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THE SERMONS OF JOHN BRINE

**Some Mistakes in a Book of Mr. Johnson's of
Liverpool, Entitled, "The Faith of God's Elect"**

Noted and Rectified:

by John Brine

(London: John Ward, 1755)

*Thou hast given a standard to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth*

— Psa. 60: 4



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SERMON 23

SOME MISTAKES IN A BOOK OF MR. JOHNSON'S OF LIVERPOOL,

INTITLED, *THE FAITH OF GOD'S ELECT, ETC.*
NOTED AND RECTIFIED,

Printed for JOHN WARD, at the King's Arms, in Cornhill, against the Royal-Exchange: And Sold by GEORGE KEITH, at the Bible and Crown, Gracechurch-Street; and by JOHN EYNON, at a Print-Shop, on the North Side of the Royal Exchange. London 1755 [Price Six-Pence.]

I AM sensible that it is a very displeasing Thing, to undertake a Discovery of the Misconceptions of Writer, upon any Subject. And, that there are but Few, who have Temper enough to bear with an Examination of what they publish, without at least some Degree of *undue* Resentment. Notwithstanding, I shall always think myself at full Liberty, to animadvert upon, and point out the Mistakes of any Author, even though he is *my* Friend, provided I am not guilty of Indecency, in my Manner of doing it. And I hope to have such a Guard upon myself, in the following Lines, as not to give Occasion for a *just* Censure of Unfairness and Disingenuity, much less of Rancor and Indecency: And such Freedom I will allow any one to take with me. I have often observed, that our Mistakes, on many Subjects, arise from a *partial* Consideration of the Matter of our Inquiries. For want of examining a Doctrine, in every Point of Light, wherein it is to be viewed, we many Times form very mistaken Conceptions concerning it, and fall into such Notions, relating to the Subject of our Disquisitions, as are, by no means, defensible. Unless I am greatly deceived, unto this Cause are owing, *Most of the Mistakes of Mr. Johnson, in his Treatise, entitled: "The Faith of God's Elect. Which may, chiefly, be summed up under the following Heads, or Positions:*

I. That Grace and Glory might have taken place upon God's Elect, on the Ground of Adoption, without the Intervention of Sin, and Salvation from it.

II. That *Adam* was called *earthy*, in respect to his Mind, as well as his Body: Or that the Apostle called him *earthy*, in Relation to his Person, and Nature.

III. That Grace in the Hearts of the Saints, is not a new Creature.

IV. That Faith, though it hath Activity, it is not an Act.

V. That Faith is not, nor can be a Duty.

VI. That Faith is not purchased by Christ.

VII. That Ministers are not commissioned to preach the Law.

VIII. That they are not to admonish Sinners to leave their Sins, and amend their Lives.

I. *Mr. Johnson thinks, that Grace and Glory might have taken place upon God's Elect, on the Ground of Adoption, without the Intervention of Sin, and Salvation from it.* Thus he speaks: *I cannot conceive any Reason, according to the original Constitution of Things, why Grace and Glory might not have taken place upon God's Elect, according to his everlasting Love in Adoption, supposing Sin, or Salvation, has (had) never had a Being.* ^{f1} The Love of God to his People is from everlasting, and never began, as it will be to everlasting, and will never end. It is invariable, there is no Alteration in it, whatever Changes take place in them. It admits not of Increase, or Decrease. It is not of one Kind now, and of a different Kind hereafter. An Alteration in their State makes no Difference in Divine Love to their Persons. In my humble Opinion, it may be thus defined, *viz. A Will in God, arising from his sovereign and immense Goodness, to do them good, with infinite Delight.* If this is a just Definition of the Love of God to the Persons of his People there can be no proper Reason to take Offence at asserting, that while they are in a State of Unregeneracy, they are interested therein; nor the least Necessity, to distinguish Divine Love, into a Love of *Benevolence*, and a Love of *Delight*. Because, neither the Disposition, nor the Actions, of the Objects beloved, come into Consideration herein, but their Persons only. When they are in a State of Unregeneracy, God approves not of their Disposition, or their Actions, yet he loves their Persons. And when they are regenerated, he approves of their Graces, and delights in their Exercise, and their spiritual Obedience is pleasing to him. But his Love to

their Persons doth not consist therein. It is quite distinct therefrom. And well it is for them, that it is. For, if it was not, the Ruin even of the best of them, would be inevitable. This sovereign, eternal, and invariable Love of God to his Elect, is the Origin of all their Felicity.

That the Elect were made the Sons of God in Predestination, is, I think, a certain Truth, and it is excellently explained by Dr. *Goodwin*, on Eph. 1: 5. That God may choose perfect Creatures, unto the everlasting Enjoyment of himself, render them *impeccable*, by Super-creation-Grace, and make an Addition to their Happiness, by farther Discoveries of his Perfections to them, than that which they enjoy in their State by Creation, are Things unquestionable. For, thus it hath been his sovereign Pleasure to proceed towards the holy Angels. But to imagine, that, that Grace might in this World and take place upon the Elect in this World, and that Glory, which they will enjoy, in the next, without the Intervention of Sin, and Salvation from it, is as great a Mistake, as can be imagined. Nay, the Glory of the Angels themselves had not been what it is, without the intervention of Sin in Men, and Salvation from it. For, herein only is the Lord known, in the endearing Character of the God of ALL GRACE. In this Knowledge will consist the *Summit* of the Happiness, both of Angels and The Church, for evermore. And I am resolved to have no Dispute with Mr. *Johnson*, or any other Man, about Grace, or Glory, whereof the Evangelical Revelation makes no Discovery. Men may, if they choose it, please themselves with Thoughts of Grace and Glory, that might have taken place on God's Elect, without the Being of Sin and Salvation from it; but, I think, they must be at a Loss, to determine what that Grace and Glory are. This I am sure of, it cannot be the Grace of the Gospel, nor that *eternal Glory*, unto which, God of his infinite Mercy calls his Elect. And, therefore, they shall never be the Matter of my Contest with any Man.

1. Without the Intervention of Sin, Evangelical Grace could not have been exercised towards, nor taken place upon the Elect. The Patience and Forbearance of God towards them while in a State of Rebellion against him, which how great it is, no Tongue can express, nor Mind conceive, had never been, if Sin had not overspread our Nature. The Communication of Holiness to us, had not been an Act of sovereign, and infinite Mercy, if we had not lost our original Purity by Sin, regenerating Grace could not have taken place in the Elect, without their Apostasy from God. If they had not become dead in Sin, the *Riches* of Divine Mercy, manifested in quickening them, would for ever have lain concealed. And, if Sin had not

a Being, as an active Principle, in the Hearts of God's Elect, after their Regeneration and Conversion, how could the Kindness and Mercy of God have been exercised towards them, in passing by their numerous Provocations, in healing their Backslidings and in maintaining the good Work in their Souls, in Opposition to their impetuous and raging Lusts? Yea, without the Intervention of Sin, the whole Work of the Blessed Spirit, in enlightening, quickening, comforting, sanctifying, witnessing, and establishing them, had never been, or taken place in their Hearts. Which, next unto that of the Redemption of our Persons, by the Sufferings and Death of the Son of God, demands our Wonder and highest Praises. Besides, if Sin had never been, God had not *commended* his Love to us in the Gift of Christ for us, to redeem us from our Iniquities, and save our Souls from Destruction. The infinite Riches of Grace in pardoning us, would not have been displayed: Nor should we have ever known the Grace of Christ, in the Character of a Redeemer. Who, *though he was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through his Poverty might be made rich*. The noblest Effect of Divine Love, and infinite Wisdom, without the Intervention of Sin, could never have taken place, *viz.* our Redemption by Christ. Which is *the Wisdom of God in a Mystery, the hidden Wisdom, which he ordained, before the World, to our Glory*. Farther, without our Breach of the Covenant of Works, that wise and holy Constitution, could not have had that Honour done unto it, which it hath by our Lord's Subjection to it, and the exact Fulfilment of all its sacred Precepts, in the Character of our Surety. We had never stood before God, our righteous Judge, in a Righteousness of infinite Value and Splendor, as now we do, if we had not been unrighteous in ourselves. What Place would there have been, for the Grace of free Justification, by the Obedience of Christ, if we had retained the Perfection of our Nature, and punctually obeyed the Law, in our own Persons? None at all. Nor could the Bestowment of eternal Life have been an Act of Justice, as well as an Act of Kindness and Grace, on any other Foundation, than that of the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to us. The Reign of Grace, unto eternal Life, is through Righteousness: Or the Justice of God is as clearly seen, in this Way of our enjoying everlasting Bliss as the exceeding Riches of his Kindness, and in no other could it be so. In a word, this Position entirely evacuates the whole Grace of the Gospel. As to Favour, which Mr. *Johnson* may think might have been extended towards the Elect, without the Entrance of Sin, it could not be that Grace, any Branch of it, whereof the Gospel is so glorious a Discovery. And, it is what God never intended to extend unto

them, nor had the least Place in the Divine Counsels. And, therefore, I will not have any Debate with him, or any other Person, about it: But am determined to be silent concerning it, as I will be of every other Thing, which is not revealed. Since it is not Evangelical Grace, Mr. *Johnson*, and others with him, may exercise their Thoughts, as much as they please, concerning it, but I will not be so employed.

2. That eternal Glory, unto which God calls his Elect, could not be enjoyed without the Intervention of Sin. The future Felicity of the Saints will very much consist, in the perfect Knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent. And, therefore, therein, Respect must be had unto Salvation, from Sin, and its Consequences, which was the important End of Christ's Mission. In the blissful World, we shall have clear Conceptions of the federal Transactions of the Divine Persons, and of those mutual Obligations, they came under to each other, relating to our Recovery, and Happiness. The Father, required Service of the most important and difficult Nature to be performed by Christ, as our Surety, promised a glorious Reward on that Condition. Christ consented to the Will of the Father, and thus the Obligation was mutual between them. Christ became obliged to fulfill the Father's Will, by his own voluntary Engagement, and the Father, by his Promise to Christ, brought upon himself an Obligation to bestow the Reward he promised; and, the Blessed Spirit undertook, in this federal Transaction, to reveal and apply to the Elect, what the Father purposed, and Christ obtained. And, this Agreement on his Part brought an Obligation on him, to come into the Hearts of the Elect, and operate in them, at the Will of the Father, and the Will of the Son. And, thus, as their Engagements were mutual, their Obligations to each other are so. Now, as our Salvation was the *grand* Affair settled and secured, by these federal Transactions, between the Divine Persons, it is most clear, that the Knowledge of this gracious Compact could not be comprised, in the future Glory of the Elect, without the Intervention of Sin. The Being of that is necessarily supposed, in this everlasting Covenant, which the Blood of it, obtains the Remission of, and that is Sin. And, therefore, if distinct, clear, and perfect Conceptions of these mutual Engagements of the Divine Persons; in our Favour, will be a Part of the Glory, which the Saints, will possess, in Heaven. Which surely no Christian will deny; then, it must undeniably be granted, that without the Being of Sin, it was impossible, that this Glory, should ever take place, in God's Elect. Again, the Divine Perfections, without the Intervention of Sin, could not possibly have been displayed, in *such* a Manner, as they

are, in our Salvation from it. Divine Sovereignty hath a most illustrious Shine herein. It was the highest Act of Sovereignty to ordain the human Nature, unto a Union with the Divine, in the Person of the Son of God. By Virtue of which Union, Christ, as Man, was invested with a Right to Dignity and Glory, far superior to that which Angels, or Saints, will ever enjoy. Some perhaps will say, this might have been, without a Purpose in God, to permit of the Entrance of Sin. Be it so, that this was possible, yet, it is evident, that such was not the Divine Intention; and, therefore, our Reasoning upon it, I think, to say no more, can answer no important End. But the Subject, which we are upon, will by no means permit our Thoughts to stop here. For, that is heavenly Glory, as it is a Perception of the Display of the Divine Attributes, in the Business of our Salvation, and, consequently, our Ideas must be carried farther. And, therefore, I add, Divine Sovereignty exercised itself, in a very eminent Manner, in determining, that Christ, who was raised above the Condition of a mere Creature, by his personal Union with the Son of God, should come under our Obligation to the Covenant of Works, obey it for us, bear our Guilt, suffer its Curse, and endure the whole Punishment, our Crimes demerited. Thus Sovereignty provided the Victim, by which Divine Justice, was to be satisfied, for our Sins. It was acted upon the greatest Personage, and its Resolutions concerning him, for the full Manifestation of itself, were carried to the utmost Extent. Christ was the grandest Subject, the sovereign Will of God could form any Purposes about, and his Determinations relating to him, are such, as gave no *Parallel*, nor possibly can have. As our Blessed Lord, the Subject, on whom this Divine Attribute exercised itself, was far superior to all, in Greatness and Dignity; so the Resolution of the *absolute* Will of God, was, to demand *such* Submission from him, as *never* was, nor *ever* will be required of any Creature. Sovereignty first exalts him, as Man, unto the highest Glory, in a personal Union, with the Son of God, and then resolves upon his *deepest* Abasement. It made all Things his in Right: and determined that, for a Season he should not have any Thing in Possession.

Again, Grace, Kindness, and Mercy, have a most illustrious Display, in this whole Business. It was with a direct View to the Salvation and Happiness of Criminals, that Sovereignty in God, formed the Resolutions above-mentioned. The Persons, in whose Favour these Resolutions were taken, had nothing to recommend them to him. No Disposition, whereof he could approve, and were incapable of performing any Actions, acceptable to him. And, therefore, Goodness, Grace, and Mercy, alone

gave Rise to those *amazing* Purposes. Whether, the *Freeness*, or the *Abundance* of Divine Grace, in this sovereign Constitution, is most to be admired, perhaps, is not a Point to be determined by any Creature. However, both, I am sure, demand our holy Adoration; and will be the Matter of the highest Joy and Wonder, in the Saints, for evermore.

Besides, the justice of God shines forth, in *full Blaze*, in this sovereign Appointment. Divine indignation against Sin is manifested, in the Perdition of apostate Spirits, and sinful Men. But, in the Debasement of the Son of God, and in the Infliction of Punishment on him for our Crimes, there is a far greater Discovery of the Divine Resentment against Sin, than there is, in that Penalty, which they will suffer unto Eternity. For, both the Dignity of Christ's Person, and the Interest, which he had, in the Love of God, beyond all others, are to be taken into Consideration, as well as the Weight of those Sufferings, which he endured for our Sins; all which taken together, show the infinite Indignation of God, against moral Evil, unto the utmost. Which was not possible to be done in any other Way.

Moreover, infinite Wisdom is no less conspicuous in this sovereign Appointment. It became God, in pardoning Sin, and saving Sinners, to provide for the Honour of his Law, which is violated, and to secure the Rights of his offended Justice, as well as magnify the Riches of his Mercy. All which are fully and effectually done herein. The Law is *magnified and made honorable*, and the Demands of Justice are answered by the Sufferings and Death of Christ, as our Surety. And, free, rich Mercy illustriously shines, in the Gift of Christ for us. It cannot be said, that God, in our Salvation, *connives* at Evil, or makes *Allowances* for the moral Imperfections of his Creatures. He pardons their Iniquities indeed, but not without *taking Vengeance on their sinful Inventions*, and that most awfully, in the Person of our Savior. And, what a wonderful Discovery of Divine Wisdom was there, in ordaining the human Nature unto a personal Union with the Son of God, that it might be his own, in a peculiar Manner? Hence, it was *absolutely* at the Disposal of his Divine Will, and under its Direction in all Things. And, therefore, it was impossible, that his human Will, in any Instance, should act counter to his Divine Will. This, O this, is the deepest of all God's Designs! And all the infinitely holy Properties of his Nature, by this Constitution, shine out in their full Splendor. This is that *manifold Wisdom of God*, which astonishes Angels, and will fill the Church with rapturous Delight, *in the Ages to come*. Now, future Glory will consist, in an immediate, clear, and perfect Vision of the

infinitely glorious Perfections of God, as they are thus displayed, in our Salvation. And, therefore, it must be a great Mistake to think, that Glory, that is to say, *this Glory*, which the Gospel is a Revelation of, might have taken place upon the Elect, if Sin, and Salvation from it, had never had a Being. I say now, as I said before, concerning Grace, if Glory of *another Kind* is meant, than that which the Gospel reveals, I will have no Concern with it, nor any Debate about it, with Mr. *Johnson*, or any other Person. Let it be what it may, I dare say, that it *never* came into the Mind of God, to confer it on his Elect; and, therefore, I think myself fairly excusable, in refusing to attend unto the Consideration of it. I suppose, that Mr. *Johnson* had in his Thoughts, the *supralapsarian* Way of Rating the Doctrine of Election, and for want of considering the whole Decree of Election, as viewed in that Point of Light, he fell into this great Mistake.

Notwithstanding, God, in that Decree, considered the Persons, of whom he made Choice, unto the Fruition of himself, as *unfallen*; yet, his End, in that Choice, being the Display of the Riches of his Mercy, his Will to permit the Entrance of Sin, is necessarily supposed therein; because without that, this End designed in their Election could not be accomplished. And, therefore, it is easy to observe, that though, in Election, God might view the Objects of that gracious Decree, as in the *pure Mass*, yet he could not decree to confer that Grace and Glory on them, which the Gospel reveals, without a Will to permit the Being of Sin, and their Ruin, in Consequence thereof.

These *deep* Things of God, I know, in our *sad* Times, are slighted by many Professors, and considered as *speculative* Notions, that are of no Moment at all. Which is not a favorable Symptom of their being *made meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*. I am certain, that if to Heaven they come, quite other Apprehensions must take place in their Minds. For, without that, it is impossible they should ever unite with the Blessed, in adoring the Perfections of God, as they shine forth in there *sublime*, and *mysterious* Truths, to the holy Wonder, Joy, and Adoration of Angels, and Saints, unto Eternity.

Seeing these Things are the Matter of my present Meditations, I cannot but take Notice of a Conjecture of the *learned* and *ingenious* Mr. *Ray*, which with great Modesty, indeed, he delivers. But I think it is a very great Mistake. He speaks thus: *And truly, I do not know, but that the Sins of the Blessed may be blotted out, even of their own Memories. — I am inclinable sometimes to imagine, that the Soul of Man can hardly be*

entirely happy, unless it be as it were dipped in Lethe. For every sinful Action having a natural Turpitude in it, and being dishonorable, how can the Memory and Thought of it, but beget such an ungrateful Passion as Shame, even to Eternity? ^{f2} I can by no means concur with him in this Thought; because, if we should ever forget that we were Sinners, we could not then retain a Remembrance of our Redemption from our Sins by the Blood of Christ. And, surely, that shall never be the case with the Blessed. If it should, Heaven will not be that, which, holy Souls expect to find it. It is true, that there is a natural Turpitude in Sin, and it is most dishonorable; but the ungrateful Passion of Shame, at the Remembrance of our Sins, will be prevented taking place in our Minds, by that View, which we shall then have, of the Glory, which redounds to God, in the Remission of them, through the Blood of his Son. Doubtless, we shall always be fully sensible, that Shame and Confusion were our just Due, and that will excite in us adoring Thoughts of Divine Grace and; Mercy, which, notwithstanding, railed us unto a State of Dignity and Bliss. I am so far from assenting unto this Conjecture, that I am of the same Opinion with Dr. *Owen*, who says: *Even the very Remembrance of Sin is sweet unto them; when they see God infinitely exalted and admired in the Pardon thereof.* ^{f3} Not Sin in itself no: Nor the Thought of our having committed Sin. God forbid, that any should imagine this. But the Consideration of the Being of Sin, as an Occasion of God's bringing infinite Glory to himself, in the Way of our Salvation from it:

Mr. *Johnson* rightly observes, that *Sin, in its own Nature, cannot possibly be of any Use to any Being. That it is what God hates; and it is what makes every Creature miserable, where it takes place. And Sin alone makes Salvation needful: Without which no Salvation could have been.* These Things are true. It is certain, that no sinful Act, as such, can be productive of Good. The most precious Benefits spring from the Crucifixion and Death of Christ. But those Benefits are not Effects arising from the Sin of the *barbarous Jews*, who crucified, and put him to Death. Fruits they are of what Christ suffered; but the sinful Actions of the *Jews*, which they put forth upon him in his Sufferings, had not the least causal Influence in the Production of those Fruits. They are the proper Effects of the *wise, and holy* Constitution of God, of the Matter of his Sufferings, and of the infinite Dignity of the Person of the Blessed Sufferer. So that the sinful Actions of his Murderers had no *Efficiency* at all, in the Production of the happy Effects of his Death. They wholly spring from that which he suffered, and not in the least from the criminal Acts of those

by whom he did suffer. And though, upon the Commission of Evil, great Humiliation, Self-abasement, and Indignation against Sin, may arise in the Mind of a good Man, as they did in *David*, for Instance; yet, the sinful Act, or Acts committed, have no Efficiency in producing those good Effects. The Grace of God taking Occasion from the Sin committed, to operate on the Mind, in a Way of holy, spiritual, and gracious Conviction, works these desirable Effects. It is not Sin, that humbles the Soul; but Divine Grace, effecting a proper Sense of its evil Nature in the Mind, after the Commission of it, lays the Soul low. We cannot use too great Caution, in the Manner of expressing ourselves on this Subject. Perhaps, some have not been so *wary*, as might be wished, in their Mode of speaking on it; and Expressions may have dropped from them, which are capable of an *ill* Construction, (which ought always to be avoided) though their Meaning was *good* and *sound*. This by the bye. These Things, though true, do not at all serve that Purpose, for which Mr. *Johnson* urges them, to prove, that Grace and Glory might have taken place upon the Elect, if Sin had never had a Being. For, what though hath no *causal* Influence into that Grace and Glory, which are conferred on God's Elect, as the Effect of his most *holy*, *wise*, and *gracious* Counsels? it does not therefore follow, that, that Grace, and that Glory, which they do, and shall receive, might have been communicated to them, without the Intervention of Sin. This is so plain a Point, that I will not affront the Understanding of the Reader, by attempting any farther the Proof of it. This I must say upon the Whole, that I do not know, that he could possibly have fallen into a greater Mistake on the Subject, than this Position contains. Of that thus far. I proceed to the next,

II. That Adam was called earthy, in Respect to his Mind, as well as his Body: Or, that the Apostle calls him earthy, in Relation to his Person, and Nature. His Words are these: *But this Holiness wrought in Creation, fulfilled in the earthy Man; and could only be such a Resemblance of, and Nearness to God, as an earthy Nature was capable of.*^{f4} I think, that by the Nature of *Adam*, Mr. *Johnson* must mean, not his Body, in a *distinct* Consideration from his *intellectual* Part; but his Person, as constituted of *both*. If his Meaning is only this, that *Adam* is called the *earthy Man*, with Respect to his Body, in Distinction from his Mind, his Reasoning on the Place loses all its Force. For, his Design is to prove by it, that the Holiness of *Adam*, was inferior to that of Angels, and Saints. Now, it is possible that a reasonable Soul may be the Subject of the *greatest* Holiness, in Union with a Body, whose Original is Earth, and which is not yet

spiritualized. I am persuaded, that the Holiness of Christ was as great, when he stood *crowned with Thorns*, as it is, now he sits *at the right Hand of God*, and *is crowned with Glory*. He was as holy when he bled, bowed, and died on the Cross, as he is now in the immediate Presence of the Divine Father. He is not more holy, now he is in Heaven, than he was, when he dwelt upon the Earth. The Purity of his Nature was then the very same. But, during that Time, his Body was not *Spiritualized*. It was then not *Spiritual*, but *natural*. This Assertion reflects no Dishonor on the Blessed Jesus. God forbid, that I should ever affirm any Thing, that is dishonorable to him, who is, on all Accounts, most worthy of the highest Praises from Angels, and the Church for evermore. This Subject is of great Importance, and demands our *diligent* Consideration. It seems to me, that Mr. *Johnson* hath been too *superficial* in his Inquiry into it, which occasioned his Mistake upon it. The Scope of the Apostle, in the Place referred unto, is to prove two Things, *viz.* that there is a natural, and a spiritual Body, contained in this Proposition: *There is a natural Body, and there is a spiritual Body*. The Proof of the former is a Divine Testimony: *And so it is written, The first Man Adam was made a living Soul*. The curious Machine of the Body of Man being formed out of the Earth, the great Creator endowed it with Life and Activity. *He breathed into his Nostrils the Breath of Life; and the Man became a living Soul*. The Body of *Adam*, thus formed, and animated with Life, was *natural*. As it was of the Earth, so its Life was to be maintained by the Fruits of the Earth. The Proof of the latter, is the Apostle's own Assertion concerning Christ, under infallible Direction: *The last Adam was made a quickening Spirit*. This is to be understood of the Body of our Blessed Lord; for if it is not, it can be no Proof, that there is a *spiritual* Body. Besides, as the Apostle speaks of the Body of the first *Adam*, in the former Phrase, it is reasonable to think, that in this, he speaks of the Body of the last *Adam*. The Body of the one, and the Body of the other, are the Subject of his Discourse. To prevent a Mistake, in Relation to Christ's Body, or lest it should be thought, that his Body was not *natural*, but *spiritual*, in its Production, he subjoins unto this Assertion: *Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterwards, that which is spiritual*. And, therefore, the Body of our Savior was first *natural*, as ours is, and afterwards it was made *spiritual*, as ours shall also be. And the Subject on which the Apostle discourses, determines, when the Body of Christ was made *spiritual*; that is, the Resurrection, and, consequently, Christ's Body, before his Resurrection, was not *spiritual*, but *natural*. Its Production,

indeed, was *supernatural*; but notwithstanding that, as to its Nature, it was the same with ours, though absolutely free from that *ill* Temperament, and those corrupt Qualities, whereof our Bodies are now the Subjects. In order to prove the Propriety of this great Change in the Body of Christ, the Apostle proceeds to observe the vast Difference between him, and the first Man, in Dignity. *The first Man. is of the Earth, earthy: The second Man is the Lord from Heaven.* Our Savior being truly Divine, who took our Nature into Union with himself, it was fit, when he had finished that Work therein, which he undertook, that his Body should pass under this *amazing* Change in its Resurrection, that so it might be capable of enjoying, in Union with his Soul, that State of Glory, to which, as Man, he was ordained, and unto which his personal Union with the Son of God gave him a proper Right. According to that Scope, which the Apostle hath in View, *viz.* the Glory of the Members of Christ, as well as his personal Glory, upon his Resurrection from the Dead, he farther observes, that: *As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.* As we have natural, mortal, and corruptible Bodies, from the first Man, who was of the Earth, earthy; so we shall have *spiritual, immortal, and incorruptible, or heavenly* Bodies, from Christ, who is *heavenly*, and a *quickening Spirit*. And, therefore, *as we have borne the Image of the earthy, we shall also bear the Image of the heavenly.* As our Bodies are like the Body of the first Man, in Death, and the Grave, by reason of our being Members of him; so our Bodies shall be like to the glorified Body of Christ, because of our Union with him, as a living Head, when they are raised from the Dead.

No Countenance is given, in any Part of the Apostle's Reasoning on this important Subject, unto this Imagination, that *Adam* was *earthy*, in Respect to his Mind, as well as his Body. That Part of him, only, was *earthy, which was of the Earth*. And that was not his intellectual Part, but his Body. And, therefore, it is a great Mistake in Mr. *Johnson* to think, that the first: Man is called earthy, in Relation to his Nature, as it consisted of Body and Mind. For that Epithet respects him only in his inferior Part, the Body. Nor is it just, and agreeable to Truth, to conceive, that a reasonable Soul, in Union with a natural Body, is incapable of possessing Holiness, in the highest Degree. Christ was as holy, while his Body was natural, as he is, now his Body is *spiritual*. Low Thoughts are not to be admitted, concerning the Holiness of the Nature of Man, in Creation. If we *depreciate* our *original* Purity, it must be at the Expence of *infinite Wisdom, Goodness, and Holiness*; and, therefore, we ought to be

most careful, that we advance, or suggest nothing, which hath the least Tendency to lessen our primitive Perfection. Those who are much acquainted with Theological Debates on the Subject, well know by what Sort of Men this is done, to the Dishonor of their Creator. Let us not give any Advantage unto their *wretched Abominations* herein. But, on the contrary, let us maintain, and defend, the Perfection and Glory of our Nature, in its original State.

I freely grant, that there are various considerable Differences between that holy Principle, which was concreated with *Adam*, and connatural to him, and that Principle of Holiness, which is implanted in the Souls of God's Elect. That was derived from God, as Creator: This springs from him, as the God of all Grace.

That was the Effect of Divine Benevolence to him, as a Creature: This is a Gift of *special* and *peculiar* Favour, and is by no means due. It was not an Act of the *sovereign* Will of God to create *Adam* holy, the infinite Holiness of his own Nature made it necessary to him, and he could not do otherwise. But to communicate Holiness to an apostate Creature, it is free to the Divine Will, to resolve upon it, or not, just as it seems good to the Lord. For, no Divine Perfection requires, or makes it necessary. That, as to its Conservation, depended on the free Will of *Adam*, without a *determining* Influence upon it by God, in a Way of *peculiar* Favour. This, in Respect to its Preservation, is wholly dependent on a continual and gracious Influx from God, in the Character of *the God of all Grace*. And, therefore, it is impossible, that it should be lost, as our original Holiness was. That holy Principle rendered *Adam* capable of living unto God, and enjoying Communion with him, agreeably to the Nature of the Covenant of Works, under which he was. This gracious Principle fits us for living unto God, and enjoying Communion with him, on the Plan of the Covenant of Grace, wherein all the Divine Perfections have their *brightest* Display. And, therefore, it is a Life more *noble* and *sublime* in its Nature, than that which *Adam* possessed in his State of Creation. These Differences may all be granted, without degrading, in the least, our original Purity.

III. Mr. Johnson is of Opinion, that Grace in the Hearts of the Saints is not a new Creature. Upon this Subject, he writes in a very *inaccurate*, *confused*, and *inconsistent* Manner. Speaking of Grace in the Heart, he says: *If the Principle wrought, did subsist in the Man's self, without immediate Communication from God, it would be the proper Work of the*

Man to actuate that Principle. ^{f5} Since he calls Grace a Principle, one would imagine, that he thinks, that it is an inherent Spring of Action in the Saints; but he does not. For he affirms, that *the spiritual Grace, or Life of Faith, which the Saints enjoy, is not inherent in themselves.* ^{f6} Hath this Principle then no Subject, in which it inheres? Or is it in God? Or in Christ? In one Place, he expresses himself in such an *unguarded* Way, as might induce his Reader to conceive, that he hath such an Apprehension, *strange* as it is. His Words are these: *Nor can this transcendent, glorious Grace come within the Compass of a Duty: But is, from first to last, altogether perfect, infinite, eternal, unchangeable, heavenly, and divine.* ^{f7} This *unaccountable* Assertion needs no Comment, to prove, that he means Grace, which is communicated to us, and not Divine Love, from which it flows: For, none imagine Love in God to be the Creature's Duty. The Origin from which that Grace springs, which the Elect of God receive, is indeed infinite, eternal, and unchangeable; but it is impossible, that, that Grace, which is received by them, should be so. I think it is clear, that Mr. *Johnson* understands by Principle, in this Place, and by Grace in the other, the self-same Thing. Now, that no infinite, eternal Principle can be inherent in us, it is most certain; and, therefore, his Words are sufficient to tempt one to imagine, that he conceives, that this Principle is not in us, though received by us, but in God himself. If it is not, it can't be infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in its Nature; for nothing out of God can possibly be so. We are capable of perceiving which is infinite, *etc.* but it is *impossible*, even to Almighty Power, to work that in us, which is *infinite*.

Though he speaks of Grace in the Soul, as a Principle, yet he does not allow it to be such; but calls it *imaginary*. His Words are these: *For that imaginary Principle itself, must be a distinct Creature. And I know, this is the Way that some Persons speak, of a new Creature in the Man: Instead of speaking in the Scripture Style: If any Man be in Christ, he is a new Creature. But if this imaginary Creature be not perfect, it is not the Work of God; and if it be perfect, the Man must have Perfection in himself, and can neither seek, draw, nor receive Grace from Christ: For, that which is full; and that which is full can hold no more.* ^{f8} Why does he first speak of Grace, as a Principle, and afterwards pronounce it *imaginary*? I cannot reconcile these Things. This gracious Principle is indeed *distinct*, though not *Separate* from the Mind, in which it is. It is not the Soul itself; but it is *Spirit*, or a spiritual Nature, in the Soul, which is *born of the Spirit*. It is not the human Mind itself, that is born of the Spirit; but a vital and heavenly Principle, or Spring of holy Operation, in the Mind, from which

all spiritual Acts arise. That which is born of the Spirit, was not before its Birth. The Soul, wherein the new Birth is, was before that Birth, and, therefore, that Birth cannot be the Production of the Soul itself; but it must be the Production of something in the Soul, which was not in it before. And the same holds true, in Relation to this Work, as it is a *new* Creation. That which is created, was not before that Creation of it; the Soul was before this new Creation, and, consequently, it cannot be the Production of the Soul; but it must be the Production of something in the Soul, which was not in it, before that creating Act took place; and, that something is the *new Man*, or *new Creature*. Our being the Subjects of this new Creation, gives us the Denomination of new Creatures. Which Denomination, by no means supposes, that our Minds are produced in this Creation, for they were before; but something is produced in our Minds, by this new Creation, which was not in us until that Time. And this blessed Work is perfect in *its Nature*. No Defect attends it, in *its Kind*; though, it is not in its Degrees, what it will be, when it is ripened into Glory.

We are the Subjects of this Divine Work of Regeneration, and *new* Creation, and, therefore, we are very properly said to be born again, and to be *the Workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works*. But, that which is produced in this *new* Birth, and *new* Creation, is not our Mind; but a holy, spiritual Habit, or Principle, from which all Acts of a spiritual Nature take their Rise. The Flesh, which is its contrary, is inherent in us, and this also is an inherent Principle in us. And, as they are opposite in Nature, so there is a Contest between them, and their Opposition is mutual. A Believer hath that in him, which is perfect in *its Nature*, but not in its Degrees. And, therefore, it can't be said, that he hath Perfection in himself, because Perfection not only implies, that which is perfect in its Nature; but also its full Proportion, and a Freedom from that which is contrary to that good and holy Principle. And, consequently, a Saint may derive Grace from Christ, to increase the Vigor of that gracious Principle, which is in him. Lust in the Heart is *equally* evil at all Times, whether its Acts are more, or less vigorous: And so Grace, or the spiritual Principle, is at all Times *equally* holy; but its Actings, as to Strength and Vigor, are variable. Sometimes *more*, and sometimes *less* intense. Surely, an Addition may be made to that, which is not perfect in its Degrees, though it is in its Nature. And Grace in the Saints, though it is perfect in the latter Sense, it is not in the former. I confess, that I am ashamed to dwell thus on a Matter, that is so plain, and easy to be understood. I will,

therefore, proceed to consider another Mistake of the Author's, which is this:

IV. That Faith, though it hath Activity, it is not an Act. He says, *I know Faith is an active Principle.* ^{f9} Aye, does he know, that Faith is a Principle? Why then does he deny, that it is inherent in the Saints? If it is a Principle, it must be in some Subject, or else it subsists of itself. If it inheres not in some Subject, and in itself hath proper Existence. And if it is itself a Substance, and hath proper Existence distinct from the Saint, as it must have, if it is not inherent in him: Then it is not the Saint who believes but this Substance, which is distinct from him, and is not inherent in him. This is *amazingly* strange! and is absolutely beyond the Power of my Understanding, to reconcile with Truth, Sense, and Mr. *Johnson* himself. *I am very sensible,* adds he, *there is (are) what may be called Acts of Faith.* ^{f10} But he does not allow those Acts to be properly our Acts. *The Soul ascends towards Christ, not as its own proper Act,* says he. *Believing in, cleaving to, embracing, and resisting (relying) upon Christ for Life and Salvation, are not Acts of the Person in a proper Sense.* ^{f11} He is very *voluble*, and hath a great *Flow* of Words, where his Ideas are not *many*. It is not, therefore, necessary to quote at large, what he expresses. His whole Meaning may be understood without it. What can Faith be? It is not an inherent Principle, nor properly the Act of the Saint, as Mr. *Johnson* thinks. What then can it be? Is it something which hath a distinct Subsistence from a Person, in whom it is? And are its Acts proper to itself, in Distinction from him? So one would imagine, he thinks; but that he speaks of the Soul's *ascending to Christ, etc.* According to that Account, which this Writer gives of Faith, to the best of my Apprehension, it is a *mere Nullity*. Or, if it is any Thing, it is something in a Person, which hath Subsistence of itself, distinct from him, in whom it is, and none of its Acts are the Acts of the Person; but of this *something*, which is supposed to be in him, and yet is distinct from him, in itself, and in whatever it acts. So that, in Consequence of Faith being wrought in a Man, he does not himself think holily, nor will spiritually; but this *something* in him, (if, in Fact, it is any Thing) which Mr. *Johnson* is pleased to call Faith.

That excellent Grace, in my humble Opinion, is not distinguishable from other Graces, except in its Actings. It seems to me, that spiritual Acts of every Kind, spring from one common spiritual Principle of Operation in the Soul, which is called the *new Man, a new Heart, Spirit, the inner Man,* and the *Mind*. Certain it is, that spiritual Acts are various; but, unless I am

greatly mistaken, they all proceed from one Principle, which is *Spirit*, as it is *born of the Spirit*. Thus, Faith is Thought of its Object, who is Christ, with Trust in him, or Dependence on him, for Life, and Salvation, under a Conviction of our Misery, and Helplessness, in ourselves. Hope is a Perception of the Excellency of spiritual Blessings, with an humble Expectation of receiving them. Love is Thought, with Approbation, and Liking of its Object. Repentance is Thought, with Contrition, Humiliation for, and a Dislike of Sin. Fear is Thought, with Reverence of the Object, unto which Respect is had. Those different Acts spring from the self-same Principle in the Soul, and not from so many distinct Graces. Now, if it is true, that Faith, Hope, Love, Repentance, and Fear, are only distinguishable, as Acts, and not in their Principle, or Root; then it will follow, that there is no such Thing, as Faith, or Love, or Repentance, or Fear, if they are not *properly* Acts. For, if they are not *properly* Acts, they are not *properly* distinguishable; because, as Acts *only*, they are distinct, their Principle being the same. If Thought, and Volition, are not *properly* mental Acts, it can't be said, that a reasonable Soul ever acts at all: Or, properly speaking, when we think, will, and nill, we are not active, but inactive, if Thinking, Willing, and Nilling, are not Acts. If they are Acts, they must be the Acts of that which thinks, wills, and nills; for they cannot be the Acts of something else, which is distinct and separate from that, wherein are Thought, Volition, and Nilling. And, therefore, if it is the gracious Principle in a Believer, as distinct from his Mind, which thinks holily, and will spiritually, those holy Thoughts and spiritual Volitions are not his; but are proper to something, which, though it is supposed to be in him, is really distinct from him. And with that can be, but a *new Soul*, in whose Actings he hath no Concern, for my Part I am not able to devise. If holy Thoughts and Volitions are properly Actions, and the Actions of our Minds, as sanctified by the Grace of God; then, in thinking, and willing, in a holy Manner, in a proper Sense, we act, or those holy Thoughts, and Volitions are our proper Acts.

Indeed, Actions differ, some are involuntary, as the Action of our Lungs in breathing. The Motion of the Humors of our Bodies in Perspiration, and the Motion of the Blood in Pulsation, or beating of the Pulse, neither of which is under the Direction of our Will, and, therefore, they are called involuntary Motions, or Actions. And, some Actions are under the Direction of our Will, as moving my Fingers to write. The Action of my Fingers, now I am writing, immediately follows an Act of my Will, to move them in such a Manner, as is necessary to form the different Letters,

which compose the Words, whereby I express my Meaning. And, my Mind *properly* acts, in direction, as my Fingers move, or act in writing. Therefore, I am *astonished*, that Mr. *Johnson* should argue from the involuntary Motions in our animal Frame, that we are not properly active in Thought, and Volition: Which is what, I think, he must mean, if he hath any Meaning at all. When a Man believes, hopes, loves, repents, and reverences God, he *acts mentally*, in as proper, a Sense, as he does corporeally, when he walks. Walking is the Motion, or Action of his Body, and believing, hoping, loving, repenting, and reverencing God, are the proper Acts of his Mind.

Mr. *Johnson*, unless I mistake him, confounds *actuating* and *acting* Faith. ^{f12} The former is the Work of the Blessed Spirit upon us. For, it is He who actuates, or stirs up that Grace in our Souls by a gracious Influence, The latter, *viz.* the Acting, or Exercise of the Grace of Faith, is *proper* to us. For, the Holy Spirit does not believe; but we ourselves, by Virtue of his Aid. And the Distinction, and Difference of these two Things, is very easy to be conceived of. Mr. *Johnson*, with as much Propriety and Truth, might tell me, that I do not *properly* think, when I really have holy Thoughts, as that Faith is not *properly* my Act, when I believe; because I am actuated in both, by the Spirit of God. He tells us, that he hath no Knowledge, how to go about acting Faith. Does he know how to go about to think, or will? Acting Faith is no other than suitable Thoughts of Christ, and a hearty Choice of him, as God's appointed Way of Salvation. But, perhaps, more than was necessary hath been said on this Subject. I go on to consider his next Mistake,

V. That Faith is not, nor can be a Duty. ^{f13} However strange this may seem, it is a just Deduction from the Premises above-mentioned. For, if Faith is not an Act, it cannot be a Duty. If it is an Act, it certainly is a Duty; except it is a Work of Supererogation, which no Protestant thinks it to be. As it is a Principle, no *Calvinist* asserts, that it is the Duty of Men to acquire it. For, they all maintain that it is infused by the Grace of God, and not acquired. And, therefore, Mr. *Johnson* argues *very impertinently*, in observing, that it is not the Duty of Men to beget, or produce, this holy Principle in themselves. The Author, on whom he animadverts, pleads not for that. The *Socinians*, *Arminians*, and *Baxterians* also, who are consistent with themselves, deny, that the Principle is infused in order to the Act. The late Dr. *Watts*, indeed, allowed of the Infusion of the Principle, in order to the Act; which one Thing *utterly overthrows* that

conditional Provision of Salvation, which he supposed is made for the *Non-elect*. Because, if the Infusion of the Principle is necessary, in Order to the Act, none can believe before the Infusion of the Principle. And, if God will not infuse that Principle into the Hearts of the Non-elect, it is impossible that they should believe. If he will, then they will certainly believe, and their Salvation cannot, be conditional and uncertain; but it must be absolute and certain. Though, it is not the Duty of Men to acquire the Habit of Faith, or to beget and produce that Principle in their Hearts, from which believing Acts spring; yet it is the Duty or those to believe, or act Faith, in whom the Principle is infused.

It is a *false*, and an *unaccountable* Foundation, on which Mr. *Johnson* argues, that Faith is not, nor can be a Duty, *viz. That it is not an Act*. If it is not an Act, it is not distinguishable from Hope, Love, Repentance, or Reverence of God; for all these Graces resolve themselves into one and the same spiritual Principle: They differ not in their Root, though they differ as Acts. He calls Faith *Enjoyment*, ^{f14} and concludes, that it is not *properly*, an Act, because it is Enjoyment. It is true, that when a Saint believes, he enjoys the Divine Presence and Peace, Consolation and Joy, in his Soul; but that is no Proof at all, that the Mind doth not properly act, in a *fiducial* Application to Christ, as a Savior, and in the Appropriation of his Benefits to itself in particular. But, surely, enough is said on this Matter. And, therefore, I proceed to consider the next Position:

VI. That Faith is not purchased by Christ. ^{f15} This is a Subject of the greatest Importance. For, the Grace, of God the Design of Christ, in his Obedience and Death, and his Merit in both, are to be taken into Consideration. I hope, that I shall not advance any thing derogatory to the Honour of Free-Grace on one hand, nor extenuate the Merit of a dear Redeemer on the other. Sometimes such Phrases are used, relating to this Matter, as are not strictly defensible, as they may be understood. For Instance, it hath been said, that *Christ, procured the Favour of God to Men*. If the Satisfaction of Justice is intend in the Phrase, it is true; but if the good Will, and Love of God, is designed by it, it is a great Mistake. For, the Death of Christ did not procure Divine Love; but is itself the Fruit thereof. God loved his People, and, therefore, he gave his Son to die for them. For which Reason, it would be better not to use such Kind of Phrases. They may possibly beget a mistaken idea in the Minds of some. I am sensible, that several very *worthy* Persons scruple to use the Terms, *purchase*, and *purchased*, concerning Grace, and Glory; but upon a

mature Consideration of this Point, I cannot but think, that, without the least Prejudice to the Free-Grace of God, they may be allowed of. And, unless I am mistaken, some who scruple the Use of those Terms, do themselves, in other Modes of speaking, convey the very same Idea, as others, who use these Terms, mean by them. As when they say, that Grace and Glory are communicated to us, through the Righteousness and Blood of Christ: Or, on the Foundation of his Obedience and Death: I am persuaded their Meaning is not, that the Righteousness, and Sacrifice of Christ, are *barely Means* of Conveyance. But, that a *legal* Right to Grace and Glory is obtained for us, by Christ's Obedience and Death. Which, if they do, though they are not free to use the Terms, *purchase*, and *purchased*, they mean that, which others do, who use them, on this Subject. And, therefore, it is not the Thought to which they object; but the Words, whereby it is expressed.

It may be, that some Persons, of *less Accuracy*, have mistaken Conceptions herein; and may think, that because God chose his People, as *unfallen*, or in the *pure Mass*, and gave Grace, and settled the Inheritance of eternal Glory upon them in Christ, as their Representative; that, therefore, all that Christ did, was to remove an Incumbrance, brought by Sin, upon that Grant of Grace and Glory, in him, as a Head. As an Estate may be settled on a Man; but may afterwards be mortgaged, and, therefore, it cannot be enjoyed by him, before that Incumbrance is removed: So some seem to think, that there was a Grant made unto the Elect; of spiritual and eternal Life; but an incumbrance is brought upon that Grant by Sin, and that the Removal of that Incumbrance, is the Whole of what our Savior did, by his Obedience, and Death.

This, in my Apprehension, is a great Mistake, and is built upon a *false Hypothesis*, *viz.* That God not only chose his People in the *pure Mass*, but also made a Grant of Grace unto them, and settled, the heavenly Inheritance upon them in Christ, prior to, and without the Consideration of the Fall, and their Ruin thereby; which ought not by any means to be supposed. For two Reasons, one is, if such a Supposition is true, then God altered his Purpose. He first willed, that the Elect should enjoy Grace and Glory without the Fall, and afterwards determined to permit the Fall, and their Ruin by it. The other is, *that* Grace, and *that* Glory, which the Elect receive from God, necessarily suppose the Entrance, or Intervention of Sin; for neither Grace, nor Glory, could be of *that Kind*, which they are, without Sin took place. This, I think, is most clear, and, consequently, the

Grant of that Grace and *that* Glory, could not be prior to, or without the Consideration of the Fall.

If this is the true State of the Matter, as, in my humble Opinion it is; then the Elect were not invested with a Right to *evangelical Grace*, and *eternal Glory*, considered as *unfallen*; but as involved in Misery and Ruin by the Fall. Not that Sin is *any Cause of that* Grace, and *that* Glory; but it is the Occasion of Divine Goodness displaying itself, in conferring Grace and Glory of *that Kind* upon the Elect, which are, in a way of sovereign Favour communicated to them. The Fall, therefore, did not bring an Incumbrance on that Grant of Grace unto the Elect, and that Settlement of the heavenly Inheritance upon them in Christ; for it was pre-supposed in that Grant, and Settlement. Perhaps, this Point may be more easily conceived by considering the Covenant of Grace, wherein that Grant, and that Settlement, were made. I will, therefore, briefly state it, so far as I apprehend it may serve to set this Affair in a plain and easy Light.

- 1.** In that Covenant God the Father promised Grace and Glory to Christ, for the Elect; or unto them in him on Condition of his doing and suffering, what he, in the Time appointed, did do, and suffer.
- 2.** Christ, on his Part, in this federal Transaction, agreed and consented to do and suffer all that the Father required of him to do and suffer, in order to the Salvation of the Elect. Therefore,
- 3.** This Covenant, though, as it respects the Elect, it is absolute and unconditional, yet, as it respects Christ, their Surety therein, it is properly conditional, and not absolute.
- 4.** Christ's Performance of the Conditions required of him, brings an Obligation on the Father to fulfill all those Promises, which he made to him upon those Conditions: Or, Right to a Participation of all the Benefits promised, respecting Christ, himself, as Head, and the Elect, as his Members, whom he represented, arises from his Performance of those Conditions. This Right, as to us, is wholly free, and unacquired; but, as it respects Christ, our Surety, it is Matter of Debt, and it was *properly* acquired by him. I add,
- 5.** The Sufferings and Death of our Savior properly merit, and justly deserve our Pardon, and Impunity. And his Obedience to the Law for us, deserves all that Grace, which we receive in this World, and all that Glory, which we shall enjoy in the next. So that the Remission of our Sins, on the

Foundation of Christ's Atonement, is an Act of Justice, as well as an Act of infinite Mercy and Grace. And thus also, the Communication of Grace, and eternal Glory, to the Elect, on the Ground of the Imputation of Christ's Righteousness to them, is an Act of Justice. For, it is impossible, that greater Glory should be enjoyed by them, than that infinitely valuable Righteousness *properly* merits, or deserves. A *pecuniary* Price was not indeed paid for our Redemption, and Happiness; but a valuable Consideration, both for our Pardon, and eternal Felicity, was given into the Hand of God, in the Characters of a Law-giver and Judge, by our Blessed Lord. And, therefore, thereby he acquired for us a Right unto both. His everlasting Righteousness gives us a *legal* Title to everlasting Life: As his Death gives us a Claim, on the Foot of Right, unto a Freedom from Condemnation, and eternal Death. Our *perpetual* Justification, by his Obedience, is that Foundation, whereon our endless Bliss securely rests. Some seem to think, that when the Saints are in Heaven, they will be justified in the Sight of God, by their own inherent Perfection, and sinless Obedience to the Divine Will. This, I think, is a Mistake; it supposes, that the Righteousness of Christ will not always be the Matter of our Justification before God; but that our perfectly holy Dispositions, and Acts, in the heavenly State, will then be the Matter of our Justification before him. Thus, I think, it will not be. But that, as we shall come to Heaven, by Virtue of Christ's Righteousness imputed to us; so we shall for ever enjoy that happy State, on the Foundation of the Imputation of that Righteousness to us. *Grace will reign through this Righteousness unto eternal Life.*

Now, when I consider these Things, I am not able to discover any Inconvenience in the Use of the Terms, *purchase*, and *purchased*, concerning Grace, and Glory. If I understand their Import, as used on this Subject, it is only this: That Christ, by his Obedience and Death, obtained for us, a *Right* to Pardon, and a *legal* Title unto the Participation of Grace here, and eternal Glory hereafter. Not that what he did, and suffered, *caused* a Will in God to pardon us, and to bestow Grace and Glory upon us.

The Thought, however, is true, and, I think, the Terms are not *justly* exceptionable. The Thing itself I shall always contend for, as a most important Truth. And I know, that it detracts not at all from the Free Grace of God. For, that is *absolutely* free to us, which cost our Lord *most dear*. As to the Use, or Disuse of the Terms, let others enjoy their Liberty, as

they approve, or disapprove of them. Let but the Thing be maintained, that we have a *legal* Right to Grace and Glory, acquired for us, by what Christ did and suffered, I shall be content.

Mr. *Johnson's* Reason against it is of no Weight, viz. *Whatever is obtained by Purchase, is procured by the Purchaser from some Hand distinct from himself: But Faith proceeds from Christ, as its native Original.* ^{f16} Faith, on this Subject, is put for the whole Grace of Regeneration, or the regenerate Principle. It is true, that, that Principle is derived from Christ, as a Head of Life, and Influence: Which, I suppose, is what Mr. *Johnson* means. It is also true, that it was the Pleasure of the Divine Father, that all Fulness of Grace and Glory should dwell in Christ, in order to be communicated, by him, to the Elect, who are his Members. And it is equally true, that neither Grace, nor Glory, were to be conveyed unto the Elect by Christ, unless he made *Reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlasting Righteousness*. These were the Conditions required of him, in order unto the Communication of that Grace, and that Glory, which were deposited in his Hand: And except *he made his Soul an Offering for Sin*, he was not to *see his Seed* Participants of, either Grace, or Glory. His *Right* to bestow, and the *Right* of the Elect to receive spiritual Blessings from him, did not arise *merely* from the Grant of those Blessings to him for them; but from his Performance of those Conditions, on which that Grant was made. This *Right*, therefore, was his *Acquisition*. And that is all, I think, which is intended by the Terms, *purchase, and purchased*, when used concerning Grace and Glory. If any apprehend, that they are capable of an *ill* Construction, they are at Liberty, for me, to refrain from the Use of them. For my own Part, I confess, that I think they are not. This I shall *strenuously* insist upon, that *Right* to Grace and Glory was *obtained* for the Elect, by the Obedience and Death of Christ. And, that no spiritual Blessing is, or ever will be, communicated to them, otherwise than *through* his Righteousness and Blood, not as *Means of Conveyance*, but as *proper meritorious* Causes. The whole Dispensation of Divine Grace, in the everlasting Covenant, is an *irrefragable* Proof thereof. For, all the Grace of that Covenant, as to its Communication, rests upon, and is secured by Christ's Obedience, and Sacrifice. Nor, is the Freeness of the Grace of God, as the Origin of spiritual Blessings, in the least diminished hereby. Because, it was sovereign Favour, which provided that Righteousness, and that Sacrifice, by which our *Right* to Grace and Glory was obtained, and into which it must be resolved. Those who are much acquainted with the Controversy, relating to the Extent of Christ's Death,

well know, that *Calvinistical* Writers have urged, with great Advantage, against the Universality of his Death, his *purchasing Faith* thereby, for all those, on whose Account he died. By which they mean, if I understand them, Christ's obtaining a *Right* to Faith, or the Grace of Regeneration, for all those, on whose Account he shed his Blood, and, consequently, he did not die for Men universally; because some Men never believe. Whereas, all shall believe, for whom a *Right* to Faith was obtained by his Death. This Argument, in Favour of the limited Extent of Christ's Death, hath not yet been, nor ever will be answered, by any *Arminian*, or *Baxterian*. This is a Knot, which they cannot untie, therefore they cut it: And deny, that he *purchased Faith*, or obtained a Right to Faith, by what he did, and suffered. This Argument is *solid*, and I am determin'd never to give it up. For, I am sure, that it is agreeable unto, and is founded on, the whole Dispensation of the Grace of God in the Gospel. And that it is, what gives unto Christ that Glory, which is his Due, as he is *the Lord of our Righteousness*, and the Author of eternal Redemption.

VII. Mr. Johnson will not allow, that Ministers are commissioned to preach the Law. *Our Commission*, says he, *is not to preach the Law, but the Gospel.*^{f17} By preaching the Law, or the Gospel, I understand, treating of the Doctrines which belong to either. Now, if preaching the Law is not supposed, and included in our Commission, we have no Warrant to preach it. And if we do, we therein exceed our Commission. Can this be true? Surely, it is not, since our Blessed Lord himself preached the Law. Is not his Sermon on the Mount principally, or at least in great Part, an Explication of the Law? Does he not, therein, show its Spirituality and Extent? Does he not vindicate it from the false Glosses, which the *blind Jews* put upon its Precepts? And doth he not assert and maintain its Perpetuity? And demonstrate the Equity and Justice of that Constitution? The Apostle *Paul* followed the Example of his great Master herein. He largely treats of the Law, explains its Nature, asserts its Authority, as a Covenant, and proves, that all Men are in a miserable Condition; because they are justly obnoxious to the Curse of it. Did he herein exceed his Commission? And act a Part, for which he had no Warrant? Can this be thought, since he acted under infallible Direction? Surely it may not be imagined. He preached the Law, as a Covenant to Sinners, in order to their Conviction; he also preached it to Saints, as it is such, that they might clearly see the Greatness of their Misery in themselves, and be excited to adore Divine Favour, which is manifested in their Salvation by Jesus Christ. Again, he preached the Law, as a Rule of Conduct to Believers,

and taught them, that they were not without Law to God, but under the Law to Christ. And, does he, not, in all his Epistles, discourse of the various Duties, which are incumbent on the Saints, and exhort them to the Practice of those Duties? I ask Mr. *Johnson*, if this was preaching the Law, or preaching the Gospel? He will scarcely say it was preaching the Gospel therefore he must allow, that it was preaching the Law: Or say, that it was preaching neither Law, nor Gospel; but something distinct from both, and he knows not what. This *unskillful* Way of writing is not likely to be of any Service to Evangelical Truths; but highly prejudicial, let it proceed from what Cause soever. Whether Error in Judgment, or Want of due Attention, and through Inadvertency. I am truly sorry, that I have just Occasion for making so displeasing a Remark. I have apprehended, ever since I entered upon ministerial Service, that I ought to preach the Law, as well as the Gospel, and still am firmly of the same Opinion. As I care not at all; by whomsoever I am accounted an *Antinomian*, for preaching the Free Grace of God, as the sole and entire Cause of Salvation, without Works, as Conditions thereof: So I am wholly unconcerned, who may reckon me a *Legalist*, for preaching the Law unto an evangelical End. I know, that all preaching the Law is *legal* Preaching, *materially* considered; but to preach it to Gospel Ends, as Christ, and his Apostles, preached it, is not *legal* Preaching, in the *ill* Sense of that Term.

VIII. *One would think, that Mr. Johnson's Opinion is, that Ministers are not to admonish Sinners to leave their Sins, and amend their Lives.*

For he says: *Admonishing Sinners to reform their Lives, to mend their Ways, to practice Virtue and Religion, etc. would not have the least Tendency, to convince, but to reduce them; by causing them to imagine their Salvation depended (depends) on a moral Reformation.* ^{f18} I acknowledge, that Ministers ought by no means to neglect preaching the Gospel, as he observes. I also grant, that in reproving Vice, and recommending Virtue, *etc.* due Care should be taken, that no Countenance be given unto these Imaginations, *viz.* that a *supernatural* Work on the Heart is not necessary, and that Men are to be saved by their own Acts of Obedience. And, it is much to be lamented, that many Preachers only act the Part of moral Philosophers, and not that of Christian Ministers. They flatter Men with Hopes of Happiness, by becoming outwardly virtuous, though Lust reigns within. Which is an open Contradiction to the holy Law of God, and the Gospel of Christ also. But what though admonishing Sinners is done in a wrong Manner by some, it does not therefore follow, that it is wrong *in itself*, and is not to be done at all. Elsewhere he allows,

that *Repentance, and a moral Reformation, are required of Men every where, and that they have sufficient Encouragement thereunto.* ^{f19} Why, therefore, may they not be exhorted unto such Repentance and Reformation? Perhaps he will say, they may and ought to be. Why then does he here express himself in such a *loose, and unguarded Way*? Which, I think, is not to be reconciled therewith. And, it may be, that he will say also, that he is not against preaching the Law, though that is not his Commission. Since he says, that *our Work is to strike at the Root: To open the Purity and Perfection, Extent and Intent, Perpetuity and Severity of God's holy Law.* ^{f20} If that is not to preach the Law, I am yet to learn, what preaching the Law is. For my Part, I cannot reconcile these Things. It may be, Mr. *Johnson* can.

I cannot be persuaded to think, as he does, that it is a *very, easy Thing for a carnal Man, to comply with Admonitions, and practice Duties which are recommended to him.* ^{f21} My Opinion of the Corruption of human Nature, prevents my concurring with him in this Thought. I dare to affirm, notwithstanding all the *fine* Things, which are spoken of our reasonable Nature by many, that it is not a very easy Thing for Men to abstain from Vice, and practice Virtue, by reason of the *Impetuosity, and Violence* of those *raging Lusts*, which are in the Hearts of us all, and every one. To what Purpose is it, for any one or us to dissemble in this Case, since all our Hearts are *open* to God, the Judge of all? I am sure, that such is the *Force, Cunning, Deceit, and Treachery* of Lust in the Souls of Men universally, that were it not for those Restraints, which are laid upon it by God, in the wise and holy Dispensation of his Providence, there would be no Decorum, and Regularity, in the Earth. But the whole World would be a *Hell of Confusion*, if Men were left unto the Conduct and Influence of their own Lusts without Restraint. That Order which subsists amongst us, is not owing to the *Easiness* of abstaining from Vice, and practicing Virtue; but unto the wise Constitution, and Settlement of Things, in such Manner, by the great Governor of all, that various Considerations necessarily present themselves to the Minds of Men, which are a Check upon their *furiosus* Lusts, and *exorbitant* Passions, whereby they are prevented acting, in Instances innumerable, what Lust aims at, and prompts them unto. And this calls for Thankfulness, and Adoration, from us. For hereunto we owe our Peace, and Safety, through the whole Course of our Lives.

I agree with him, that the Corruption of Nature, and the Penalty due to Men on Account thereof, ought to be represented to them. And the miserable, helpless, and hopeless Condition of every Sinner, (*i.e.* in himself) should be taught and inculcated. That all the natural Virtues, *etc.* of a fallen Creature have Depravity, Imperfection, and Hypocrisy, *etc.* in them, as he says, it is certain; and not only so, but farther, there is nothing of true Holiness in those Virtues. The Impossibility of Salvation to any Soul, any other Way than by the Son of God alone; in whose Righteousness we are justified, and by whose Grace we are sanctified, are Truths of the greatest Moment, and ought to be much insisted on. Nothing inconsistent therewith should ever drop from the Lips of a Christian Minister. But what are all these Things to the Point in hand? Nothing at all, so far as I can perceive. This is no other than telling me, that, as a Preacher, I ought to have a farther View, than promoting an external Reformation in Men. I grant it; but it does not therefore follow, that I am not to aim at, and endeavor to promote that. In my Opinion, no Person is qualified to be a Christian Minister, who knows not how to reprove Vice, and recommend the Practice of Virtue to Men, without giving them Occasion to think, that no more is necessary to Happiness than an outward Reformation, and that Salvation depends on, and is to be secured by their own Works. One who hath not such Skill, may be a *moral Philosopher*; but a *Christian Divine* he cannot be.



FOOTNOTES

- Ft1 Page 88,89.
- Ft2 Of the Dissolution of the World, *p.* 431, 432.
- Ft3 Collect. Sermon. *p.* 426.
- Ft4 Page 69.
- Ft5 Page 48.
- Ft6 Page 92.
- Ft7 Page 99.
- Ft8 Page 48.
- Ft9 Page 40.
- Ft10 Ibid.
- Ft11 Page 52.
- Ft12 Page 40.
- Ft13 Page 52, 53, *etc.*
- Ft14 Page 44.
- Ft15 Page 44.
- Ft16 Page 44.
- Ft17 Page 259.
- Ft18 Page 259.
- Ft19 Page 21.
- Ft20 Page 260.
- Ft21 Page 259.