

## NOTE.

This book, "The Spirit of the Word," is a compilation of a periodical published by the late A. P. Adams of Beverly, Mass. It begins with the March issue of 1885 through February 1886. There are other works, earlier and later by Mr. Adams which we intend, the Lord willing, to republish.

These books are very rare, and treasured highly by the few who have them in their possession. Since this is true, we feel that many of God's dear people will be grateful for this republication.

Proceeds from sales of this book will be used in further republication of Mr. Adams works.

Please order from: Editor and Publisher of

"The Revelator"

Louis Finley

2653 Pasadena Avenue

Los Angeles 31, California

## PREFACE.

### "TRUTH FOR TRUTH'S SAKE"

Having spent a quarter of a century in the ministerial profession, seeking, ever seeking aggressively, searching in the great field of Theology for TRUTH; digging, mining, prospecting, excavating, and exploring every possible avenue of greater light and deeper truth, (Prov. 2:2-5) and all the while living in, and advocating only the *letter* of the Word, and having very little, if any conception of the true "SPIRIT of the Word."

The late Mrs. George N. Brewer of San Francisco, having read some of our writings on "Reconciliation of all things", reciprocated by sending me a small copy of Mr. A. P. Adams booklet entitled "The True Basis of Redemption." But receiving so much literature, I let it go unnoticed for several years, not realizing that I had within my grasp the unsearchable riches of hidden wisdom within this small insignificant booklet.

Then one day God stepped definitely into my life as he did into Saul's life on the Damascus road, and caused a shaft of glorious light to burst and spangle all around me. I was momentarily blinded with its brilliance. Its glory animated me with a new life.

I had had an accident, losing two fingers on my right hand, during which time I contracted Virus Pneumonia. As I lay on my bed feeling the physical life leaving me, fully resigned to my Father's will, and having no fear of passing, God became vividly real to me and showed me the futility of the self or soulical life: showing me "that if I sought to save my life, (self) I would lose it. But if I would lose my life, (let it go, count it as nought) I would find it in Him (the life of the Spirit). I was to die "and my life to be hid with Christ in God." (Col. 3:1-4). Now He lives in me, and I live his life. (Gal. 2:20).

Shortly following my illness, a very dear and precious sister in the Lord, 'Sister Jessie Grant of Los Angeles, handed me without solicitation, a well-worn copy of Mr. A. P. Adams' book entitled "The Spirit of the Word". Immediately, as I began reading this work, the Holy Spirit came upon me anew. Within my consciousness a new heaven and a new earth took form. A complete transformation is mine mentally, physically and spiritually. I have been made alive. Yes, resurrected and caught up to sit with Christ in celestial places. (Eph. 2:5-7). A new life is ours. A new creation is rising; (2 Cor. 5:17,18) a new world wherein we know that "All things are of God."

"God is great and greatly to be praised." Psalms.

Louis Finley

2653 PASADENA AVENUE

Los ANGELES 31, CALIFORNIA

# The Spirit of the Word.

The Words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.—Jesus.

The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.—Paul.

## GREETING.

We commence this paper, and shall continue it, we trust, if in God's providence it is to continue, in the name of God and for the love of the truth. We desire to reach, through the medium of this periodical, as many as we can of those who *love the truth for the truth's sake*;—those who love and prize the truth, above the creed, above the denomination, above their reputation, above all their worldly prospects,—those who are willing to part with all they have for the priceless pearl. I would rather have the privilege of sending this little monthly visitor to a few hundred such readers, than to send it to thousands of the more numerous class of careless, indifferent, worldly Christians. "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." Jer. xxiii., 28. We are living in a shallow, deceitful age. Expediency is the universal principle in the church as well as state. Sterling integrity, unswerving uprightness, incorruptibility and fearless honesty is alas, the exception and not the rule. The cynical aphorism—, every man has his price" is almost universally applicable. Politicians, from the lowest "heeler" to the "boss," are to be bought for money, or the "spoils" of office. The same is true to a very great extent of legislators, judges, jurymen, and others in positions of trust and power. Even the Christian ministry is contaminated by the same covetous spirit: and preachers are oft-times engaged in an unseemly scramble for the "loaves and fishes," rather than seeking for that bread that perisheth not. The masses are like their leaders: thoughtless. worldly and selfish. I do not expect to reach them. God will speak to them presently, "out of the whirlwind," as he spake to Job, and *then* they shall hear. "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before Him; He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people." (Psa. l. 3, 4.) Meantime, "Bind up the testimony, seal the law among my disciples." Isa. viii. 16. A few are willing to pay any price for the truth; to as many of these as this may reach I send greeting, and trust that our communion through this medium may continue to our mutual benefit and God's glory.

## THE TITLE OF THE PAPER.

By the *Spirit* of the Word I mean its *real* and *intended* meaning, in contradistinction to its apparent and surface meaning, or the "letter." It is a common mistake among Christians to suppose that the Bible is written in very plain and simple language, and that the correct meaning is that which lies upon the surface—the most obvious and apparent sense. If I err not, the truth is just the opposite of this. The Bible often means something very different from what it says; there is a hidden, mystical sense that is like the pearl hid in the depths of the sea, the real jewel. It may sound strange and erroneous to some to hear any one say that the Bible does not mean what it says. But if you will read this paper month after month, I think I can show you that I do not make the statement unwarrantably: and herein, let me add, lies the explanation of that fact that has been, and still is, such a stumbling stone to thousands of honest seekers after truth, viz., the almost innumerable differences of opinion on Bible doctrine. Men equally pious, devoted and learned, are in antipodal antagonism in regard to Scriptural teachings; and the learned seeing such discrepancy among those who are considered leaders, each one pointing in a different direction, are brought into endless perplexity and confusion. The fact is, oftentimes, all these leaders are wrong. They are building upon the letter that kills, and hence the contradictions. Error is manifold. Truth is a unit; there may be any number of *wrong* explanations of scripture or a doctrine; there is only one *right* one. A crooked line may run in any number of different directions. A straight line can run in but one. All the while the "doctors" are disputing about the letter, the truth lies like a fair jewel hid away in the spirit, to be revealed to some humble soul, unlearned and obscure, it may be, and yet possessing the proper spirit to enable him to receive "the deep things of God." "I thank thee, Father, maker of heaven and earth, that THOU hast *hid these* things from the wise and prudent and *revealed* them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in Thy sight."

I claim (without stopping now to give proof, of which there is abundance, as I shall show hereafter) that to all scripture there is a spirit as well as a letter, the former is the real but hidden meaning; the latter is only the outward *form* of the truth, the shell, the husk, the symbol, absolutely useless and worthless, and even harmful, unless the true intent is apprehended. This *Spirit* of the Word we shall endeavor to bring out, as God shall help us, so that the Scripture shall really be *life* unto us, and not death. For the present we will only notice one very plain and familiar illustration of this spiritual meaning of Scripture.

Take the case of Abraham and his two wives, as told in the Old Testament and as explained by Paul in the fourth chapter of Galatians. The Old Testament account is the *letter* that kills. Paul's explanation is the *spirit*, or real meaning that giveth life. But how is it, some one asks, that the letter in this account kills, and the spirit gives life? The Old Testament account appears anything but creditable either to God, or to Abraham, or to Sarah. The command that God gives in Gen. XXI. 12, seems harsh and unjust. Abraham's course seems to have been very reprehensible; and Sarah's conduct unreasonable and cruel in the extreme. (See Gen. XVI. 3-6 and XXI. 9, etc.). Take this account as it reads, in the letter merely, and it would certainly give one a disagreeable impression of God, and would repel them from him, instead of drawing them toward him; and many an infidel has brought up these very points and objections to show the evil tendency of the teaching of the Bible, and the unfeeling and unjust character of the God of the Hebrews. Thus the letter kills. But now in the light of Paul's explanation all these objections fall to the ground; everything is made plain when we understand that "*all these things happened for types,*" (1 Cor. x. 11, margin). Paul brings out the *real* meaning of the Old Testament, the *Spirit* of the Word, and thus we obtain knowledge of God (for in Paul's "allegory" we have an epitome of God's entire plan of salvation). Knowledge of God is "life eternal" (æonial). John XVII. 3. Thus "the spirit giveth life."

The Spirit of the Word, I have said, is the real, the intended meaning; and I would add that it is the *only* meaning that is profitable to the child of God. If you miss the spirit of a passage of Scripture and see only the letter, you have lost the full ear of corn and hold only the husk in your hand. "The flesh profiteth *nothing*, it is the spirit that giveth life," (John VI. 63). The Bible is purposely written in "parables and dark sayings" that the truth may *not* be seen. (Mark IV. 12) except by those who "search for it as men search for hid treasures." The passage in Hab. II. 2 is often quoted, "that he who runs may read"; the idea being that so plain is the Word of God that a passing glance, like one glancing at a sign as he hastens by, is all that is needful to make the truth clear. But the passage is misquoted; the correct reading is "that he that readeth may run." If we read God's Word in the spirit (and if we do not get the *spirit* of the Word we do not read God's *Word* at all), it will certainly cause us to "run with patience the race set before us." But we need not think that a mere cursory glance at God's truth, while we are all absorbed for the most of the time in the world, will be all that is needful to make us "wise unto salvation."

One more thought—I would make a distinction between this view of the spirit of the Word and the method of so called "spiritualizing" of scripture that is so largely practised by theologians of our day. By this latter process the Scriptures are often made perfectly meaningless and abortive. For instance the 35th chapter of Isaiah being thus "spiritualized" is made to apply to the present time, and thus its grand symbols and marvellous declarations are greatly belittled and impaired. In the same way the last chapter of Zechariah is robbed of its grand meaning and beauty. Now I do not believe in any such "spiritualizing" as this, but rather in the kind indicated above. We may safely lay it down as a rule that the spiritual meaning of any passage is never *less* important, and *less* grand than the letter. God's promises are not at a discount, but rather at a premium. His "paper" is worth *more* than the face value, not less. Any explanation of a scripture that belittles it, that seems to fall far short of the language used, may be looked upon not below, but far above the power of human expression.

I shall be able to make this subject clearer, I think, by Scriptural illustrations from time to time in the paper. The foregoing will perhaps sufficiently explain the title for the present.

## **DEFINITION OF BIBLE TERMS.**

### **NATURAL, SPIRITUAL, CARNAL.**

A great deal oftentimes depends in a discussion on the definition of a term. Parties may dispute for a long time and finally discover the only difference between them is, that they have been using the same term in different senses. Bible terms are often used in a very loose and careless way; if we wish to arrive at the truth we must be careful how we use Bible terms. The best way that I know of to get the true meaning of a word in Scripture is to trace it through the Book and notice in what sense the sacred writers used it. Collate all the passages where the word occurs; and then from these passages and the context, the meaning (or meanings, for some words are used in more than one sense) of the word may be very readily and surely gathered. In each number of the paper I shall endeavor to set forth the meaning of one or more important Bible terms in this way; and I invite others to send in any such terms that they wish to have explained, and we will endeavor to do so to the best of our ability. In this way, after a while, we shall get quite a glossary of Scriptural words.

In this number we will first briefly discuss the correlative terms, Natural and Spiritual. A strict definition of these terms is needful in order to understand the important rule laid down in 1 Cor. XV. 46, that God's order is first the natural and afterward the spiritual. A study of the New Testament in the manner indicated above will give us such a definition. But first I will give the meaning of the words in my own language and then notice the scriptural proof.

Natural means pertaining to this fallen state, earthly, fleshly, corrupt. Spiritual, being the opposite of natural, means, pertaining to the restored (or resurrection) state, finished, perfect. Both words refer to human beings; they are never applied to spirit beings, to God, or angels, or demons. Now let us look at the Bible and we shall find these statements confirmed. On the word natural see Jas. III. 15 and Jude 19. In both of these passages the words rendered "sensual" are the same in the original as the word rendered "natural" in 1 Cor. XV. 46. The context clearly shows that natural pertains to the fallen man as "earthly, sensual, devilish." The spiritual being the opposite of the natural and coming after it according to God's order, may now be readily identified; the natural, as we have seen, refers to the fallen, corruptible condition; the spiritual then must refer to the restored, incorruptible state; or in other words the natural refers to the process of creation. the spiritual to the finished result.

It should be understood by all that the great work that God has in hand is the creation of a race of beings in his own image and likeness. This work was begun in Eden, has been finished in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ as the pattern man of God's creation, and will be finished in the *race* of man in the "ages to come. All this will appear plainer after reading in this same number the article on the two accounts of the creation. Now we refer to it simply for the purpose of bringing out the meaning of this word spiritual. If we understand that the perfect or finished man is "*God's workmanship*" (Eph. II. 10), and that the work is a *process*—*made* "perfect through suffering" (Heb. II. 10)—then we shall understand what is meant when it is said that the natural refers to the process and the spiritual to the finished result. The gospel dispensation might very properly be called *the finishing off age of the first "order"* (1 Cor. XV. 23) *of God's creation*. Previous to the gospel age no man was ever finished or perfected; unfallen Adam was not a finished man as we have shown in the article referred to above. Christ was the first, and thus far the only man finished, at the beginning of this gospel age, as the "Head" of this first "order," the "first fruits." or "the church of the first born;" and during this age the perfecting work, the "finishing touches," so to speak, are being accomplished for those who belong to this first order. Hence the spiritual, i.e. the finished, begins to appear. The Old Testament gives us the letter; the New Testament brings out the spirit. (See for example, Rom. II 28, 29). Hence in the New Testament this idea of the spiritual occurs for the first time, and we read about spiritual gifts, spiritual meat and drink, a spiritual body, spiritual blessings, spiritual songs, etc. There is nothing of this kind in the Old Testament in that portion of the Bible, man is presented in the rough as raw material, so to speak; crude and undeveloped, and no intimation is given of the finished, perfect, or spiritual state except in type and shadow. A portion of the race is being finished off during this gospel age hence the spiritual is in order, and the New Testament brings this out.

Now in the light of this explanation see 1 Cor. II 6-16; especially verses 13-15. The last clause of verse 13 should read "comparing (or explaining) spiritual things [neuter plural] to spiritual men" [masculine Plural]. Now the two following verses—"But the natural -man [man in the crude, rough state] receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual [being finished off] discerneth [margin] all things, yet he himself is discerned of no man."

From these considerations we can understand the meaning of the natural and the spiritual. The natural is the corruptible, crude, rough state of man. The spiritual is the finishing work. When that work is complete then are we fully spiritual, or perfect; this will be when we "awake in his likeness."

Now look at the third chapter of first Corinthians for one more thought in this connection, namely, that indicated by the word "carnal." We have been studying the significance and correlation of the spiritual and natural; here it is the spiritual and carnal; what is the import of this latter word?

We have seen that "the natural man" is man in the rough, the mere animal man, who has received no spiritual development whatever. The terms natural and spiritual are mutually exclusive; one cannot be natural and spiritual at the same time. But one may be spiritual and carnal at the same time. Many Christians have some spiritual development, and yet the carnal, the fleshly, still predominates; they are, as Paul says, "babes in Christ;" not mature and advanced, but mere infants. We know that after the - spiritual begins to be developed we are still in the flesh, and more or less fleshly, Says Paul, "The life that I now live in the flesh, (still in the flesh, but living a higher life), I live by the faith of the Son of God." Again we read, "The flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary, the one to the other." If in this conflict between the flesh and the spirit the flesh predominates, we are babes in Christ and carnal. If the spirit is paramount then we may be called spiritual, as in 1 Cor. II. 15 and Gal. VI. 1.

Now read this third chapter of first Corinthians with this explanation in mind, and the carnal Christian will at once be apparent—a perfect type of many a Christian in these days. The sectarian spirit is perhaps the most hateful manifestation of this carnality. "I am of Paul, I am of Apollos." So in these days we hear, "I am a Methodist to the back bone." "I am a Baptist dyed in the wool." "I am a Congregationalist true blue," and thus these infantile

disciples go on in their clannish professions, little thinking that thus they are demonstrating their own carnality and spiritual babyhood. O Lord, help us to “crucify the flesh with its affections and lust” and “press on unto full growth.” Heb. vi. 1, N. V., margin; read also the last four verses of the preceding chapter from the New Version.

Still further on these words that we have been considering, see Rom. vii. 14, and xv. 27. 1 Cor. x. 3 4, and xii. 1, etc.; also xv. 44. 2Cor. i. 12 and 4 Eph vi 12 Heb vii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 11.

### **“ALL THINGS ARE OF GOD.”**

There is no statement in the Bible that is more remarkable and even startling than this. When you think of it seriously, it seems as though Paul was very unguarded and careless in his language. We are apt to think that he ought to have modified and limited it in some way, such as for instance, all *good* things are of God.

But no, Paul makes the sweeping, unqualified statement, “All things are of (literally, *out of*) God.” Furthermore, so important did Paul consider this truth that he repeats it over and over again. The direct statement is made no less than six times in the writings of the apostle. See Rom. xi. 36; 1 Cor. viii. 6, and 2 Cor. v. 18; Eph. i. 11, and Heb. ii. 10. Now was the apostle careless and a little too bold in these utterances, or did he mean just what he said, and are they true, taken full strength? I say, without any hesitation, yes, to the two latter questions. The more we learn of God’s works and ways the more we shall understand that in a sense absolutely “*all things are of God;*” or in other words, as it has been often expressed *God is in everything*. We will notice a few passages that will set forth the Bible teaching on this point. Says Christ, “Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.” (Matt. x. 29, 30). In Luke xii. 6, we read, “Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and *not one of them is forgotten before God.*” Do you realize friend reader, the stupendous character of this statement? How many millions of sparrows think you are there in the world? And of course it is not sparrows alone that God cares for, but all creatures, *not one of them is forgotten, and even the very hairs of your head are numbered*. The great men of the earth manifest their greatness by their close attention to so called great things; the affairs of state, national interests, business ventures involving the risk of millions, vast philanthropic schemes, and such like matters of world-wide importance. These men generally have very little care, and pay very little attention to the common everyday affairs of life. But God, between whom and the greatest of all earth’s great ones there is an infinite disparity, displays *His* greatness by caring for what would seem to be the most trivial interests of his creatures, like the numbering of the hairs of their heads, and taking notice of apparently the most unimportant events, like the falling of a single sparrow. Well may we exclaim with Faber, in view of *such* greatness,

O, God! thy loving greatness ever lies  
Outside us like a boundless sea;  
We cannot lose ourselves where all is home,  
Nor drift away from thee.  
Thus doth thy grandeur make us grand ourselves,  
Thy goodness quells our fear;  
Thy greatness makes us brave as children are  
When those they love are near.

If you would see this thought of God’s universal providence carried out in every detail, read Psalms CIV., CVII. and CXLVII.

See the case of Joseph for an illustration of how God is in affairs of greater moment it would seem. His unnatural brethren determined to kill him; (Gen. xxxvii. 12, etc). Being dissuaded from this they sell him to the Ishmaelites, thus bringing upon him a cruel servitude, and upon their aged father a heartbreaking agony. A blacker or more wicked deed could scarcely be imagined; and yet in the sequel of the story, when Joseph is made ruler of Egypt, and his brethren coming down to buy corn at last discover that he is their long lost brother, whom they had so cruelly wronged, he reassures and comforts them by saying, “Now therefore, be not grieved nor angry with yourselves that ye sold me hither, for God did send me before you to preserve life. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God.” (Gen. xlv. 5, 8). Could we have a more striking and positive illustration of how “all things are of God?” He is in everything, even in the crimes and cruelties of man. Take another illustration not so prominent in the Bible but just as positive. See Judges xiv. 1-4. Samson becomes enamoured of a Philistine woman and must have her for

his wife. In vain his parents try to dissuade him from so improper an alliance as it would seem, Samson is completely bewitched and insists upon having her. Who would suppose that God had anything particular to do with this apparently foolish love affair? and yet it was of him. For the 4th verse reads, "But his father and his mother that he sought an occasion against the Philistines." For another illustration see 2 Chron. x. 15, xi. 4.

Another very striking example of how all things are of God is brought out in the case of the priestly house of Eli. Read 1 Sam. ii. 30-33. Now see how the fulfilment of this prediction was brought about in 1 Sam. xxii. 18-20. A more cold-blooded, barbarous butchery was never perpetrated, and yet it was the carrying out of the purpose of God. In 1 Sam. ii. 31, God says, "I will cut off thy father's house." According to the account in chapter xxii. it was Doeg that did the awful deed, and yet it is plain to see how God was in it. Abiathar escaped the massacre; the denunciation was against the entire house of Eli. Abiathar must be banished from the priesthood. See how it was done in 1 King ii. 26, 27. "So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord; to fulfil the word of the Lord, which he spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh." Is not this a very plain illustration of the great truth we are considering. The awful deeds of wicked men are "of God" in such a sense that he makes them conducive to the carrying out of his own plans and brings good out of them in the end. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise him; the remainder of wrath [that which he cannot turn to his praise] will he restrain." "All are his servants." (Psa. cxix. 91). and stormy wind fulfil his word." (Psa. cxlvii. 8).

The heathen king Cyrus is another illustration of this truth. See Isa. xlv. 1-7. Cyrus was God's "annointed" to do His work. God used him as an instrument to accomplish a certain purpose, though Cyrus knew not that he was thus being used of God; (See verses 4, 5). The case of the Assyrians is still more marked. God was using them just as the carpenter uses his tools. See Isa. x. 1-19; especially verse 15; and in the same connection see Jer. li. 19-20.

Again, see Josh. xi. 15-20. Israel destroyed the Canaanites and made peace with none of them, except the Gibeonites, "For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle that He might destroy them utterly." See also a very remarkable illustration in Psa. cv. 25. God sent his people down into Egypt, having sent Joseph before them (verse 17; this verse confirms Joseph's own statement that God, and not his wicked brethren, sent him), to prepare the way for them. God increased his people and made them stronger 'than their enemies (verse 24) and now mark, "He turned their heart to hate his people, to deal deceitfully with his servants." What! did God incline the hearts of the Egyptians to hate his own people, to deal deceitfully with his own servants? So the record reads. Truly, "All things are of God."

Take still another illustration from the New Testament. The crucifixion of Christ is always looked upon as the most awful crime that ever was committed, and the perpetrators of it are considered as deserving the most severe retribution; and yet they simply did what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done, (Acts iv. 28). And Peter tells us that Christ was "delivered up by the DETERMINATE COUNSEL AND FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD." (ACTS ii. 23). Thus we see how even this stupendous crime was of God, and since we know that he worketh *all* things after the counsel of his will," (Eph. i. 11), we can readily understand from the illustrations cited how true it is that "all things are of God." Thus in God's universal sovereignty fully established by the plain teachings of the word. "He doeth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him what doest thou?" (Dan. iv. 35). See also Isa. xl. whole chapter, an Rev. xvii. 17.

To the child of God this truth is most precious and reassuring. It teaches us how absolutely safe we are while we "abide the shadow of the Almighty." His power extends not simply to the smallest affairs, like the hairs of our head and the birds of the air, but also to greater things, individuals, communities, states, nations, and worlds, and no creature moves but by his appointment or permission. "All things are of God," therefore I can understand how all things work together for good to them that love God;" and how, also, all things shall yet turn for good to man, since God loves him. God uses the forces of the world whether human or otherwise,—just as one would move the pieces on a chessboard. They are so many instruments,—tools, in his hands. "Shall the ax boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? As if a rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself as if it were no wood." (Isa. x. 15).

But now these considerations lead us to another great subject, which we will examine in the next article.

### **FREE MORAL AGENCY.**

Do not the views set forth in the foregoing article clash with the doctrine of man's free moral agency? Do they not make him out to be a sort of a machine without any will of his own? Before answering these questions let me call the attention of the reader to the fact that the foregoing views are most plainly Scriptural. The many illustrations I have given (and I might give more) clearly set forth the absolute sovereignty of God. Let me also call attention to the fact that the phrase, "free moral agency," is not a Scriptural one, any the phrase, "immortal soul" is Scriptural.

Free moral agency is simply a theological expression, man-manufactured for his own convenience, and it may be that it does not express the truth. Let us by all means fit our theology to the Bible; and not try, as many do, to conform the Bible to our theology. Now then to the question. Is man a free moral agent? I answer most emphatically, *no*. Is he a machine then? Again I say no. What then is the truth? An agent is an actor, one who is able to act; a free one who can act as he pleases without any restraint; a free who is free to act as he pleases on all moral questions, i.e. all questions involving the qualities of right and wrong. Now we do not hesitate to say that man is *not* a free moral agent. One passage of scripture would confirm this position if had no other. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee; remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psa. LXXVI. 10). If man is under *restraint* then he is not a free agent; and surely the illustrations we have given in the preceding article clearly show that God does restrain and control, and use man just as he pleases. And yet man is free; the Bible teaches it and I firmly believe it; but *how* free? Free as to his *will*, I answer; but *not* free as to his *acts*. He is a free moral *chooser*, but not a free moral *actor*. Man's *will* is free, he may choose what he pleases. His purposes, determinations, volitions, are entirely under his own control and guidance. But his *actions* are controlled and directed and over-ruled by God. We have seen this to be true in the illustrations we have already given. Let us notice another. The Jews were exceedingly desirous of getting Paul out of the way; they wanted to kill him. Paul was arrested and forty Jews banded together under a great curse that they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed him. (Acts XXIII. 12). I do not know whether these wicked Jews kept their oath or not, but if they did they starved to death for they never killed the apostle. They were murderers in the sight of God just as much as though they had committed the deed; but he interfered so that they were unable to carry their wicked purpose into *action*. But God did not interfere to prevent cruel Nero from taking Paul's life later on. This illustration shows how God sometimes restrains and sometimes permits evil. He restrains it when he cannot overrule it to his glory. He permits it when he can so over-rule it. The very night before these forty Jews had formed their murderous intention, the Lord had stood by the apostle and said, "be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou has testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also in Rome." (Acts XXIII. 11). God's word was thus passed to the apostle, assuring him that he had no immediate cause for alarm, and mapping out his future service. Would God allow forty Jews to thwart his purpose, or cause his word to fail? No, nor forty millions of them. Paul is delivered and God's word comes to pass; as God, himself, says: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. XLVI. 10). But now why did not God interfere to save Paul's life from Nero? Because the apostle's work was done then, and he could glorify God in such a death. Paul wrote his second letter to Timothy from a Roman dungeon, while awaiting his execution, in which he exclaims, "I am now *ready* to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand; I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have *finished* my course,—henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." (2 Tim. IV. 6-8). Paul's mission was accomplished; hence, God allowed Nero to carry out his wicked purpose; and yet he was no more guilty of the murder of the apostle, than were the forty Jews who were *not* permitted to carry out their purpose. Turn to the case of Joseph again. His brethren were determined to kill him, but God "restrained" them. Then they decided to sell him into slavery; this God allowed because he could over-rule it for good. Thus does the wrath of man praise God, and the remainder (what cannot be made to praise him), he restrains. Man may purpose or determine what he pleases, and *as* he purposes, so he is judged. "For that he hated knowledge and did not *choose* the fear of the Lord, therefore shall he eat of the fruit of his own way, and be filled with his own *devices*." (Prov. I. 29, 31). "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," (Prov. XXIII. 7), and so will he be judged. But whether he will carry out his thoughts and plans, will depend upon whether God will let him or not; and whether God will let him will depend upon whether he can over-rule it for the good of his creatures and his own praise. If he can, he permits it; if he cannot, he restrains. But whether he permits or restrains the man is equally accountable for his purposes. Christ makes this plain in his sermon on the mount. He there makes the guilt to consist in the purpose of the will, not in the outward act. "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, has already committed adultery with her in his heart," whether he is allowed to carry out his evil desires or not.

This is the Bible doctrine of man's freedom. He is not a free *agent*; his actions are entirely under the control of a higher power; this does not render the person guiltless, however, when he commits a wrong deed, even though the deed were foreordained by God. The crucifixion, we have seen, was foreordained and predetermined, and yet Peter lays the guilt of that sin upon the Jews. "Ye have taken, and by *wicked* hands have crucified and slain." And Stephen denounces them as "the betrayers and murderers" of "the Just One." But though man is not a free agent, his *will* is free; he has the full power of choice and volition. Now let us notice how clearly this view is confirmed and fully established in the book of Proverbs. "For the ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth all his goings." (v. 21). "A man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps." (XVI. 9). There are many devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand (XIX. 21). Now mark the next passage, "Man's goings are of the Lord how can a man then understand his own way?" "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will." (XXI. 1). And finally we have the whole doctrine in a

single sentence in xvi. 33 “The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord.” This is a scriptural version of the old maxim, “Man proposes but God disposes.” And thus it appears that the Proverbs of Solomon are unmistakably in harmony with the view I have presented of man’s freedom.

I will call attention to only two more passages in this same line. See Psa. xxxvii. 23, 24. I have read this passage many times, and in former years taken it for a text, and in preaching upon it I have laid great stress on the word “good.” “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord.” It is only recently that I noticed, while reading Young’s translation of the Old Testament, that the word “good” is not in the original. This is indicated in our English Bibles by that word being in italics. The passage is general, not particular; “the steps of a man (any man, all men) are ordered of the Lord.” Young renders it thus; “From Jehovah are the steps of a man, they have been prepared and his way he (i.e. God) desireth. When he falleth he is not cast down, for Jehovah is sustaining his hand.” The translators had to “tinker” in this passage because they did not understand the great truth that “all things are of God.” That the meaning of this passage is as indicated above is fully confirmed by other Scripture. We have already noticed two such confirmatory passages from Prov. xvi. 9, and xx. 24. We will refer to one more in Jer. x. 23. “O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” Young renders it; “I have known, O Jehovah, that not of man is his way, not of man the going and establishing of his steps.” Is it not plain,—is it not absolutely sure from these scriptures that man is *not* a free agent (actor)? and yet it is equally plain and sure that man’s will is free, he has the full power of choice. Thus is God’s sovereignty and man’s freedom fully harmonized and scripturally established. and it gives the true Christian a most comforting view of God. He is Supreme ruler, Universal King. All things are under His control, all things are of Him. The wicked purposes of man are not carried out unless God permits, and he does not permit unless he can over-rule it for good. O, how safe and secure the trustful child of God feels when he realizes this truth! “All things are of God,” whatever comes to him, whether for the present joyous or grievous he knows that it is by his Father’s appointment or permission, and hence, must be for his good. Whether it be a blow or a gift, a pain or a joy, tears or smiles, reproaches or blessings, persecutions or benefits, slander or praise, sickness or health, death or life, in every case, and in all it is *the will of God*, and that will is always the expression of a Father’s love, and therefore sweet, and precious and good. These truths give us an idea of God that is at once grand and reassuring. He is “Our Father,” the Almighty, infinite in Wisdom and boundless in Love. O, what a God for fallen man! from whom we may expect nothing but good, and always good, and *only* good and *all* good. “Thou art good, and doest good.” (Psa. cxix. 68). “I will love thee, O, Lord, my strength. The Lord is my Rock and my Fortress, and my Deliverer; my God, my Strength, in whom I will trust; my Buckler and the horn of my Salvation and my High Tower.” (Psa. xviii. 1, 2).

“Father! what hast thou grown to now?  
A joy all joys above,  
Thy love to me may teach me how,  
Thee, in return, to love.  
With gentle swiftness lead me on,  
Dear God!’ to see thy face:  
And meanwhile in my narrow heart  
O make thyself more space!”

## THE TWO ACCOUNTS OF THE CREATION.

It is well known to all Bible Students that in the first two chapters of Genesis we have two distinct, and in some respects apparently contradictory accounts of the Creation. Skeptics have called attention to these apparent contradictions as evidences of the unreliable character of the Bible. The first account is contained in the first chapter and the first three verses of the second chapter. The second account embraces the remainder of the second chapter.

Now there is doubtless some explanation of these discrepancies; an explanation that is reasonable and consistent, as there is to all the apparent defects of Scripture. We may not only be sure of the above, but we may also expect that, where there seems to be a contradiction or discrepancy in the Bible, when we come to understand the solution of the difficulty we shall find some especially grand and glorious truth hid away in the heart of the perplexing “letter,” like a pearl in an oyster, and what at first seemed to be an irreconcilable tangle, is found at last to be only another illustration of the absolute harmony and perfection of God’s wonderful “Word of life.”

We will notice some of the characteristics of these two accounts and then I will present what I believe to be a scriptural solution the seeming difficulties.

It seems a discrepancy, to begin with, that there should be two accounts. Why should not every particular and detail be embraced in one full account without perplexing us with two partial and varying ones? It would seem as though



the one account would be preferable; surely this would be the verdict of human wisdom. But God's ways are not our ways nor his thoughts our thoughts. has given us four Gospels instead of one, thus supplying a fruitful field for cavilers to rake up objections and note contradictions. But there is not one discrepancy between the gospels that is capable of a perfectly consistent solution, and that does not some gem of truth. So here in these two accounts there is a reason, we may be sure, for this dual presentation of this greatest event on record, the creation of the world. If we humbly sit at the feet of Divine Wisdom, as Mary sat at the feet of Jesus, it may be that He will give us the key to unlock this mystery.

Remember, the Bible is written in parables and dark sayings. The Scriptures are a veil as well as a revelation. In the Word incarnate the truth was "hid" as well as revealed. See Col. ii. 3. So it is in the written Word. To some it is "given" to know the mysteries, to others it is not given. Matt. xiii. 11. The fact that there seems to be a discrepancy here so far from being a trouble to the enlightened student of Holy Writ should rather cause him to rejoice since he would gather therefrom that underneath this seeming difficulty there must be an especially precious vein of truth. And so he sets to digging that he may get at the precious ore. As we proceed in our examination it will clearly appear, I think, why there should be two accounts instead of one.

#### NOW TO NOTICE THE VARYING CHARACTERISTICS

1

The first account shows a perfect order, system and of which the second account is entirely destitute. In the first account the time is divided up into regular intervals. and the morning were the first day." "The evening and the morning were the second day," and so on. Here also the work of creation is systematically arranged and graded: it moves on majestic y from the lowest forms of being to man, the image of the Creator. There is nothing of this kind in the second account. There is no order or system here, but rather a sort of an off hand mingling of all the events together in one short narrative.

2

According to the first account the work of creation occupied "six days"; whether the day be days' of twenty-four hours, or days of a thousand ears or vast eolo i al eriods we need not now stop to discuss; it is enough for our present purpose simply to notice that the periods are each called a "day." According to the second account the whole work of creation seems to have occupied only one day. See verse 4. "In the day that the Lord God made the earth, and the heavens, and every plant," etc.

3

The six days of the first account are followed by a seventh day of rest. No rest day is spoken of in the second account.

4

In the first account everything that God makes is pronounced "good"; and at last when His creative work is crowned with man in His own image, all is stamped with the divine seal as "very good." Nothing is pronounced good in the second account.

5

In the first account two beings are spoken of as being engaged in the creation of man. "Let us make man," etc. In the second it is the Lord God alone who creates man.

6

In the first account man is created in image and likeness of God. In the second nothing is said of his being thus created.

7

In the first account man is given dominion over all God's creation. In the second no such authority is bestowed upon him.

8

In the first account the creation of the man and the woman seems to have been simultaneous and is blended together in a very curious way, as indicated by the use of the singular and plural pronouns in verses 26 and 27 "And God said let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them [the man and woman evidently, though nothing had been said about the female] have dominion. So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he *him*; male and female created he *them*." In the second account the creation of the male and the female is very distinct and explicit and it appears that the former came into existence sometime before the latter.

Thus in the first account see the male and the female blended together as though they actually *were* one, although nothing is said of their being one. In the second account we see just the opposite of this; the man and the woman appear as very distinct and separate, but they are *said* to be one.

10. In the first account the man and the woman are commanded to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it.” No such command is given in the second.

11. In the first account man has full permission, without any restriction whatever, to partake of every herb and tree “upon the verse 29. In the second account a restriction is placed upon him “Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”

12. Finally, and perhaps more significant than all the rest, in the first nothing to do with it. God does the whole work from the beginning until he creates man in His own image and likeness, and rests because everything *He has made* is very good. In the second account, by the prohibition the work; and he spoils it *all*, as he always has, by his disobedience. The first account is rounded out, and perfectly completed, bright and glorious, by “everything very good,” and God resting “from all His work” (ii. 2). The second account runs sadly on into the devil’s disastrous work, man’s disobedience, and the apparent ruin of the race. When we see it thus we feel like exclaiming, O that the first account might have been the true and only one! where there is no law, no serpent, no sin, no death. But many who would thus express themselves little think that without this second account, with all its disastrous consequences, man would never have reached the perfect state, and God’s work would never have been completed.

It will be seen that some of the foregoing differences seem absolutely contradictory; others are perplexing; all of them are very suggestive. In the letter it would be very difficult to harmonize these differences, so as to make the Bible appear consistent and reliable. But there is a *spirit* to this portion of the Word as to all the rest. We are sure of this, for Paul plainly indicates it when he tells us in Rom. v. 14 that was a “figure (type, same word as in margin of 1 Cor. x. 11) of him that was to come,” Jesus Christ, the finished Adam. This account of the creation then is an

“allegory,” like that of Abraham and the promised seed. This has a spiritual meaning. What is it? What is the spirit of this portion of the word? I will tell you in my own language and then give the proof afterwards. If I err not, the key that unlocks this mystery is this: —The first account is Prophetical, setting forth the work, in figure, as it ‘was to be in the process, and as it will be in the perfect, finished result. The second account is Historical, setting forth the work as it actually was at that stage of the process, Let us see if the application of this key will not clear up all the discrepancies and explain all the difficulties, and bring out the truth.

In Rom. iv. 17, a very important principle in God’s method is laid down; “God calleth those things which be not as though they were.” God speaks of things that he determines to do as though they were done. He speaks of things in process as though completed. He speaks of things that are not as though they were. I might give many examples of this from the Bible, but one very striking one will make the principle plain.

Read the 17th chapter of Genesis and note the tense of the verb in the 5th verse. “A father of many nations have I made thee.” Humanly speaking God had not at that time made Abraham a father of many nations. He had only one son, Ishmael, the child of the bondwoman; and in the common course of nature there was no possibility of his having any more; (See Rom. iv. 17-21), and yet God says, “The father of many nations have I made thee,” as though it was something he had already done for him. Paul tells us that God was speaking of things that were not, as though they were. God has a right to speak thus. What God purposes to do is as good as done nothing can thwart or disarrange his plans; there is no possibility of failure. Hence he has a right to speak of things that are not as though they were. When God makes a promise he need not say I will do so and so, but I have done it. In Rev. xxi. 5-6, the expressed purpose “Behold I make all things new,” is followed by the promise in the future tense, “I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.” But sandwiched between the two, as if to assure us that there is no doubt about the fulfilment, comes in the grand declaration, “These words are faithful and true—It is done, I am Alpha and Omega the beginning and the end.” Thus we may rest on God’s promises with the same assurance as though we already had the fulfilment.

As God spoke to Abraham, so he spoke by the mouth of his servant Moses in the Scripture we are studying. In this first account of the creation he is speaking of things that are not as though they were. He speaks not as things actually were at that time, but as they will be when completed; but he has a right to speak in the past tense as we have seen, because this account is prophetical, expressing God’s purpose, and hence absolutely certain of accomplishment.

In one respect at least we are sure that this first account speaks of things that are not as though they were namely,

when it says that Adam was created in the image of God. Now we are certain that Adam was not created in God's image at that time,—that no one has been thus created as yet, except Jesus Christ. He is the only human being that has ever been finished; hence he is “the first born of every creature,” and “the beginning of the creation of God.” Rev. III. 4. If Adam was actually created in the likeness of God, then he, and not Christ, was the beginning of God's creation. That Adam was not originally created in the image of God is also made plain in 1 Cor. xv. 45-49. In this passage Adam and Christ are contrasted; it is here shown how they differed. Adam was not like Christ; they were not “made” alike (verse 45). Hence, since Christ is like God, and Adam was not like Christ, Adam was not like God. This is certain, and yet we read in Gen. I. 28 that “God created man in His own image.” How can we understand this except as above? And this is no more strange than what God says to Abraham, “A father of many nations have I made thee,” “when as yet he had no child.” (Acts vii. 5). The rule that God “ calleth those things that be not as though they were” makes all plain; and we shall find that in every particular and detail this rule fully reconciles these two accounts. Now refer back to the characteristics I have noticed as we apply this rule.

1. This is just what we should expect according to the foregoing explanation. If the first account is prophetic it should set forth, as it does, how God works through successive “ages,” represented by the “days” in the account, to accomplish His great work of creation; from chaos to perfection, from a formless void to the image of God, is God's way in grace, as well as in nature. Everything in God's plan moves on methodically, with regular gradation, growth and development. “My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure.” So in this first account. Thus does this account plainly, though mystically, foreshadow the complete creation of God. The second account presents no particular order or arrangement because it would not become apparent at that early stage of the process.

2. The six “days” of the first account, I think, point to the six thousand years to the perfection of the promised “Seed.” They represent thousand-year days. (2 Pet. *iii.* 8). “I must work today and tomorrow,” said Christ, “and the third day I shall be perfected.” Luke XIII. 32. There is no possible sense that we can put upon Christ's words here except we understand that he was speaking of the thousand-year days. He was in the fifth millennium, just at the beginning of it, when he spoke; that was the “today” he referred to; the 6th millennium was the “tomorrow,” and the “third day” was the 7th millennium when “*the Christ*” will be complete and perfected. We are now entering upon the 7th millennium, and the promised “perfection” is close at hand. So in this first account: the six days represent six thousand years, followed by the seventh thousand, which is the day of rest. Only one day is spoken of in the second account because that account sets forth only the initial stage of the work.

3. The six days were followed by a seventh day of *rest*. So the seventh millennium is God's rest. Let it be noticed in the account that on the seventh day *God* rested. There is nothing said about man resting, it was *God's* rest day. Of course this has a spiritual meaning, for certainly God did not need to rest literally, as though he was tired. When is God's rest day? It had not come when Christ was here on earth, for he said, “My father worketh hitherto and I work. But when the promised seed, the real Adam, of which the first Adam was only a “figure,”—when this finished seed is complete, then will come God's rest day. It takes both the male and the female to make the one Adam. Gen. v. 1, 2, “God called *their* name Adam.” Christ and his bride make the one new man” the real Adam; and when he is come the work of regeneration will be given into his hands, just as generation was the work of the first Adam and Eve. And when the work is thus taken in charge by God's “son” even his “first born,” then God “And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, he hold the tabernacle of God is with men; and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be God.” What God sought for with his ancient people, “a Sanctuary,” (Ex. xxv. 8), and could not have because of their perversity (Ex. xxxiii. 7), he has at length found in the new heavens and new earth. His tabernacle is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be *His* people, and God himself shall be *with* them and be their God. Notice how the idea of God's association with men is repeated three times, as though now at length the Father's heart was satisfied. He has got home; he is *with* his children; the completing of the work is handed over to the elder son, and the Father *rests*. “And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it; because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.” (O blessed rest of God, speedily dawn upon us, that the Fatherhood of God, and the brotherhood of man, may be known in all the earth!) There is no rest day spoken of in the second account, because at that stage it was a long way on in the future.

4. In the first account everything is “good,” and at last “very good.” At every stage God's work is good, no less than at its completion. Though the process may lead from chaos, through darkness, suffering and death (for God's way to life is through death. John xii. 24; 1 Cor. xv. 36), yet every stage is good, because man is drawing nearer each “day” to the “very good.” In the second account nothing is pronounced good, because man at that stage was not prepared to see that even evil is made to result in good in God's economy; and yet that even that stage really ‘was good, see II. 22.

5. “Let *us* make man.” “My Father worketh hitherto and I work.” God and Christ, the Father and the Son together accomplish the creative work. But there is “division of Labor.” The Father raiseth the dead; Christ, the Adam, regenerates. The Father begins the work; the Son takes it at a certain stage to complete it; thus both are engaged, and this appears in the first account, which foreshadows the entire process. But in the second account which resents only the first stage of the Father’s work, there is no intimation of any other being co-operating with the Lord God.

6. In the second account nothing is said of God’s image because at that stage man was a long way from that image. In the first account, however, which prefigures the entire process, man in the image of God appears. Thus assuring us “in a mystery” that God’s likeness is the goal to which humanity tends.

7. Nothing is said of dominion in the second account, because man had not yet attained to it. But in the first account after he is made in God’s image, dominion is given to him, thus foreshadowing the fact that the finished man shall have “all things put under him.” (Heb. II. 9). “And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.” (Mic. IV. 8).

8. In the early stages of man’s development, natural distinctions are made prominent and insisted upon. But in Christ Jesus, the finished man, “there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, but *all* are *one*.” So in the first account this blending and unification is mystically prefigured, while in the second account the male and female appear separate. We must leave this mystery for further elucidation at some future time.

9. Now that we do not have the substance we need the “word of faith”; When we possess the substance the word may be dispensed with. Now it is *said*, “they twain shall be one flesh” though the reality of this oneness with Christ is still unrealized. When the reality is *known*, it no longer need be said.

10. The real fruitfulness of man will be “in the Regeneration,” (Matt. xix. 28), when the typical Rebekah shall become “the mother of thousands of millions.” (Gen. xxiv. 60.) Then the promised seed shall be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth and *subdue* it. “For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” In this natural state the less fruitful man is the better, hence no command to be fruitful and multiply is given in the second account; neither is there any command to “subdue” the earth, because man at that stage was not prepared to receive such a command. But the first account contains these commands; for the finished man which the first account foreshadows, shall “subdue all things,” and be exceedingly fruitful. “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for *more* are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations; [make room for the children] Spare not, lengthen thy cords and strengthen thy stakes; for thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.” Isa. LIV. 1-3. God be praised! that this earth shall yet be peopled by a happy, joyous race, dwelling in love one with another, and having in their midst “the Tabernacle of God.”

11. When man is perfect he will need no law, no prohibitions, but all God’s universe will be spread out before him to be used as he will. “He that overcometh shall inherit *all* things.” But in the process of development, is needed; bounds and limits must be set, prohibitions and commands must be laid down for “the law is the child leader unto [i.e. until we get to] Christ.” All this is presented “in a figure” in these accounts.

12. The great truth that we are God’s workmanship, and that all things are of him, has already been noticed in this number. In the second account man is seen apparently spoiling God’s work, just as the second covenant, that of the law with the children of Israel at Sinai, seems to fail because man is a party to it. But in the first account most emphatically, “all things are of God “as it really is always; nothing depends on the man—”Let us make man.” God and Christ do the whole work, and hence nothing fails. So in the first the “covenant (not of mutual agreement, but) of *promise*,” with Abraham. There are no conditions in it; nothing depends on man. God simply tells Abraham what *He* ‘will do without any *if* about it. (See Gen. xvii). Will it be done, do you suppose? God be praised! that the accomplishment of the process and completion of creation depends not on man but on God,— hence there can be no failure,—the race at last shall attain to the likeness of God; and then His words will be no longer mystically prophetic, but actually realized,—”So God created man in His image of God created he him, male and female created he them.”

I must close this long article, although many thoughts still crowd upon my mind for expression. There is no bottom and no shore to this “great deep” (Psa. xxxvi. 6) of God’s truth. The letter of the Word seems oft-times to lose its power and to be exhausted. The spirit is as inexhaustible as God; it is God, for to find the spirit in all things, is to find “God in everything.” What I have said may help some to more truth. These two accounts surely have a deeper richness and significance when we thus see the spirit of the Word. We can thus see why there *are* two accounts, and

all the apparent discrepancies are seen to of the “letter” is cleared away. May the spirit lead us on into “all truth.” Amen.

### “WE ARE GOD’S WORKMANSHIP.”

A great and important truth is contained in this declaration, and one which practically most Christians deny. Perhaps this statement may seem too strong to some; but I think that I can show that it is correct. Theoretically all Christians believe that, in a sense, “we are God’s workmanship.” But in practice most of them deny it, and act just as though they must make themselves, and (in some cases) everybody else. In other words, most Christians live as though the responsibility of their own development and perfection rested entirely upon themselves and in addition to this they oftentimes act as though the responsibility of the world’s salvation also rested upon them. Understanding that I am not speaking of the expressed belief of Christians but of their practice. Now I desire to show in this article, from the Bible, that the declaration—“we are God’s workmanship”—is most absolute and literal and that we do not have anything to do with our own manufacture, so to speak, excepting to “*yield ourselves unto God.*” Rom. vi. 13; also, remainder of the chapter.

In the first place we must understand God’s plan of creation. We must know something of what “our Lord is doing” (John xv. 15). God’s great work according to the scripture is *the creation of a race of beings in his own image and likeness*. When God said, “Let us make *man* in our image,” he meant not the first man only, but the *race* of man. I think it was made clear in the preceding paper (1-1-14)<sup>1</sup> that God was speaking prophetically here. He was speaking of things that were not as though they were. We have seen that Adam was *not* created in the image of God at that time, hence we are sure that the race is referred to when God says, “Let us make man in our image.” The second account gives us the history of the creation at that stage, and in that account nothing is said of man created in the image of God. This work then of creating a race of beings in God’s image began in Eden, and has been steadily carried on ever since and *will* be carried on to its completion, without any check, hindrance, interruption or delay. The idea that most Christians have is that God created a perfect man and woman to begin with, intending that this perfect pair should be the progenitors of a perfect race. But Satan comes in and God’s work at the outset, he contaminates the fountain head, the whole stream is befouled, and God must delay his originally intended work until he repairs damages, so to speak—until he counteracted and undone the Devil’s evil work; in which endeavor he will only partially succeed according to the common view, and thus Satan will succeed in marring God’s original plan eternally. Of course we cannot suppose that when God create man innocent in Eden, he *intended* that any of his descendants should be eternally tormented; and yet some of them *will* eternally tormented according to the so called orthodox view; hence the conclusion necessarily follows that Satan has succeeded in permanently disarranging God’s plan and has compelled him take a course that he would not have taken had it not been for t so called “fall of man.” But how can we accept such an idea this? Thus we make God to be “altogether such an one as our selves” (Psa. L. 21) I for one could never accept such a view What is the alternative then? The orthodox view must be wrong. Satan did *not* disarrange God’s plan, or compel him to change it the least; hence the “fall” was a *part* of the plan, and a necessary step toward its accomplishment. I want each one to see this clearly and positively; for unless we thus understand God’s relation to the race as a whole we cannot understand his relation to as individuals. I want each one to see that the above reasoning absolutely inevitable. Either Satan, by the introduction of evil the world with all its consequences, disarranged God’s plan, partially, at least, thwarted it, or else the fall of man was a part God’s plan, prearranged, provided for, and tending to the advancement of his purposes of grace and love. To my mind the former supposition is impossible; the latter one *must* be true. Do not now to think whether the Scripture is in harmony with this view or not. We will examine that by and by. Just use your own reasoning faculties and common sense and every one must see that, God is supreme, the introduction of evil into the world with all consequences must be a part of the plan of God.

Perhaps I ought to say right here for the benefit of some of my readers, that the idea that God *has* a plan may be to them a new one. According to the view of most Christians, God has no definite, prearranged plan, but is simply endeavoring to do the best he can through human instrumentality to repair the ruin that sin has made, and, though thus far the majority of the race have been overwhelmed in that ruin, yet in the end truth will triumph and sin will be destroyed, or at least confined in an eternal prison house. To my mind such a view of God is very belittling and dishonorable. I cannot entertain it for a moment. The God of the Bible, the God that we can worship, and adore, and *trust* in, is Almighty and Supreme—“He worketh all things after the council of his own will”—“He doeth all these things, and known unto Him are all his works from the beginning of the world.” Acts xv., 17, 18. “He doeth

---

<sup>1</sup>See Explanation of Reference Marks on last page.

according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of earth, and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" Dan. iv. 35. God has a perfect, definite plan, embracing all the details and particulars of his work, and including in its sweep ages and worlds, past and to come. Paul announces this fact directly in Eph. iii. 11. "According to His purpose of the ages;" see the margin of the New Version. Rotherham renders it, the "plan of the ages." There can be no doubt that God has a perfect, exact, prearranged, and absolutely changeless plan of creation.

I will notice also in this connection why I speak of the plan of *creation*, and not the plan of *redemption*, as Christians commonly speak. The view presented above makes this change necessary. When we speak of God's plan of *redemption*, we seem to imply that redemption was an afterthought with God—that it is simply a means of remedying an unforeseen, or at least, an unintentional and undesirable contingency; and that while redemption is being worked out, God's original purpose must be delayed. We have already shown that this view cannot be accepted by anyone who believes in a supreme and all wise God; the so called fall of man and redemption as its consequent, are a part of the original plan of God—they are steps in the carrying out of that plan; in fact God controls and directs "all things" to the furtherance of his own councils, and hence all things are tending toward the completion of the purpose announced in Eden — the creation of the race in the image and likeness of God. Therefore we speak of God's plan of creation, not of redemption. Redemption is only one of the steps in the process whereby man is ultimately to reach the divine image. To speak of the plan of redemption is to take a narrow, unscriptural, ungodlike view of the situation. God's Plan of *Creation* covers the whole ground from the commencement of the work in Eden according to the second account, to the completion of it in Eden restored, in the New Heaven and New Earth.

I am well aware that the foregoing view involves several very startling and we might even say staggering conclusions; such, for instance as that Satan is one of God's servants to help on his plan and that all evil, under God, shall eventuate in good, and that God in some way is responsible for the introduction of evil into world, etc. I cannot now stop to notice these points in detail; I have done so in other writings. I will now simply say that there is nothing in any of these conclusions contrary to the Scripture; indeed, they harmonize and make plain the Word. The great principle forth in the article in 1-1-7 that "all things are of God" makes the whole subject clear, and fully prepares us for all these otherwise startling conclusions. Let us not fear conclusions so long as we feel the solid bed rock of truth under our feet at every step of our reasoning. Many a one has been enamored of the truth for a season, and gone a little way in the ever brightening pathway, but suddenly perceiving how far away from the old ruts they were diverging, and that they must diverge still further if they kept on, they have become frightened and turned back again to the orthodox thoroughfare. Such a timorous, cowardly spirit will not be found among those who climb the highest peaks of inspiration to catch the first glimpse of the coming dawn. "Ye are bought with a price be not ye the servants of men." "Then shall ye know if ye follow on to know." God has his "friends" to whom he tells his "secrets" (John xv. 15; Psa. xxv. 14). But if we would be "the Friend of God," we must be willing, like Abraham, the great pattern friend, to leave home, kindred, and country if need be, and go forth "not knowing whither," alone with Him who is the source of all truth and who will surely bring us into the Canaan of rest, if we only follow on. See 2 Chron. xx. 7; Isa. xli. 8; and Jas. ii. 23, with Gen. xviii. 17; also Amos iii. 7.

We start out then in our investigation concerning how we are God's workmanship, with this truth, that God is creating a race of beings like himself; this work began in Eden and has been steadily progressing ever since; Christ is the only human being thus far that has been finished—he alone has reached the goal, likeness to God; the rest of the race are unfinished; the mass of them being in the crude, rough, "natural" state (1-14), having lived and died in this condition; a few in the past have had some finishing (i.e. spiritual) work done for them; and during this gospel age a class, "they that are Christ's" (1 Cor. xv. 23 and John xvii. 9) are being finished off, so to speak; and during the "ages to come" "all shall be made alive in Christ" or finished, "but every man in his own order" (band or class). All this is entirely the work of the Father and the Son—Let us make man—and man has no more to do with it than Adam had to do with his own creation, or Eve with her's. What man *has* to do, and the purpose of it we will notice presently; but now we are speaking of the carrying out of the original purpose announced in Eden—"Let us make man in our image."

Now if we consider man in this light, as unfinished, half made "Ephraim is a cake not turned" Hos. vii. 8 then we shall be able to understand the true condition of things. We shall see how thoroughly and absolutely he is God's workmanship. "If any man be in Christ he is a *new creation*." "We are God's husbandry (farm, see margin) ye are God's building." 1 Cor. iii. 9. Surely the man cannot recreate himself any more than he could create himself in the first place. The beginning, continuance, and completion of the process of creation is entirely of God. Read Rom.

ix. 9-33 and see how absolute is God's sovereignty. "The purpose of God according to election stands not of works but of Him that calleth." He raised up Pharaoh for the very purpose for which he used him, and "He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." "Shall the *thing* formed say to him that formed it why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of *the same lump*, to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?" Are there not "vessels of wrath *fitted* to destruction," and "vessels of mercy *before prepared* unto glory?" No stronger language than the above could be used to show how absolutely man is God's workmanship,—clay in the hands of the potter. And this view clashes not with the true idea of man's freedom as we have seen in the preceding paper (1-1-10). But everything is harmonized and made clear and plain when we thus see the truth. God is man's proprietor, and will surely make the best of his property. This view is full of hope and comfort. If we are God's workmanship, the work will surely be done, and done well. He speaks with the simplicity and quietness of conscious power,— "Let us make man in our image," as though it were the easiest thing imaginable to make a man in the image of God, and "hath he said- and shall he not do it? hath he spoken and shall he not make good?" God's own veracity is at stake here; his own reputation and credit, so to speak, is involved. For His *own* sake, he will complete and perfect his work; and so He speaks by His prophets. "I even am he that blotteth out thy transgressions FOR MINE OWN SAKE, and will not remember thy sins." Moreover, mark these blessed words—"Remember these; O Jacob and Israel; for thou art my servant; *I have formed thee*; thou art my servant. O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. *I have blotted out* as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins. Return unto me for I have redeemed thee." Take notice that it does not read return unto me and I will redeem thee, and blot out thy sins,—but, return unto me *because I have redeemed thee* and blotted out thy sins. O blessed grace! that reconciles a world unto God, not imputing their trespasses unto them, (2 Cor. v. 18-21), "while they are yet sinners and "before they call," and so is able to preface the invitation come to God by the declaration of his finished work! Surely this a gospel,—glad tidings. No Wonder that the prophet breaks out,— "Sing, O ye heavens, *for the Lord hath done it*; shout, ye lower parts of the earth; break forth into singing ye mountains, O forests, and every tree therein, for the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and glorified Himself [mark it—glorified *Himself*—made His own word good] in Israel. Thus saith the Lord, thy redeemer, and *He that formed thee from the womb, I am the Lord that maketh ALL things*; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself. Isa. XLIV. 21-24. Read in the same line, Ezek. xxvi. 16, Read to the end of the chapter. First God charges Israel with their perversity and corruption and yet he has pity (verse 21) and makes them great promises (verses 25-30) Why? On what ground? Not for *their* sake; not because *they* deserved it; but for *His holy name's sake*." See verses 21-23, 31, 32, 36. See also Ezek. xx. whole chapter; especially verses 9, 14, 22, 41-44. If we can only see this truth, and get it well in mind we shall have no fear of the final result of God's creative plan. God's own honor is at stake. His declared purpose—"Let us make man in our image" cannot fail. For His *own* sake, if not for man's, He will bring the work to a perfect completion, a faultless consummation; and a godlike race shall yet people the earth to the universal praise of God's workmanship, and the honor and glory of the Christ, God's co-laborer.

The above blessed truth explains also why man is so imperfect, and full of defects, and flaws, and failures. He is only half made. He is "a cake not turned." What can you expect of man in this crude, rough state? "He remembereth our frame, he knoweth that we are dust." And now we are prepared to answer an oft-repeated Bible question, which we will take as the title of the next article.

#### "WHAT IS MAN?"

This question is so important that it is five times asked in the Bible. First in the book of Job, vii. 17. "What is man that thou shouldst magnify him, and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him?" Again in Job xv. 14. "What is man that he should be clean, and he that is born of a woman that he should be righteous?" Also in Psa. viii. 4. "What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" Again in Psa. cxliv. 3. "Lord, what is man that thou takest knowledge of him, or the son of man that thou makest account of him?" and finally in Heb. ii. 6, the same as in Psa. viii. 4.

It must be that this question is important or it would not be so many times repeated and with such variations. We will search for an answer. If we should answer the question according to a matter of fact view of the condition of things in the world today, we should say that man, considered as a whole, is a poor, miserable creature. He appears to be a failure, a wretched abortion. He is a beast of burden; an oppressed slave; a toiling, ill-requited, downtrodden bond-servant, degraded, ignorant, godless, corrupt and wicked. I am speaking of the masses; of course we should judge of the race by the majority of its members; and the above is a truthful description of the race of man as a whole; those who do not come under this description are exceptions and not the rule. Take mankind as a whole, civilized, heathen, barbarous and savage, and the above description is not by any means as dark as the reality. If you

want to see a word picture of the race drawn out in all its awful hideousness by an inspired pen, read the first chapter of Paul's letter to the Romans; also Rom. III. 9-19. Truly "man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble," he "drinketh iniquity like water," and is "soon cut down like the grass." Such is man as we see him today, "like the beasts that perish." In regard to this humiliating view of man it is sufficient to reply, as in the preceding article, that man is in the rough, not yet finished, and hence, uncouth, defective and ill-developed.

There is another reply to this question—"what is man?" it is the orthodox answer, the prevailing view among Christians. It is about as follows. Man is a dual being, composed of soul and body (some make him triune, mind, soul and body). The body is simply the house, the perishable tenement of clay, in which the deathless soul, the real man, dwells. He was created perfect in the beginning; an immortal soul in a perfect body. He fell, and now is liable death, physical and eternal, unless he repents and believes Christ; that is his body will die; but his soul will live forever bliss or woe. Of this false and unscriptural view I have only space at present to notice briefly the immortal soul part. I will just glance at the account of man's creation and see if from that we can dray any evidence that God put an immortal soul in man when he made him. The simple account is as follows: "The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul." The phraseology here has

given some the impression that after God had made man's lifeless body he put into it as the vivifying power an immortal soul; but the passage *says* nothing of this kind; even from the imperfect translation that we have here in the common version no immortal soul doctrine can legitimately be drawn. The language implies that man was a *dead* soul before the breath of life was breathed into him, and that when he received that breath he became a *living* soul. The idea of immortality, or the distinct identity of the soul, or that the soul is the real man and the body is only a casket for it,—neither and none of these notions are hinted at in the

distant manner. In fact the account rather favors the view that the body, the part that was made of dust, is the real man; for it reads, "The Lord God formed *man* of the dust of the ground and breathed into *his* nostrils (the man's) the breath of life," &c. It seems that the *man* was formed before the breath of life was breathed into his nostrils; certainly the passage favors this view more than it does the view that the immortal soul is the real man.

from But now let us have the correct reading of the verse. I will quote from Young's translation. "And Jehovah God formeth the man-dust from the ground, and breatheth into his nostrils breath of life, and the man becometh a *living creature*." Now look at verse 19. "And Jehovah God formeth from the ground every beast of the field, and every fowl of the heavens, and bringeth in unto the man, to see what he doth call it; and whatever the man calleth a *living creature* that is his name." Beasts are called the same as man,

living creatures, the phrase is exactly the same in the original, in both cases. From the account there is just as much evidence that beasts have immortal souls, as that man has one; especially so if we compare with these verses, chap. VII. 22, where we learn that "the breath of life" is in the nostrils of beasts as well as in man and if it means an immortal soul in the one case it must in the other. The fact is no such doctrine as immortal soulism is taught in the Bible, either here or elsewhere; it is altogether man-made; it is Babylonish in its origin, and is founded on the falsehood of the father of lies—"Ye shall not surely die." Man is destined to *become* immortal when he is finished but that is the crowning glory of his creation and hence is the last step, the putting on of the cap-stone of perfection, to make him immortal to begin with would be like trying to make a chimney by commencing at the top and building down. If we see the truth set forth in the preceding article we shall understand how absurd as well as unscriptural this immortal soul doctrine is. In "God" r. III. does not lay the cap-stone first, but the foundation. Immortality is the final goal, not the starting point; it is the crown of the "perfect man." (Eph. IV. 13), not the swaddling bands of his infancy. I would say very emphatically that our theology will be wrong if we start out with this great overshadowing error of all Christendom, the immortal soul. As the phrase itself is utterly unscriptural so is the idea, and no less is it contrary to Scripture, than to common sense and reason. When man was first created he was just what the scripture says he was, "a living creature:" and from that mere animal, natural condition, he will be developed into a "perfect man" in the likeness of God, incorruptible and immortal.

Now we return again to the main question. What is man? We have answered this question according to present appearances, and according to the traditions of men, let us now see what the Bible says. In the context of the passages we have noticed there is no answer except in Psalms CXLIV. 3, 4, where we are told that "Man is like to vanity; his days are as a shadow that passeth away;" an answer that applies to the present unfinished condition of man, and in Psa. 8, quoted more fully in Heb. 2. In Psa. 8th, things that are not spoken of as though they were; the as yet unfulfilled *purpose* of God is spoken of as though it were already accomplished. We are sure of this



because Paul makes it clear in Heb. 2, where the Psalmist is quoted and explained; this latter passage we will now notice particularly. Commence at the 5th verse. "For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come whereof we speak; but one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him for a little while (see margin) lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honor, and didst set him over the works of Thy hands. Thou has put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But *now we see not yet all things put under him.*" In this last clause we have the enunciation of the same principle as in Rom. **IV.** 17. The Psalmist quoted speaks exactly as though man had already received dominion, but Paul says, "not yet." Why then speak as though the work was already done? Because God "calloeth those things that be not as though they were;" and herein is infinite comfort. These declarations of universal dominion for man,— "all in subjection under him"— seem almost too good to be true, especially when we compare them to his slavish condition now; and yet so sure are they of ultimate realization that God speaks of them as already accomplished; they must *surely* come to pass; and man instead of being the slave shall be the master of God's creation. But now let us read on a little further. "We see not yet all things put under him, *but we see Jesus.*" Well what of that? What has Jesus got to do with the question, what is man? Jesus was pure, immaculate, unspotted; it is right that he should have dominion; he is worthy of it; but what has that to do with corrupt, fallen, sinful man? Just this, *Jesus is the pattern man of God's finished creation.* He is the sample, the standard, after whom all the redeemed are to be fashioned. Hence we see the significance of this reference to Jesus. We see not yet all things put under *man*, but we see Jesus, the pattern man, and hence we can tell what man will be when he is finished. Suppose a man had the rough material to make a great number of machines; he first finishes off one of the machines and gets it perfectly adjusted in every part, as a pattern to go by in finishing the rest. You go into his factory and see this great mass of material and you ask, "What are you making?" The artisan replies, "All this that you see is only rough material; come this way and I will show you what I am making," and he takes you to the machine he has finished off; "there," he says, "that is what I am making." You would have no difficulty in understanding what he meant. You would see at once that the finished machine was a sample or pattern of what the others would be when the material

all worked up. So the apostle points to Jesus in just the same way. "What is man?" a poor, wretched slave of sin, corrupt and tending to corruption. Yes, that is true, but God *intends* to make him a noble lord of creation, perfect and complete in the image of God. But now we see not yet this great work accomplished except in the case of one individual, Jesus Christ. He has passed through the entire process of creation, and been finished, perfected; hence He is "the beginning of the creation of God." Now if you wish to know what man is—i.e., what is his destiny—look to Jesus, the *finished* man, the *only* finished man, and you will see a perfect pattern of "the perfect man." To me there is blessed comfort in this. I am glad that the apostle points us to Jesus when we ask, "what is man?" Sad indeed would be the answer if we had to make it up from the degraded condition of man to-day. Not much better would it be if we had to accept the answer that modern orthodoxy gives; man is a being made perfect and immortal; but he lost that perfection, and now his destiny is an endless heaven or an endless hell, with the chances thus far in the history of the race about a hundred to one against the former and in favor of the latter. Such a view is sad in the extreme, and it looks as though man's maker had made a terrible mistake somewhere. But how blessed to turn from all this confusion and just "look to Jesus" for an answer to the question. "What is man?" i.e. mankind, the race; the answer is Jesus. He is the great representative man, the "Forerunner," the "Beginning," the "First fruit," and "if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

Thus the ever blessed Book gives us a grand and cheering answer to this greatest problem of life, what is man? It is an answer that at the same time brings comfort and hope to the believer, and reflect honor and glory upon the Creator. Jesus is the pattern. He partook of flesh and blood because the "children" (Heb. **II.** 14), were in this fallen condition. He passed through all the experiences of sorrowing humanity that "having suffered, being tempted, he might be able to succor them that are tempted." "He was made in all points like unto his brethren, that he might be a faithful and merciful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." His perfection is the type of our perfection, for "we shall be like him." His triumph is the pledge of our victory. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." "As by the offence of one judgment came upon all men unto condemnation, so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." The human race is God's masterpiece, the crowning glory of his creation, and, as the sculptor takes a piece of marble and first gives it to an ordinary workman to block out the statue in the rough, and then with his own skillful fingers fashions the stone into a figure that almost seems to breathe and speak, so God, the Great Master Workman, gets man out in the rough first, using many agents to hew and hack the obdurate material; then he finishes him with an infinitely skillful hand, molding and fashioning him until He makes him the facsimile of himself, and pronounces

him “very good.” To use another figure, every human being is a rough jewel. God is the great Lapidary; and, as in the laboratory of nature, the black, unsightly carbon is transformed into a radiant, flashing diamond, so in the laboratory of grace, sinful, fallen man, under God’s manipulation, comes at length to shine in all the glory of the divine image. “This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.”

Man can reduce the diamond to carbon, but he cannot transform the carbon into diamond; God by his natural laws alone can do that. So man can degrade and debase himself, but to life himself he has no power. He must cry out, in utter self-despair, “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?” Then *God* lifts him from the “horrible pit,” and brings him at last to “walk upon high places.” But let me add that God is not obliged to wait until we are willing for him to work in our behalf. Even when we are stubborn and disobedient, God is dealing with us for our good, although we do not know it. Our very sins are made in the end the means of our training and discipline. Every Christian knows this by experience; it is also a clear teaching of the Bible. Read Jer. II. Notice how God charges Jerusalem with their wrong-doing, notice how he “pleads” with them (verse 9), and sets forth the “two evils” they had committed. Then he asks, “Why is Israel spoiled?” and gives the answer in verse 19, “*Thine own wickedness shall correct thee and thy backslidings shall reprove thee,*” etc. How wonderful is God’s way with man! Man by his perversity changes blessings into curses, but God alone in his goodness and might can transform curses into blessings. And so the work of God shall go on in spite of all opposing forces; for by God’s power all opposition will not only be neutralized so that it shall not *retard* the divine purpose, but it shall be transformed into co-operation so as to *advance* his designs; and thus “all things” shall help toward the glorious consummation,—the creation of man in the image of God. And the time shall come at last, when “there shall be no more anything accursed.” Rev. xxii. N. V., margin.

#### FAITH AND WORKS.

Having read the two preceding articles some perhaps will feel inclined to ask, “has not the individual *anything* to do toward his own salvation? Is he altogether like clay in the potter’s hands? Does not the Bible tell us to “work out our own salvation?” to “make our calling and election sure?” that “faith without works is dead?” etc. Is there nothing for man to *do*?” I answer, yes. But what is the nature and the purpose of this doing? Christians *do* the wrong thing and with the wrong motive, hence their doing is a snare and a stumbling stone, causing them to “fall from grace” (Gal. v., 4), rather than to “grow in grace.” (2 Pet. III. 18) . Let us see about this doing.

In the first place I would say most emphatically that we cannot do anything to make ourselves like God. Whatever we do for such a purpose is labor lost; and worse than lost; for as long as we are trying in the slightest degree to *work* for our salvation we thereby demonstrate that we have “fallen from grace,” and are living under the shadow of Sinai. All our doing that amounts to anything is the spontaneous outgrowth of the spirit of Christ within us, so far as it is developed; and such doing does not make us *more* like Christ, but simply shows us how near like him we have already become, Thus we work out the salvation that God works *in*. We can do no more than this. We cannot work out any salvation that we have not already *in* us. We do not work *for* salvation, but simply work out the salvation we have already. “It is God that worketh *in* us, both to will and to do of *his* good pleasure.” Christians are continually trying to do God’s work. They try to make themselves good, or at least to improve themselves, or, finally, at least, to *help* improve themselves; they work *in*, trying to get *more* salvation, instead of working *out* the salvation they have already. Put the bight of a rope under your feet and then take the two ends in your hands and try to lift; how high can you raise yourself? Just so high and no higher can you lift yourself spiritually by anything that you can do. Settle this question now once for all, and “cease from your Own works.”

“Cast thy deadly doing down,  
All down at Jesus’ feet.”

Our doing is a manifestation of our state of grace,—our degree of spiritual growth; it is an effect, not a cause, the *outgrowth*, not the source, of our faith,—the fruit of the tree, not the tree itself. doing is a gauge to measure the depths of the spirit within us. *filled with the spirit*” is the command; but we come far short such fulness, and are more likely to be very shallow in our spiritual state; our doing marks the depth. Again, our doing is not a *stepping* stone to heaven, but a mile-stone in the way of life, to show us: how far we are along. Now most Christians view this matter in way just opposite to the truth. They must *do* in order to be right within; being faithful is *doing* a great deal; their doing they is the *means* of spiritual growth, the way to increase their faith; their estimation it is the tree that is to bring forth all the fruits the spirit, and a ladder by which to climb to heaven. Christians not *express* their view thus directly, but practically the above their faith. This is a subtle snare of the devil, and oft-times those who think they are trusting in God, are in really trusting in Remember that a very little of this legal doing will vitiate

neutralize a great deal of faith. You cannot even *help* in the smallest degree to save yourself or to make yourself better any more than the clay can help the potter. If anything beautiful and good ever made of you, God must do it, and He alone. "Let these sayings sink down into your hearts."

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the Christian, as I have said, something to do. What we need to know is, what it is, and the purpose of it. But as works are the outgrowth of faith—the fruit, not the tree—logically and practically faith comes first, hence before saying any more on works, we will ask, 7

#### WHAT IS FAITH?

First, I would reply negatively in the language of Scripture, "The law is not of faith: but the man that doeth them shall live in them." If you want to get salvation by doing, even by the least of doing, go back to Sinai, you have no need of Calvary. The word faith does not occur in the Old Testament except twice, while occurs hundreds of times in the New. Read on this point very carefully, verse by verse, the whole of Gal. m. We shall refer to further anon. In the realm of law faith has no place; and yet law must be the "child leader," and it must come *before* the gospel; we shall see why presently.

In seeking an answer to the question, what is faith, we need blunder about among the wordy disquisitions of men, or the unreasonable creeds of the churches. We have a plain direct Bible answer. "Faith is the substance (i.e., foundation or ground) of things hoped for, the evidence (proof) of things not seen." Heb. XI. 1. Let us study this definition. Faith is the foundation of things hoped for." "We are saved by hope," says the apostle in another place; but it is not any and all hope but a hope established on scriptural faith. Faith is the foundation of hope, but what is the foundation of faith? The *truth*, I answer, for "faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." Now we have "The Word of God" as the foundation of faith; and faith as the foundation of hope. It will not do to leave out either of these foundations. A hope that is not founded on a scriptural faith is shadowy and Vain; a faith that is not founded on the truth, God's word (John XVIII. 17), is a dead and worthless faith. These, truth and faith, are the massive blocks that build up a solid pedestal for that "hope which is an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast and which entereth into that within the veil." The first important point then regarding faith is that it is founded upon the truth, or knowledge of God, for all truth is knowledge of God. Our faith in God will be in proportion to our knowledge of Him. Thus it is always; we cannot have much faith in a stranger or in one with whom we are slightly acquainted. In proportion as we know a worthy person, as we become better and better acquainted with him, so our faith in him increases. So it is in our relationship with God; it is but reasonable that the better we know God the more we should trust him, the less we know him the weaker will be our faith. Thus we see how true it is that the foundation of faith is knowledge of God. Every advanced Christian knows how true this is in his own experience. When he was a "babe in Christ" his faith was weak and wavering; but as he "grew in grace" and "increased in the knowledge of God," his faith continually strengthened. This is an important point, and one that many Christians miss. They realize that faith is important, but they do not understand that it is founded on knowledge. Hence they try to work up a great faith with very little knowledge of God. People but slightly acquainted With the Lord strain after an enormous faith; thus building with Wood, hay and stubble, instead of gold, silver and precious stones. (1 Cor. III. 12). There is a great deal of foolish talk among Christians, about believing. Seekers after religion are told to "believe, only believe." Seekers after sanctification are given the same advice. Believe, believe, all you have to do is to believe—believe

you are saved and you *are* saved—believe you are holy and you *are* holy—and so on to the end of the chapter. Such teachers of faith are "blind leaders of the blind"; and such a faith is a castle in the air; a mere intense screwing up of the will to say that you believe something of which you know but little or nothing, and which your own common sense tells you is not so. Learn this truth,— "Faith comes by *hearing*, and hearing by the *Word of God*. " Hear the Word! Study the Word! "Search the Scriptures," and so get acquainted with God, become one of His "friends," to know what he is doing, and you will not have to struggle to get your faith up to a certain pitch, as one might strain himself to blow up a big bladder and have nothing but a bag of wind after all, but your faith will grow spontaneously with your knowledge, yea, it will "grow exceedingly" (2 Thess. I. 3) like the tiny mustard seed from a mere speck to a "great tree," "a finished," (Heb. XII. 2), perfected faith at the coming of the Lord.

Now I think we can understand why the law was necessary, and why it must come before the gospel. The purpose of the law is given in Rom. III. 20, 21. "By the law is the knowledge of sin " and it is also a "witness" of "the righteousness of God." In other words the law gives us knowledge of self, and knowledge of God. I do not intend now to notice the former thought; but simply notice how the law gives us knowledge of God. The whole system of

the law is one of God's revelations of himself to man. All the ceremonies and forms, all the paraphernalia of the temple, the priesthood, the sacrifices, etc., etc., all these are types, shadows, patterns, figures of the "things pertaining to God," thus revealing the Creator to the creature. Hence the law must come before the gospel which inculcates the way of faith, because the law gives us knowledge of God, the *foundation* of faith. The order of development in this respect is as follows. First comes the law, giving us knowledge of God in type and shadow. Then comes Christ, the most perfect revelation of God and hence giving us the most perfect knowledge of God. Then, established upon this knowledge, comes faith begetting blessed hope that lifts the veil of the future and gives us a foretaste of heaven. Then in the next age comes sight, a clear view of all that was dimly foreshadowed in the law, face to face with our Savior, hope merged in glad fruition, and the actual realization of all that we now claim by faith.

Now all this is set forth in Gal. III. In the first place the apostle makes it plain here that the gospel is the realm of faith and not law. "Received ye the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the spirit are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" The law is of the flesh, faith is of the spirit. These Galatian Christians were trying to do what the church has not ceased to try to do to this day, namely to unite the law and the gospel in the same dispensation; this is an impossible union. When the law obtained there was no faith; see verses 12, 23-25. When faith comes we are no longer under the law; the two are mutually exclusive you must choose between them, for you cannot live under them both at the same time; which shall it be, Sinai or Calvary? law or gospel? works or faith? Moses or Christ? Do not deceive yourself by supposing that you can mix law and faith together,—that while you are an "heir of the righteousness which is by faith," you may also be "under the law." "Are ye so foolish? the having begun in the spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" Of all professing Christians, the most to be pitied are those who profess to believe on Christ, and to have entered the covenant of grace, and yet at the same time are trying to stagger along under the yoke of the law which neither the apostles nor their fathers were able to bear (Acts xv. 10). They might as well try to walk on both sides of a stone wall at the same time; they might as well try to walk in opposite directions simultaneously. The apostle goes on to illustrate faith, as he does in Rom. IV., by Abraham, "the father of the faithful." "Abraham believed God,"—that is all Abraham did—"and it was accounted to him (set down to his account as) righteousness." There's the whole scheme of justification by faith in a nutshell. Now do not try to tack anything on to it; let it be plain and simple,—*faith* accounted for *righteousness*. Now right here I would notice how Abraham's faith illustrates the truth that knowledge is the foundation of faith. If Abraham had not had knowledge of God he never *could* have believed him, because God told Abraham something that humanly speaking was not true. "A father of many nations *have* I made thee; and I *have* made thee exceeding fruitful, and I *have* established my covenant between Me and thee, and I *have* given to thee and to thy seed after thee in the land of thy sojournings, and I *have* become their God," and so on. According to the common version verse 8 is contradicted by Acts VII. 5. In verse 8 God promises to give the land to Abraham, but according to Acts VII. 5, God did not keep his promise, for Stephen says that God "gave him none inheritance in it, no, not so much as to set his foot on." There is a discrepancy here in the