

No.

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"IF YE THEN BE RISEN WITH CHRIST, SEEK THOSE THINGS WHICH ARE ABOVE, WHERE CHRIST SITTETH ON THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD." COL. 3. 1.

PREDESTINATION AND ELECTION.

An Address (revised) at

St. Mary Axe, E. C.

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by

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Correspondence welcome:

Scriptural literature for Believers

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 PREDESTINATION AND ELECTION.

OUTLINE:-

1. Introduction.
 - (a) Controversial subjects to be prayerfully handled.
 - (b) Truth is not variable.
2. The Language of Scripture, (See Concordance).
3. The Plan of Salvation.
4. The Effects of God's Unmerited Love.

As frequently, beloved friends, the questions which are asked, and the subjects which are requested, have what we may call something of apparent "controversy" in them. You know what I mean. Our gathering here is not simply to ponder the same thing which we have heard again and again, though precious are all the simple things of Truth. But we want more than milk; do not we want strong meat? Now Scripture contains much strong meat, but it is concerning the deeper things of God's Word that Satan SEEKS to make bare controversy, yet a dear child of God feels, "I want to know what my Father's will is, in such and such a matter", therefore he brings up the subject at a meeting like this. Hence at the outset I want to make perfectly clear that "controversial" subjects will never be excluded from this gathering. There are gatherings in which they are not so fitting, but here they are appropriate. But though we shall have controversial subjects, I do hope we shall never have controversial spirits. The important thing is not, What is the subject? but, What is the Object? If we have the right object, if the glory of God drives personal pride into such a position that it cannot assert itself, then there will be no opportunity for quarrelsomeness. Beloved friends, though we have controversial subjects, we will not have mere controversy, for controversy means turning against

and by the grace of God we want to be, like the cherubim in the holiest of all, turned toward one another, because our faces are toward the mercy seat. If we look toward Christ, we SHALL look toward one another. The cherubim never looked away from one another, and that is a deeply important thought for believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. We are to seek to be one because we are one. For a unity to seek to produce disunity is not only unspiritual, but illogical. Let us seek to be what we are. The Holy Spirit said to the Corinthian saints, That ye may be a new lump even as ye ARE unleavened. "Be what you are" is an excellent encouragement to those who are the Lord's people. So pressing forward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling, and longing to BE what we are, to be in that oneness which we have, if born from above, through and IN our precious Lord and Saviour Who died for us, - looking forward for the time when all the redeemed shall be brought together with that wondrous blending and binding which can never be unbound or separated! Looking forward for that time, having a hope set upon Christ, we seek to purify ourselves, even as He is pure, and this means a purifying ourselves from all the "isms", and thoughts, and crutches which interfere with the fellowship of the redeemed.

Beloved friends, controversial subjects **MUST BE PRAYERFULLY HANDLED**, and in that statement I think we may have a double protest. It is possible to handle them in anything but a prayerful way, it is also possible to shelve them and refuse to have them. By the grace of God we will have them in our hands, but, first of all, let us have a right heart attitude towards the Lord. What says the Scripture? What is God's Holy Spirit's instruction for us? This must be the condition of mind. We do not come to persuade God but to be persuaded by Him. We do not come infallibly, but by grace we come humbly. We are not to teach the Scripture, but the Scripture is to teach us. We are not the critics, but we wish the Truth to criticize. It is deeply important

that every believer should be a learner. I saw an advertisement the other day, "Learners wanted", and I thought how appropriate it was spiritually. Truly we need learners, those who are in a condition to learn, learners because the Lord is the Teacher. Who teacheth like Him? Oh that our minds may be attentive that we might hear what God the Lord will speak to us this evening, and that then we may not turn again to our natural folly! Yes, for WE ALL have something of foolishness, - of only One could it be said contrarily, CHRIST is the Wisdom of God. But the fear of the Lord is the BEGINNING of Wisdom, and if we have not yet reached the end, thanks be unto God if we have come to the beginning. That we may grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by our subject this evening, is our heart's desire.

Let us remember, next, that Truth is not variable. Do not misunderstand me. There ARE different aspects of Truth. Truth can be presented in different ways by the Holy Spirit at different times.. God dealt with Adam and those who lived before the flood in a different manner from that in which He dealt with those who lived between Noah and Moses. When the law was given, a yet further manner of divine dealing was made manifest. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came into being through Jesus Christ. A fresh dispensation, not simply a law given, but grace and truth came into being in a Person, Who illustrated them both in their fulness. Absolute grace and absolute truth in Christ! Here we find - not a tabernacle to contain tables of stone, BUT the very Lord Himself, Who became flesh and tabernacled among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only Begotten from the Father FULL of grace and truth, our beloved Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh. Truth may have dispensational aspects, but Truth is not variable. If Christ is revealed as God, in the Later Scriptures; there can be nothing against this in the Earlier Scriptures. If we have brought before us that God had an election of grace in the days of the apostles, we must not object to that term

election of grace in these days, when there is so much quarrelling with the word. Truth is unchangeable like its Author, - "I am the Lord, I change not, (Here is the resting place of our faith), therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed".

We pass next to consider the Language of Scripture. I do not mean in general, but upon this deeply important subject. You will commonly hear the word "predestination" uttered in the present day with a sneer. We are told of those who believe in predestination, and so forth. But, beloved friends, it is deeply important that we should be careful what words we refuse. Does Scripture speak of predestination? If so, our hearts should believe it, before we can understand it. It is not, "I believe the Scripture because I see what it means"; but (in this connection as in all else), "If thou wilt believe, thou shalt see." "If anyone will to do His will, he shall know of the doctrine", and I believe that we can learn more by obedience and suffering than by human systems. Turn to your concordance and see whether God employs the word "predestinate", and the words "elect" and "election". See if Scripture speaks of believers being chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. I recollect years ago when one desired to go forth to preach, that he came to certain classes which the Lord graciously enabled, and seemed enthusiastic in this direction; and a caution was brought before him that one should know what he was about to preach before he began to preach it. The question was put, Do you believe, for example, that God chose His people in Christ before the foundation of the world? Oh, he said, that is a question. Beloved friends, I hope there are among us those to whom that is a FACT; because God's Holy Spirit says so. "According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love; having predestinated us unto the sonship, through Jesus Christ unto Himself". Read through Eph. 1, and you will find there a CONTINUAL stress upon the wondrous source of all blessing to all redeemed, even God's own uninfluenced and unfathomed choice. The language of Scripture seems

peculiarly definite in this connection. Mark 13 speaks of the elect whom He elected, rendered in our version, "the elect's sake whom He hath chosen". Then we read in 1 Thess. 1 "Knowing, brethren beloved, your election OF GOD". In other words, the term election is associated with God, not with man. HE is the Chocser, His people are the chosen, grace is the source. Take the very definite statements of Rom. 9, where we have brought before us, in unequivocal language, that Salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Oh how precious is that Divine statement, "That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of WORKS but of Him That calleth". And this leads, beloved friends, to a further thought. The Holy Spirit knew that any deviation from this was the thin edge of the wedge of salvation by WORKS. Hence the statement "Not of works, but of Him That calleth". Do not misunderstand me. I rejoice to believe that there are those who have been quickened in accord with electing grace, yet who KNOW very little ABOUT electing grace, and sometimes although they have spoken against electing grace, and spoken as to the possibility of believers being lost, nevertheless are themselves kept from being lost, when they have spoken against it, by the electing grace which they deny. One rejoices that believers are not saved by their creeds, that salvation is of the Lord; and one of the most remarkable manifestations of electing grace is the existence of so many who seem to know the Lord who have spoken against it, and yet the Lord patiently bears with them. If it were not for electing grace how could this continue? His marvellous loving-kindness secures even those who have ignorantly spoken against portions of His Own Truth. Ah, do we not all need to go softly all our days, for are there not the times of our ignorance when we have wandered from the strictly accurate Scriptural expressions which have now become precious to our souls. The Lord save us from speaking unless we know the Truth. There is a time to be silent as well as a time to speak. Let everyone be swift to hear, slow to speak, is the precious command of the

Holy Spirit through James. But, beloved friends, if any denial of election is the exaltation of works, how serious it is. Yet that is the way in which we must read Rom. 9. 11 "That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of WORKS, but of Him That calleth". The apostle says elsewhere, that if faith has anything of a natural human work in it, if salvation is distinct from the gift of God, then grace is no more grace. We must not be blind as to these issues because of the failures of many who bear the precious Name of our beloved Lord. We must rejoice in the Divine unveiling that salvation belongs to Him. All Scripture confirms this. May I awhile leave out the words "election" and "predestination"? The testimony is still definite. In speaking of this subject one often feels that OTHER words than those which are usually introduced are oftentimes the strongest evidence. You take such an expression as in Eph. 2, "Dead in trespasses and sins". Now, beloved friends, do we accept it, - that the sinner is dead in trespasses and sins? If we do, Who has made us to differ? Who has made us to live? Was there anything in the dead soul that produced the first spark of life? Nay. Then if there is such a thing as regeneration, if there is a Divine quickening, it must be that the purpose of God according to election might stand. The language of Scripture, and the plan of salvation imply this. They imply that salvation is not a human development, not a human improvement. He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ **HATH BEEN** begotten of God. We are born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man, but out from God. Here we have that which sets on one side the creature's glory entirely. The flesh profiteth nothing, it is the Spirit That quickeneth. They that are in the flesh are not able to have pleased God. GOD hath begotten us to a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Every Scripture which emphasizes the plan of salvation shows that there must be God's electing grace. Moreover, this is entirely in harmony with God's "plan" **THROUGHOUT**, including history. Providential arrangements illustrate. Look throughout the world, notice privileged England and

down-trodden central Africa. Is there an equality? Have we not had advantages as a nation, advantages which cannot be gainsaid? Did they come by chance? or was it that God was pleased so to arrange? Take, of all nations, the nation of Israel. The Lord did not set His love upon them because of anything

inherent in them, but because the Lord loved them. They were a stiffnecked people, but the Lord chose, and that was sufficient. Beautiful are the brief statements referring to God's dealing with Abraham: I took your father Abraham, I called him alone. GOD chose, it was HIS OWN purpose in fulfilment of His promise that He would tabernacle in the tents of Shem, and the history of Israel, preserved as the ordinances of the sun and the moon with a view to a blessing when the sunlight shall be sevenfold, preserved with a view to that millennial day, when the Lord shall be exalted in the earth, - the history of Israel bears its unanswerable testimony that God chooses. "I loved Jacob" is the witness of Malachi. "I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed". The WHOLE principle of Divine working shows that salvation, whether individual or for the nation which will yet have Christ as its glory, is from the Lord in its Source, even as unto the Lord in its result.

I feel, beloved friends, it is impossible to do justice to this subject. I want that you should bring up your difficulties and points with loving frankness afterwards, that they may be considered in the light of Scripture. I hope we desire to be neither Calvinists nor Arminians, but to illustrate the grace that hates all "isms". We call no man our teacher in this sense, but desire to illustrate that we are the children of God by faith of Jesus Christ, following on to know the Lord. I am persuaded that the frank bringing up of differences or difficulties will help toward a prayerful solution of them, but just now I would simply say this; it seems to me that the majority of objections to God's sovereign grace, to God's electing love, are actually objections to

something else, namely, objections to the fact that man is ruined. If you probe beneath the surface you will find that very few object to Election. Why should they? Election harms no one. How can the picking of a man OUT of doom harm anyone else? The real objection, at the present day, is not to election, though that word is made a catchword of sad controversy, - the real objection is to that fact which is revealed in Psalm 51, that we are shapen in iniquity, that we are born sinners by nature, dead in sins, until, as we read concerning Paul in Gal. 1 "It pleased God, Who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me". IT PLEASED GOD. Here is the Divine description of the whole plan of salvation. Is salvation in Christ? It was WELL-PLEASING that the fulness of the Godhead should be in Him. Is the Gospel to be proclaimed? It PLEASED God by the foolishness of the preaching (of the proclamation) to save them that believe. Ah, beloved friends, we deserved nothing but doom. Acknowledge that, and election is the only hope. There is nothing else but infidelity or universalism. Acknowledge that we were poor lost sinners, dead in trespasses and sins, only evil continually; acknowledge that there is in man no natural spark to be fanned into a flame, but that believers are born again of INCORRUPTIBLE SEED which the Lord places; acknowledge that if anyone is in Christ there is a new creation, for we are His workmanship having been created in Christ Jesus: - and election must at once be recognised. But, oh, beloved friends, to me it seems very painful to find so many of God's dear people deny this. They deny it - professedly to defend the character of God. May I remind you that in this professed defence of the character of God there is human pride and a "being wise" BEYOND what is written, eye, and against what is written. Nor is the character of God defended by these human methods. It is only a shallow mind which can REST in such a defence of the character of God, for if God's election be daringly put on one side as wrong, God's foreknowledge, in the weakest sense of that word "foreknowledge", - God's foreknowledge that men would go to doom would be

as much against His character as the absence of election. Human theories based on such language as "If I were so and so", are out of place. He giveth no account of His matters, Behold these are parts of His ways, how little a portion of Him is heard. Furthermore, WE see through a glass darkly, and again let us recollect the enormity of SIN which makes it righteous for God to punish sin. No man is punished BY election, he is punished for his SINS. But many are saved by election because their sins were laid upon the Lord of Glory. Herein is love, not that we loved God. And let me also say that I cannot use the word "foreknowledge" in its weakest sense. People as soon as they see the word "foreknowledge" often assume that it means foreknowledge that they would believe. Scripture never says so. It is dangerous to add, even to the meaning of a word. One of old well said that election was not because of foreseen faith, but because of foreseen unbelief. It is indeed precious to recollect, in this connection, the Divine words, not the election of God's faithful ones, but the faith of God's elect. Let us keep to the Scripture order, let us keep to the Scripture words. Christ will give His people crowns as SERVANTS, but SALVATION is solely of the Lord.

The effect of God's unmerited love should be seen in our daily life. Chosen that we should be holy and without blame, what manner of persons ought we to be? Who hath made thee to differ, and what is it that thou didst not receive? And if grace made thee to differ, if thou canst say with Paul, BY THE GRACE OF GOD I am what I am, why dost thou boast as if thou didst not receive it? Nay, go softly all thy days, that there may be the manifestation of that rich mercy. Do we remember the expression of Eph. 2? His grace, nay, more, - the riches of His grace; nay, the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us. Here is the climax of loving kindness; that we, remembering salvation is not by works, might remember that there are the good works in which we should walk about. Elect, says the apostle, with an idea of something

coming after. God has chosen you unto salvation THROUGH sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth, elect unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. This is the Divine argument, Whom He foreknew He did predestinate, to be CONFORMED to the image of His Son. Election is always linked with holiness, not as a cause but as an effect. Every believer on his knees says that God chose him. You cannot pray ascribing some credit to self. Sovereign grace will come out in prayer though it may be left off the platform. When the believer is bowing down before his God, He acknowledges that salvation is of the Lord in its entirety, there is no room for argument then, there is no room for boasting. Where is the child of God who knows something of himself, and would dare to say:- Ah, yes, I went to school with such and such a one, and I improved my opportunities of seeking salvation, and I was better than he was, and so I am a Christian, and he is not! Every believer who knows anything of the flesh which is in him, and of the Spirit That quickened, says, BY THE GRACE OF GOD I AM WHAT I AM. I cannot explain it, I cannot tell all that it means. It is not a matter of mere argument to me, but it is my rejoicing that the words of Christ are ever proving true, "All that the Father hath given Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out". On this background we can go forth and preach a full and free Gospel. Sometimes it is said that election hinders the proclamation of the Gospel. Some of us have not found this in our experience. If we had to preach that man must do some work of his own, that man can contribute the last farthing, or rather the first farthing, for that is what it would need to be with regard to the work of salvation, then we should feel ourselves helpless, in view of dead sinners. But when we realise it is the Spirit That quickeneth, we can go forth with the Gospel of the grace of God and tell the precious news that Christ died for sinners, praying with our preaching that God may cause some, by nature turned away, to be turned unto Him, that they too may receive that which we have received as a GIFT of God, for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ was, and is, EXCEEDING abundant,

WITH faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. Any who deny this precious teaching may introduce human methods to gain men, but if we recognise we are the Lord's servants it is our privilege to keep HIS plans. Beloved friends, I venture to say that a logical mind, denying election ought to go mad. Do you follow what I mean? If we think that we, by our work, by our effort, could bring souls out, who, but for our energy would be in hell, and that we could alter the number of those who will fill up the seats at the marriage supper of the Lamb, - if we think that we could do this on our own account, and with our own power, by human means and efforts, surely we ought to go mad! I feel convinced that our gracious Father would NOT put such a mind-breaking responsibility upon us. To suggest it, is, in my heart's feeling, an affront to His character! Nay, He has put the arrangement in HIS hands. It is simply ours to be the instruments and channels of blessing that through us He may lay hold of poor lost sinners, and thereby may graciously permit us to rejoice not as the arrangers of the work, but as part of the means, that He alone may be exalted now and in that Day

Q. Regarding the statement which you made about being dead in trespasses and sins and God quickened us. have not we something to do before God will quicken us? What part are we doing before we are quickened?

A. If we take the simple words of Eph. 2, to which I alluded, "And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins", and if we read on we shall find as verse 3 puts it, "We were by nature the children of wrath even as others", not a little better than others, but even AS others. Then comes the fourth verse with its dramatic contrast "BUT GOD". Now my own heart feeling is that this striking contrast gives the answer, "BUT GOD who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us", not for anything in ourselves, you notice, - "For His great love wherewith He loved us even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us".

There is no room for any human working. Indeed the apostle says it is not of works, lest any man should boast. It is not of him that willeth, for the Lord Jesus declared concerning man's ruined will, "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life." If we were left to ourselves, everyone would turn to his own way, as Isa. 53. 6 puts it, "All we like sheep went astray, we turned a man to HIS way". Salvation is thus revealed as the work of God; but I quite enter into your difficulty. The thought perhaps presents itself, - that the words taken out of their context present a somewhat mechanical view of salvation, and that the individual is treated rather as a machine. It is not so, for undoubtedly, when any are saved they do accept the Lord Jesus Christ as their Saviour; they have faith, they believe, nor do they understand the nature of that faith till afterwards; but when they are quickened from above then they realise that it is the faith of God's elect, or, as Paul puts it elsewhere, the faith of the inworking of God. In other words God does not say to them, Now I am about to save you in spite of your will. That would be merely a mechanical forcing. But God imperceptibly, just as He works in nature, causes them to will, and afterwards to do on account of HIS GOOD PLEASURE. Hence there is the springing up of affection toward Him and they desire Christ, but they AFTERWARDS find that here was the beginning of the quickening, for a dead man does not desire the Living God. He desires to go still on his own path. *Do you follow what I mean?*

Q. Yes, I quite follow, but what I meant was this. God will not quicken me until I come within hearing of the Word, and I may say within myself, Yes, that is true, and that is true; then I believe. We come to the knowledge of these things, and look within ourselves and we admit that we are sinners, and admit that we need salvation, then God will quicken us, but we must come in contact with the Word first before God will quicken us?

A. But, beloved friend, when we are graciously brought to hear the Truth, we may have heard it a hundred times before, - why is it that on the hundred and first time it comes with power? Is it not in accord with Isa. 55. 11, "So shall My Word be which goeth forth out of My mouth, it shall not return unto Me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I

sent it". Is it not in the words of Rom. 10. 17 "Faith cometh by hearing, but THE hearing through a spoken Word of God"? In other words, behind the human utterance, God speaks to the soul of a sinner, as the apostle says in Rom. 7, "When the commandment CAME". Up till that time he had read Scripture hundreds of times, knew large portions of it by heart (in the general acceptance of that misused expression), but when the commandment came there was a vast difference. So when truth comes with power, is it not because it has pleased God to reveal His Son in us? Else, why is it that we can hear the Truth hundreds of times and be unmoved? We must not take ANY of the credit to ourselves. It is that God stops us, as surely as He stopp'd Saul of Tarsus on the road to Damascus. There was nothing of Saul's natural preparation for it, but God stopp'd him, and that is what mercy does still. It is true our consciousness is vastly different. My own consciousness, trained up in a Christian home, would be entirely different with regard to the way of salvation, from that of a believer who had grown up in the depths of outward sin, and was suddenly brought by grace face to face with ^{the fact of} eternity, and a decm. MY consciousness is quite different, but MY salvation is absolutely the same,

Q. I think the question of our brother might be put, Is not there a work of the Holy Ghost within one, or on one, before a knowledge of the quickening power, before the knowledge of a new birth takes place in the soul?

A. Undoubtedly God's workings precede our KNOWLEDGE of them, nor can we say just how they precede.

Q. That is what I think our brother means, the work of the Spirit before the knowledge takes place.

A. "When I passed by and saw thee in thy blood, I said unto thee, Live". Grace antedates the consciousness of it.

Q. THAT would be of God also.

A. Undoubtedly.

Q. Then even repentance is a gift of God?

H. Christ is exalted to GIVE repentance (Acts 5.31)

Repentance is a new mind.

Q. They shall be made willing in the day of Thy power. The text "Work in you to will and to do," I take that to be the working out your own salvation with fear...for God worketh in you. That is not my eternal salvation. That was worked out for me and apart from me.

A. Undoubtedly salvation is the Lord's work. I hope I said nothing to hint anything else. My thought was this, that all our willing was, by nature, wrong. Therefore as soon as we have the beginning to will that is right, this indicates God's working in us to will and to do. Then there should come a stop, in Phil. 2. 13. Most people read on "To will and to do OF His good pleasure", thinking it is to will and to do His pleasure. Nay, it is to will and to do on account of the good pleasure, i.e. His good pleasure; here is the reason for our right willing and doing.

Q. Is not that more salvation from the power of sin in the body through the work of God's Spirit within us? Not amending the flesh, but God working in us to make us walk worthy of the vocation wherewith He has called us.

A. True, but the first breath of faith is of the same character as the after breaths, though they may be deeper and longer as the child grows stronger. But each is of the same kind.

Q. Of course the Word of God teaches that God worketh in you to will and to do, and if one has a sensitive spirit, that is if my eye catches God's eye, (you understand what I mean, Ps.32); if I am walking in the light, as God is in the light, He will lead me, my spirit will be sensitive to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and when I am taught what is wrong, as an obedient child I shall throw the wrong away.

A. It should be so, yes, undoubtedly.

Q. With regard to resisting the Holy Spirit, would you say a few words on that?

A. Acts 7, Ye do always resist the Holy Spirit, as your fathers did, so do ye. The servant of God had just quoted Isa. 66. He had quoted the words of

the Spirit of God in the Scriptures. The minds of men were against these words. The one who had quoted them is himself described by the Holy Spirit as being full of the Holy Spirit, yet they gnashed on him with their teeth. They therefore always resisted and fell against the Holy Spirit. Now THAT is a most important passage, showing the need for a Divine election. Some people will tell us that the human will does something, and when you ask them for a passage they say "Ye will not come to Me that ye might have life". I always think a passage of that kind tells solemnly the other way. It shows the need for a Divine Will, if our will is always a "will not". In like manner "Ye do ALWAYS resist" makes a need for quickening grace, for unless there is absolute quickening grace, "Always resist" will mean "always condemned". It seems to me these emphatic statements as to men by nature, leave no loophole for anything else but - IT PLEASED GOD to save.

Q. Do you not think that in Isaiah where God speaks of Cyrus, He brings out the thought of God's purpose with the unsaved?

A. Undoubtedly the whole of history is a display that God has a plan.

Q. Do you think that resisting the power, resisting the will of God exists in a state of unregeneration?

A. Yes, that was the point, hence the need for a quickening, that we may have a new nature which will harmonise with the Spirit of God.

Q. Then comes the quenching and the filling, in the new creation in Christ Jesus, but the resisting takes place, I think, in the unregenerate state?

A. Undoubtedly. I believe the quenching is a different aspect altogether, if I might say so. I think the context there is with regard to the supernatural gifts in an early Christian assembly.

Q. How do we understand such Scriptures as "God is not slack concerning His promise; but is longsuffering to youward, not wishing that Any should perish but that ALL should come to repentance."

A. I think that passage has a strong argument with regard to God's electing grace, for the "to usward"

or "to youward", defines it. The after words are understood in this light. Is longsuffering to usward, Why? How does He show it? He is not willing, (He is not determining) that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. I do not lock on that as merely an inclination, there is a determination. HE is determining. Is the passage universal, or is there a stress on the "usward" or "youward"? Surely the only way to explain is to allow the strength of that extraordinary expression of the Holy Spirit "to usward", or "youward". Here are believers being brought to repentance, caused to leave the systems and divisions into which they have gone, and being recovered out of the snare of the devil, for God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the Truth. And the Lord Jesus is waiting for this anticipation of That Day, even the little reviving which is to take place, I believe, ere He returns in glory.

Q. Does not that interpretation limit, not wishing that ANY and ALL? Does not that lead to showing that He wishes the condemnation of some?

A. I do not think it is dealing with that subject at all. The passage is not concerning itself with the ungodly. The word there used has the thought of a decree and intention. Now if you are speaking of certain persons who are wandering from the Lord, and you say how the Lord has not determined that any should perish but that all should come to repentance, you are not speaking concerning other people. You are speaking about a certain class, are you not?

Q. May not the text in our friend's mind be the passage in Timothy, He will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the Truth.

(Yes, that was in my mind as well).

A. The message there is equally suggestive in its context.

Q. I might link with that another difficult verse, "Christ tasted death for every man".

A. Yes. In 1 Tim. 2 we read, "I exhort,

therefore, first of all, that supplications be made, prayers, intercessions, giving of gratitude for all men, for kings and all that are in authority, that a quiet and peaceable life we may pass through in all reverence and solemnity, for this is good and welcome in sight of our Saviour God, Who will have all men to have been saved, and into knowledge of Truth to have come". Not merely will have them to be save-ABLE, but will them to have been saved, and into knowledge of Truth to have come. This expression - "Into knowledge of Truth to have come" reminds us of "repentance to the knowledge of the Truth". Such knowledge of the Truth implies a wondrous blessing; then the argument comes, "For there is one God, ONE also the Mediator of God and men, a Man Christ Jesus." The argument is plainly this - Pray for all men, there is ONE God. Is He the God of the Jews only, is He not also of the Gentiles? There is One Mediator, the MAN Christ Jesus. Not a Jew, but a Man. Those who lived in the days of the early church were accustomed to think of the salvation of Israel, but here is a stress upon salvation reaching beyond the favoured nation. At once the Scripture continues, "Who gave Himself a Ransom instead of all, the witness in its own appointed time, unto which I was placed, I a herald, and an apostle, (Truth I speak in Christ, I am not lying), a teacher of GENTILES", - so the word "all" is explained with reference to Gentiles. The argument is understood in connection with the earlier context, for the apostle says, Grace saved me, I was a persecutor and blasphemer, therefore I exhort that prayers were made for all men. The longsuffering of God reached me falling over the precipice, therefore the longsuffering of God has a long reach to include others of all classes. Here then we have not a universalism of salvation, but a grace for all classes of men, and for the most unlikely. You can pray for those that persecute you, knowing that the God Who saved a Manasseh and a Saul of Tarsus, is able to save

where you naturally think He will not save. Therefore, says the apostle in this important chapter, "Lift up holy hands without wrath and doubting". It is so easy to pray for unlikely ones, and then, by doubting, to rub your signature out at the end of the prayer. Grace emphasizes a fixity in prayer without wrath and doubting.

Q. Of course election, as taught in Eph. 1, is according to the foreknowledge of God, and according to His purpose and according to His counsel but would you with election and foreknowledge (it is GOD'S foreknowledge, remember) preach a limited atonement? This question comes up naturally with the doctrine of election. A limited atonement? You understand what I mean?

A. I do, I follow what you mean. It is deeply important that we should know just what is meant by a limited atonement. To me the limited atonement is the atonement that is unable to save. In other words if anything of Christ's work is ineffectual that seems to me to limit Him. He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

Q. Hallelujah.

A. Well then, if He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, we must not limit His atonement and make it simply that which makes men save-ABLE. His Name is called Jesus for He Himself shall SAVE His people from their sins. He came to completely save that which was lost. Now the present day idea is that we are exalting the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, if we say it was given in vain for thousands, if we practically infer it was shed for some who were then in hell when He died. To me that is derogatory to His glory. Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it, that He might present it to Himself, a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me. The Lord Jesus Christ distinctly speaks of those who were given to Him, and if His atonement is taken away from this aspect of those who were

given to Him, we have the thought that He took some who were not given to Him, - which is speaking against Him, though unintentionally. We have the further thought that His work is limited in its power, for we cannot get away from this fact that either the atonement is limited in its extent, or limited in its power. If it is limited in its power, Christ did not die to save any, but only to make them save-able, and they put the finishing touches upon it, but if it is limited, by covenant, in its extent, - rather made wide to this extent, for we all DESERVED wrath - then He shall see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied. His precious blood shall be that which is the cause of salvation to myriads which no man can number out of every nation under heaven, who will confess that He loosed them from their sins in HIS blood. We are told He gave Himself as a corresponding price. I know this has been wrongly and insultingly called the commercial aspect of atonement; surely this thought of a corresponding price is Scriptural. There is a precious "instead", and we cannot get away from it, the blood of Christ cannot be wasted.

Q. That is a very nice thought, but if I were opposing you I should say, If that is the case it must be a limited atonement, and there is no chance for thousands, hundreds, and millions. It is only according to the foreknowledge of God, and those whom God did not foreknow, well what about their atonement? There should be no satisfaction to God unless the blood was shed for them. Therefore if I was opposing you (I put the word IF), I should say there was no atonement for them?

A. I rejoice we alike would lay a stress upon the "if" in that connection, for I feel it is our mutual desire that we should please the Lord. I grant that the subject you raised is of tremendous importance and tremendous solemnity, but theories of a universal atonement, limited in power, do not solve the problem. Though we may have election, and believe in universal "savability", we cannot

deny that God from eternity knows all facts. Therefore when man is brought into the world God knows the end from the beginning, and yet He in full foreknowledge of judgment, full foreknowledge of the sin of Judas, for example, for which Judas was and is judged, permitted that Judas should be born, though He Himself, our precious Lord, who spake words of grace, said, Good were it for that man if he had not been born. Consequently there is no way out of that difficulty by avoiding election. The only solution I can find is this, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Lo, these are parts of His ways, but how small a portion we poor, weak creatures can understand! It is for us to bow the head, and to worship, and to say, Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of creation, He is of one mind and who can turn Him? It was this attitude that was the blessing, although there were many failures linked with that remarkable movement of the Reformation:- for a denial of election was brought in with regard to Jesuitism. Those who stood firm as reformers, though they did not see all that God has unveiled since, were definite as to God's electing grace. God HAS ever dealt sovereignly. Men like Luther and Calvin emphasized this, and that was the power in true witnessing. The only true attitude that I feel we can take to-day is to acknowledge all the Scripture says, to recognize the completeness of the work of the Lord Jesus and to say concerning our gracious God, Of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things, to Him be glory for ever and ever.

Q. The Scripture says many are called but few are chosen. I suppose you would say that the reason why they are not chosen is:- they did not accept?

A. That passage, I think, makes plain that they are called with the outward call of the Gospel, but unless God inwardly convicts and saves they never come to the Lord Jesus Christ. So that they simply show their natural condition when they refuse the outward call. If by the grace of God we have accept-

ed the call it is more than ^{an} outward call to us, it is an inward call. Well, we are not chosen because we accepted it, but we accepted it because we were chosen. I mean that God GAVE life to us. We cannot say that we began the work, or that we made salvation applicable, but that God saved us in spite of ourselves. Surely, I am right in saying that if you and I together have a joy in the Lord we agree upon one point, that there was nothing one whit better in either of us by nature, than in some who are despising our gracious God. It was only mercy that we love the Lord, then we can give no credit or crown to self, it is unto Him That loveth us.

Q. Some would say that some have no effectual call at all.

A. If there is an effectual call it must be effectual. God is described as the One Who calleth you into His kingdom and glory, and He will not leave you half-way.

Q. Shall I put it another way and say, He does not call some?

A. The outward call is general, but the inward call, the quickening call, is limited.

Q. You speak of outward and inward call, but if there is a call at all it must be an effectual call.

A. I think not.

Q. I cannot resist the counsels of God, I cannot thwart His purposes.

A. No, but surely there is the general proclamation of the Truth beyond that

Q. God so loved the world?

A. We proclaim the general Gospel of the grace of God.

Q. He tasted Death for all.

A. But you did not accept the Gospel of the grace of God simply because you heard the general proclamation of it. It came with power to your heart one day. There was not simply the proclamation; it was an inward call. If it was simply an

cutward call you would still be dead in sins. Surely the words are that our beloved Lord not only loved us when we were dead in sins, but, in the words of John 5, The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, AND THEY THAT HEAR SHALL LIVE. THAT is the effectual call, and I cannot alter "shall live" to "may live". You agree with me, I think?

Q. Oh, I agree, I am not speaking for myself. Bless the Lord, He saved me, I was about to say, against my will.

A. Nay, He gave a new will.

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