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"Earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints."

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AN INEFFECTUAL STRUGGLE

There was a young professor of religion in the Presbyterian Church, who felt very frequently a rising repugnance to the doctrines generally denominated *Calvinistic*. The secret workings of his heart, unknown to himself, (if they had been plainly translated) ran nearly thus: "It were a pity those doctrines should be true; it is in short out of the question. I hope God will act more in accordance with my ideas of propriety. I must, if possible, find some passage of Scripture to upset them," &c. But to all the texts he could produce, proclaiming the general offer, the unlimited efficacy of the Saviour's death—his having no pleasure in the death of the sinner, &c. &c. he received from his brethren one short and simple reply: "God offers salvation freely to all, through a Redeemer's blood—all as freely and with one accord reject it. Shall he let them all take their own road to death? or save all? We see he does neither, but makes as many *willing in the day of his power* as he chooses." And no matter what the number or variety of passages he cited, this answer (or the substance of it better expressed) was always ready, and seemed to fit the whole of them. His next undertaking was to try and have those passages which seemed to declare God's eternal purposes, explained so as to get them, if possible, out of his way. He was intimate with several pious and worthy men who did not believe the views of his church on those points, but thought them false and hurtful. To them, then, he would go with such a passage from the Bible as the following: "And they that dwell upon the earth shall wonder (whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world.)" *Rev. xvii. 8.* He would receive an explanation which would satisfy him for the time; but when he next opened his Bible, he would perhaps, stumble upon, *Acts xiii. 48.* "*And as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed.*" Here he would find that the former explanation would not fit this—for to say they were ordained to eternal life *before* they believed, would be *election*; and to say they were ordained *after* they believed, would prove the *final perseverance*—and yet it would ap-

“I might write folios by way of commentary, and with indefatigable zeal, paint with a thin colouring the whole of the Sacred Oracles—but in the glare of the judgment day, it would all vanish like smoke.”

NELSON.

THE CHARACTER AND SAFETY OF THE SAINTS.

A SERMON.

BY JAMES GALLAHER.

JOHN x. 27, 28, 29.—*My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*

IN this chapter, the Saviour styles the saints his sheep, and himself the shepherd. Such imagery frequently occurs in the sacred writings. David says, “The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.” And again, “we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.”

The text contains,

I. *The character.*

II. *The safety of the children of God.*

I. Their character is thus given. ‘My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me.’ Hearing the voice of Christ, implies a *belief* of what he declares, and a *performance* of what he commands. He said to the Jews, ‘He that is of God, heareth God’s words; ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.’ Many who appear conscious of their obligation to do what God commands, appear not to realize that their obligation is equally strong to *believe* what he declares. The Bible, however, assures us that unbelief is as offensive in the sight of God as any other kind of disobedience. He that refuses to do what God commands, practically denies the justice and authority of God. He that refuses to believe what God declares, practically denies that there is truth in Jehovah, or that reliance can be placed in his statements. Awful are the denunciations of Christ against him that *believeth not* the testimony of God. He offers the highest insult to the God of truth. John avers, “He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar.” Now the disciples of Christ “hear his voice.” They believe what he has testified concerning the character and purposes of God; the character and condition of man; the claims of the divine law; His own character as Mediator, and the whole system of gospel truth. Moreover, theirs is a faith which works by love, “teaching them that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.”

“And I know them.” Does this only mean, that he is acquainted with their existence in the world? In this sense, he knows the most ungodly as well as the christian. Or does it simply mean, that he can distinguish between the christian and the hypocrite? This he can certainly do. But the passage implies more. The Lord is intimately acquainted with the existence and character of all men—the just and the unjust, the holy and the impure. But there is a sacred acquaintance which he has only with his children. It consists in that holy fellowship and communion which is kept up between the soul of the christian and his God. “Truly our fellowship,” says the apostle, “is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.” “I will come in,” says the Saviour, “and sup with him, and he with me.” To this communion and fellowship the hypocrite is a stranger. Of this sacred acquaintance Christ speaks, when he says, “I know my sheep, and am known of mine.” John x. 18. And again, John xvii. 3. “This is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.” The eternal life of the christian will consist in holy fellowship and communion with God. Of this also, the apostle speaks, in II. Tim. ii. 19. “The Lord knoweth them that are his. To the same thing the Saviour alludes, when he says to the finally impenitent, “I never knew you.” He had known them as wicked men; but as to that holy converse and communion in which consists the christian’s saving acquaintance with his Redeemer, he says, “I know you not.” “I never knew you.”

“They follow me.” Christ hath left his people an example, that they should follow his steps. Pet. ii. 21. And a great example it is. In it we see “piety without superstition, morality without ostentation, humility without meanness, and fortitude without temerity; patience without apathy, and compassion without weakness; zeal without rashness, and beneficence without prodigality.” This is the great example which the believer aims to follow. And if in the present world, “there is no man that sinneth not,” still it is the aim of the child of God to follow the example which the Saviour hath left. This is forcibly illustrated in the apostle’s account of his own life and exercises. “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect; but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

II. The safety of the children of God. “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” What God will do, can only be known to us, by his declarations. We may attempt to guess at what he will do in a particular case—

we may form conjectures respecting what he *ought* to do. In the folly of impiety we may rashly assert that Jehovah *must* act thus and thus, or else be unjust, or unmerciful. But God is too high, and we too low, for our conjectures to be entitled to much confidence.

“O ’tis beyond a creature mind,

“To glance a thought half way to God.”

But we have a “more sure word of prophesy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place.” The Lord pledges his *word* that his people *shall never perish*; and on his word we may rest with absolute certainty.—“The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever.”

When we find any particular truth plainly asserted in the word of God, we need have no hesitation in receiving it, however unbelief may cavil and object; for, says the Saviour, “Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” Whether every christian is “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation;” or whether some christians do fall from a state of grace, and perish forever, is a subject on which the opinions of mankind have been much divided. And altho’ persons of sterling piety may have differed in sentiment here, yet, unquestionably, if the truth on this interesting point, is set forth in the Oracles of God, and we do not see it, and receive from it that consolation it is calculated to afford, the fault is ours. Let us now take up the sacred book, and hearken to the voice of the Spirit of inspiration. Father of lights, direct us in our investigation. O make thy word a lamp to our feet, and a light to our path

Jesus, says of his people, “I give unto them eternal life.” The life they have is his gift. They were once *dead* in trespasses and in sins, but they have experienced a spiritual resurrection. He gives them life. What kind of life? *Eternal* life. We all know the distinction between temporal life, and that which is eternal. Temporal life is the period of our existence on earth. It runs on through a few months or years, and then sinks in death. How fleeting, how transient! Like the “morning cloud and the early dew,” it passeth away. Eternal life is that which endures forever. Nothing that comes to an end, is eternal. That life which burns on for a time, and then is extinguished, is but *temporal*; eternal duration is not one of its properties. Eternal life is that which transcends the boundaries of time, and flames on through the immense periods of vast eternity. “I give unto them eternal life.” But, notwithstanding the life that is given them is eternal, may they not perish? “They shall never perish,” says the Saviour. But, have they not enemies that seek their destruction? “None shall pluck them out of my hand.” But, are not their enemies great and powerful? “My Father which gave them me, is *greater than all*; and none is able to pluck them out of my Fa-

ther's hand." Could language be more conclusive? If this were the only passage in which Christ asserts the absolute safety of his people, how dare we doubt it, since every jot and tittle of his word is firm as the pillars of heaven? But since we are 'slow of heart to believe,' he has condescended to give us 'line upon line, and precept upon precept.' In John v. 24, he asserts the same blessed truth in the following language: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." His people have life. What kind of life? Everlasting life; or life that lasts forever. But still, may not the believer come into condemnation? 'He shall not come into condemnation,' says Christ; 'he is passed from death unto life.' If it be possible for language on this subject, to be more pointed and strong, he uses it, John vi. 37. 'All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me; and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out.' We have seen that his people are in his hand; that their enemies, however numerous, powerful and malignant, are *not able* to pluck them out of his hand. But may he not in *some way* cast them out himself? His word is pledged; 'Him that cometh to me I will in *no wise* cast out.' In the 40th verse of this chapter, he says, 'And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.' At the last day! When the changing scenes of this world are forever closed; when all the fears and trials and temptations of the christian are past and gone; after his spiritual enemies on earth and in hell, have spent their utmost efforts for his destruction; He, who is the Resurrection, will raise up *every one* that in this life, seeth the Son and believeth on him.' Blessed Jesus, may we see thee with the eye of faith; may we believe on thee to the saving of the soul; and O! may we be raised in triumph among thy ransomed people, *at the last day.*

We have now noticed a number of instances in which the certain salvation of every christian is asserted in the most clear and pointed terms, by him whose 'word is truth.' The passages, however, which I have quoted, are but a 'handful to the harvest.' Throughout the sacred writings, this soul refreshing truth is urged upon the attention of the reader in language the most unequivocal and strong. But the limits allotted to this discourse, will not allow me to transcribe them. Indeed, if we dispute the Saviour's word in the texts already mentioned, we may dispute the meaning of every declaration he has made. "If we believe not Moses and the prophets, neither would we be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

But that the honest enquirer after truth, may have every doubt removed, and may see how clearly the beams of the Sun of Righteousness have pointed out the truth on this subject, I will now call his attention to another class of passages. Mat. vii. 24.

27. "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock." Here the hopes of the believer are set forth in a figure most beautiful and affecting. 'Every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them.' To hear his sayings and *do them*, is one leading characteristic of his people: 'My sheep hear my voice and they follow me.' 'And a stranger will they *not follow*, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers.' This is a distinguishing feature in their character. 'Those who hear not his voice; who do not follow him; who obey not his sayings, are not his children at all. Concerning the hope of the christian, observe the following things. (1) It had a good foundation, 'for it was founded on a rock. (2) It was assailed by trials fierce and appalling; the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house.' (3) It fell not.' (4) The reason, 'for it was founded upon a rock.' Now every christian's hope is built on Christ, 'the Rock of Ages.' The man whose hope is built on any other foundation, is *not a christian* at all, and of course cannot fall from grace. The only reason given by the Saviour, why the christian's hope does not give way, is that it is *founded on a rock*. The floods may rage, and the tempests roar, but the rock of ages never moves. Blessed of the Lord are they whose hopes are founded there. In the following verses, we read of a foolish man, against whose house the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and it fell: but where was it founded? 'On the sand.' Observe, it *never had any better foundation than the sand*; it was *built on the sand at first*. We have no account of a house that was first built on the rock, and then shuffled about until it got on the sand, and then fell. No, the house that fell was built *at first* on the sand. Spirit of eternal grace, "Lead me to the rock that is higher than I." O may Christ be to our souls, as a 'hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

That every christian shall be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," is evident also, from the prayer of Christ, for his disciples: In John xvii he prays thus: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we *are*. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. Father I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me. Neither pray I for these alone; but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." In John xi. 42. addressing his Father, he says, 'thou hearest me always;' that is, thou art always

ready to grant what I ask. Now if the Father always hears Christ, and grants his petitions, then his first disciples and all who believe on him through their word shall be kept from the evil that is in the world, and sanctified thro' his truth, and at last shall be with Christ where he is, and shall behold his glory, and of consequence, none of them shall fall from grace and perish.

The perseverance of the Saints, is rendered certain by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. 'I will pray the Father,' says Christ, 'and he shall give you another Comforter *that he may abide with you forever*; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he *dwelleth in you, and shall be in you.*' In our state of apostacy, Satan has unrivalled possession of the human heart. As a "Strong man armed, he keepeth his house" until a "stronger than he," bind him and cast him out. The Spirit of God then takes possession of the heart, to dwell in it forever. Shall he ever be dispossessed, or driven from his habitation? "No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man." But what power is able to bind the omnipotent Spirit of Grace, or expel him from the regenerate heart? Speaking of the Holy Spirit, to the woman of Samaria, the Redeemer says, 'Whosoever drinketh of this water,' the water of Jacob's well, "shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall *never thirst*; but the water that I shall give him, shall be *in him* a well of water *springing up into everlasting life.*"

That christians shall never perish, is plain, from what our Lord says respecting the *cause* of their life. He tells us that his life is the cause, and his people's life is the effect John xiv. 19. 'Because I live, ye shall live also.'

Addressing the Philippian christians, the Apostle saith, "Being confident of this *very thing*, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Phil. i. 6. That the day of Jesus Christ, in this passage, means the day of Judgment, none will deny. That God has 'begun a *good work* in the heart of every believer, is also admitted by every one: but the matter in dispute is, *this very thing*; whether he who has *begun* the good work will *perform* it until the day of Jesus Christ. Now, however we may doubt on this subject, the Apostle had no doubts at all. We may suppose, that unforeseen difficulties may arise; that the believer's case may be *harder to manage* than was *expected* when the good work was begun, and therefore, he, who has begun the good work, may find it necessary to desert it and leave it unfinished; but the Apostle had no such notions; he was absolutely *confident of this very thing*, about which so many doubts are entertained at the present day.

In I. Cor. iii. 9. Christians are styled "God's building." They are designed 'For a habitation of God through the spirit.'" God has

undertaken in infinite grace to build up in the hearts of his people, faith, and love, and hope, and joy—in short, every christian grace, and designs their hearts to be a temple of the Holy Ghost. Jesus Christ teaches that it is *unwise* in a builder to make a commencement, before he hath 'counted the cost,' and ascertained that he is able to finish, and that such conduct deserves only mockery and derision. Luke xiv. 28, 30. "For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first and counteth the cost, whether he have *sufficient* to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish." And does the all wise Jehovah act thus? Does he commence the spiritual building in the hearts of his people before he hath counted the cost? Do difficulties arise in the progress of his work, of which he was not aware when he began? After he has laid the foundation, do such unexpected obstacles present themselves that he judges it best to abandon the whole undertaking? And shall his enemies, on earth and in hell, have cause to mock, and say, he 'Began to build, and was not able to finish!'"

Inspiration tells us, that believers are 'joined to the Lord.' If therefore, they fall away and perish, it must be, either, because the Lord turns away from them, or because they depart from him; for it is plain, that as a vital union exists between them and their Redeemer, if he does not turn away from them, and they do not depart from him, they shall never perish. In Jer. xxxii, 40. the Lord says, 'I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that *I will not turn away from them*, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, *that they shall not depart from me.*"

"Happy art thou, O Israel: Who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord. The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms!"

It has been thought by some, that as believers are *free agents*, the Lord cannot, with absolute certainty, *keep them from falling*, without destroying their free agency. This is perhaps, the most artful objection that ever has been brought against the doctrine, as it leads directly to an enquiry concerning the *mode* of the divine operation on the human heart—a subject on which, while in this world, we must remain profoundly in the dark. But where reason fails, Revelation shines with peculiar brightness. Hearken to the voice of the Holy Spirit: "Now unto him that is *able to keep you from falling*, and to present you *faultless* before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power." Jude 24. Here it is expressly declared, that the Lord is *able to keep his people from falling* and to present them *faultless* before the presence of his glory. To those therefore, who urge the above objection, we reply, "ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the *power* of God."

The power of God is employed for the preservation of his people.

Saints are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." That power which built the world, and stretched out the heavens; which vanquished the hosts of hell—raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, and carries forward the whole scheme of redemption; by this power the saint was first arrested and brought from spiritual death to spiritual life, and by it he is kept, through faith; faith, which is the 'gift of God,' unto salvation.

The Lord assures his Saints, that he is their keeper Ps. cxxi. 5. If they fall away and perish, is it because he is not able to keep them, or, so indifferent on the subject, that they are lost thro' inattention? That he is *able* to keep them from falling, we have already seen; that he is *willing*, is asserted again and again. Mat. xviii. 14. "It is *not the will* of your Father which is in heaven, that one of those little ones should perish." John vi. 39. "This is the Father's *will* which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should *lose nothing* but should raise it up again at the last day." That he is not indifferent, so as to forget his people, and suffer them to perish through inattention, is announced in the strongest terms. Isa. xlix. 15. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, *yet will I not forget thee.*" The strongest affection known among mortals may fail, but the mercy of the Lord "endureth forever."

'Yea, saith the Lord, shall nature change,
'And mothers monsters prove;
'Zion still dwells upon the heart
'Of everlasting love.'

"That all real christians are preserved by omnipotent grace, from final apostacy, is manifest from the *joy of angels*, at their conversion. Luke xv. 7. "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance." We are here taught, that when a sinner on earth repents, the joy of angels in heaven rises to a remarkable height. Now, the angels of God have, in every age, been intimately acquainted with the affairs of his church. They are "all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be the heirs of salvation." There never has lived a saint upon earth, but they have known of his conversion, and whether he was received into heaven after death, or not. Now, if they have seen in ages past, that a number of those who were converted by the Spirit of God, did, a few days, months, or years afterward, lose their religion, fall from grace and perish, would they now give way to such wonderful transports of joy, when *one sinner* repenteth? Would they not rather check these premature raptures, and hold themselves in doubt, until they could see whether he, who had *begun* the good work in this sinner, would *perform* it until the day of Jesus Christ? And, in the mean time, rejoice more over each of the ninety and nine, who are out of danger, than over this one repenting sinner, whose final salvation is still so uncertain. Is it

not plain, from the great joy of angels when a sinner is brought to Christ, that they know his salvation is certain; that they know that the covenant of grace is *immutable*, and that the Lord will not turn away from him, and divine grace shall so work in his heart, to will and to do, that he shall not depart from the Lord? However then, the perseverance of the saints may be disputed on earth, we find it is firmly believed among the angels in heaven.

That real christians do not apostatise is plain, from what the Scriptures tell us respecting apostates. Christ and his apostles frequently speak of those who professed religion for a time, and then cast away their profession, and it is worthy of remark, that they plainly represent them as persons who never had been genuine christians. Read the second chapter of Peter's second Epistle, and you will see a full drawn character of those who had apostatised in his day; from his account it is evident that those apostates never had been real christians: he concludes thus, "It is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed, to her wallowing in the mire." From the illustrations here employed, it is plain, that these apostates never had experienced any renovation of heart, or been the subjects of a saving change. It was the *dog*, that returned to his vomit, it was the *sow* (washed, changed in outward appearance, but retaining the old nature, within) that returned to wallowing in the mire. Speaking of the last judgment, Mat. vii. 22. Our Lord observes, "Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity." These had been eminent professors in their day; had prophesied, cast out devils, and done many wonderful works, yet they were never christians. Paul tells us, 1. Cor. xiii. 1—3, that a man may "speak with the tongues of men and angels, and have the gift of prophesy, and have all faith, so that he can remove mountains and yet be nothing," as respects true religion. "I never knew you." He does not say, I once knew you; but after a while, you became strangers to me; but 'I never knew you;' there never did exist any sacred acquaintance between-us. I never had any holy fellowship and communion with you. 'I know my sheep, and am known of mine,' but I never knew you, depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Jehovah declares that, "All things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Disciple of Christ, it is the voice of your Lord. Yes, it is his word, who hath in his hands all things in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. The angels above, are at his direction, they are all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall

be the heirs of salvation. On earth, there is "none that can stay his hand." He numbers the hairs of your head, and causeth the "wrath of man to praise him, and the remainder of the wrath will he restrain;" and even Satan, your grand enemy, is under his control. To the roaring lion, who goeth about seeking whom he may devour, He saith, hitherto shalt thou come, but no further. Job i. 12. and xi. 6. "All things work together for good." The ministry of angels from on high; all events on earth, the small and the great, from the death of a sparrow to the subversion of empires; "all things," even the machinations of their most malignant enemies; the snares and temptations of the world, the flesh, and devil; yes, the very fears, sorrows and inward trials against which they struggle; all things, under the perfect management of Zion's King, work together for good, to them that love God. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

It is not surprising, that in the contemplation of this wonderful subject, in which the everlasting love and unfailing faithfulness of God are so brightly displayed, an inspired Apostle should break out in these energetic and rapturous strains, "We know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the *called* according to his *purpose*. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also *called*: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with HIM also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

If the doctrine of the certain perseverance of the saints, be so false, and so dangerous, as it is sometimes represented, is it not wonderful that the God of all grace, has so often asserted it in the broadest terms? Is it really dangerous for us to believe, that in these pointed and powerful declarations, he *means* just what he *says*? Does he address us in language, which if believed and relied on, will lead us awfully astray? Does he for bread, give his children a stone? for fish, give them a serpent? "What if some

did not believe?' says the apostle, 'shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar?' Rom. iii. 3, 4. O ye disciples of Christ, 'The word of your God shall stand forever.' Fear not to trust his promises; fear not to rely upon his word; fear not to believe that, 'He who spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for you all, shall with him also freely give you all things.' Fear not to believe, that in tribulation, and distress, and persecution, and all your spiritual conflicts, you shall be 'more than conquerors, through him that loved you.' Fear not to believe, 'that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate you from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus your Lord.'

Let us now notice some of the objections that have been urged against this doctrine.

1. It is thought by some, that the warnings, cautions and exhortations against apostacy, given to believers in the Scriptures, are inconsistent with the doctrine, that all christians shall persevere in holiness, and obtain eternal life. Now, it is admitted on all hands, that such exhortations and cautions are addressed to believers. 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.' What I say unto you, I say unto all, watch. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.' &c. &c. But, Calvinists consider such warnings and admonitions, as not at all inconsistent with the certainty of the believer's salvation; but in fact, a necessary part of that system of means, which God uses to keep his people thro' faith unto salvation. Let us illustrate this subject by one or two examples.

When Christ was born in Bethlehem, in the days of Herod, it was *absolutely certain*, that he should not be slain for more than thirty-three years; for Daniel, above five hundred years before, had pointed out the precise time, when Messiah should be cut off. It was absolutely certain, that he should live to perform the miracles which he did, on the sick, the blind, and the lame; and that at his death he should be numbered with the transgressors, and then be buried in the sepulchre of the rich man of Arimathea, for Isaiah had predicted these things, seven hundred years before. It was absolutely certain, that at his crucifixion, they should give him vinegar to drink, mingled with gall, and that the soldiers should part his garments among them, and cast lots upon his vesture, for the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, had spoken of this, above a thousand years before. Yet when Christ was born, and Herod was troubled and sought to slay him, the angel of the Lord came to Joseph, saying, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." Mat. ii. 13. Had Joseph been of opinion that when an

event is made certain by the purpose of God, the means necessary to bring it about may be dispensed with, he would, most likely, have replied, "Thou Angel of the Lord, I don't see the propriety of taking this journey into Egypt. If what David, and Isaiah, and Daniel have said be true, the Messiah will not be cut off by Herod. He has yet to live many years, and perform many marvellous works, and then to die in a manner very different from what Herod designs. This journey into Egypt, therefore, is altogether useless." But Joseph's *creed* was more orthodox. He considered the purposes and promises of God, as perfectly consistent with his commands, and the duty he requires of us. "He arose, and took the young child and his mother, and departed into Egypt." Herod spent his rage. Christ was not slain. He lived till the time Daniel had mentioned, performed all the works the prophets had foretold, and was then put to death as had been predicted. Thus every jot and every tittle of what God had spoken was accomplished. Again, in Acts xxvii. we find, that Paul and his companions, when sailing to Italy, were overtaken by a tremendous storm. "Neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and all hope that they should be saved was taken away." At length Paul addressed the company thus: "Now I exhort you to be of good cheer; for there shall be no loss of any man's life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Cæsar: and lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: *for I believe God*, that it shall be even as it was told me." But a short time after, when the sailors had let down the boat and were about to flee from the ship, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, 'Except these abide in the ship ye cannot be saved.' Had one of our modern objectors been on board, he would have detected the same inconsistency in Paul, which he finds in Calvinists of the present day, 'What do you mean, Paul? Did you not tell us that there should be *no loss of any man's life*? and that the angel of God had told you so? and that you believed God that it should be even as it had been told you? What matter, then, whether these sailors go or stay? for if we are to be saved we shall be saved.' 'Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? The exertion of these sailors is the means God hath appointed to effect our preservation. Separate not the appointed means from the appointed end. What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." The centurion and the soldiers attended to the warning Paul had given; the sailors were kept in the ship; 'and so it came to pass, that they escaped all safe to land.' Now in each of these cases the event was *certain*, and yet, the warnings and cautions given, were neither absurd nor useless. The warning of the angel to Joseph, was not designed to shake his faith in the promises of God, and persuade him that it was *quite uncertain* whether those positive declarations of the Most

High, concerning the life and death of Christ, should be fulfilled or not. But it was designed to teach him the way in which the Lord had determined to accomplish all that he had spoken. The warning had its intended effect, and in due time, all that the Lord had foretold, came to pass. The warning given by Paul to the centurion and the soldiers, was not intended to persuade them, that they should put but *little confidence* in the promise of God, that there should be no loss of any man's life among them. But it was intended to teach them the means by which the Lord had determined to accomplish all that he had spoken. The warning had its intended effect, and they 'all got safe to land,' according to the word of the Lord.

In like manner, the exhortations, cautions and warnings, addressed to believers, are not designed to *shake their confidence* in the 'exceeding great and precious promises' of their God, or to persuade them that it is dangerous to put their *entire trust* in his word, when he saith, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.' Heb. xiii. 5. "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer. For this is as the waters of Noah unto me; for as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth; so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor rebuke thee. For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee." Isa. liv. 8—10. But the exhortations and warnings addressed to the children of God, were designed to teach them the way in which they should walk, and are a part of the means which Jehovah employs to keep them from the evil that is in the world, and fit them for the heavenly kingdom. The predictions concerning the life, miracles and death of the Messiah, were just as true, just as certain to be accomplished, just as worthy to be believed, after the warning was given to Joseph, as they had been before. The word of the Lord pledged to Paul, that there should be 'no loss of any man's life among them,' was as unshaken, and had as omnipotent a claim to their absolute confidence, after his admonition to the centurion and the soldiers, as it had before. In each of these cases it is plain, that the caution given, did not detract one whit from the *certainty* that what God had spoken should take place. In like manner the exhortations and cautions addressed to christians, do not in the smallest degree lessen the *certainty* that all the Lord hath promised them, shall come to pass. 'They shall never perish.' 'None shall pluck them out of his hand.' 'All things shall work together for good to them,' and he 'will raise them up at the last day.'

The warnings given to Joseph, and to Paul's companions, were so far from being either useless or inconsistent with what God had before spoken, that they had an important instrumentality in bring-

ing about what God had determined. In like manner, the warnings given to christians are so far from being useless, or inconsistent with the certainty of their salvation, that they have an important instrumentality in preparing them for that 'house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'

The warning to Joseph, *did* answer the purpose for which it was given, and the whole matter turned out according to the 'determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God.' Acts ii. 23. The warning to Paul's companions, *did* answer the purpose for which it was given, 'and they all got safe to land.' In like manner, the warnings given to christians *do* answer the purpose for which they were designed. "They hear the voice of Christ and they follow him, and a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers." 'And so all Israel shall be saved.' Rom. xi. 26. "O Israel, trust thou in the Lord; he is their help and their shield. O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord; he is their help and their shield. Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; he is their help and their shield."

But there is another objection. It is said the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints cannot be true, for we read in the New Testament of several persons, that certainly had once been christians, who afterwards deserted the cause of Christ, and acted most perversely. For instance, Judas, and Hymeneus and Alexander, and perhaps others.

That Judas, Hymeneus and Alexander, had publicly professed the religion of Christ, is acknowledged; and it is also conceded on all hands, that at length, they proved to be wicked, graceless men. The only question on which there is a difference of opinion, is this: Were they *ever* real christians? Had they ever been regenerated by the Holy Spirit? It is desirable that on this, as well as on every other subject, all christians should agree. I know of but two ways in which we can all come to an agreement on this point. The apostles formed an opinion concerning the real character of these men, and have transmitted it to us in their writings. If we all adopt the opinion they have expressed we shall all agree. Or, we might all agree by unanimously rejecting their opinion.— But, as the apostles lived in the same age with these men, were intimately acquainted with them, and had an opportunity of judging the 'tree by its fruit;' and, especially as in the opinions they have expressed, they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, it would, certainly, be wisest and safest in us, all to agree with the apostles, and thus agree with each other.

As for Judas, Christ and his apostles have delineated his character with great particularity, and they were certainly very competent judges. In John vi. 64, Christ addressing his professed disciples, observes, "There are some of you that *believe not*. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that *believed not*, and who should betray him." We are not told, that Jesus knew from

the beginning who they were that would, *after a while* become unbelievers, but he knew, all along, from the beginning, who they were among his professed friends, that believed not, and who should betray him. In John xii. 6, we are told that Judas 'cared not for the poor,' and that 'he was a thief.' In John xiii. 10, 11, after washing his disciples' feet, Christ said to them, "Ye are clean, but *not all*. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, ye are *not all* clean." In John vi. 70, 71, he said to his disciples, "Have not I chosen you twelve? And one of you is a devil? 'He spake of Judas Iscariot.'—And it must be observed, that Christ and his apostles *never contradict* these statements, by giving Judas a better character. How widely then do you differ from them if you contend that Judas was a Saint? Let us contrast the opinion of the objector on this point with that of Christ and his apostles.

OBJECTOR.

1. Judas, before he betrayed the Saviour, was a believer.
2. Judas was a man of purity.
3. Judas was a benevolent man.
4. Judas was an honest man.
5. Judas was a saint.

CHRIST & APOSTLES.

1. "Jesus knew *from the beginning* who they were that *believed not*, and who should betray him."
2. "Ye are *not all* clean. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean."
3. Judas "cared not for the poor."
4. Judas "was a thief."
5. Judas was "a devil."

But there is one text, so often quoted on this subject, that it is proper now to mention it. John xvii. 12. "While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name; those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled." That this passage does not imply that Judas was a christian, is evident from his being called the "son of perdition." Moreover, he "was lost, that the scripture might be fulfilled." In Acts i. 16, Peter says, "Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas." The mistake concerning the text in John xvii. 12, above quoted, consists in supposing, that the latter part of the text contains an exception to what is declared in the former part. But a little attention to other texts in which the same form of expression occurs, will satisfy the candid mind. In Luke iv. 25, we are told, that, "Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow." Surely no person ever imagined, that this woman of *Sarepta, a city of Sidon*, was one of the *widows of Israel*.

Again. "Many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Sy-

gan." Surely none will pretend that Naaman the Syrian, was one of the lepers of Israel. Once more, in Rev. xxi. 27, of the heavenly Jerusalem it is said, "There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life." Who ever supposed that a part of those that defile, and work abomination and make a lie, are written in the Lamb's book of life? In each of these texts, the latter clause is not an exception to what is asserted in the former, but asserts a different fact. The following is plainly their meaning: 'There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie; but they (shall enter in) which are written in the Lamb's book of life.' 'Many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, but unto none of them was Elias sent; (but he was sent) to Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow.' 'Many lepers were in Israel in the days of Elias, and none of them was cleansed, but Naaman the Syrian, (was cleansed.) Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost; but the son of perdition (is lost) that the Scripture might be fulfilled.' That this is the real import of the text is also evident from the 9th verse of the next chapter, where this text is quoted, John xviii. 9. To those who came to take him, Jesus said, if ye seek me, let these (my disciples) go their way; 'That the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake. Of them which thou gavest me have I LOST NONE.'

He that objects to this exposition must, to be consistent, maintain that a part of those that defile, and work abomination, &c. are written in the lambs book of life, that the widow of Sidon, was a widow of Israel, and that Naaman, the leper of Syria, was a leper of Israel.

What further say the Apostles? Peter was a member of the church, when Judas publicly professed love to Christ, he was well acquainted with Judas from the commencement of his profession until his apostacy, he was also an active minister of the church when Hymeneus and Alexander first made a profession, and all the while they continued in the church, and also at the time of their apostacy, and thus enjoyed the best advantages for judging correctly. Now, about thirty-four years after the apostacy of Judas, and seven years after the apostacy of Hymeneus and Alexander, and after Paul had published an account of the whole matter, Peter, writing to the churches, speaks particularly of those persons, who in that age, had first professed religion, and then fallen into base and abominable practices, among whom were Judas, Hymeneus and Alexander. He concludes his account of them thus, "It is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to wallowing in the mire." Such was Peter's opinion. What says John? John was a member of the Christian church at its first organization, was well acquainted with Judas from his first profes-

sion until he forsook his master—was an active and zealous minister, when Hymeneus and Alexander first joined the church, all the time they continued in the church, and long after they left it. About thirty years after Paul had published his account of the apostacy of these men, John addressing the churches, calls their attention particularly to the case of those persons who, in the apostolic age, had professed religion and afterwards apostatised. He gives his opinion of them in these words, I. John ii. 19. 'They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.' Let us ask the apostle a question or two. Were those persons who, in the apostolic age, cast away their profession and left the church, that is, Judas, Hymeneus, Alexander, and the rest, were they ever of the number of real christians? 'They went out from us, but they were *not* of us.' Well, if they had been of the number of real christians, would they have apostatised and left the church? 'If they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.' Such was John's opinion of these men. Now we must acknowledge the doctrine of the perseverance of the Saints; or we must find *better arguments* against it, than can be drawn from the case of Judas, Hymeneus Alexander, and apostates of that age; or we must contend that Peter and John were wrong in their opinion of these men, and that the accounts they have sent down to us are, uninspired and incorrect.

Once more.—It is objected that the doctrine of final perseverance, tends to produce carelessness and spiritual sloth among professors.

That this doctrine may be abused, is acknowledged; and what doctrine may not? Must we deny a plainly revealed truth, lest some should make an improper use of it? It is an important truth of Revelation, that God is 'slow to anger,' and exercises forbearance, and is long suffering toward sinners. Yet Solomon declares that this precious truth is awfully abused by immense multitudes of the human race. 'Because sentence against an evil work is *not executed speedily*, therefore the heart of the sons of men is *fully* set in them to do evil.' Must we deny that the Lord is gracious and slow to anger, and try to explain away all those passages in which he has declared it, lest sinners take encouragement to go on in sin? He that perverts and abuses God's truth, shall answer for it to the majesty of Heaven. 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.'

But does the doctrine of final perseverance, *actually produce this effect*, on those christians who believe it? Are they persons of less truth, less honesty, less moral virtue, than those who deny it? In the discharge of the duties they owe to God and to man, are they notoriously deficient? In attention to personal piety and fami-

ly religion, are they inferior to others? Have they less reverence for the Bible, less regard for the institutions of God? In those churches and neighborhoods where this doctrine is most generally believed, is it a fact, that less is done to send the Bible to every individual, to every family, to every nation under heaven? Or is the reverse of all this true? Now, if it is a notorious fact, that the doctrine of final perseverance, where cordially received, *does not* cut the sinews of exertion in the good cause, but on the contrary invigorates them; then the above objection is 'worse than worthless.'

'Where your treasure is there will your heart be also,' said Jesus to his disciples. It is an egregious mistake, to suppose that when the heart is set with ardor on a desired object, *assurance of success* in pursuit of that object, produces carelessness and sloth in the use of the appointed means. We have an example. Gen. xxvii. 10—22. Jacob took leave of his father's house to go to a land of strangers. The occasion was mournful, the father whom he left was aged and blind, the kind affectionate mother from whom he parted was fast sinking under a load of years, the cause of his departure, was to escape from the wrath of his brother—his only brother. On foot and unattended he commenced his lonesome journey. How throbb'd his full heart, as he cast a farewell look over the scenes of his childhood, and saw that mansion, where he had spent the morning of life, retiring in distance from his view. 'Shall I ever return to this lovely spot? What reception awaits me in the land to which I go? Oh what ravages may death make in you dear dwelling, before I see it again!' When night overtook him, he lay down, with the earth for his bed, a stone for his pillow, the heaven for his covering. There he was blessed with a vision of the Almighty. 'Behold, a ladder set upon the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven;' and behold, the angels of God ascending and descending on it; and behold, the Lord stood above it and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac. And behold, *I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.*' How did Jacob act after receiving this *absolute promise* of God? Did he feel that all motives to activity were taken away? Did he say, well, the Lord has promised to 'be with me,' and to 'keep me in all places whither I go;' and to 'bring me again to this land;' and declares that 'he will not leave me until he has done all that he has spoken,' and therefore, I will just fold my arms and sit down, and not take another step in my journey? Did Jacob act thus? No, 'Jacob vowed a vow, saying, if God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God.' And he 'went on his journey,' with a firmer step, and a lighter

heart, and stronger motives to exertion than he possessed before.

Take another example. At an early period of our country's history, there was one, she was a wife and a mother, taken by the savages, carried far, far into the pathless wilderness, and there retained in captivity. But neither the distance of the way, nor the vigilance of her foes could prevent her thoughts of affection from travelling back to the fire-side from which she had been taken, to visit the friends of her love; and when imagination returned with its report of the deep, inconsolable grief of her husband, and the prattle of her little babes about their lost mother, the tears that hurried down her cheek, told of the emotions within. It was dark; and the guard that surrounded her had sunk in sleep, when, by the wonderful providence of God, she escaped from confinement and turned her face toward her home. One gleam of hope cheered her soul for a moment; but presently new dangers appeared; the wolf howled upon the hill and was answered by the shrill scream of the panther. The way was long, the mountains she had to pass were rugged and high, the rivers broad and deep. Morning would betray her steps, and the furious swift-footed Indian, with scalping knife and tomahawk would pursue for vengeance. Thus was extinguished that ray of hope which at the first moments of her escape, had dawned upon her prospects, like the beam of a distant star. Now, had the God of Jacob appeared to her as to the Patriarch of old, and pledged his immutable word that he would be her friend, her guide, her protector; that he would preserve her from the jaws of the wolf, from the fangs of the panther and from the scalping knife and tomahawk of the Indian; that he would conduct her over the mountains, and through the rivers and *never leave her* until he had brought her home, to her friends, her husband, her children; would such a promise from the mouth of the great God, have made her feel like folding her arms, sitting down in the wilderness, and not taking another step, or would it have been the strongest possible encouragement to vigorous and persevering efforts. What is the condition of the christian? He is in a wilderness, far from home, surrounded with dangers. Snarcs are spread for his feet, and

“A thousand savage beasts of prey

“Around the forest roam.”

‘Without are fightings, within are fears;’ and in himself, he is feeble as the ‘reed shaken with the wind.’ Follower of Jesus, is the ‘journey too great for thee?’ Wilt thou sink in despair? And shall thy bones be found bleaching in the road that leads to thy Father's house? Hark! Is that the music of heaven that rolls upon the ear of the Zion-bound pilgrim? ‘Fear not thou worm Jacob, I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel. Fear thou not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteous-

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ness. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee, for the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy on thee.'

Such, ye travellers to the New Jerusalem, are the melting declarations your Redeemer hath given of HIS sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love. You know by experience they are not calculated to chill your devotion to HIM, and send you to ramble through the paths of guilt and rebellion until you reach the city of destruction. 'For the love of Christ constraineth us, that we should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again.' Then, 'let us lay aside every weight and every besetting sin, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto JESUS the AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith.

Ye who are without God and without hope in the world, behold the provisions of that gospel which Jesus brought from heaven. No peradventure; no uncertainty as to its blessings; they are the *sure mercies of David*. Amidst the wide-spread miseries which sin has introduced into our world, here is a balm for every wound, a cordial for every fear. O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God; for he will abundantly pardon." Ye thirsty, come to the 'wells of salvation.' Ye hungry, receive the 'bread of life.' Ye votaries of pleasure, here are the joys that never die. Ye whose hearts pant for fame, behold, the crown that fadeth not. Ye sons of want, here are durable riches.' Ye at whose couch pale disease attends, Jesus has immortal health for the soul. Ye dying look to him who is the 'Resurrection and the life.' For the provisions of redeeming love, are 'deep as our helpless miseries are, and boundless as our sins.' Yes, in the gospel there is cordial for the heart even of you dejected and comfortless stranger in the world, to whom so early in life, life has become a burden—whose spirit is withered with the blight of misfortune. Friendless orphan, to thee I speak. Have thy father and thy mother been taken from thee by death? And art thou left alone in the world? And has the world treated thee with cold neglect, and hard-hearted inhumanity? And when distresses crowd upon thee, canst thou find none to sympathize? and to soothe thy troubled soul, dost thou go to the grave of the friends thou hast lost, and sigh and weep, and call on the name of thy departed parents? Friendless orphan, look up to the God of the fatherless. Jesus has consolation for thee. Give thy heart to

HIM. Receive HIM as the portion of thy soul. He will wipe away thy tears. He will adopt thee into HIS holy family. He will give thee pardon, and sanctification, and an eternal interest in HIS love. He will guide you while you live. He will cause all your troubles to work together for your good. He will make you 'more than conqueror' over all the evils that assail you. And "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate you from HIS love."

SYNOD OF TENNESSEE.

PASTORAL LETTER ADDRESSED BY THE SYNOD OF TENNESSEE
TO THE CHURCHES UNDER THEIR CARE.

DEAR BRETHREN:—In reviewing the events of the past year, we meet with much that is calculated to fill our hearts with fervent gratitude to God. Never since the first settlement of our country, have we been allowed the happy privilege of telling you of so much good which the Lord has done within our bounds—never have the prospects of the church appeared so bright and flattering—never has the cause of the Redeemer among us advanced so far in a single year. His doctrines have dropped as the rain—his speech has distilled as the dew upon the souls of the children of men. Let our hearts be lifted up in gratitude and praise to God while we relate some of the special mercies he has bestowed upon us.

We are persuaded it will be a matter of rejoicing to you, as it has been to ourselves, to find that the members of the different Presbyteries which compose this synod, have met together and consulted with brotherly love and harmony of sentiment. Stricter coincidence of sentiment and greater harmony of feeling than have been manifested at our late meetings, could scarcely be hoped for in our present imperfect state. This fact holds a high claim upon our gratitude. It is at all times a subject of profound satisfaction to know that unanimity in the belief of gospel truths prevails among our ministry. But it is peculiarly gratifying to be assured of this fact in our churches at this enlightened day, when we must expect the cause of truth to be assailed by weapons which become formidable in proportion as we advance toward a high state of civilization.

From the reports of the several presbyteries under our care, it appears that the work of God has been specially revived during the last summer in the greater number of the congregations within our bounds. The past summer has been pre-eminently a harvest season—a season of the ingathering of souls. In Union Presbytery seven congregations have been refreshed by the out-pouring of the Spirit. Baker's creek and Grassy valley, the happy subjects of a revival the last year, have again been blessed with considerable additions.—