The Promises of God



Charles G. Finney

THE PROMISES OF GOD

By

Charles Finney

Text.--2 Pet. 1:4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

I. I am to make several preliminary remarks upon the nature of the promises.

1. The promises made to the church under the old dispensation belong emphatically to the Christian Church. Thus the promise made to Abraham was designed more for his posterity, and for the Christian Church than for himself. That part of the promise which related to the temporal possession of Canaan never was fulfilled to him. He lived and died "a stranger and sojourner in the land of promise." In Heb. 11:13 we are expressly informed that Abraham did not receive the fulfillment of the promises, but that they belonged especially to Christians under the New Testament dispensation. "These all died in faith not having received the promises--but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth," i.e. Abraham and the patriarchs died without receiving the fulfillment of the promises. Again, verses 39-40, -"And these all, having obtained a good report, through faith, received not the promises; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." So the New Covenant in Jer. 31:31-34: Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more, every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord, for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember

their sin no more. Also, Jer. 32:39-40: -"And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever for the good of them, and of their children after them; and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Also, Ezek. 36:25-27: --"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. 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 I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

And numerous other kindred promises, made to the church under the Old Testament Dispensation, belong particularly to the Church under the Christian Dispensation. Consequently the Apostle in Heb. 8:8-12 maintains that the covenant in Jer. 31:31-32 respects particularly the Gospel Dispensation. -"Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."

2. The promises made to the Church as a body, belong to individuals of the Church. The Church is composed of individuals, and the promises are of no avail, any further than there is an individual application of them. 3. Promises made to the Patriarchs, and Individuals, under the Old Testament Dispensation, as well as under the new, belong to all individuals, in every age and land, under similar circumstances. Thus we find the inspired writers recognizing the principle, every where, in their writings, in the use they make of the promises. As an illustration, see Heb. 13:5 --"I will never leave thee,

nor forsake thee." If you turn to Gen. 28:15, you will see that the promise which the Apostle applies to all Christians, was originally made to Jacob, on his way to Padanaram. "And behold I am with thee, and will keep thee, in all places, whither thou goest, and I will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, till I have done that which I have spoken to thee of." So in Heb. 13:6 --the Apostle continues, "The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me." This also is quoted from Ps. 56:4, 11, --"In God I have put my trust; I will not fear what man can do unto me."

Let these serve as specimens of the manner in which inspired writers make an application of the promises. In the experience of every Christian, it is manifest that the Spirit of God makes the same application of the promises to their minds. And thus the promises are a kind of common property to the saints. Who has not been edified, and refreshed in reading the biographies of highly spiritual men; by observing the copious use of the promises which the Spirit of God makes in refreshing the souls of the saints. 4. The promises made to Israel and Judah, in the Old Testament, are promises made to the whole Christian Church, both Jews and Gentiles. Thus the Church of Christ is called the "Israel of God." And the Apostle expressly affirms that "they are not all Israel which are of Israel." But this fact is abundantly confirmed, that the true Israel of the Scriptures, is the true Church of God, in every age--to whom, collectively and individually, all the promises of the Bible belong.

5. The promises mean all they say; in other words, they are to be interpreted by the same rules by which we interpret the commandments. e.g. the promise in Deut. 30:6, --"And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live," is to be interpreted by the same rule by which we interpret the commandment, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul." So the promises in Ezek. 36:25-26 --"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh," is to be understood as implying just as much as the commands in Ezek. 18:30-31 --"Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions, so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions, and make you a

new heart, and a new spirit." So also the promise, "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them," is to be construed as meaning just as much as the commands, "walk in my statutes," and "keep my commandments" mean.

6. We never keep the commandments, only as we take hold of the promises. By this I mean, that grace alone enables us, from the heart, to obey the commandments of God. It is, therefore, only when we lay hold of the promise, by faith, and receive its fulfillment in ourselves, that we really, in heart, obey the commandments of God; e.g. we never love the Lord our God, according to the first great commandment, only as we lay hold on, and receive the fulfillment of some such promise as this: "I will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

7. The promises are held out to all who will believe them.

8. The promise of spiritual blessings cannot be fulfilled to us, without the exercise of faith on our part. This is naturally impossible.

9. The promises cannot be believed, unless they are known to exist. This is self evident.

10. They cannot be believed, unless their application is understood.

11. Promises of particular blessings cannot be believed, without a general confidence in the character and truth of God. Our confidence in any specific promise of any being, must depend upon our confidence in his truth, willingness and ability. Thus if a man come to God to plead any promise, it is indispensable, in the outset, for him to believe that "God is, and that he is a rewarder of those that diligently seek him."

12. There are promises in the Bible of all kinds of blessings, suited to all our wants and circumstances, temporal and spiritual.

13. There are promises suited to all classes and conditions of men.

14. There are promises suited to all possible states of mind.

Upon these last thoughts I shall have occasion to enlarge under another head.

15. Some of the promises are without any condition, expressed or implied. The fulfillment of these does not depend, in any degree, upon our own agency.

The covenant made with Noah is an example of this kind. "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

16. There is, however, almost always some condition, at least, implied in every promise--a condition which though not expressed, arises out of the nature of the case; e.g. should I promise to pay a sum of money, for value received--here, although no condition is expressed, yet it is plain that the individual must consent to receive it. So if a testator leave a legacy to an heir, the terms of the bequest may be absolute, and without condition, yet it is always implied, that the heir believe that a bequest was made, and take the necessary steps to enter into the possession. So with the promises of God. Many of them appear to be absolute, because there is no expressed condition. But a condition is implied, viz. that we believe the promise, and are willing to receive the proffered blessing.

17. Multitudes of the promises of God are made upon expressed conditions. Thus the promises in Ezek. 36:25-27 --"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them," seem to be expressed in full, without any condition. Yet in the 37th verse this condition is expressed --"I will yet be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them, saith the Lord." So in James 1:5 you find this promise --"If any of you lack wisdom let him ask of God who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." It seems to be expressed without condition; but in the sixth verse the condition is expressly annexed --"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering," and we are informed that without faith it shall not be fulfilled.

In Matt. 7:7 you have another illustration of the same principle --"Ask and it shall be given you; seek and ye shall find; knock and it shall be opened unto you." Here asking (of course in faith) is made the condition of receiving. 18. I have already said that many of the promises are made to particular states of mind, and applicable only to persons in that state, e.g.

(1) There are promises made to the impenitent sinner. Isa. 55:7 --"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Now the conditions of these promises are that the sinner "forsake his way" and "return unto the Lord." Without the fulfillment of this condition, the sinner can never receive the benefit of the promise. In Isa. 1:18 there is a promise to the sinner --"Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be like wool." And in the 19th verse the condition is expressed, "if ye be willing and obedient." (2) Again, there are promises to the backslider. As in Hosea 11:7-9. "And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they (the prophets) called them to the Most High, none at all will exalt him. How shall I give thee up Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah?

how shall I set thee as Zeboim? My heart is turned within me --my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Ephraim, for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee, and I will not enter into the city." And in chapter 14:4-9: "I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely: for mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine, the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon. Ephraim shall say, what have I to do any more with idols? I have heard him, and observed him; I am like a green fir tree. From me is thy fruit found. Who is wise and he shall understand these things? prudent and he shall know them? for the ways of the Lord are right, and the just shall walk in them. Also in Jer. 3:12, 15, 22, "Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep mine anger forever.

Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers, under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord. Turn, 0 backsliding children, for I am married unto you, and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion. And I will give you pastors according to my heart, who shall feed you with knowledge and understanding. Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." In both of these passages the conditions lie upon the face of the promises.

(3) Again there are promises especially to weak believers. Isa. 41:10-14 --"Fear thou not for I am with thee, be not dismayed for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea I will help thee; yea I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. Behold all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded, they shall be as nothing and they that strive with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seek them, and shalt not find them, even them that contended with thee. They that war against thee shall be as nothing, and as a thing of nought. For I the Lord thy God will hold thy right hand, saying unto thee, Fear not: I will help thee. Fear not thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel, I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel." Also Isa. 35:3-10: --"Strengthen ye the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not; behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense, he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing, for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And an high way shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon--it shall not be found there--but the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. Also Isa. 40:29-31 --"He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall. But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with

wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, and they shall walk and not faint."

(4) Again there are promises to those who are spiritually blind, and in darkness. Isa. 42:7. " To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Also verse 16 --"I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known, I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them."

(5) Again there are promises to those that are tempted. 1 Cor. 10:13 --"God is faithful who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." 2 Pet. 2:9 --"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." --Ps. 34:17-19 --"The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles. The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit. Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all."

(6) Again there are promises to those who are struggling to overcome sin, and are weighed down with a sense of guilt. Matt. 11:28-29 --"Come unto me, all ye that labor, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

(7) There are promises to those who are seeking for sanctification. Matt. 5:6: -"Blessed are they who do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Isa. 55:1-3 --"Ho every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; Come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David." 1 Thess. 5:23-24 --"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul and body be

preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." See also Jer. 31:31-34 --"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying; Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Also Ezek. 36:25-27: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them."

(8) There are also promises to those who fear future relapses into sin. Psalm 121 is a specimen of these--"I will lift up mine eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord who made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; he that keepeth thee will not slumber. Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil; he shall preserve thy soul. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even forevermore." Ps. 37:31--"The law of his God is in his heart; none of his steps shall slide."

(9) Again there are promises to those who are seeking divine influence.

Luke 11:11-13: --"If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone, or if he asks a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your

heavenly father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Rev. 21:6--"I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." And 22:17 --"And the Spirit, and the bride say, Come, And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

That the water here mentioned is the divine influence is evident from Isa.12:3

--"Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." John 4:10, 14 --"Jesus said unto her [the woman of Samaria] If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." "Whosoever shall drink of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water, springing up into everlasting life." Also John 7:37-39. "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive."

(10) There are promises to those who pray for their friends. Luke 11:5-9

_"Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." One thing taught in this passage is that we may come and expect to receive blessings for our friends. So in Matt. 15:22-28 --"And behold a woman of Canaan cried unto him saying, Have mercy on me, 0 Lord, thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered, and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord help me! But he answered, and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast it to dogs. And she said, truth,

Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their masters' table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, 0 woman great is thy faith. Be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." Although in this, and the last quoted passage, encouragement is held out to perseverance in prayer, yet it is especially taught that perseverance in prayer for our friends is indispensable to secure the blessing.

(11) There are promises to those who pray for the Church. Every promise in the Bible that relates to its future prosperity, is held out to all who will pray for the Church.

(12) Again there are promises so general in their nature as to cover all our necessities, temporal and spiritual. Let Mark 11:24 stand as a specimen of this class of promises --"Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." Of this class of promises, that cover all our desires, I remark,

(a) That we must desire right things, that is, i.e. as will glorify God. (b) It is implied that we desire them for right reasons, i.e. that we have a benevolent, and not a selfish design in wishing to obtain them.

(c) That the suppliant should be under a divine influence, in his request, and that his desire should be begotten by the Holy Spirit. None but the highly spiritual will ever rightly understand and apply this class of promises.

(13) There are promises to parents for their children. Isa. 44:3 --"I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." Now this promise is as express to every Christian parent, as it was to any parent that ever belonged to the Church of God. The Apostle expressly informs us in Eph. 2, that the Gentiles are made fellow heirs with the Jews, and inheritors of the same promises. So that if this promise could ever have been claimed and appropriated by a Jew, it can be, and ought to be so appropriated by every Gentile.

(14) Promises are made to persons under all kinds of trials and afflictions. These promises are so numerous that I need not quote any of them.

(15) Again there are promises to widows, and to the fatherless. Ps. 68:5 --"A

father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation." Jer. 49:11 --"Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in me." Hosea 14:3 --"In thee the fatherless shall find mercy." This class of promises is also numerous.

(16) Again there are promises to persons in all the stations and relations of life. Let these suffice as specimens of the vast multitudes of promises in their application to all classes of persons. You who read your Bibles know, that I have quoted only a few under each head, of the great multitude of promises that are made to each of these particular classes; and that I might easily continue to an indefinite extent the quotation of promises, to all conditions of persons in all the stations and relations of life.

I must defer the remaining heads of this discourse till my next lecture.

Text.--2 Pet. 1:4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

In continuing this subject, I am to show,

II. The design of the promises.

The design of the promises, as stated in the text, is to make us partakers of the divine nature. I will state what I do not, and what I do understand, by being made partakers of the divine nature.

1. I do not understand, that we are to be made partakers of the spiritual essence or natural attributes of God. For this would,

(1) Destroy our personal identity.

(2) It is naturally impossible, as it would be, in effect, making us divine beings.

(3) There is no such change promised in the Bible.

(4) Such a change would not be a moral, but a physical change.

(5) The promises have no tendency to change our constitution--to destroy our personal identity--and make our spiritual existence identical with that of God.

I do understand our being made partakers of the divine nature, to mean, 2. That we are to be made partakers of the moral nature, or attributes and perfections of God. By this I mean, that the moral perfections of God cause the like moral perfections in us--so that the same exercises, in kind, that are in the divine mind, are, by the Spirit, through the promises, begotten in our minds. In other words, that the exhibition of the moral character, nature and attributes of God, as exhibited by the Spirit, transforms us into the same image. Thus the Apostle expresses it, in 2 Cor. 3:18 --"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." The Bible everywhere abounds with declarations and representations to this effect. It represents us as participating deeply, in his exercises, both of holiness and of happiness. I will quote a few of the many passages that might be given to sustain this position.

(1) We are called partakers of his holiness--Heb. 12:10 --"For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his HOLINESS."

(2) We are made partakers of his love. Rom. 5:5: "And hope maketh not ashamed, because the LOVE of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us."

(3) We are called partakers of his fulness. John 1:16 --"And of his FULNESS

have all we received, and grace for grace." By this I understand that the graces in Christians, are answerable to the graces in Jesus Christ, i.e. that the Christian graces are the same in kind, that existed in the Son of God.

(4) We are partakers of His joy: Matt. 25:21 --"Enter thou into the JOY of thy Lord." John 15:11 --"These things have I spoken unto you, that my JOY might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." John 17:13 --"And these things I speak in the world, that they might have my JOY fulfilled in themselves."

(5) We are made partakers of His rest. Ps. 95:11 --"Unto whom I sware in my wrath, that they should not enter into my REST." Ps. 116:7 --"Return unto thy REST, 0 my soul." Matt. 11:28,29 --"Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you REST. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find REST unto your soul." Heb. 3:11 --"So I sware in my wrath, that they shall not enter into my REST." Heb. 4:1,3,9,11 --"Let us therefore fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his REST, any of you should seem to come short of it. For we which have believed, do enter into REST. There remaineth, therefore, a REST for the people of God. Let us labor, therefore, to enter into that REST."

(6) We are made partakers of His peace: John 14:27: "PEACE I leave with you, my PEACE I give unto you." John 14:33 --"These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have PEACE." Phil. 4:7 --"And the PEACE of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Col. 3: 15 --"And let the PEACE OF GOD rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body."

(7) We are made partakers of His happiness. Ps. 36:7,8 --"How excellent is thy loving-kindness, 0 God. Therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy PLEASURES." Ps. 16:11 --"Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy: at thy right hand there are PLEASURES FOREVERMORE."

Let these serve as specimens of the scripture representations on this subject. By a careful examination of the Bible, it will be found that every feature of the moral nature and character of God is begotten in the Christian, by the provisions of the gospel.

3. A state of entire sanctification is also included in the idea of being made partakers of the divine nature. The principal proof of this, I shall examine when I come to show, under the next head, that the promises are adequate to that for which they are designed. But here I would suggest the following considerations, in support of the position, that entire sanctification is included in being made partakers of the divine nature.

(1) If the saints are ever sanctified, it is plain that it must be done through the influence of the promises, including the whole revealed will of God. That the truth, and especially the truth contained in the promises, is the Spirit's grand and indispensable instrument for the saint's sanctification, no reader of the Bible can deny.

(2) If they are not sanctified in this life, there is no reason from the Bible to believe that they ever will be sanctified. The provisions made for the sanctification of the Church, whether adequate or inadequate, are for this life: and I know of no reason to believe, that these means will follow them into eternity, to change their characters there.

(3) In Eph. 4:11-13 we have the following declaration --"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Now here the perfecting of the saints is said to take place under this ministry, and these are the means by which this work is actually accomplished, until they come "unto a PERFECT man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Where is this ministry to be exercised? This work is to be completed in the same world in which the ministry is exercised--the ministry of the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

(4) If the gospel has not provided for the entire and permanent sanctification of the saints, then no such provision is made anywhere that we know of.

(5) But if the gospel has made such provision, then sanctification must take place in this life, for it is in this life that the gospel must do its work.

(6) I recently saw a letter which had a remark to this effect, "that she [the writer] had seen so much of the depravity of her nature, that she believed she could not be wholly sanctified, except by the sickle of death." Perhaps the form of expression here is somewhat singular; but the idea is a common one. Many believe that death is to complete the work of sanctification. It has been a common remark, that one great reason why we should be willing to die, is, that by death we shall get rid of sin. Now I would ask, do any of the inspired

writers ever urge this as a reason for being willing to die--that by death, or at death, we shall be rid of sin? "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord," says John; "Yea, saith the Spirit, for they shall rest from their labors, and their works do follow them." Now it is manifest, that that from which they rest follows them. Does John here mean to say that men rest from their sins, and that their sins follow them?

I cannot but think, that one reason, and the prime reason for thinking that death only can terminate our sins, is that the bodily appetites are supposed to be in themselves sinful; and that every excitement of men's constitutional propensities is in itself a sin. This opinion would naturally lead to the conclusion that the destruction of the body, and the annihilation of the bodily appetites alone, could free us from sin. I do not suppose that we have any promise in the gospel, or any means that can make a physical or constitutional change in soul or body. And those who believe that the change required is a constitutional one, would naturally conclude, that death, and not the promises is the means of our sanctification.

III. I am to show that the promises are adequate to the effect ascribed to them.

It appears to me that the reason why so much doubt is entertained upon the subject of the entire sanctification of the saints in this life is, that the grand distinction insisted upon in the Bible, between the Old and New Covenants is overlooked--that because saints under the Old Testament were not perfect, it is inferred that they will not be under the New--that inasmuch as the legal dispensation was not able entirely and permanently to sanctify saints, it is inferred that the Gospel Dispensation cannot sanctify them, even when administered by the Holy Ghost. If I understand the Bible, the difference between the two dispensations, and covenants is exceedingly great--that what was lacking under the Old Covenant, is abundantly supplied by the New--that the New Covenant was designed to secure what the Old required, but failed to secure. Because the Old Covenant made nothing perfect, it was therefore set aside, and the New introduced, founded upon better promises.

In order to show distinctly the difference between the two covenants, I will lay before you the scripture declarations of the peculiarities of each. By thus contrasting them step by step, you will be able to see whether the promises are adequate to the perfecting of the saints.

I am to show that the first, or Old Covenant was the law written on the tables of stone. This was the substance of the covenant, to which was added the Ceremonial Law. Ex. 34:27,28--"And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant with thee and with Israel. And he was there with the Lord forty days and forty nights; he did neither eat bread, nor drink water. And he wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, and the ten commandments." Deut. 9:9-15: When I was gone up into the mount, to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the Lord made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights; I neither did eat bread nor drink water: And the Lord delivered unto me two tables of stone, written with the finger of God: and on them was written according to all the words which the Lord spake with you in the mount, out of the midst of the fire, in the day of the assembly. And it came to pass, at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the Lord gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant. And the Lord said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image. Furthermore the Lord spake unto me, saying, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: Let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under heaven; and I will make of thee a nation mightier and greater than they. So I turned, and came down from the mount, and the mount burned with fire; and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands." Heb. 9:4 --"Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod, that budded, and the tables of the covenant." These, with many other passages, that might be quoted, show what we are to understand by the first or Old Covenant. It should be known that the words covenant and testament mean the same thing, and are only different translations of the same original word.

I will now show what we are to understand by the New Covenant. Jer. 31:3134--"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) But this shall be

the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jer. 32:39,40 --"And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Heb. 8:8-12: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Ezek. 36:25-27: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Here, then, we have the two covenants distinctly spread before us.

I will now refer you to those passages which set them in contrast; and point out, step by step, wherein they differ, as laid down in the Bible itself.

1. The Old Covenant was mere law, to which was added a typical representation of the gospel. Heb. 10:1 --"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the

comers thereunto perfect."

The second or New Covenant is the writing of this law in the heart. The first said "thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind and strength."

The New, as promised in Jer. 31:31-34, is the fulfillment of what the Old required. "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Heb. 8:8-12: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." Here, then, it is plain that the New is the fulfillment, in the heart, of what the Old required, and of all that the Old required.

2. The Old Covenant required perfect obedience on pain of death. Deut. 27:26: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them: and all the people shall say, Amen." Deut. 28:15: "But it shall come to pass, if thou wilt not hearken unto the voice of the Lord thy God, to observe to do

all his commandments and his statutes, which I command thee this day, that all these curses shall come upon thee, and overtake thee." Gal. 3:10: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."

The New Covenant is the CAUSING God's people to render perfect obedience. Ezek. 36:25-27: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them ." Heb. 8:8-11 --"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Jer. 32:39,40--"And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me for ever for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

Now it should be observed that the New Covenant is not a promise, but it is the thing promised; i.e. the promise itself is not the New Covenant, but the state of mind produced by the Spirit of God writing the law in their hearts, and CAUSING them "to walk in his statutes and keep his judgments and do them." The "new heart," and the "new spirit"--these are the New Covenant itself, and the promise of this New Covenant is quite another thing. The New Covenant and the promise differ as a promise and its fulfillment differ. The New Covenant is a fulfillment of this promise. Jer. 31:31--"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of

Israel, and with the house of Judah." Here is the promise of a covenant to be made. Now what is the covenant to be made? This is it, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." It cannot be too distinctly understood that the New Covenant is neither law nor promise, but the very spirit required by the law produced in the heart by the Holy Ghost.

3. The Old Covenant required a holy heart. Ezek. 18:31--"Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, 0 house of Israel?" The New is the giving of this holy heart. 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." Jer. 31:31-34

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

4. Obedience was enforced under the Old Covenant by penal sanctions. "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." The New is the production of this obedience in the heart, by the Spirit of God. Ezek. 36:27: "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Jer. 31:31-34 "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel;

After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." and Heb. 8:8-11 "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

5. The Old Covenant promised life only upon the conditions of perfect and perpetual obedience. Lev. 18:5: --"Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments; which if a man do, he shall even live in them; I am the Lord." Ezek. 20:11,13,21: "And I gave them my statutes, and shewed them my judgments, which if a man do he shall even live in them." "But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness: they walked not in my statutes, and they despised my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; and my sabbaths they greatly polluted: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness, to consume them." "Notwithstanding, the children rebelled against me: they walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall even live in them; they polluted my sabbaths: then I said, I would pour out my fury upon them, to accomplish mine anger against them in the wilderness." Luke 10:28: "And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live." Rom. 10:5: "For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them." Gal. 3:12: "And the law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them."

The New is the producing of this perfect and perpetual obedience. That it is perfect see Deut. 30:6: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and

the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Ezek. 36:25: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you." Jer. 50:20: "in those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve." 1 Thess. 5:23-24: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." Jer. 24:7: "And I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." Jer. 33:8: "And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me." That it is perpetual, see Ezek. 36:27: "And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Jer. 32:39-40: "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that 1

will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." 1 Thess. 5:23,24: "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit, and soul, and body, be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." It has been objected, that this last is a mere prayer, and may not be answered; but the 24th verse promises "will do it."

Now if this covenant is to be everlasting, so that "they shall fear him for ever," that "they shall not depart from him" --if to cleanse the Church from "all her idols," "from ALL iniquities, and ALL sins," so that when her "iniquities are sought for, NONE shall be found" --if to "give her a new heart and a new spirit," and "cause her to walk in his statutes" --if "to sanctify her wholly, body, soul, and spirit, and preserve her blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus"--if these are not perfect and perpetual obedience, I know not in what terms such obedience could be expressed.

It has been objected by some, that the promises in the Old Testament were made to Jews, and applied only to the Jews. I answer, it is plain, that these promises respected the whole Church under the New Covenant dispensation, and that the New Covenant included the Gentile nations. The Christian Church is the Israel of God, as I have shown in a former lecture.

Text.--2 Pet. 1:4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

In continuing the contrast between the Old and New Covenants, I remark,

6. The Old Covenant left men to the exercise of their own strength. The New is the effectual sanctification by the Holy Spirit. Ezek. 36:25-27: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will PUT MY SPIRIT

WITHIN YOU, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Gal. 3:14: "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the PROMISE OF THE SPIRIT through faith." I need not quote the numerous promises which sustain this point. But here let me say that this is one of the grand distinctions between the Old and New Covenants, that the New Covenant is the effectual indwelling of the Holy Spirit, producing the very temper required by the law, or Old Covenant. There is a grand and mighty difference between the Old and New Covenants in this respect; and let it be forever understood, that the difference does not lie merely, or mainly in the fact that the New Covenant is a fuller revelation than the Old, which brings me to say,

7. The Old was a mere outward covenant, written upon tables of stone--the mere "letter that killeth." The New is an inward covenant. It is the indwelling of the Spirit of God, writing the law in the heart, begetting and maintaining the very obedience required by the Old Covenant. If this be overlooked, the New Covenant is thrown away. And herein is the great error of the Church,

that they make the Old and New Covenants substantially the same thing, while, in fact, the Old Covenant was the mere requirement of that of which the New Covenant is the fulfillment, by the indwelling and effectual influences of the Spirit of God.

8. The Old Covenant had properly two parties. We find both the parties recognized in Ex. 19:8: "And all the people answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do. And Moses returned the words of the people unto the Lord;"--and 24:3-8: "And Moses came, and told the people all the words of the Lord, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the Lord hath said will we do. And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burntofferings of oxen unto the Lord. And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basins; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the Lord hath said, will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the Lord hath made with you concerning all these words." This covenant had no surety. But the New Covenant unites the parties in a mediator, who is also the surety of the New Covenant. Heb. 7:22: "By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament." Now observe the Old has no surety pledged for its fulfillment, while the New has the most ample surety pledged for the fulfillment of every jot and tittle of it.

9. The Old Covenant, I have said, was broken. Jer. 31:32: "Which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord." Now this was the grand reason why this covenant was set aside. Heb. 8:7:

"For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second." 7:11, 18, 19: "If, therefore, perfection were by the Levitical priesthood (for under it the people received the law), what further need was there that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec, and not be called after the order of Aaron?" "For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before, for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope

did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." But the New Covenant shall not be broken by those who receive it. The great difficulty with the Old Covenant was, that it had not sufficient efficiency to secure holiness. And if the New Covenant is not holiness, wherein is it better than the Old? In Heb. 8:6, it is said, "But now hath he [Christ] obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises."

But see the tenor of the covenant itself. The reason why it was not faultless, was because it did not secure obedience. This was the very reason why God found fault with it, and introduced a new one which consisted in obedience. See again Heb. 8:7-11: "For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For, finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts, and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Jer. 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jer. 32:39, 40:

"And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me forever,

for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, THAT THEY SHALL NOT DEPART

FROM ME." 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." Ezek. 11:19-20: "And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you: and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; That they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." Jer. 24:7: "And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart." To these I might add many other passages to the same effect.

10. The Old Covenant was designed to develop sin. Rom. 5:20: "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound: but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 7:8-13: But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, WROUGHT IN ME ALL MANNER OF CONCUPISCENSE.

For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, SIN REVIVED, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, TAKING OCCASION BY THE COMMANDMENT, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, WORKING DEATH in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. Now the design of the Old Covenant, as declared in these texts, was not to make men holy, i.e. it was not expected to make men holy, but to develop their real character--to bring out their depravity to their own observation, and thus convict and condemn them, rather than make them holy and justify them. Read the New Covenant again, Jer. 31:31-34 "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; Not according to the covenant that I made with their

fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jer. 32:39-40: "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me." Jer. 50:20: "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found: for I will pardon them whom I reserve." Ezek. 36:25-27: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 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 I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Rom. 6:1-14: "What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye

should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of righteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom. 7:4-6: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Rom. 8:2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Gal. 5:16-18: "This I say, then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." I continue to quote these texts, and to write them out, that you may read them attentively in the different connections in which they occur in this discourse. I wish you, by all means, to consider them attentively in all the different connections in which I quote them, and see if they prove the points for which they are quoted.

Now I ask you, beloved, if these texts do not prove that the New Covenant is the death of sin, in opposition to the Old, which is the "STRENGTH OF SIN" 1

Cor. 15:56: "The STRENGTH of sin is the law." Now observe again, that the New Covenant is not an outward precept, nor an outward promise, nor any outward thing whatever, but an inward holiness wrought by the Spirit of God- the very substance and spirit of the law written in the heart by the Holy Ghost. Hence in Rom. 6:1-14, persons that are baptized by the Holy Ghost are said to be "dead," "crucified," "buried," &c. I have just quoted it, but consult it again.

"What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know

ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of righteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Rom. 7:4-6: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter." Rom. 8:2: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." Gal. 5:16-18: "This I say, then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law." Now what do these passages mean, if they do not teach a death to sin? And this certainly is not spoken of a future state of existence; but is affirmed of saints in this world. If these passages do not contain an account of a state of entire sanctification, I believe there are none in the Bible that contain such an account, either in reference to this world, or heaven itself. Again, if these passages do not speak of a state of entire sanctification, then there are none that speak of a state of entire depravity. If to be "dead in trespasses and sins"

is not a state of total depravity, then I do not know that the doctrine of total depravity is taught in the Bible. But if to be dead in sin is total depravity, then to be dead to sin must be total or entire holiness.

Now by what rule of biblical interpretation can this conclusion be denied or evaded?

11. The Old Covenant was the ministration of death, but the New of righteousness and life. 2 Cor. 3:6-16: "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit: for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses, for the glory of his countenance; which glory was to be done away; how shall not the ministration of the Spirit be rather glorious? For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory. For even that which was made glorious had no glory in this respect, by reason of the glory that excelleth. For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Seeing, then, that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech: and not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished: But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart. Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." Here we have the two covenants beautifully contrasted by the Apostle--the Old as working spiritual death, and ending in eternal death--the New as consisting in righteousness and eternal life.

12. The Old Covenant was only a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Gal. 3:24: "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." But the New Covenant is the reign of Christ in the heart. Jer. 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt;(which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;)

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Jer. 32:39-40: "And I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." Ezek. 36:25-27: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 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 I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Col. 1:27: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." 1 John 4:4: "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them; because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world." Rom. 8:9: "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Gal. 4:6: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Gal. 2:20: "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." Rom. 8:10-11, 16: "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Phil. 1:19: "For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ." Here observe that the Old Covenant was designed to strip us of self-righteousness, and show us our need of Christ--to develop our selfishness and enmity--and our entire helplessness and dependence upon a foreign influence to incline us to

holiness; and thus preparing the way for our acceptance of Christ as an indwelling and reigning Savior. Then when the Old Covenant, as a schoolmaster, has brought us to Christ, the New enters. In other words--Christ enters the soul, takes up His residence there--writes the law of love in the heart--takes away the stony heart of flesh--makes the New Covenant with the soul--and sheds His divine influence over the entire moral being. Now if as much as this is not taught in these scriptures, and in various other parts of the Bible, what is taught? And if these texts are to be set aside, and explained away after the common manner of disposing of Scripture testimony on this subject, what doctrine or truth may not be expunged from the Bible?

Text.--2 Pet. 1:4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

In resuming the subject of the contrast between the Old and New Covenants, I remark,

13. The Old Covenant was the strength of sin. 1 Cor. 15:56: "THE

STRENGTH OF SIN IS THE LAW." In this passage, and in others, the Apostle plainly teaches that the Old Covenant, or law, strengthened depravity, instead of annihilating it. But the New is represented as the death of sin. Ezek. 36:2529: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 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 I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from ALL YOUR UNCLEANNESS." Rom. 6:1-14: "What shall we say then?

Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are DEAD to sin, LIVE any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his DEATH?

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into DEATH; that like as Christ

was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should WALK IN NEWNESS OF LIFE. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this, that our OLD MAN IS CRUCIFIED with him, that the body of SIN MIGHT BE DESTROYED, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that IS DEAD IS FREED FROM SIN. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he DIED UNTO SIN once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be DEAD indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. For SIN SHALL NOT HAVE

DOMINION OVER YOU: FOR YE ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT

UNDER GRACE. Rom. 7:4-6: "Wherefore, my brethren, ye are also become DEAD to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit UNTO DEATH. But now we are delivered from the law, that being DEAD wherein we were held; that we should serve in NEWNESS OF SPIRIT, and not in the oldness of the letter." Gal. 5:16-18: "This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would. But if ye be led of the Spirit, YE ARE NOT UNDER THE

LAW." Now as I have before remarked, if to be dead to sin be not entire holiness, then to be dead in sin is not entire depravity.

14. The Old Covenant made nothing perfect. Heb. 7:19: "For the LAW MADE

NOTHING PERFECT, but the bringing in of a better hope did; by the which we draw nigh unto God." Heb. 9:9: "Which WAS a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices that COULD NOT

make him that did the service PERFECT, as pertaining to the conscience." Heb. 10:11: "And every priest standeth daily ministering, and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which CAN NEVER TAKE AWAY SINS." It is abundantly taught in this epistle that Abraham, and the other Old Testament saints did not receive the promises; i.e. they did [not] receive the fulfillment of the promises. The promises were made to them, or rather through them, to the Christian Church. But it is expressly said that they did not receive the fulfillment of the promises. Of the long list of saints mentioned in chapter 11 of this epistle, it is said, verse 13, "These all died in faith, NOT HAVING

RECEIVED THE PROMISES." And in verses 39, 40, it is said: "And these all having obtained a good report through faith RECEIVED NOT THE PROMISE: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

The New Covenant is perfection itself. Lest this should be doubted, it may be well to inquire what we understand by Christian Perfection. Has God any where required perfection in the Bible? If so, where? Does his law require perfection? If not, what part of the Bible does? And if his law does not require perfection, why does it not? Is it not manifestly an imperfect law? And how can it be said that the "law is HOLY, JUST and GOOD"?

But it probably will not be doubted that God's law is perfect, and that entire conformity to it is perfection itself. Now what does this law require?

(1.) Not that we should love God as much as we should be under obligation to love him, had we a perfect knowledge of all our relations. If the law required this, it would be more than any saint on earth or in heaven, or any angel in heaven could perform. None but an infinite mind can perceive all the relations that exist between God and ourselves, and between ourselves and our fellow men.

(2.) It does not require the same degree of love that we might have rendered,

had we never abused our powers by sin. If it did there is not a saint on earth or in heaven that could obey the law. The law is directed to us as we are; and it says to every individual as he is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all THY heart, and with all THY soul, and with all THY strength,"--not with all the strength thou mightest have had, hadst thou never sinned. Perfection would be as impossible to saints in heaven as to saints on earth, did God require the same strength of affection that might have been rendered had our powers never been debilitated by sin.

(3.) Nor does the law require the same love that might be rendered, had we as much knowledge of God as we might have gained if we had always improved our time in the acquisition of knowledge. If this were required of the saints, there is not a saint in heaven that is or ever will be perfect; for there is not one that has as much knowledge as he might have possessed had he always improved his time and talents in its acquisition. What is lost in these respects is lost forever. And God no more requires us to make up the deficiency than he requires us to recall past time. Repentance for all the past, and perfect obedience in the future, with such powers as we have, is all that the law or the gospel requires. "THOU shalt love the Lord thy God with all THY heart, and with all THY soul, and with all THY strength." This is the Old Covenant. I have before said that it made nothing perfect.

I now add that the New Covenant is perfection itself. Jer. 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them saith the Lord;) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Heb. 8:8-12:

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant

with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their iniquities will I remember no more. Ezek. 36:25-27:

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 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 I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Deut. 30:6: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God WITH ALL

THINE HEART, and WITH ALL THY SOUL, that thou mayest live." Rom. 8:14: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me FREE from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law MIGHT BE FULFILLED IN US, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." Now if you look into the promise of the covenant in Jeremiah, you will see that it is just this--a promise to write the Old Covenant in the heart. It should be remembered, that the words old covenant and law are synonymous terms. And when God promises to write the law in the heart, he promises that the Old Covenant shall be written in the heart.

Now if the Old Covenant or Law required perfection, (and if it did not there is no requirement of perfection in the Bible,) the promise in Jeremiah is that

this same perfection shall exist in the soul. And in the quotation from Rom. 8:4, it is expressly asserted that this was the object of the atonement of Christ. Now it does appear to me that the argument in favor of entire sanctification may be settled to a demonstration, by looking at what the Old Covenant required, and recognizing that as the highest perfection that God requires of man, and then seeing that this Old Covenant is to be written in the heart by the Spirit of God. If, when the Old is fulfilled in the heart, men are not perfect in the Bible sense of that term, we may hope in vain to understand what perfection is.

15. The Old Covenant gendered to bondage. Gal. 4:21-31: "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written, that Abraham had two sons; the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman. But he who was of the bond-woman was born after the flesh; but he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which GENDERETH TO

BONDAGE, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. For it is written, Rejoice thou barren that barest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not; for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband. Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bond-woman and her son: for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bond-woman, but of the free. Here the Apostle represents all men under the law as being in a state of slavery and rendering merely the service of fear. But the New Testament is liberty itself. Gal. 5:1: "Stand fast, therefore, in the LIBERTY wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." John 8:32-36: "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you FREE. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin, is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house forever: but the Son abideth ever. If the Son therefore shall make you FREE,

ye shall be FREE indeed." Rom. 6:14: "For SIN SHALL NOT HAVE

DOMINION OVER YOU; FOR YE ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT

UNDER GRACE." Gal. 4:2-6: "But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in BONDAGE under the elements of the world: but when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to REDEEM THEM that were under the law, that we might receive the ADOPTION OF SONS. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father." Isa. 61:1: "The spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek: he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to PROCLAIM LIBERTY to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Rom. 8:21: "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the GLORIOUS LIBERTY of the children of God." 1 Cor. 8:9: "But take heed, lest by any means this LIBERTY

of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak." 2 Cor. 3:17: "Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is LIBERTY." Gal. 5:13: "For, brethren, ye have been called unto LIBERTY; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." 16. The Old Covenant produced only outward morality, while it aggravated the sin of the heart. Matt. 23:25: "Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye make clean the OUTSIDE of the cup and of the platter, but WITHIN THEY ARE FULL OF EXTORTION AND EXCESS." Rom. 7:8: "But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, WROUGHT IN ME ALL MANNER

OF CONCUPISCENSE." The New Covenant is the purifying of the heart. Jer. 31:31-34: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord;) but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts;

and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Ezek. 36:25-27: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. 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 I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Deut. 30:6: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live."

17. The Old Covenant had only a shadow of the Gospel. Heb. 10:1: "For the law having a SHADOW of good things to come and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect." The New is the inwrought effect of the gospel. Let it be understood that the New Testament is not the Gospel itself; but is that which is to be effected by the Gospel. The New Testament and the Gospel are by no means to be confounded the one with the other. The New Testament or Covenant is that work in the heart which is wrought by the Holy Ghost, by the instrumentality of the Gospel. Most professors of religion, in speaking of the New Testament, mean by it the book containing the Gospels, the Acts of the Apostles, the Epistles and the Apocalypse. Now these are not the New Testament; for the New Testament and Covenant, you understand, are the same thing. These books are the Gospel. And, as I have said, the Gospel is only the means by which God makes the New Covenant with the soul, or by which he inclines the soul to close in with, and obey the Old Covenant. Now the whole object of God in the Gospel is not to abrogate the Old Covenant, but to bring men into obedience to it; i.e. to be perfectly conformed to the law of love. The Gospel is as distinct from the New Covenant as the means are distinct from the end. And for an individual to suppose he has received the New Covenant because he has the Gospel in his hands, or because he lives under the Gospel dispensation, is a dangerous and fatal error. A man may live under the Gospel, may understand and believe many of its truths, and yet the Gospel

may never have been so fully received by him, as effectually and permanently to have written the Old Covenant or law in his heart.

It has been said that regeneration is all that is included in the promise of the New Covenant, and that every real Christian has received this New Covenant. Now if this be so, in what sense did not Abraham and the Old Testament saints receive the promises and their fulfillment? Were they not regenerated?

See Heb. 11:13: "These all died in faith, NOT HAVING RECEIVED THE

PROMISES." Also verses 39, 40: "And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, RECEIVED NOT THE PROMISE: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Now here many of the most distinguished saints under the Old Testament dispensation are mentioned by name, and it is expressly said of every one of them, that they "died in faith," but "had not received the promises." It is not meant that they had not heard the promises, for to them the promises were given. It must therefore mean, that they did not receive their fulfillment. But who will doubt that they were regenerated? Now I cannot resist the conviction that to suppose regeneration to be the receiving of the New Covenant or New Testament, in the sense in which it is promised in the passages [I have] so often quoted, is a great and dangerous error. It appears to me that the Bible abundantly teaches that these promises are made to believers and not to unbelievers--that they are made to the Church, and not to the world, and that it is after we believe that we are to be sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. Eph. 1:13: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also AFTER THAT YE BELIEVED, YE

WERE SEALED WITH THAT HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE." I have been ready sometimes to ask, can it be possible that those who maintain that the promise in Jeremiah means nothing more than regeneration, have thoroughly considered what they say and whereof they affirm?

18. The condition of the Old Covenant was perfect obedience to law. I have so often quoted the passages to prove this, that I need not here repeat them. The condition of the New Covenant is faith in Christ. Gal. 3:14: "That the blessing of Abraham, might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that

we might receive the promise of the Spirit THROUGH FAITH." Now it is naturally impossible that the New Covenant should be received, or the Old written in the heart upon any other condition than faith. Without confidence or faith there can be no love; and there cannot be genuine faith that does not produce love.

These are only a few of the exceeding great and precious promises of which the Apostle speaks in the text. Every student of the Bible knows that I might extend this examination indefinitely, and write a volume as large as the Bible itself, should I quote all the promises, and remark upon them only to a limited extent. Some of them I have quoted over and over again for the purpose of showing their particular bearing upon the different propositions I have laid down. Those which I have quoted are only specimens of the promises, and designed only as illustrations of the truth that the promises are sufficient to accomplish the great work of making us partakers of the divine nature. The Lord willing, I design ere long to take up a more direct examination of the question whether entire sanctification is attainable in this life, and enter more into detail than would be proper in these discourses on the promises. In my next, I design to present some reasons why the promises are not fulfilled in, and to us.

In the mean time, I wish to call your attention to what I regard as a settled truth, viz: that the doctrine of sanctification is so spiritual a subject that no mind will understand it that is not in a truly and highly spiritual state. No man ever understood discourses on regeneration, and especially on the evidences of regeneration, and the exercises of a regenerated heart, who had not himself been regenerated. Nor will a man understand any course of reasoning on the subject of sanctification, who has not experience on that subject. By this I do not mean, that he may not have sufficient intellectual perception to understand some things about it. But I do mean that he will not understand the fullness with which the Bible teaches that doctrine until his spiritual perceptions are made clear and penetrating; e.g. no man ever believed that Jesus was the Christ who was not born of God. It is expressly asserted in the Bible that "whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God" and that "no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Now it is not intended in this passage that a man may not settle the abstract question to some extent, as a matter of science and evidence respecting the divinity of

Christ. But it is intended that none but a spiritual mind can have any knowledge of Christ as God. And to me it seems plain that the more spiritual any truth is, the more certainly it will be misunderstood by any but a spiritual mind; for the natural man discerneth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. The utmost that I expect to do by any thing that I can say, and by any scriptures that can be quoted, with minds not in a truly spiritual state, is so far to convince their understanding as to convict their heart of being wrong, and thus to bring them to search after the true light.

Text.--2 Pet. 1:4: "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."

In some of my last lectures, I examined a few of the promises, with the design of showing that they are sufficiently full and explicit to cover the whole ground of our necessities; and that they afford us abundant means of entire conformity to the divine nature or image--that we have only to realize in our own experience the fullness of the promised blessing, and to believe and receive all that is actually promised, in order to know by our own blessed experience, what it is to be made partakers of the divine nature. I might extend this examination of the promises to almost any length, as every attentive reader of the Bible knows. I have only quoted such specimens of the different classes of promises, as seem to me to afford a fair illustration of the extent and fullness of the salvation promised in the Gospel.

According to my plan, I am now to show,

IV. Some of the reasons why the promises are not fulfilled in and to us.

1. They are overlooked in a great measure by the Church. They seem as a body not to know that there are any such promises as these in the Bible. Now as the fulfillment of a promise must depend upon our knowing, understanding, and believing it, there is a very obvious reason why to multitudes the promises are never fulfilled.

2. Many who know that such promises are in the Bible, do not at all understand their application. I was amazed, not long since, to hear a minister

contend, that the promise of the New Covenant, which I have so often quoted, was made to the Jews--that inasmuch as Israel and Judah are mentioned, we had no right to apply the promise to any but the Jews. He seemed entirely to overlook the fact that these promises were made to the Israel of God, and more especially to the Christian Church than to the Jewish Church. Now it is perfectly manifest that where such ignorance as this prevails (and it does very extensively prevail in the Christian Church) that there is a natural reason why the promises are not fulfilled--are not pleaded, believed, and applied by the Church to their own case. Therefore they are as ineffectual to them as the Gospel provisions are to sinners who starve to death with the Gospel feast before them.

3. Another reason why they are not fulfilled to many is, they will not believe the promises mean all they say. They reason thus: as a matter of fact, say they, the Christian Church is not wholly sanctified and never has been--that very few, if any, believers in Christ have ever been wholly sanctified in this life. Therefore, as a matter of fact, either they do not mean to promise entire sanctification, or God has not kept his word. They therefore suffer themselves to fritter away the meaning of the promises. Now if the objection that the promise cannot mean entire sanctification, because, as a matter of fact, entire sanctification has not taken place in the Church, be good for anything, it must amount to this--that nothing more is promised in the New Covenant than the Church have actually realized. For the whole force of the objection lies in this, that if God has not fulfilled all that he promised, then he has forfeited His word. Therefore, the New Covenant does not mean entire sanctification; but these promises of the New Covenant, and all the promises which I have quoted, mean nothing more than the Church has actually realized. Now if this objection amounts to anything, it is this--that nothing more is promised than has been fulfilled--that the Gospel has done for the Church all that it can do in this world--and that every Christian has actually been at every moment just as holy as there was any provision for him to be. Now the first absurdity involved in this objection is that it would make the promises mean more or less to different individuals, just according to the measure of grace which each one has had. For according to the objection, if the promise has not been fulfilled, then God has broken his word. And if one Christian has had more holiness than another, it must be because God has promised more to one than to another. For in this objection, let it be remembered, it is contended that he

has fulfilled all His promises.

A second absurdity is, it assumes that these promises are without any condition, or that the condition has been complied with by every Christian. For certainly it would not be assumed that God had violated his promises, if he intended to promise entire sanctification, unless it were assumed either that they are without condition, expressed or implied, or that the condition had been complied with. But these promises are all made on conditions, either expressed or implied. They are to be recognized, and pleaded, and believed. The conditions are often expressed along with the promises; and when not expressed, are always implied. The conditions are not arbitrary, but there is a natural necessity that they should be understood, and believed, and a personal application made of them, as the indispensable means of getting that state of mind that constitutes the divine image or nature in man. It is indeed a shorthand method of frittering away the promises of God, to overlook the conditions upon which they are made, and contend that they can mean no more than has been actually realized by the Church, because on any other supposition, God has not performed his word. Now the reason, and a sufficient reason, why entire sanctification has not been realized by the Church, is that she has not believed and applied these promises according to their real import.

I don't know how to leave this objection without saying it is truly ridiculous. Upon the principle assumed in the objection, there is no promise in the Bible that has become due that can be or ought to be pleaded by Christians, inasmuch as the promises must be already fulfilled, else God has violated his word.

But to what I have said, it may be objected--that the New Testament times have really come--that the New Covenant has been actually made with the Church--and that those who have actually received it have not been entirely sanctified. To this I reply--that the Church may have received more or less of the New Covenant precisely according to their understanding of the fullness of the promised blessings, and their faith in the promises. When God had promised the New Covenant, he said, "Nevertheless I will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do it for them." Now it is nowhere asserted in the Bible that the New Testament, or Covenant, has been fully received, although the

time has come when it is offered to the Church. Under the New Covenant dispensation, it is promised that the fullness of the Gentiles shall turn to the Lord, and that the Jews themselves shall be converted and receive this covenant. Now the fact that the Church has not actually received the blessing of sanctification, no more proves that that blessing is not fully promised in the New Covenant, than the fact that the Jews and Gentiles have not been converted, proves that no such thing is promised. It is certain that the promises are not fulfilled in regard to the world's conversion, for the very reason that the Church and the world have not believed and applied these promises. The same is true of the New Covenant blessing of sanctification. This blessing has been received to a very limited extent by the Church because she has neglected to believe and apply the promise.

4. Another reason why the promises are not fulfilled in us, is that we often fail to search out the one that is applicable to our circumstances. There are promises adapted to all our circumstances and states of mind, as I have before shown. No one will answer our purpose for the time being, but the one that is applicable to our state of mind. I have often been struck with this, in endeavoring to help anxious souls out of their difficulties. After inquiring as clearly as I was able into their state of mind, I have presented one, and another, and another of the promises, and found that they would instantly perceive that these promises did not exactly meet their case. But when the Spirit of the Lord directed to the selection of the right promise, I have often been amazed and delighted to see how instantly they would recognize it as exactly suited to their case--as made to one exactly in their state of mind--as meeting them where they are, and affording them just the aid they needed. It is often most refreshing to see with what a grasp the mind in such a state will lay hold upon such a promise, and how, in a moment, it becomes as an

"anchor to the soul, sure and steadfast," and how easily the mind when anchored down upon such a promise, can look out upon the storm that rages without, and smile through tears of joy. It is one of the great and sweet employments of the ministry, to search out and apply the blessed promises to the different states of mind in which their people are--to feed the lambs and sheep with food suited to their age and spiritual health; and he is surely but illinstructed in the oracles of God, who has not sufficient spiritual discernment, experience, and knowledge of the Bible, and of the laws of the

human mind, to know how to search out the real state of different persons, and apply the promises that belong to them. It is a most divine employment, and if ministers were much better fitted for it, than they are, the weak ones of the flock would soon be strong.

5. Another reason is that we do not anchor down in naked faith upon the promises. We are waiting for some state of mind to precede the exercise of faith, which we suppose must be had before we are at liberty to lay hold on the promise. And often the very state of mind which we suppose must precede the exercise of faith, is to be the effect of faith, and can only be produced by it. When I speak of anchoring down upon a promise in naked faith, I mean that we should take the promise and believe it, as a matter of fact, as the word of God, as infallible truth, entirely irrespective of any state of mind in which we may be at the time. Take an illustration of what I mean. A young man not long since, had been for a long time anxious, and going to one and another, and inquiring into their experience, and how they obtained the blessing. When one had told him, he would think, now I must get just into that state of mind and then I shall have the blessing. And when another had related his experience, he would strive to imitate that; and so he went from one to another, but all in vain. Finally he came to this conclusion, that what the Bible said about Christ Jesus were matters of fact, that there he would begin by taking these things as facts--that he would not inquire about this or that man's experience, but would take the facts about Christ Jesus and the promise as certain truths. Now this is what I call naked faith. This immediately brought him into the state of mind after which he had been seeking, and which, it seems, he expected in some degree at least, to realize before he exercised faith in the promises. Now if we ever expect to receive the fulfillment of the promises, we must not wait for appearances or any indications that God is about to fulfill his promises, but must anchor right down upon them in naked faith because they are the word of God.

6. Again, we do not receive them as belonging to us, as in the case that I have mentioned, where one supposed that the promise of the New Testament was made only to the Jews. Now multitudes seem never to have understood the promises made to individuals and to the Church under the Old Covenant, as belonging still more emphatically to the Church and to individuals under the Christian dispensation. They seem entirely to have overlooked the fact that

Christ and his apostles always treated the promises of the Old Testament, as more emphatically belonging to Christians under the New dispensation. Now here is a sufficient reason for their not receiving the fulfillment of the promises, that they do not understand them as made to themselves. Consequently they do not believe nor apply them.

7. It does not seem to be generally understood, that the promises mean all that they say--that they are to be interpreted by the same rules by which the commandments, and other parts of scripture are to be interpreted, e.g. the promise "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul," does not seem to be understood to mean as much as the command "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." It is a matter of amazement and grief that so many individuals, who will contend for the literal meaning of the commandments, will fritter away the promises when the same terms are used, as meaning infinitely less, than the language in the commandments means. Just as if an infinitely bountiful God meant less by the promises of grace than by the requirements of justice. If that man is to be accounted least in the kingdom of God who shall teach men to cast away one of the least of the commandments of God, what shall be said of him who not only casts away himself, but teaches others to cast away the promises of God? Were this the place, it could be easily shown, that it has been a common thing with those who have written against the doctrine of entire sanctification, in this life, to interpret the promises by a very different rule from that which they applied to the commandments. Now I would humbly ask where is their authority for doing this? Is not such a course manifestly a violation of the Word of God?

8. Another reason is, we are so prone to limit their meaning to our own experience, or to the experience of others whom we esteem to be eminent saints. How common is it for persons to inquire, if these promises mean this, why did not President Edwards or his wife, or Mrs. Isabella Graham, or Dr. Payson understand them and experience their fulfillment? Now we are apt to suffer such cases as these to stumble us, by assuming that they understood and applied the promises in all their length and breadth. It should be understood that no man's experience is the standard of truth. We are not to interpret the Bible by the experience of any man, but bring the experience of

every man into the light of the Bible. The plain meaning of the Bible as it reads, is the standard, whatever we may have experienced to the contrary notwithstanding. It is the practice of some men, in these days, when the full meaning of the promises of the gospel is contended for, to reply, by demanding an example. They say, show us an example of a perfect man. To this I reply,

(1) That should such an example be produced, its perfection would not be acknowledged. Christ claimed and really possessed perfection. But his claim was set aside by the religious teachers of his day, and he was considered as a blasphemer, and as one possessed with a devil. I verily believe that examples have been produced, and that some have all along existed in the Church, and now exist, who enjoy the blessing of entire sanctification, as I understand that term, and who nevertheless, have been and still are looked upon, even by the mass of professors of religion, as being so far from a sanctified state, as to render it very doubtful whether they have any religion at all; certainly the most holy persons that I have ever seen have been the most maligned and persecuted, and denounced, even by many of the Church, as being almost any thing else than what they ought to be. And this is exactly according to the Word of God. "If any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution."

(2) But another answer to this call for an example is, that if no such example were known to us, this would no more prove that they did not exist, than the fact that Elijah did not know that God had reserved seven thousand men, that had not bowed the knee to Baal, proved that they did not exist.

(3) If no such example did exist, or ever has existed, it would prove nothing more than that the gospel has not yet done all for the world and the Church, which it was designed to accomplish. And who, I would humbly ask, believes that it has? Who believes that either the Church or the world has experienced all that the gospel is designed to effect? If no case can indeed be found, where entire sanctification is enjoyed, by any saint, it certainly does not prove that the promises mean no more than is enjoyed, but only that they are not believed, and the fullness of their meaning realized in the experience of the Church.

9. Another reason why the promises are not fulfilled in us is a want of

perseverance. The Bible insists largely upon the importance of perseverance in prayer. The case of the "woman of Canaan" is recorded in the 15th of Matthew; and that of the unjust judge in the 18th of Luke, and many other instances recorded in the Bible, set the importance of perseverance in prayer in a strong light. It is often the case, that individuals will pray with confidence for blessings for a short time; but becoming discouraged because the blessing does not come, or supposing perseverance to be unnecessary and that the blessing will come in its time without it, they cease their efforts and wrestling, and, in this respect, restrain prayer before God. Now it is very often the case, that perseverance is naturally indispensable to our obtaining the blessing--that nothing else can prepare our minds to receive it; and it is often the case that it cannot be granted, but through our own agency and protracted and agonizing efforts. Some obstacle may be, to be overcome, either within or without ourselves, that can be overcome in no other way. As Christ said on a certain occasion, "This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting." 10. Again, we hold on too long, i.e. we do not go from promise to promise, taking hold on them as they rise one above the other. Now it is manifest to those who have experience on the subject, that the promises are adapted to all possible states of mind, from the lowest degree of grace, and from the lowest depths of despondency, step by step, up to the highest degrees of holy confidence and triumph of which the human mind is capable. It often comes to pass, that when individuals have taken hold on some of those promises, designed to reach the Christian in his most languid state, such as "He giveth power to the faint, and to him that hath no might he increaseth strength." "The bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench till he bring forth judgment unto victory" that here he rests, and being comforted by these promises he does not proceed to take hold on promises suited to his state of mind as he rises, and thus rise quite out of the murky regions of his unbelief and selfishness, but contents himself with hanging upon that one, or those of that class, without rising any higher. It is impossible that a believer should remain stationary. He must go from strength to strength, or he will certainly insensibly decline. The promises are like a ladder that reaches from earth to heaven; and the cry continually is, come up higher, come up higher, and unless the mind is taken up with viewing the heights still above, and what is still to be attained, it is apt to become giddy with looking down upon those below, and dwelling upon its own attainments, and being lifted up with pride, falls into the condemnation of the devil.

11. We do not duly consider how intimately God's glory is connected with our receiving all that the promises mean. We are apt to be taken up with a sense of our unworthiness, and be discouraged by a consideration of it, and not duly to consider that this very unworthiness would render it exceedingly honorable to God to give us the fullness of his grace, and wholly to transform us into his own image. I love to contemplate the grace of God as manifested in Paul-once a Saul--a raging persecutor, breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the infant Church--afterwards so changed by the grace of God as to become the wonder of the world in his remarkable resemblance of the Son of God.

God's glory is his reputation or renown. And if to bestow great and transforming grace upon the children of men who are in the image of hell, is calculated to convey a high idea of the patience, forbearance, goodness and moral omnipotence of God, then certainly his glory is intimately connected with our receiving the full meaning and power of his promises. 12. We do not sufficiently consider the importance of our becoming living illustrations of the power and grace of God. There should be among Christians, a holy ambition, each one to become a living, standing illustration of the full meaning of the promises, and of the provisions of the gospel to transform the soul into the divine image and make it a partaker of the divine nature. Who that has read the life of Mrs. President Edwards, has not been encouraged and edified and strengthened to press after higher attainments in holiness when they have seen what grace can do and what it actually has done, even in modern times, to transform and elevate the soul. Now as we prize the glory of God--as we desire to do good to the Church, instead of being satisfied with small attainments, we should reach after the highest measure of grace, and try the full strength and intent of the promises, and ask God to give us for his own glory all that he meant to promise--that the unbelief of the Church may be rebuked, and that we might so illustrate in our own experience the fullness of gospel salvation, that the frittering away of the promises and paring them down to the legal experience of the Church in her present state may be done away forever.

13. Another reason is the concealing the grace of God which we actually have received, either through the suggestion of Satan that we shall lose the present blessing, or through fear that we shall be thought egotistical and

proud, if we declare what God has done for our souls. Says the Psalmist, "I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart. I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation. I have not concealed thy loving-kindness and thy truth from the great congregation." And when he had been brought up from the horrible pit of miry clay, and his feet set upon a rock, his goings established, and a new song put into his mouth, he said, "Many shall see it and shall fear, and shall trust in the Lord." Christ has said that "men do not light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick, that it may give light to all that are in the house." "Even so," he adds, "let your light so shine that men may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven."

Now it is not enough that we should merely behave ourselves aright, but we should be prompt, and plain, and simple-hearted in ascribing all our good works to the grace of God within us, else ourselves and not God will have the glory in the estimation of men. If we conceal the lovingkindness of the Lord, if we are ashamed, or afraid, or for any cause neglect to give him glory and tell what the Spirit hath done for our souls, we may expect that to overtake us which was spoken by the prophet, "If ye will not hear and if ye will not lay it to heart to give glory unto my name, saith the Lord of hosts, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings."

14. A voluntary humility may prevent us from receiving the fulfillment of the promises. Many individuals seem afraid to hope or expect to attain to any but the lowest measures of grace, on account of their great unworthiness. They feel as if it would be aspiring and getting out of their place to ask for the children's bread, and therefore suppose themselves to be doing God service, in consenting to live upon the crumbs under the table. They read of the attainments of others, but ah! they think, these are not such great sinners as themselves. They thus dishonor the grace of God, by somehow imagining that it was because they were not so great sinners that they have been so highly exalted. In other words, they insult the grace of God by accounting for the attainments of those of whom they read, upon the score of justice rather than grace--supposing that it was because they were not so ill-deserving as themselves. Now what is this but wicked and shocking unbelief, depreciating the grace of God, and ascribing that to justice which is only the result of infinite grace--and besides, a most self-righteous keeping down in the dust, by a most God-dishonoring idea that our worthiness and not unworthiness is

to recommend us to the grace of God? Now it should be forever understood that worthiness recommends us to the justice and not to the grace of God, and that our deep unworthiness, while it lays us under the condemning sentence of justice, recommends us to the grace of God. Let no one therefore suppose himself to be pleasing God, when he voluntarily consents to grovel in the lowest attainments, when he ought to rise into the full sunlight of God's countenance, and to be filled with all the fullness of God. 15. Another reason is a God-dishonoring unbelief, and a blasphemous putting in of but, and if, when pleading the promises of God, which imply insincerity on the part of God in making the promises, e.g. Christ has said "God is more willing to give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him than parents are to give good gifts to their children." Suppose we pray for the Holy Ghost, and preface and conclude the petition by saying, "if it be thy will," &c. Now wherever there is an express promise, to put in an if in this way, is to call in question the sincerity of God. Where he has made no conditions, we are to make none, unless we would be guilty of adding to or subtracting from his word.

16. Another difficulty is, very few have ever learned how to use the promises. They have so little faith in them as not to select them, nor have [they]

committed them to memory, nor arranged them in any order in their own minds. And to them, the weapons of their spiritual warfare are about as useless as if they were locked up in an armory. Now the promises of God should be so pondered, selected, arranged, and remembered, as to be ever ready at hand, that the one that is needed may be presented at any time to quench the fiery darts of the wicked. To understand how to use the promises of God is a science of vast extent, and it requires the highest exercise of the human faculties, always to be able to seize upon the one we need, for our own or for others edification and support. I regard this as one of the principal qualifications of ministers. We need to know how so to apply the promises of grace, as to bring the Church from her low estate to those heights to which the promises were designed to elevate her.

17. Another reason is that the ministry to a great extent, are frittering away instead of applying the promises of God to the help and edification of the Church. My soul is often sick to see how the promises are understood, and how they are explained away, and the Church robbed of its heritage, and the

sheep starved to death by those who are set to feed the flock of God.

18. Another reason is, we regard iniquity in our hearts. If any sin is cherished there, if any lust is spared, if any unholy indulgence is pleaded for or defended, or pride or sin of any kind, the Lord will not hear us. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."

19. Another reason is, a disposition to defer the fulfillment of the promises to the Millennium. In my apprehension, this is the very reason why the Millennium has not already come, because the Church are waiting for the effect to precede the cause. The Millennium will be the fulfillment of these promises. Before they can be fulfilled they must be believed and pleaded. But the Church seems to be waiting for the Millennium first to come, and then they will lay hold of the promises. How long shall the Church thus act? How long shall the promises that are conditioned in their very nature upon our faith, remain a dead letter in the Bible because the Church is waiting for their fulfillment before they are believed?

20. Many are doubting whether these promises are to be fulfilled until we get into eternity, e.g. of the promise of the New Covenant it is said by some that no time is specified when it shall be fulfilled, and consequently we know not that we have a right to expect the blessing until we arrive at heaven. Now to this a multitude of answers might be given. But at present I will only say,

(1) That a promise in which no time for its fulfillment is either expressed or implied is void and a ridiculous mockery. Should I promise to pay A.B. twentyfive dollars without saying anything at all of the time, then he may call upon me at any time, for my obligation is considered as on demand. But if I should say at some FUTURE time, without specifying when, it would be void, as the time would never come when it would be considered as due. This is true of the promises of God. When a promise is made in the present tense it is always due or may at any time be pleaded--if at a future time, it is not due until that time arrives. If a promise should be found (of which there is no instance in the Bible) in which no particular future time is expressed or implied, that promise must from its nature be a mere nullity: For faith being the condition, it is plain that the condition can never be fulfilled because there is nothing on which it can rest, it being impossible to ascertain whether the time is come or when it will come that the promise was intended to be

fulfilled. If it be said, as in the promise of the New Covenant, that, "after those days,"--"at that time," &c. evidently referring to some particular future time when the promise should be fulfilled--at that time it becomes due, and ever after that time it may be pleaded as a promise in the present tense. The particular time referred to in such cases may be learned in general by the connection in which the promise stands, or by reference to other parts of scripture: e.g.; Many things are promised to be fulfilled "in the latter day,"--"at the end of the world or Jewish age," &c. From the Bible, it is abundantly evident that the latter day is the gospel day--that the end of the world when by the phrase is meant the end of the Jewish state, is also the commencement of the Christian dispensation, and that all the promises of blessings to be bestowed "in the last days" are now to be regarded as in the present tense, to be fulfilled at any time and to anyone who will believe them. This is undeniably the understanding of the Apostle, when, in Hebrews, he quotes the promise of the New Covenant from Jeremiah, as a promise to be fulfilled at the coming of Christ, who was the mediator of the New Covenant. Now the coming of Christ was the particular time at which the promise made by Jeremiah, and so often repeated in the prophets was to be considered as due, and forever after treated as a promise in the present tense. Christ's coming did not of itself secure the fulfillment of the promise, irrespective of our own faith and agency, but it pointed out the time when the Church was to look for its fulfillment, and when its fulfillment should depend upon their pleading it in faith. (2) If there be no particular time in which the promises of God are to be fulfilled, I mean those of them that are in the future tense, then we can no more receive their fulfillment in heaven than we can here. For without a new revelation informing us that the time has come, we can never lay hold on them as due,--we cannot believe and receive their fulfillment. If the promise is evidently future, and no time is expressed or implied, when it shall be fulfilled, when we have been in heaven myriads of ages, we shall no more be able to lay hold on the promise as due, nor so far as I can see, be any more certain that the time for its fulfillment is not yet future, than we are now.

21. Another reason why the promises are not fulfilled in us is, we are unwilling on some accounts to have them fulfilled. Such as a fear of disgrace, being called fanatics, perfectionists or something else of the kind, that we dread. Lest we should have to abandon some particular indulgence, lust, or favorite pursuit. Now it often happens, that we would be very willing to have

the blessing of sanctification, if it did not imply the actual giving up of sin, under every form. Many are praying for that blessing who are after all holding on to some form of sin.

22. Selfishness in our motives. Under one form and another, selfishness is often lurking in our applications to the throne of grace for promised blessings. God cannot be deceived in this. And unless our eye be single our whole body cannot be full of light.

23. Our experience of the inefficacy of prayer, such as we have so often offered in selfishness, operates as a discouragement, and we come to God in the peevishness of unbelief. We have so often come to God in our selfishness and pleaded his promises, overlooking the wickedness of our motives, that we are ready to conclude either that we have misunderstood the promises altogether--that the time has not come for their fulfillment, or for some reason our prayers cannot prevail, and therefore we do not expect to receive the blessing. We are straitened by our wants, and cry to God, but it is in the anguish of unbelief, and we are of course denied.

24. Presumptuous misapplication of a promise. e.g.: The promise, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," is so misapplied and misunderstood that we become presumptuous, and depart from him instead of his departing from us. So the promise in James, "If a man lack wisdom let him ask of God and it shall be given him," is sometimes so misunderstood as to lead persons to expect wisdom without research.

25. Persons often tempt God, in asking the fulfillment of a promise without performing its conditions.

I might mention a great many other reasons, but these must suffice. And now I must close this discourse by saying, that I cannot tell you how much I felt shocked, when the question came fully up whether the grace of God was sufficient as a matter of fact for the entire sanctification of Christians in this life, and it was flatly denied. The question in this shape had never come fairly and fully before my mind as a subject of distinct consideration till the last winter of my residence in N. Y. And I can never express my astonishment and grief when I found that men standing high in the Church of God flatly denied it. I have often asked myself, is it possible that these brethren can be

of the opinion that if a man should believe and realize in his own experience the full meaning of the promises, and all that the gospel and the grace of God can do for a man in this world, that he would not be entirely sanctified? I would humbly ask, where is there one among them that has tried the experiment? It is no answer to this to turn around and inquire, have you received the fullness of the promise? Are you sanctified? For if I have not, and if there were not a man on earth that has, that does not at all change the meaning of the promise, nor prove that they are not sufficient to produce entire sanctification, so long as it is true that every one of them must confess that they have never received or hardly begun to receive all that they themselves admit the promises mean.

Table of Contents

Start