besides, we are naturally as conscious of our volitions and affections, as we of our speculations; and therefore we are as capable of knowing what we choose and love, as what we believe: and, therefore, we may as well know that we love God and Christ, if we really do, as know that we have right speculative ideas of the true and real character of God and Christ, and of the doctrines of revealed religion, in which they are exhibited. Many are confident they *believe aright*, who are hereticks; and many are confident they *love aright* who are hypocrites: and yet this hinders not but that true saints, who believe aright and love in sincerity, may know it: and know the one as well as the other. And it cannot be proved, but that there are as many, who have doubts about the truth of gospel doctrines, as there are that have doubts about the sincerity of their love to gospel doctrines. It cannot be proved, that there is one professor, who doubts the sincerity of his love, who has an infallible assurance which is the right scheme of religion, among all the schemes in vogue. It is very evident, that there is a great degree of scepticism among the professors of christianity in this age, and as much among the learned, as among the unlearned; as is obvious to every one, who is acquainted with books and men. And, for aught that appears, it might be as difficult to find men, who believe christianity to be true, real christianity I mean, to that degree, as to have no doubts about what is truth; as to find men that love it, so as to have no doubts about their love. This is certain, that it was the constant doctrine of Mr. Stoddard, that *no unregenerate man does know the gospel to be true*, as every one knows who is acquainted

quainted with his writings. And it is also certain, that in the apostolic age, it was the universally received doctrine of the whole Christian church, that *whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God.* 1 Joh. 5. 1. And it was in that age believed, that the unregenerate, however they might, for a time, believe and rejoice ; yet neither their faith, nor their affections were ‘fixed,’ because they had *no root* in themselves : and therefore in time of temptation they would fall away from both. Mat. 13. And therefore, if we open the door wide enough to let in the unregenerate, as such, into the church, we must not insist on their being ‘fixed’ what to believe, or ‘fixed’ what to do ; for there is *no root* in them. Much less must we affirm, that they must be ‘infallibly certain’ that they are ‘fixed,’ when if the bible is the word of God, it is infallibly certain, that they are not ‘fixed.’ And their very confidence, that they are ‘fixed,’ is a full proof, that they do not understand and believe the gospel, which declares, that they are not ‘fixed,’ that they have *no root* in themselves.

But to return.

Our author says, p. 79. ‘ If it is a real gracious state, that gives us a real right to join with the church ; then it is a known gracious state that gives us a known right.’ And he adds, ‘ This is a self evident proposition.’---And this he says in order to prove, ‘ that no man can, with a good conscience, make this profession, without as certain a knowledge of the gracious state of his own heart ; as he must have of any particular fact, about which he is called to give an evidence in a civil court.’ ---But if this argument is conclusive, then his own scheme is overthrown. For, turn the tables, and the argument stands thus.

*If it is real orthodoxy, that gives us a right to join with the church ; then it is known orthodoxy, that gives us a known right.* And I may add, ‘ This is a self-evident proposition.’ And therefore, according to Mr. M. *no man can, with a good conscience, join with the church, without as certain*

*a knowledge of his orthodoxy, as he must have, of any particular fact, about which he is called to give an evidence in a civil court.*----So then, according to Mr. M. unregenerate, graceless men, must be as certain, which, of all the various schemes of religion in vogue, in the Christian world, is the right one, as they are of any fact, which they see with their eyes, to the truth of which they can make oath, or they cannot, with a good conscience, join with the church : i. e. they must have as high a degree of infallibility, as the apostles had under inspiration, or they cannot, with a good conscience, join with the church.---But does Mr. M. believe this ? Does he look upon his graceless, conscientious church-members, as infallible as the apostles ?

To say, that real orthodoxy is not a requisite qualification, is to give up his own scheme.---To say, that altho' real orthodoxy is a requisite qualification, yet a degree of infallibility; equal to that which the apostles had under inspiration, is not necessary, to qualify a man, with a good conscience, to join with the church, is to give up his argument. For the apostles were not more certain, which was the orthodox scheme of religion, than we are of facts, which we see with our eyes, and which we can swear positively, that we did see. And our certainty must be equal to this, he says, or we cannot, with a good conscience, join with the church.---Every conscientious, graceless church-member, therefore, according to Mr. M. is as infallible, in points of orthodoxy, as was the apostle Paul.---But does Mr. M. believe this ? No, by no means. What then does he mean ? Why, he means to confute our scheme, by an argument, built on a principle, which he himself does not believe to be true ; and, which, were it true, would overthrow his own scheme.

*Objection. But I know that I believe such and such doctrines ; yea, I can swear I believe them.*

*Answer.* You can swear, that you believe your own creed ; but can you swear that your own creed is orthodox ? For not a confident belief, but real orthodoxy is,  
according



according to Mr. M. a requisite qualification to church-membership. Therefore, according to him, you must be certain, that your creed is orthodox ; even as certain as you are of facts which you see, and to the truth of which you can make oath before the civil magistrate. Which is a degree of certainty equal to that which the apostles had under inspiration.

The *Arians*, the *Socinians*, the *Pelagians*, the *Papists*, &c. &c. can swear that they believe their schemes ; but does this qualify them to be church-members ? Would Mr. M. receive them to communion ? If so, then it is no matter what scheme of religion men believe, if they do but believe it confidently. And then orthodoxy is not a requisite qualification for church-membership, but rather bigotry ?

Our author says, p. 78, 79. ‘ This affair of covenanting with God, Moses styles, Deut. 29. 14. *This covenant and this oath.*’ And ‘ will it do, to tell people, that they may give a positive evidence, when they have only a prevailing opinion about the fact ?’—That is, will it do, to tell people, that they may enter into covenant with God, and bind themselves under the solemnity of an oath, as the Israelites did, to keep covenant, (Deut. 26. 27. *Thou hast avouched the Lord this day to be thy God, and to walk in his ways, and to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, and to hearken to his voice,*) when they have only a prevailing opinion, that they have *such an heart in them* ? but have not a certain knowledge of it, as they have of facts, which, under oath, they can positively declare to be true.

Answer 1. When men have not *such a heart in them*, they are not qualified to enter into *this covenant and this oath*. And, therefore, if unregeneracy consists in being without such an heart, and in having an heart opposite hereunto, agreeable to St. Paul’s doctrine, Rom. 8. 7. Then unregeneracy disqualifies us, for entering into covenant with God.

2. No man can, with a good conscience, enter into this

covenant, unless he is conscious to himself, that he has such an heart, to such a degree of clearness, as to be satisfied, in his conscience, that he indeed has such an heart. And, therefore, for men, who know, that they have not such an heart, to enter into this covenant, is gross immorality.—But he, who is satisfied in his conscience, that he has such an heart, may, with a good conscience, enter into this covenant. That is, his conscience will approve of his conduct in so doing.

3. A man may be satisfied in his conscience, that he has such an heart, by prevailing evidence, short of strict certainty.---For instance. Mr. Mather was satisfied in his conscience, that it was his duty, to write in the defence of the external covenant, upon prevailing evidence of its truth ; but yet, if it were put to him, he would not positively declare under oath, that he knows it to be true ; as he knows the truth of facts, which he sees with his eyes. For he declares in his preface, ‘ Yet, I am not so fond of my own judgment, or tenacious of my own practice, but that *I stand ready to give them both up*, when any one shall do the friendly office of setting light before me.’---And therefore, he cannot swear, that his scheme is the true scripture scheme. He knows, that he has written on this subject. This fact he is certain of. He could give oath to this before a civil court. Nor could he give up the truth of this fact, let all the light in the world be set before him. Nor could he, with a good conscience, offer to give up the truth of this fact, on any condition : because he knows, that the fact is true. He knows it with certainty ; with infallible certainty. But he has not equal certainty, that his scheme is true. It was only his prevailing opinion. And so, he offers to give it up on further light. Yet, he acted conscientiously in writing in its defence. That is, his conscience, instead of condemning, approved of his conduct.---For the truth of this, I appeal to Mr. M.---The application is easy.---And yet,

4. It is readily granted, that we are to blame for every

very wrong judgment we make, in moral matters, relative both to truth and duty, how conscientious soever, we were in making the judgment. Thus, for instance, Paul, before his conversion, was conscientious in judging and acting against Christianity; but still he was to blame for judging and acting as he did. And if Mr. M's external covenant is unscriptural, how conscientious soever he has been, in believing and acting as he has, yet he is to blame. So, if we judge, that we have such an heart, when in fact we have not, how conscientious soever we have been, yet still we are criminal. For we might have known better. It was our fault that we did not know better. And in this world, or in the next, we shall know, that the blame lies at our door. — Therefore,

5. Those words of our blessed Saviour ought to be attended to and regarded, by every one, who entertains thoughts of making a profession of his holy religion: *Luk. 14. 25---35. And there went great multitudes with him, and instead of pressing them to an inconsiderate profession of his religion, as a means of their conversion, he turned and said unto them, if any man come to me, by an open, public profession, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, so as to have an heart to give up all for my sake, he cannot be my disciple; but will in time of trial, desert me. And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, with a heart to suffer every thing for my sake, cannot be my disciple; but will, in time of trial, desert me. Therefore, consider what you do. For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, &c. &c. So likewise, whosoever he be of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. My disciples are the salt of the earth. Salt is good, if it is salt; but if the salt have lost its savour, wherewith shall it be seasoned. It is good for nothing. It is neither fit for the land, not yet for the dunghill: but men cast it out, as good for nothing. And what are such disciples good for, who will desert me in time of trial. Attend to what I say. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.*



## THE CONCLUSION.

Mr. M. speaking of our sentiments of religion, as contained in president *Edwards's Treatise concerning religious affections*, which is, beyond doubt, one of the best books that has been published on experimental religion and vital piety since the days of inspiration, says, p. 36. 'These sentiments are surprizingly spread in the land, in the present day.'—Yes, and always will spread among people in proportion as true religion revives and spreads. Nor am I without hopes, that Mr. M. should he thoro'ly look into the scheme, and get a right understanding of it, would yet himself become a profelyte to it. And if he should become a profelyte to it, he would soon give up his external covenant, as being wholly inconsistent with it.

And it is quite certain, that when the divine promises, scattered thro' the sacred writings, relative to the glorious prevalence of true Christianity, come to be accomplished, that Mr. M's graceless covenant will become a useless and an impracticable thing. When *nations shall be born in a day*; when *all the people shall be righteous*, when *the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the earth as the waters cover the sea*; people will not desire to make a graceless profession. Nay, they can never be persuaded to do it in that day. For then they will *love Christ more than father, or mother, or wife, or children, or houses, or lands; yea, more than their own lives*. And men who really love their wives and children, are able ordinarily to say, with truth and a good conscience, that they do love them. Yea, it would be thought a sign, that men, generally, if not universally, hated their wives, in any kingdom, city, or town, should it be known, that 'ninety-nine in an hundred' of them had such doubts, that with a good conscience they could not say, that they loved them. Mr. *Stoddard*, in his *Treatise concerning the nature of conversion*, says, p. 79. 'We do not know of one Godly man in the scripture, that was under darkness about his sincerity.' And our *catechism* says, 'The benefits which in this life do either accompany or flow from justification, adop-

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‘tion, and sanctification, are *assurance of God’s love*, ‘peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of ‘grace, and perseverance therein to the end.’—And when religion revives in its purity and glory, assurance will become as common a thing among professors, as it was among the apostolic converts, in the apostolic churches.—And even now, should a man and woman present themselves before a clergyman, to enter into the marriage-covenant, and at the same time declare, that they doubted their love to each other to such a degree, that with a good conscience they could not give their consent to *the form of words* in common use, because that would imply a profession of mutual love, no judicious man would think them fit to be married. The application is easy.

Nothing renders a graceless covenant needful but the prevalence of gracelessness among our people. For did our people all of them *love Christ more than father, and mother, wife and children*, no man would desire to have the covenant of grace set aside, and a graceless covenant substituted in its room, in our churches. When, therefore, that day comes, in which *satan shall be bound*, who at present *deceives the nations of the earth*, that he may *deceive them no more* : When the great *harvest* comes, of which, what happened in the apostolic age, was but *the first fruits* ; and *the stone cut out of the mountain without hands becomes great*, and fills the whole earth, and the God of heaven sets up a kingdom, and all people, nations and languages serve him, and the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven is given to the people of the saints of the Most High, and all dominions shall serve him ; then, even then, true godliness will be universally professed, and universally practised.

Since therefore this graceless covenant will ere long be universally exploded, and *rooted up*, as shall every plant which our heavenly Father hath not planted, why should not we all now unite to give it up, and to invite our people to become Christians indeed, to profess and practise according

ording to the true import of their baptism? It is as much their duty and as much their interest to become Christians now, as it will be in any future period of their lives. They have from God no leave to delay. Thanks be to God 'that these sentiments are surprizingly spreading in this land, in the present day.'—Nor ought it to pass unnoticed, that every attempt to prevent their spreading has hitherto had the contrary effect. For while those who oppose them, how ingenious and learned soever they be, are obliged to run into the grossest absurdities and inconsistencies, in their own defence, as one error leads on to another, it naturally tends to open the eyes of all candid men, who attend to the controversy. And may we not hope, that so candid and ingenuous a writer as Mr. *Mather* is represented to be, 'who is not fond of his own judgment, or tenacious of his own practice, but stands ready to give them both up, when any one shall do him the friendly office of setting light before him,' will upon a calm review of all that has been said, become a friend to *the good old way* of our forefathers, the first settlers of *New-England*, and come into that plan on which the *New-England* churches were originally formed.---Which, may God of his infinite mercy grant, thro' Jesus Christ. A M E N.







