

Robert Sandeman's *Letters On Theron And Aspasio*.

Table of Contents to my comments on select portions of Robert Sandeman's *Letters On Theron And Aspasio*.

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CHAPTER ONE

That Strange Something

Letters On Theron And Aspasio is Robert Sandeman's reply to James Hervey's *Theron and Aspasio: Or a series of Dialogues and Letters upon the most important and interesting subjects*.

Unless it's all bombastic bluster bereft of spiritual backbone, Sandeman judged unregenerate some popular and fashionable preachers of his day (the God-hater John Wesley inferred Sandeman was condemning "*the whole generation of God's children!*"). But, alas, Sandeman does NOT judge righteous gospel judgment absolutely since he allows for some damnable heretics to be "inconsistent Christians" ("Aspasio," specifically). Sandeman took issue with Hervey's (presumably) fictional character, Aspasio, who is "evangelizing" an unconverted Theron and Eugenio. Despite the insidious inconsistency of Sandeman, he does, nevertheless, make some very "spot on" and astute observations.

For some historical context regarding Robert Sandeman and Andrew Fuller, here is William Rushton writing in his (alleged) *Defense of Particular Redemption* (I say "alleged" because Rushton speaks peace to heretics toward the end of his so-called "*defense*"):

"When an author publishes on controverted subjects, he does so, not only for the generation living at the time, but for the succeeding generations. Though he dies as a man, he still lives as an author, and teaches and speaks as long as his writings are read. It is right, therefore, to examine the theories and doctrines of an author, whether he be living or dead. What man of sense would reflect on President Edwards, for publishing his confutation of Dr. Whitby, after the Doctor's death? Or who would charge Mr. Fuller with unfairness, for publishing his 'Strictures on Sandemanianism,' long after Mr. Robert Sandeman had returned to his original dust?" (William Rushton).

If my recollection is accurate, Rushton received unfair and illogical criticism for publishing his "polemic" against a deceased Fuller. Evidently when Andrew Fuller wrote his "*Strictures*," Sandeman was not alive to make a possible response to it.

Historian Michael Haykin details Andrew Fuller's influences and the "Sandemanian system" known by many (or not so many) as "*Sandemanianism*":

"His time as a pastor in Soham was a decisive period for the shaping of Fuller's theological perspective. It was during this period that he began a lifelong study of the works of the New England divine Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) which, along with his humble submission to the authority of the infallible Scriptures and the fearless exercise of his mind, enabled him to become what his close friend John Ryland Jr (1753-1825) once described as 'perhaps the most judicious and able theological writer that ever belonged to our [the Calvinistic Baptist] denomination'" (Haykin).

"Never one to allow what he considered vital error to go unchecked, Fuller penned a series of letters to a friend on the Sandemanian system, which he eventually published in 1810 as *Strictures on Sandemanianism*" (Haykin).

"For Fuller, as we have noted, Edwards was his major theological tutor after the Word of God. 'No man', he once said of Edwards, 'possessed a clearer insight into these difficult subjects', namely, the various roles played by the understanding, the will and the affections in the matter of conversion and the Christian life" (Haykin).

Sandeman perhaps was mindful of Edwards' *Religious Affections* when he penned the following:

"Having now quoted enough at present, I shall here make a stand. And before I proceed to a more particular notice of the several passages, I cannot help reflecting, with regret, on the many artifices that have been devised by some, and unwarily adopted and propagated by others, serving to throw mist betwixt the eyes of men, and the glory of that righteousness which delivers from death; serving to confound and perplex their minds about the way of enjoying the unspeakable comfort therein laid open to the guiltiest of mankind, in their most desperate circumstances; serving, in short to render of none effect the gospel of our salvation.

I speak not of those who have employed their weapons against the person and work of Christ, endeavouring to make us lose sight of him as a divine person, and of his acting as the substitute and) representative of sinners in the whole of his obedience unto death; such as have got any taste of the good word of God, are not in the greatest danger of being subverted by these:

but I speak of those teachers, who, having largely insisted on the corruption of human nature, concluded the whole world guilty before God, eloquently set forth the necessity of an atonement, zealously maintained the scriptural doctrine concerning the person and work of Christ; yet, after all, leave us as much in the dark as to our comfort, as if Jesus Christ had never appeared; and mark out as insuperable a task for us, as if he had not finished his work; while, with great assiduity and earnestness, they are busied in describing to us, animating us with various encouragements, and furnishing us with manifold instructions, how to perform that strange something which is to make out our connection with Christ, and bring his righteousness home to us; that something which has got many names, and includes divers considerations; all which have been supposed to be comprehended under the scriptural expression FAITH; as to which, after all they have told us about it, we are at as great a loss to tell distinctly what it is, or what we are doing when we perform it, if not greater, than when they began” (Robert Sandeman, *Letters On Theron & Aspasio*).

Jonathan Edwards in *Religious Affections*, Matthew Mead in *The Almost Christian Discovered*, Thomas Shepherd in *Parable of the Ten Virgins*, and John Piper in *Future Grace*, *The Pleasures of God*, and *Desiring God* DO twist, pervert, obscure, darken, and morph into self-righteous mystical mush, the clear definition of faith given in such passages as Hebrews 11:1 and Romans 10:9.

CHAPTER TWO

Hell By A Devout Path

“Now, seeing it is the fashion to recommend religious books, I am willing to comply with it for once. If any one chooses to go to hell by a devout path, rather than by any other, let him study to form his heart on any one of these four famous treatises: Mr. Guthrie’s *Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ*; Mr. Marshall’s *Gospel-mystery of Sanctification*; Mr. Boston’s *Human Nature in its Fourfold State*; and Dr. Doddridge’s *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*. In any profane person, who desires to be converted, shall take pains to enter into the spirit of these books, it will be easy to show, from the New Testament, that he thereby becomes twofold more the child of hell than he was before. If none of these four are at hand, he may, without travelling far, easily read or hear plenty of sermons and books to the same purpose.

On the other hand, if any one has got an ear for the truth of God, and desires to have his mind established therein, let him read the history of Jesus Christ, and the Acts of the Apostles, recorded by the four evangelists. Would he be skilful in distinguishing the ancient gospel from all counterfeits, and so expert in fighting the good fight of faith? Let him read Paul’s epistles. Would he know what is pure and undefiled religion before God, in distinction from idle talking about it? Let him read James. Would he learn sobriety of mind, and patience in suffering for the truth, and have his veneration for the greatest names in the Antichristian world abated? Let him read Peter and Jude” (Robert Sandeman, *Letters On Theron & Aspasio*).

This, of course, is one of Sandeman’s superb and “spot on” quotes. But then a wolf in wolves’ clothing snarls to the defense of his brothers in Satan. Here is Wesley’s alleged response to Sandeman:

“One specimen more of your unparallel’d charity, which in any but yourself would be astonishing.

‘Is any one chuses [*sic*] to go to Hell by a devout Path, let him study any one of those four famous Treatises, Mr. Guthrie’s *Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ*, Mr. Marshall’s *Gospel-Mystery of Sanctification*, Mr. Boston’s *Human Nature in its four-fold State*, and Dr. Doddridge’s *Rise*,

and Progress of Religion in the Soul. If any profane Person who desires to be converted, enter into the spirit of those books, he thereby becomes twofold more a child of hell than he was before.’ — p. 436.

Such is the doctrine! Such is the spirit of Palaemon! Condemning the whole generation of God’s children! Sending all his opponents to hell at once: Calling arrows, fire brands, death on every side! But I stop, God be merciful to thee a sinner! And shew thee compassion though thou hast none for thy fellow servants. Otherwise, it will be more tolerable, I will not say for Seneca or Epictetus, but for Nero or Domitian in the Day of Judgment than for thee!”

Tell us how you *really* feel, John “*unparalle’d charity*” Wesley. Of course Wesley presumably believed his warnings to Sandeman were truly charitable, but once again, “By what gospel standard?” are these warnings and judgments based upon? A most reasonable question, yes?

Sandeman's blurb-jacket advice for those desirous “*to go to hell by a devout path*” was to maintain a close and assiduous adherence to Walter Marshall’s *Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*. An excerpt from Marshall’s famous treatise (as quoted by Tullian Tchividjian):

“In his book *The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*, Walter Marshall succinctly puts his finger on what our default mode is and how it can rob us of the joy of our salvation:

‘By nature, you are completely addicted to a legal method of salvation. Even after you become a Christian by believing the Gospel, your heart is still addicted to salvation by works. In your heart you still want to make the duties of the law come before the comforts of the Gospel. You find it hard to believe that you should get any blessing before you work for it. This is the mindset you tend to fall into: You sincerely do want to obey the laws of God. Therefore, to make sure you obey the law of God you make all of God’s blessings depend upon how well you keep his law. Some preachers even tell you that you had better not enjoy the blessings of the Gospel! They tell you to diligently obey the law first and that only by doing this will you be safe and happy before God. Just keep in mind, however, that if you go this route, you will never enjoy your salvation for as long as you live in this world.’

The Puritan heretic Walter Marshall paves a “devout path to hell” indeed by asserting that regenerate persons are “*still addicted to salvation by works*” and

can go for periods of time not submitted to the righteousness of Jesus Christ revealed in the gospel as the sole ground of their assurance and acceptance before God (contra Romans 10:1-4).

CHAPTER THREE

A Calvinist Version Of Universal Atonement

Sandeman appears perplexed and bewildered about how a Calvinist like Aspasio can tell two unbelievers (Theron & Eugenio) that Jesus Christ died for them. I suppose Sandeman thought all Calvinists were “high” or “Owenic” Calvinists who would never preach that way.

“The gospel proposes nothing to be believed by us, but what is infallibly true, whether we believe it or not. For shall our own unbelief make the faith or veracity of God of none effect? Far be it! Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one of his words shall fall to the ground. The gospel, which foretells the final perdition of so many of its hearers, so many seriously and zealously exercised about it, can never warrant us to persuade every one who hears it, to believe that Christ died for him; unless we shall say that Christ died for every individual of mankind, and consequently, that none of mankind owe their salvation wholly to his death.

Though I do not see how Aspasio’s account of faith can be maintained without saying this, yet I would be far from charging a consequence of my drawing, upon Aspasio, as his doctrine” (Robert Sandeman, *Letters On Theron & Aspasio*).

Oh, but it WOULD be an accurate charging as to Aspasio’s doctrine, Mr. Sandeman. You see, there is a damnable Arminian version of universal atonement and there is ALSO a damnable Calvinist version of universal atonement. BOTH doctrines give the redemptive glory to the sinner rather than to Jesus Christ ALONE. Both damnable Arminian and Calvinist versions of “atonement” necessarily imply “that none of mankind owe their salvation WHOLLY to His death.”

“Though in his beginning to persuade the young Eugenio to be a Christian, he directly affirms to him, that Christ died for him, vol. 1, p. 237. I would rather choose to look on this as spoken by way of ingratiating address to gain the young gentleman’s favourable attention, or on account of some amiable disposition he had observed about him, than to conclude from thence that Aspasio would affirm the same thing to every individual of the human race” (Robert Sandeman, *Letters On Theron & Aspasio*).

Aspasio tells two consecutive unbelievers that “Christ died for you,” but apparently that doesn’t mean he would walk up to everybody without exception and say that. Okay, whatever, Sandeman. Evidently it’s more plausible that Aspasio is some kind of Hyper-Calvinist who has observed the “amiable disposition” of being “sensible to sin” (or something). Sandeman had written: “I would rather choose to look on this as spoken by way of ingratiating address to gain the young gentleman’s favourable attention [...]”

In other words Aspasio’s “*ingratiating address to gain the young gentleman’s favourable attention*” was “peace, peace!” when there is no peace (Jeremiah 8:8-13, 14:11-16, 23:17; Ezekiel 13:9-16; cf. 2 John 9-11).

“He affirms to Theron, while yet an unbeliever, or an opposer of the imputed righteousness, that the obedience of Christ was wrought out in his name and in his stead. ... I made a shift formerly, the best way I could, to account for Aspasio’s making the like assertion to the young Eugenio; but I would not choose to account for him in that manner often” (Robert Sandeman, *Letters On Theron & Aspasio*).

Sandeman admits he “made a shift formerly,” which “shift” was that of *eisegeting*, mangling, and mishandling Aspasio’s own words.

“I was, then, and still am, very loath to charge Aspasio with maintaining, that Christ died, for any but those who shall be eternally saved by him; for if he died for them who perish, then the happiness of them who are saved, must be owing to something else beside his death. And then I behooved to look on all that Aspasio has said about the necessity and excellency of the imputed righteousness, as words without meaning” (Robert Sandeman, *Letters On Theron & Aspasio*).

Exactly -- “*as words without meaning*” alongside “... *must be owing to SOMETHING ELSE BESIDE His death.*” It’s likely that Aspasio is a moderate Calvinist who believes that Christ died for the elect in one sense, and the non-elect in another sense. This particular Calvinist scheme makes words like “propitiation,” “atonement,” and “imputed righteousness” MEANINGLESS.

“Christ, speaking of himself as the good shepherd, says, John x, I lay down my life for the sheep. But to unbelievers he says, Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 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. How then can Aspasio say to any not hearing Christ’s voice and following him, that they are of his sheep, for whom he laid down

his life?" (Robert Sandeman, *Letters On Theron & Aspasio*).

I surmise that Aspasio is a type of Calvinist who does not worry himself about precision, honesty, and forthrightness in his preaching (though he may in his doctrinal treatises or writings). Perhaps he's loath to get into "*exactly what way*" Christ died for Theron and Eugenio, whether "salvifically" or "non-salvifically." Aspasio's reasoning may be that if Theron or Eugenio are elect sheep, then they will believe this false gospel that Aspasio is preaching to them, and if they are "not of his sheep" then they won't believe the false gospel that Aspasio is preaching to them.

CHAPTER FOUR

Somewhat Unsettled And Indistinct

“But to return to Aspasio; I have said already, and still say, I am loath to charge him with flatly opposing the scriptural account of Christ’s death; I am rather disposed to think, that his views of this matter are somewhat unsettled and indistinct, which might occasion his expressing himself inaccurately at times, and who can guard himself against inconsistencies at all times? I presume, he would not venture broadly to contradict the account which Christ himself gives of his own death; and I am encouraged to think so, by his commonly connecting the death of Christ with eternal salvation, so as it should mean the same thing to say, Christ died for any person, and, that person shall be eternally saved. I will, therefore, consider this as a fixed point in the procedure of my controversy with Aspasio” (Sandeman).

Sandeman’s convoluted reasoning seeks to transform a blatant efficacious-atonement-denying heretic into a perplexing and inconsistent paragon of orthodoxy. There is no excuse for Sandeman's fanciful “massaging” and “nuancing” of Aspasio's clear expressions of Calvinist-Reformed teaching. Such Christ-dishonoring expressions affirm that He died “sufficiently” for all, but only “efficiently” for the elect – this is the damnable doctrine of Calvinist universal atonement.

CHAPTER FIVE

Calvinist Demagogues

“If I should say, that our modern demagogues have done more hurt to the souls of men, than all those stigmatized with the name of infidel writers have done together, the reflection would be thought odious. I would be referred to many passages in their treatises, asserting almost every branch of the Christian doctrine, in words not easily to be contradicted; and though I might fairly show a complete system of self-dependence to be contained in these same treatises, yea, to be the leading scope and design of them, yet it is easy to see that such a discovery, or any attempt toward it, behooved to meet with the greatest opposition from all who feed on this compound doctrine, especially from those who have the largest share of religious pride. For men do not choose to be scared away by arguments from the food which they love best” (Sandeman).

Certain Calvinist demagogues have done more hurt to the souls of men, than all those stigmatized with the name of infidel writers (e.g., Robert Dabney more than Robert Ingersoll; Douglas Wilson more than Christopher Hitchens; J. Gresham Machen more than H.L. Mencken).

“And well do the pastors, I speak of, know how to season and mix up the Christian truth with proper ingredients to suit the taste of the people, and the people accordingly flock in multitudes after them; or to express myself in more obsolete style, *'They are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.'* That I may not seem to have disjointed this ancient saying from its context, I would have it noticed that the chief thing aimed at there is to make us cautious of hearkening to every spirit or doctrine by which men pretend to assure themselves of the favour of God, or that Christ abideth in them. The sacred writer after showing us by what spirit he and his fellows were assured of this, adds, *'Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God.'* Then giving us several rules to judge by, he sums them up in these words, *'We (the apostles) are of God: he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us.'* *Hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.* Keeping then this rule in our view, let us return to the examination of Aspasio” (Sandeman).

Why ought Sandeman to infer regarding certain heretical demagogues that “*therefore speak they of the world*”? Why is Sandeman not “*rather disposed to think, that [their views] are somewhat unsettled and indistinct, which might occasion [their] expressing [themselves] inaccurately at times*”? He asserted this nonsense with regard to Aspasio’s false gospel preaching (cf. Galatians 1:8-9). So why not do the same thing here with regard to other heretics, Sandeman?

CHAPTER SIX

Pernicious Maxims

“I shall now close my remarks on the zealous Jews, by taking notice of the reason the Apostle gives why they came short of righteousness or acceptance with God. He tells us that while they sought it, *'as it were, by the works of the law they stumbled at that stumbling-stone; as it is written, Behold, I lay in Sion a stumbling-stone and rock of offence; and whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.'* They considered the bare report concerning Christ crucified as too weak a bottom to stand on before God; they were disgusted at it as one would be at the proposal to venture his life on the water in a basket. They would willingly have followed a Messiah that would have given them some employment in the matter; and they would have given a ready ear to him, teaching them how they might work the works of God; but they could not bear the thought that all their good notions and desires should be utterly set at nought; so they could neither understand nor believe that Jesus came down from heaven to work the work of God for men by himself alone.

The same disgust is evidently to be seen still among those who have the greatest repute for Christian orthodoxy and piety. But if it be necessary that I should be still more plain, I am very willing to avoid all ambiguity and freely own I have nowhere observed the Jewish disgust at the bare truth, or which is the same thing, the bare work of Christ more evident than among the admirers of the doctrine of Messrs. Marshall, Boston, Erskines, Whitefield, Wesley, and such like. I am far from denying that there are some among these, who *not knowing the depths* of such doctrine find all their comfort in the simple truth; even as I am far from denying that when the Messiah was born there were some even among the sect of the Pharisees who waited for the consolation of Israel, and avoided the pernicious maxims of their party” (Sandeman).

Evidently to the hypocrite Robert Sandeman, there is enough “inconsistency” and “unclear expression” found in Aspasio’s damnable universal atonement doctrine, to not lump him in with similarly-minded Calvinists such as Thomas Boston and George Whitefield.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Calvinist Elixir: It's A Muddy Mixture

“Who could have imagined that he who said so many simple, clear, and striking things with respect to the work of Christ in opposition to all the pleas of human pride in the latter half of the sixth dialogue, and almost throughout the whole seventh, would have perplexed himself in the manner he has done in the sixteenth, blending together two things as unfit for mixture as iron and clay? ... I Took notice in my first letter that Aspasio’s faith needed a variety of subsidiary props beside the work of Christ to support it” (Sandeman).

Here Sandeman speaks of Aspasio’s “felicitous inconsistencies.” We saw earlier how Sandeman accounted for these “inconsistencies” by taking his shoehorn of *eisegesis* to Aspasio's wicked and facinorous faith.

CHAPTER EIGHT

A Fair Shoe

“Those who wanted to make a fair show in the flesh and sought to make Christianity more palatable to men or less obnoxious to their hatred that the offence [*sic*] of the cross might cease, gave the apostles the greatest disquiet” (Sandeman).

Likewise, tolerant Calvinists give us the greatest disquiet when they speak peace when there is no peace to those who treat the cross of Jesus Christ as foolishness (cf. 1 Corinthians 1:18). Tolerant Calvinists obviate the skandalon, the utter offense of the efficacious cross-work of Christ by deeming it an optional gospel doctrine. A tolerant Calvinist, roughly speaking, is a person who SAYS he believes in gospel (i.e., efficacious) atonement, but who also says those who believe in false gospel “atonement” are his “inconsistent” spiritual brethren. Here is how one Christian writer put it:

“Definition of Tolerant Calvinist: A person who claims to believe the gospel of sovereign grace but who says that at least some who believe in universal atonement (that Jesus died for everyone without exception) are saved. (Please note that the term 'Tolerant Calvinist' is not meant to imply that all 'Intolerant Calvinists' are regenerate.)

There are many defenders of Tolerant Calvinists – those who believe that Tolerant Calvinists are saved. There are the Tolerant Calvinists themselves, who would, of course, defend themselves and others who believe like they do. But there are some who claim to eschew Tolerant Calvinism, who say that the Tolerant Calvinists are wrong in believing that at least some universal atonement advocates are saved, who say they believe that all universal atonement advocates are unsaved, yet who also say that not all Tolerant Calvinists are unsaved.

Their reasoning goes like this: *'All who believe the true gospel of salvation conditioned on the work of Jesus Christ alone (who believe that it is the work of Christ alone that makes the difference between salvation and damnation, who believe that the work of Christ alone ensures and demands the salvation of everyone whom Christ represented) are saved. Some Tolerant Calvinists, although they believe that some universal*

atonement advocates are saved, still believe the true gospel of salvation conditioned on the work of Jesus Christ alone; thus, these Tolerant Calvinists must be saved, no matter what they think about those who hold to universal atonement. Tolerant Calvinists don't hold to universal atonement themselves, so that cannot be held against them. Their erroneous view that some universal atonement advocates are saved does not necessarily show that they themselves are unsaved.'

Is this true? Is it true that if a Tolerant Calvinist does not believe in universal atonement and professes to believe the true gospel of salvation conditioned on the work of Christ alone, then we cannot say he is unsaved, even if he says that some universal atonement advocates are saved?

Let us think about this.

The first scenario:

Suppose Mr. X professes to believe the true gospel. Suppose Mr. X knows what Arminianism is, knows what Arminians believe, and knows that Mr. Z is an Arminian. Now suppose Mr. X says the following thing: 'Mr. Z holds to a lot of error, but I know he is saved. He believes in the same gospel I do, he believes in the same God I do, and I know he is accepted before God and will go to heaven.' What does this tell you about Mr. X?

The defenders of Tolerant Calvinists will say that this does not necessarily tell you that Mr. X is unsaved — that it does not logically follow that Mr. X is unsaved.

However, let the defenders of Tolerant Calvinists consider the following:
The second scenario:

Suppose Mr. X professes to believe the true gospel. Suppose Mr. X knows what Islam is, knows what Muslims believe, and knows that Mr. Z is a Muslim. Now suppose Mr. X says the following thing: 'Mr. Z holds to a lot of error, but I know he is saved. He believes in the same gospel I do, he believes in the same God I do, and I know he is accepted before God and will go to heaven.' What does this tell you about Mr. X?

Will the defenders of Tolerant Calvinists please answer the last question? What will you say about the spiritual state of Mr. X, who professes belief in the true gospel, who knows that Islam is and what Muslims believe, and

yet who says that this Muslim is saved? Will you say that Mr. X is necessarily unsaved?

If you will that Mr. X is not necessarily unsaved, then you necessarily believe that a true Christian who knows what Muslims believe can still believe that at least some Muslims are saved. You necessarily believe that a true Christian who knows what Muslims believe can still believe that the gospel of Islam and the gospel of the Bible are the same and can still believe that the god of Islam and the God of the Bible are the same. You necessarily believe that the Muslim way to God is the same as the Christian way to God. Thus, you would be consistent in defending Mr. X in the first scenario. You necessarily believe that a true Christian who knows what Arminians believe can still believe that the gospel of Arminianism and the gospel of the Bible are the same and can still believe that the god of Arminianism and the God of the Bible are the same. You necessarily believe that the Arminian way to God is the same as the Christian way to God.

If you will say that Mr. X is necessarily unsaved, then I ask you to logically explain how you came to this conclusion. And after you do that, I ask you to logically explain how the first scenario (Mr. X speaking peace to an Arminian) is different than the second scenario (Mr. X speaking peace to a Muslim), and how your conclusion about Mr. X must be different in the two different scenarios. Go for it.”

Since the true gospel is power of God to salvation for EVERYONE BELIEVING and the false gospel is NOT (Romans 1:16-17; Galatians 1:8-9); then the gospel you judge saved and lost by is the gospel you believe in. If one insists on calling false gospel believers their “muddled” or “feliciously inconsistent” brethren, then that is necessarily indicative of what gospel they believe to be the power of God to salvation for everyone believing (the writer I quoted above gave a Muslim and professing Christian example to make that contrast exceedingly stark).

CHAPTER NINE

The Elijah Complex

“Those who were eminently distinguished by their zeal for the God of Israel were proven to be as much idolaters as their fathers before the captivity. Accordingly, we find Paul comparing the time of Elias with his own time. For taking notice of the answer of God to Elias (who complained he was left alone in the general defection to idolatry), that a remnant of seven thousand were reserved; he adds, even so then, at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace” (Sandeman).

Likewise, in our day, those who are “eminently distinguished by their zeal for the God of Israel, [are] proven to be as much idolaters” as those who had bowed the knee to Baal in Paul’s and Elijah’s day. From Roman Catholicism to Eastern Orthodoxy to the Protestant Reformed establishment to mainstream “Evangelicalism” -- they have all bowed the kneel to Baal.

“It requires no long process of reasoning to show that all idolatry lands in self-adoration since it is the worshiping of a God of our own making; for men never yet made any image for God, or, which is the same thing, invented any idea of him but what served greatly to deface the glory of the original and no less to elevate their own pride. Hence it is that God intending to exhibit his own image and character himself issues the severest prohibitions against all idolatry. Hence he takes to himself the title of the Jealous God. This matter is set forth in a variety of lights in Scripture” (Sandeman).

Extreme self-adoration seeps and oozes out of those believing that Jesus Christ died for everyone without exception. The VERY EPITOME of pride and self-worship is exhibited when a person places themselves in the ROOM and STEAD of Jesus Christ as the one whose work makes the ultimate difference between salvation and damnation. Sadly, this is an apt description of what most who call themselves “Christian,” believe. There are also fashionable Calvinists who by their belief in a “partially sovereign” god show they worship a god of their own making, one that conforms to their own carnal standards of what is just and right for God to do.

CHAPTER TEN

Confounds The God-Haters To Their Very Core

“When he was on the cross the Jews insulted him in this manner: *'He trusted in God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God.'* But now he, who looking down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God returned this verdict upon the general survey: *'There is none that doth good, no not one,'* declares his full satisfaction in Jesus, espouses his character as his own, and vindicates all his claims. Did Jesus lift up his eyes to heaven and addressing the Father, say, *'I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me? &c.'* The Father approves, and bestows the requested glory. Did Jesus on the cross say, *'It is finished?'* Now we may consider the Father as saying in the most solemn form, *Amen*. In sum, the voice proceeding from the glory is no less than the motto of the broad seal of heaven, stamping the person, character, works, and words of Jesus as all truly divine, ratifying every word he spoke as infallible truth and sustaining all his works as perfect” (Sandeman).

Yes. “It IS finished” despite those conditionalist Calvinists who say the elect sinner must be “graciously” enabled to establish his own righteousness and to ADD to Christ’s redemptive work. Jesus’ phrase “*It is finished*” confounds to their very core, those who believe that Jesus died for everyone without exception. One fellow Christian accurately writes how the Atonement and the Resurrection of Jesus Christ are inextricably linked together:

“In order to establish the meaning of The Resurrection, the doctrine of The Atonement must be established. When Paul declared the gospel in 1 Corinthians 15:3, the first doctrine he declared was 'that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.' If one does not truly believe 'that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures,' then one cannot truly believe 'that He was raised the third day, according to the Scriptures.' In ... the article entitled 'Gospel Atonement' explained the meaning of the doctrine 'that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures.' Jesus Christ, the God-man mediator, as a representative and substitute of His people, in His bloody death on the cross, accomplished full pardon, full redemption, full propitiation, and full reconciliation for everyone whom He represented. The Atonement is the very heart of the gospel. All who believe in a 'jesus christ'

who died for everyone without exception do not believe in The Atonement.

This leads to the primary significance and meaning of The Resurrection. The Resurrection of Jesus Christ is proof that God the Father was totally satisfied with the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. He was totally satisfied because Jesus Christ accomplished exactly what He set out to accomplish, which was the full salvation of everyone whom He came to save. Jesus Christ fully satisfied the demands of God's law and justice on behalf of everyone for whom He died. Had Jesus Christ not fully accomplished salvation for everyone for whom He died, He would not have conquered death, and He would have remained in the grave. The reason Jesus Christ could not be held by death is that He had totally, absolutely defeated death in fully atoning for the sins of His people. If there is or will be even one person for whom Christ died who is suffering or will suffer the second death, then death was not defeated, and Jesus Christ was not raised as the victor over death. To truly believe and preach The Resurrection is to believe and preach the full, accomplished atonement of Jesus Christ with which God the Father was fully satisfied that was effectual to save everyone whom Christ represented. God the Father exalted Jesus Christ at His right hand as the Savior of His people who made full purification of their sins. There would have been no resurrection and no exaltation had there been even one person for whom Christ died who would end up in hell.”

Those who believe that Jesus Christ died for everyone without exception flatly DENY the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Those tolerant Calvinists who count the aforementioned blasphemers their spiritual brethren DENY that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is an essential gospel doctrine. Thus, BOTH of the aforementioned false religionists DENY the gospel of Jesus Christ. And as Christ Himself has said, those who disbelieve the gospel are unregenerate (Mark 16:16).

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Malignant Magnet

“It was the will of the Captain of salvation who was made perfect through sufferings that all his subjects should through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God. Paul, warning Timothy against the corruption of Christianity which was to take place, first sets before him his own godly life, and then lays down this general maxim: *‘Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus, shall suffer persecution. But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned,’ &c. All national establishments of Christianity have been devised to accommodate that religion to the pride and lusts of men*” (Sandeman; underlining mine).

When the true gospel is so twisted and perverted that it becomes a false gospel worthy of the anathema of God (Galatians 1:8-9), it likewise becomes a “*gospel*” that appeals to and attracts the unregenerate man. It appears evident that the true gospel must be adulterated into a false before certain religious hucksters can peddle it for profit.

CHAPTER TWELVE

They Know Not What It Is To Be God

“The Scripture clearly asserts the Sovereignty of God as having mercy on whom he will have mercy and hardening whom he will; and repels the strongest objection that ever was made against it, '*Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?*' ... many who profess to reverence the Scriptures as a divine revelation reject this doctrine with scorn though it be revealed there as clear as words can make it; and that not in one or two passages, but interwoven with the whole style of the Scriptures and supported by a variety of facts recorded there. They reject it, why? Because they know not what it is to be God and to have understanding and power like him” (Sandeman).

“Because they know not what it is to be God.” Most who name the name of Christ know not what it is to be God. They do not know who they are dealing with. I know of no better article than this that shows this pervasive scorning of Divine sovereignty, particularly among the popular preachers of Calvinist consumption (this article can be found at my [agrammatos](#) blog):

“Unconditional Reprobation and Active Hardening: A Study on Romans 9:11-22”

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Conditionalist Inclusivist Calvinists

“Tis agreed by the great majority in all Christian countries that there is no salvation but by Jesus Christ. Thus far general consent agrees with the apostolic doctrine. But then a capital difference between these two arises in the following manner.

The apostles maintained that Christ did enough to save sinners in his own person without their concurrence, and that all who were so persuaded accordingly found salvation in him. As the natural counterpart of this, they at the same time maintained that if any man went about to deny or undermine the all-sufficiency of Christ’s work to save by insisting on the necessity of any other concurring requisite whatever, Christ should profit him nothing” (Sandeman).

But there are MANY among this “great majority” who, in agreement with the Westminster Confession of Faith (10.3), DENY that everyone without exception who is saved by Jesus Christ, ACTUALLY KNOWS that they are saved by Jesus Christ (contra Romans 10:1-4).

Despite the many pseudo-Christians who relegate Galatians 5:2-4 to the dustbin of irrelevance, those who ADD their supposed “non-meritorious conditions” to the sufficient work of Christ will be profited NOTHING (see Galatians 5:2-4).

“On the other hand, since Christianity began to flourish and prevail in the world the majority of those wearing the Christian name have been agreed in maintaining the necessity of something beside Christ’s work to save them, or procure them acceptance with God. Yea, long before that time, even in the apostolic age, the Judaizing Christians who were far from being few in number proceeded upon the same plan. This we are taught by the apostles to call a corrupted or perverted gospel. And here chiefly we may perceive the consent of the Christian world all along opposed to the apostolic doctrine” (Sandeman).

Here is just one example of a purveyor of a corrupted or perverted gospel (cf. Galatians 1:8-9) who is diametrically opposed to the apostolic doctrine of the cross of Christ:

“Admitting, however, that the Augustinian doctrine that Christ died specially

for his own people does account for the general offer of the gospel, how can it be reconciled with those passages which, in one form or another, teach that He died for all men? In answer to this question, it may be remarked in the first place that Augustinians do not deny that Christ died for all men. What they deny is that He died equally, and with the same design, for all men. He died for all, that He might arrest the immediate execution of the penalty of the law upon the whole of our apostate race; that He might secure for men the innumerable blessings attending their state on earth, which, in one important sense, is a state of probation; and that He might lay the foundation for the offer of pardon and reconciliation with God, on condition of faith and repentance” (Charles Hodge, *Systematic Theology*, Volume 2, p. 558).

Robert Sandeman writes:

“But while we behold the Christian world consenting against the apostles about the necessity of some addition, we see them at the same time very far from being agreed among themselves about what ought to be added and how much, the nature of the assistance needful to promote the addition, and the properest means of soliciting the concurring assistance, with various other considerations depending on these. So, when Israel once departed from the worship of the one God who led them out of Egypt they could never settle upon the worship of any other, but lay open to all the innovations of the neighbouring nations. Thus, when a wife once departs from her husband to admit another, she may easily be prevailed upon to admit a second, third, and fourth, till at last she become a downright prostitute” (Sandeman).

Disagreement among the God-haters about such things as “*the nature of the assistance needful to promote the addition*” to the work of Christ (cf. Galatians 5:2-4) are seen in conditionalist Calvinists, Arminians, and Roman Catholics, to name just a few. This addition (or additions) are seen in the aforementioned false Christians’ antichristian views of “grace” that enables various kinds of self-righteousness-establishing-condition-meeting (Romans 10:1-4).

“In the apostolic age the favourite addition was to become a Jewish proselyte by circumcision. And it is evident that much more could be said in favour of that than could be urged in behalf of any other that has been adopted since. In the Roman church the additional grounds of acceptance with God have been multiplied in a very extravagant manner. Protestants have in many respects discarded the extravagance of that church, yet they still generally agree in establishing their own righteousness as the ground

of their acceptance with God, according to various schemes of their own, some in a more open, others in a more secret and ambiguous manner frustrating the all-sufficiency of the righteousness finished by Jesus Christ” (Sandeman).

Exactly. Right on. The conditionalist Calvinists may have “discarded the extravagance” of the Roman Catholic church, but nonetheless “*still generally agree in establishing their own righteousness as the ground of their acceptance with God, according to various schemes of their own, some in a more open, others in a more secret and ambiguous manner.*” John Piper’s hyper-conditionalism seen in his book *Future Grace* is a prime example of the “more open.” Though much of Piper's hyper-conditionalism seems to have been gleaned or imbibed from Jonathan Edwards' work on “Justification by Faith Alone.” John Owen is someone else who has influenced Piper, and Owen posits certain conditions that he says God enables the elect sinner to meet.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

I Know You Are But What Am I?

“The gospel will lead a man to be kind and obliging to his neighbour as to all things within his power; but for one to pretend to dispose of either the smiles or frowns of the Almighty is impious: and to do the former is of more pernicious consequence to men than the latter, for men are often hurt, yea, and utterly ruined by flattery or false charity. But on the other hand, he who enjoys the favour of the true God has that joy which no man can take from him by any anathema whatsoever. When one expostulates with me thus, 'I have charity for you, and hope you have the same for me;' I can understand him to mean nothing else at bottom but this: 'The favour of my God is at your service, and I expect you will be no less obliging in return;' or, 'I am disposed to frame and accommodate my God to your pleasure and comfort and would think it very unkind in you not to do the like for me.' Thus men often gain reputation for charity by the most atheistical trifling in sacred things” (Sandeman).

This quote reminds me of those God-haters who would initially judge us to be saved, but when we judge them as lost because they do not believe the gospel, then they decide to judge us as lost too. What is their reason in this particular case for judging us lost? By what standard do they judge us lost? Answer: The standard of “we judged them lost.” This indeed is atheistical and childish trifling since the standard of judgment is not the true gospel, but a sort of juvenile, “*I know you are [lost] but what am I?*”

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Charity In Reverse

“Charity respects the meanest peasant who loves the truth as a prince in the kingdom of heaven, while it scruples not to call the most eminently devout perverters of the truth '*dogs, evil and deceitful workers, ministers of Satan transformed as ministers of righteousness, &c.*' It were easy to show at large, and illustrate by facts, how a perverted gospel serves to promote in its votaries a temper of mind the reverse of charity, or such as charity is all along opposed to in Paul's description of it; as that it leads them to grudge others the benefit of the Divine long-suffering and kindness and cherishes the root of envy, vaunting, and all the other fruits of pride” (Sandeman).

True (as opposed to false) charity DOES NOT speak peace apart from the only ground of peace (cf. Galatians 6:12-16). Peace and mercy is upon those who walk according to the rule of boasting SOLELY in the cross. Most Calvinists, like the Old Testament false prophets, say “peace and mercy,” NOT based upon Paul's sole-soteriological boast, but upon a self-righteous refuge of LIES.

“The spirit of the Christian world has now for some time been working upon a new plan by promoting among people of very different religious persuasions a friendly intercommunity of charity at least, if not of worship also. As this friendly intercommunity is but forming as yet, different parties are not fully agreed on what common foundation it ought to rest; though good advances are already made toward this agreement. Hence it is that we have as yet no fixed name or title for this common foundation. It is called by many, '*soundness in the fundamentals of religion.*' In Scotland it is commonly called '*the being right in the main.*' It is true, the more nice sort of people are apt to start questions about what are the fundamentals or wherein does the main of religion consist. But those who would gain the greatest reputation for charity choose to hold by the general expressions, and to avoid particular explications as much as possible. Hence the pleasure some fawning teachers take in speaking of '*our common Christianity*'” (Sandeman).

The God-hating tolerant Calvinist, Augustus Toplady, appeared to have zero tolerance for the universal atonement heretic, John Wesley; but evidently he possessed enough tolerance for another universal atonement heretic of a

different stripe — one Richard Baxter:

“We read of Baxter (who, though heterodox in many things, was a partaker of the one thing needful), that when asked by a friend when he lay on his death-bed how he was, he replied, ‘almost well,’ which a person in the view of opening eternity could never say, unless he found God very precious and found him faithful. Whatever dross this holy man carried about him in this life, it was consumed in his death, and he received into glory. The testimony of glorified spirits above, as it bears weight in it, so it corroborates this truth. Their song is, ‘Faithful and true,’ Rev. xix. 11” (Toplady, *Complete Works*, p. 770; underlining mine).

In Toplady’s blinded estimate, despite Baxter being “heterodox in many things” and weighted down with doctrinal “dross,” he nonetheless “was a partaker of the one thing needful.” Evidently, the “one thing needful” was an ignorant zeal that is not according to knowledge (cf. Romans 10:2-3). Clearly, Augustus Toplady and the apostle Paul make their spiritual judgments based on an ENTIRELY DIFFERENT standard.

Toplady judges the heretic Baxter as his spiritual brother, as a fellow believer in the gospel. But exactly WHAT gospel? Answer: The “gospel” that Paul had anathematized in Galatians 1:8-9. For Toplady (and those like-minded), despite any strong doctrinal disagreements between them, Baxter had a “soundness in the fundamentals of religion” and a “being right in the main.” Toplady and Baxter would emptily verbalize something called a “cross,” but in reality their “common Christianity” is a CROSS-LESS Christianity. Baxter counts the efficacious cross-work of Jesus Christ as utter foolishness (1 Corinthians 1:18); and Toplady is vainly desirous to obviate the Biblical cross, lest he suffer persecution for boasting solely in it, and judging saved and lost by it (Galatians 6:12-16; cf. 2 John 9-11).

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Piety Toward The gods

In chapter fifteen (*Charity In Reverse*) Sandeman had written the following:

“Hence the pleasure some fawning teachers take, in speaking of our '*common Christianity*'” (Sandeman).

These “fawning teachers” held to vague and general expressions, and avoided “particular explications” about what exactly were the “core beliefs” that made up their “common Christianity.” One such fawning teacher has written the following:

“All who are baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, recognizing the Trinity of Persons in the Godhead, the incarnation of the Son and his priestly sacrifice, whether they be Greeks, or Arminians, or Romanists, or Lutherans, or Calvinists, or the simple souls who do not know what to call themselves, are our brethren. Baptism is our common countersign. It is the common rallying standard at the head of our several columns” (A.A. Hodge, *Evangelical Theology: Lectures on Doctrine*, p. 338).

So there's A.A. Hodge's general explication of water baptism being a “common countersign” without getting into doctrinal particulars about “which Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are we talking about here?” Are we discussing the Biblical Trinity, or Hodge's “trinity” that he allegedly shares in common with such heretics as Romanists?

Here is Sandeman giving a name to this “common Christianity” alleged by various fawning preachers and teachers:

“If we would give a name to this common foundation suitable to what is aimed at by different parties, we must call it Piety Toward The Gods. This piety we shall find is the hinge of modern charity. For modern charity is not so much concerned about what character is drawn for the Deity, or what God one worships, as that every one worship his own God decently, seriously, or with piety without speaking disrespectfully of that of his neighbour. This charity, as far as it has hitherto taken place, is as much disaffected to the ancient gospel as the old uniformity was. And should the friendly intercommunity of this charity prevail so far as to carry the sword

on its side, or, according to Scripture style, to 'gather together the kings of the earth and their armies,' as they were formerly gathered together in behalf of uniformity; then the lovers of the truth may expect to feel the weight of its vengeance unless heaven seasonably interpose for their relief; for as the love of the truth will always provoke against itself the charge of that inhuman and unsociable temper, that inflexible obstinacy, that hatred and aversion to mankind with which it was reproached from the beginning; it must remain excluded from this friendly intercommunity and become the principal butt of its resentment" (Sandeman).

Here is Charles Haddon Strumpet's "*piety toward the gods*":

"Most atrocious things have been spoken about the character and spiritual condition of John Wesley, the modern prince of Arminians. I can only say concerning him that, while I detest many of the doctrines which he preached, yet for the man himself I have a reverence second to no Wesleyan; and if there were wanted two apostles to be added to the number of the twelve, I do not believe that there could be found two men more fit to be so added than George Whitefield and John Wesley. The character of John Wesley stands beyond all imputation for self-sacrifice, zeal, holiness, and communion with God; he lived far above the ordinary level of common Christians, and was one 'of whom the world was not worthy.' I believe there are multitudes of men who cannot see the truths, or at least, cannot see them in the way in which we see them, who nevertheless have received Christ as their Saviour, and are as dear to the heart of God of grace as the soundest Calvinist in or out of Heaven" (Charles Haddon Spurgeon, *The Man With the Measuring Line*, December 11, 1864)

Despite detesting many of the doctrines John Wesley preached, Spurgeon is quite happy that Wesley worships "*his own God decently, seriously, or with piety.*" Now with all of this "*charitable intercommunity*" (cf. Ezekiel 13:10-16) between Spurgeon, Wesley, Whitefield, and like-minded present-day Calvinists, it is CLEAR that their (false) piety is expressed toward the SAME god — the god of self-righteous religion that has its boast in the sinner, instead of in Jesus Christ ALONE.

Many "kinder, gentler, tolerant Calvinists" gnash their teeth at us who are lovers of the true gospel of Jesus Christ. We have forsaken father, mother, sister, brother, so-called "friends," etc., for the sake of the gospel, and we have felt the weight of their vengeance.

We have insulted their Great Whore by coming out from among them. In response, they have placed sword upon thigh, and have come after us with slanders, misrepresentations, and marginalizings of every kind. Since we refuse to dally with their whorish heifer (Psalm 16:4), these “wise ones” (Romans 1:21-23) draw the “necessary inference” that we Christians must be immured with an “*inhuman and unsociable temper,*” and infected with an unnatural “*hatred and aversion to mankind.*”

“An evil disease, [say they,] cleaveth fast unto him: and [now] that he lieth he shall rise up no more. Yea, mine own familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up [his] heel against me” (Psalm 41:8-9).

“The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil” (John 7:7).

“If the world hate you, ye know that [it hated] me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name’s sake, because they know not him that sent me” (John 15:18-21).

“Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise. But as then he [that was born] after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so [it is] now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman” (Galatians 4:28-30).

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Distinguish Nicely And Sin Grossly

“Now if any credit may be given to the history of the greatest cities when at the height of their refinement in the arts of life, from Nineveh down to those of our own times, we shall find that all manner of wickedness has then reigned most extensively in them, and that even under the wing of decorum. In France, adultery, though known, if practised with sufficient caution or decency is considered among polite people as no blemish in the character of a gentleman...As our taste refines, we learn to distinguish nicely and to sin grossly. Among half a dozen of words, signifying nearly the same thing, we can perhaps mark out so many degrees of decency in the use of them; and to trespass against any established rule of decorum will hurt the character of a gentleman more than the transgression of any Divine law, decently committed” (Sandeman).

“...*we learn to distinguish nicely, and to sin grossly.*” That pithy line describes not only those who make no pretense of religion, but it *especially* describes those who do profess to know God, but who by their evil-life-characterizing-deeds do deny him.

“They profess to know God, but by [their] works they deny [Him,] being abominable and disobedient, and worthless to every good work” (Titus 1:16).

For many hideous examples of this, see the following category on “morality”:
<https://agrammatos.wordpress.com/category/morality/>

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

To Paraphrase One Ancient Writer

Sandeman writing to James Hervey about his *Theron & Aspasio* conversation:

“Dear Sir,

You never appear in a more amiable light to me than when I find you accounted a sick-brained enthusiast, or sometimes in softer terms, a man of a good enough heart indeed, but a weak judgment by many who would take it much amiss not to be held for good Christians. These men despise you on the account of the likeness your doctrine bears to that of the apostles, or rather judging yours and theirs to be the same. The very sound of imputed sin, or imputed righteousness is disagreeable to their ears; and the subject does not appear to them to be of sufficient importance to draw their serious attention or to lead them to inquire what the Scripture says or means concerning it. Thus you are vile in their eyes; and it would complete my esteem for you, could I hear you saying with the man after God’s own heart, *‘And I will be yet more vile than thus’* (Sandeman).

If Hervey’s doctrine has been understood as bearing resemblance or likeness to that of the apostles, then clearly Hervey’s doctrine has been severely misunderstood (for Hervey taught a form of universal atonement).

Sandeman’s paragraph calls to mind those who PROFESS to believe the gospel, but who will NOT even judge all Muslims and Mormons lost (this “charitable, humble, and irenic” refusal to judge righteous judgment reveals “which gospel” they truly make their judgments by). It is from these and other types of tolerant religionists of varying degrees, that we SHOULD be at the receiving end of these “charitable epithets.” For if we are NOT counted as vile in their eyes, then we should step back and make sure we have been understood correctly concerning things like gospel atonement, gospel judgment, and gospel repentance.

Sandeman continues with his letter:

“For when I would think of you with pleasure and sympathize with you as an honourable sufferer by the reproach of these men, my satisfaction is abated by hearing the applause given you by those votaries of a perverted

gospel, who prefix to your name the title of THE INCOMPARABLE. And what chiefly gives me concern is to think that in your writings any just occasion should be given to expose you to their commendation” (Sandeman).

I read somewhere that the worst tragedy for a poet is to be admired through being misunderstood. If we who believe the true gospel ever expose ourselves to the commendations of God’s enemies, we might rightly wonder what we did wrong! But as far as I can tell, it hasn’t been a lack of clarity on our parts, but rather an EXTREME INANITY on the parts of those who claim to “agree” with gospel doctrines they do NOT understand.

Back to Sandeman’s assessment of Hervey. Perhaps when Hervey speaks from one side of his mouth, he sounds “orthodox enough” to receive CONDEMNATION from the votaries of the perverted gospel of salvation conditioned on the sinner’s efforts. BUT when Hervey speaks from the other side of his mouth, he then sounds “heterodox enough” to receive COMMENDATION from other theological perverts – and this gives Sandeman worrisome pause; a sort of “*pensive disarray*.” From previous statements from Sandeman, he APPEARS to express some great insight into essential gospel matters, but he CLEARLY lacks the regenerate eyes and ears to see and discern that Hervey is simply one who is “*not abiding in the doctrine of Christ*” and “*does not have God*” (2 John 9).

“As men of this sort bear the deepest grudge against the ancient gospel preached by the apostles, he who stands high in their esteem must either be a great deceiver or greatly deceived himself, or at least much mistaken by them. As I am far from being willing to consider you in the first of these views, I shall make it the business of this letter to take notice of some of the leading sentiments and ways of speaking, which I apprehend you have adopted from such men without sufficient examination” (Sandeman).

Since these chapters are not set up in chronological order, I point out that Sandeman had opted for the third choice, which was that Hervey has been “*at least much mistaken by them*.” I think, rather, that Hervey is himself deceived and is greatly deceiving Sandeman. But Sandeman ought to know better it would seem, for he must needs TWIST Hervey’s words out of recognition to make them “appear orthodox.” To paraphrase one ancient writer:

I think that Sandeman in sedulously laboring to make Hervey a Christian, does prove himself to be a heathen.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Animated By The Spirit Of Antichrist

Sandeman concludes a letter with this brush stroke:

“I shall now conclude this general view of our popular and fashionable writers with observing what will readily occur to any lover of the ancient gospel, and the same spirit runs through them all, though it takes various courses and assumes various shapes among different classes of men in order to compass the same end; and though it does not, like the Spirit of the truth, lead its several children to very cordial affection toward each other” (Sandeman).

Ironically, Sandeman is ALSO of this “*same spirit*” when he speaks “*peace, peace, when there is no peace*” to at least one of the God-hating “popular and fashionable writers” – one James Hervey (Ezekiel 13:10-16; cf. 2 John 9-11). I say this (and cite relevant Scripture) because while Sandeman himself does NOT explicitly assert any form of conditionalism, he DOES speak peace to at least one who does so assert.

It is true that the same anti-christian spirit of conditionalism (which necessarily includes those who speak peace to this spirit) “*runs through them all, though it takes various courses, and assumes various shapes, among different classes of men, in order to compass the same end.*” And what is that “end”? The glory of God seen in the face of Jesus Christ as the “end” of law for righteousness? No. Instead, the “end” compassed by the spirit of antichrist is “self-righteous glory” brightly reflected in the spit-shined face of the sinner.

Other various and sundry “ends” are reflected off the face of the unregenerate sinner. One additional “end” is this: Since they are of the world and the world hears and agrees with them, we often witness professing Christians at “opposite ends of the theologically heretical spectrum” (e.g., conditionalist Calvinism and Arminianism) enunciating very similar sentiments that seek to relegate essential gospel doctrines to doctrines of “secondary importance” at best.

“... and though it does not, like the Spirit of the truth, lead its several children to very cordial affection toward each other” (Sandeman).

Witness such bickering brothers of Belial: James R. White vs Ergun Caner. George Whitefield vs John Wesley. Such is the “*cordial affection*” of those

animated by the spirit of antichrist.

“Little children, it is a last hour, and as you heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have risen up, from which you know that it is a last hour” (1 John 2:18).

CHAPTER TWENTY

Tolerant Calvinist Clowns

“Another of the arts of these preachers, consists in their use of scholastic words. These words, like the cups and balls of jugglers, serve them for a variety of purposes. By these, they sometimes blindfold the people, and sometimes make them stare, while they imagine some profound meaning to be contained in them; and at any rate, these words serve to confound and perplex the plain simple doctrines of the gospel, as well as to furnish upon occasions no small matter of idle disputation among the teachers. I shall only point at one instance. Mr. E. Erskine divides the sufficiency of the atonement into a threefold distinction. The first he calls '*intrinsic*,' the second '*ordinate*,' and the third '*legal*.' Then, after giving his explication of them, he very gravely tells us which of these faith has to do with, and which not. The preachers of his doctrine are at present at no small variance as to the proper use of these words, publishing ingenious controversies for the benefit of those who are disposed to read them. The poor people, who cannot well fathom such depths, must be left to follow the guides they severally most admire” (Robert Sandeman).

There are various types of juggling clowns (many who are Calvinists) that attempt to immure the heart of the simple gospel in incoherence. To them, judging saved and lost based on an atonement that actually atones is “*radical to the extreme*.” Tolerant Calvinist Clowns bloviate about it taking many long and arduous years of study for a regenerate person to believe the very heart of the gospel; to believe in an atonement that actually atones! If we say this gospel-denying assertion is contradicted by such verses as John 10:4-5, Romans 10:1-4, and 2 Corinthians 4:6, then they will just honk their red noses at us: “Honk! Doctrinal Perfectionism! Honk!”

To label belief in efficacious atonement as “doctrinal perfectionism” presupposes many things, one of which is that the plain and simple doctrine of Christ's atonement is extremely complex and difficult to understand. On the contrary, Christ's efficacious atonement is quite easy to understand. The alleged complexity or difficulty is NOT the reason why most professing Christians DESPISE THE CROSS; the reason (one reason, anyway) is that belief in Christ's efficacious atonement absolutely PRECLUDES SELF-RIGHTEOUS BOASTING:

“But may it never be for me to boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus

Christ, through whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world” (Galatians 6:14).

In addition to this customary Calvinistic clouding of the simple and elemental doctrine of Christ’s efficacious cross-work, is the fabrication of the foolish fiction of a “passive” or “permissive decree”:

*Like glittering and bouncing baubles they are tossed up into the air;
Hoping that in them will be found meaning to make them stop and stare; here is one true Christian writer who incisively lays this foolish fiction, bare:*

“... most who call themselves ‘Calvinists’ or ‘Reformed... say that God is IN control of all things but does not actively CONTROL all things. Now how’s that possible? Well, to anyone with common sense, it’s NOT possible. It’s a contradiction. But we have Calvinist authors and seminarians who make up all kinds of theories in order to justify their view of their god who doesn’t cause everything while remaining sovereign, and none of these theories has any basis in the Bible. They just had to concoct these fables, these fictions, about God, in order to make all their preconceived notions fit into the Bible’s clear teaching of God’s sovereignty. And they really don’t do a very good job of it. They use a lot of seminary-type words and phrases to try to impress people and get people to think they have this special knowledge of God, so we’re supposed to just defer to them, because, after all, they’re smarter and more well-read and have gone to highly-esteemed seminaries. But if you look at what they’re really saying amidst all the rhetoric, you’ll see that their house is built on sand. They have no biblical basis for their fabrications.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Farthings In A Dung Hill

“We may also take notice of the great ambiguity of the words and phrases which have been used on this subject [i.e., the gospel–CD], and the changes which have happened in them; some falling into disrepute, and replaced by others of less obnoxious sound: for no stone has been left unturned to intercept the light of the sacred truth and decoy our attention with an endless variety of the most abominable jargon about faith. The time and pains taken by the apostles in holding forth the heavenly ray of hope have been employed by thousands of preachers in directing us how to search for farthings in a dunghill” (Sandeman).

I cannot think of much to add, except to quote Romans 10:9 and say that many popular preachers who use the phrase “intellectual assent” as a pejorative, if consistently honest, MUST take issue with what Paul said here:

“Because if you confess the Lord Jesus with your mouth, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

The popular preachers who deny that faith is “bare assent” to understood gospel propositions (contra Romans 10:9), turn faith into a convoluted and mystical mush. Or, to word it similarly to Sandeman: These preachers are blindly leading the blind to search for the farthing of faith in a dark and doubtful dunghill.

“Jonathan Edwards in *Religious Affections*, Matthew Mead in *The Almost Christian Discovered*, Thomas Shepherd in *Parable of the Ten Virgins*, and John Piper in *Future Grace*, *The Pleasures of God*, and *Desiring God* DO twist, pervert, obscure, darken, and turn into self-righteous mystical mush the clear definition of faith given in such passages as Hebrews 11:1 and Romans 10:9” (*That Strange Something*, Chapter One).

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Mystical Mush Marination

“We may now proceed to observe that the popular preachers, while they show no small regard to distinctions devised by themselves or their predecessors and delight to range the Scriptures according to them, are very unmindful of the plain simple distinctions left us by the apostles to guide us in the understanding of their doctrine. Many voluminous controversies have arisen and much confusion has taken place through the neglect of the plain distinction made by Paul in these words, 1 Cor. Xiii, 13. *'And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three, but the greatest of these is charity.'* Though Paul as well as the other apostles always establishes an inseparable connection betwixt faith, hope, and charity, or love, he would have us to remember that any one of these is not the other, but that they are still three. When he affirms that we are justified by faith he would not have us to think that we are justified by any the least motion or degree of hope, or of love. This point must be carefully attended to because, as there have been from the beginning many counterfeits of faith, so it will be found that every man's hope and love are of the same nature with his faith. The capital question then must be: What is the faith by which men are justified?” (Sandeman; underlining mine).

The underlined portion brings to mind the Calvinists who deny that faith is assent to understood propositions. These Calvinists assert that demons understand and believe the gospel, and therefore (so their reasoning goes) some human sinner could “*understand and believe the gospel,*” and yet still remain eternally lost. By their ADDITION of an undefined (or undefinable) nebulous or mystical psychological “something” to the Biblical definition of faith (belief), they necessarily DENY that the gospel of Jesus Christ is the power of God to salvation to everyone BELIEVING.

“The apostles used the word '*faith*' or '*belief*' in the same sense we do to this day in common discourse. We are properly said to believe what any man says, when we are persuaded that what he says is true. There is no difference betwixt our believing any common testimony and our believing that of the gospel, but what arises from the very nature of the testimony. For thus the Apostle John states the matter, 1 John v. 9: '*If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater;*' so must produce greater certainty or firmness of persuasion” (Sandeman; underlining mine).

Obviously it DOES NOT take the resurrecting power of the Holy Spirit to produce understanding and assenting to “any common testimony” (e.g., $2+2=4$), while it DOES take this resurrecting power to understand and assent to the testimony of the gospel (Romans 10:9; Ephesians 1:19-20). Calvinists who labor under the delusion that demons believe the gospel, put a difference betwixt, not the nature of the gospel testimony, but the “nature and activity” of the mystical mush that is marinating between their ears.

“When once a man believes a testimony he becomes possessed of a truth; and that truth may be said to be his faith. Yea, we have no idea of truth but with reference to its being believed. The question about faith must be set aside when the inquiry turns upon how a man is affected by a testimony which he believes? His passions and affections are set in motion according to the nature of the thing testified, or according as the testimony brings him matter of joy or grief, hope or fear” (Sandeman).

If the Biblical definition of true belief or true assent is denied and ADDED to, then some sort of “subjective mystical something” (e.g., “joy,” “love,” “grief,” “hope,” “treasuring,” or “fear”) becomes the true giver of life, rather than Jesus Christ.

Faith (or assent) has an object, which is Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:1-5). True faith (or assent) worketh by love (Galatians 5:5); but this invincibly affecting love flows out of faith (bare assent). The true love that flows out of true assent confirms that this assent is not a lie. The false “love” of those who deny that faith is “mere intellectual assent” to gospel propositions, serves to confound, confuse, obscure, and contradict passages such as Acts 16:30-32, Romans 10:9, and Hebrews 11:1.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

Lies Masquerading As Truth

“As Jesus Christ and the apostles often speak of *'faith'* and *'the truth'* indifferently or to the same purpose, we may just point at a few instances. John i 17: *'Truth came by Jesus Christ.'* Gal. iii 23; *'But before faith' came.* Verse 25: *'But after that faith is come.'* John xvii 19: *'That they also might be sanctified through the truth.'* Acts xxvi 18, *'which are sanctified by faith that is in me.'* John xvi 13, *'the Spirit of truth.'* 2 Cor. iv 13, *'the Spirit of faith.'* John xviii 37, *'every one that is of the truth.* Gal. iii 9, *'they which be of faith.'* Acts vi 7, *'obedient to the faith.'* 1 Pet. i 22, *'in obeying the truth.'* 2 Tim. i 5, *'the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice, and I am persuaded that in thee also.'* 2 John ver. 2, *'for the truth's sake that dwelleth in us.'* 3 John ver. 3: *'the truth that is in thee.'* I might likewise take notice of many other phrases where the style is somewhat varied but which still carry the same meaning; as where Paul [in] Rom. v speaks of being *'justified by faith,'* and *'justified by his blood;'* by both which it is plain he means the same thing.

Every one who believes the same truth which the apostles believed has equally precious faith with them. He has unfeigned faith and shall assuredly be saved. If any man's faith be found insufficient to save him it is owing to this, that what he believed for truth was not the very same thing that the apostles believed but some lie connected with, or dressed up in the form of truth. So this faith can do him no good; because however seriously and sincerely he believes, yet that which he believes is false, and therefore it cannot save him. There is but one genuine truth that can save men.

To illustrate this matter let it be remembered that the saving truth which the apostles believed was *'That Jesus is the Christ.'* The apostles had one uniform fixed sense to these words, and the whole New Testament is writ to ascertain to us in what sense they understood them. Every one who believes that Jesus is the Christ in a different sense from the apostles or who maintains anything in connection with these words subversive of their real meaning, believes a falsehood; so his faith cannot save him. In the days of the apostles many affirmed along with them, that *'Jesus is the Christ,'* who yet meant very differently from them. The far greater part of Christendom will affirm in like manner; yet we shall not easily find many

who, when they come to explain themselves, have the same meaning with the apostles. Let us, then, lay aside all questions about faith or how a man believes; and let the only question be: What does he believe? What sense does he put on the apostolic doctrine about the way of salvation?" (Sandeman).

Regarding the comparison of being "justified by faith" and "justified by His blood." Faith has an object (namely, Jesus Christ), and so many times in Scripture faith is put for the object of one's faith. For instance, in the gospels Christ tells a woman that her faith has saved her or made her well. Clearly, this is a figure of speech that puts her faith for the object of her faith, since it was Christ Himself who made her well or whole.

Mormons and Arminians are one example of those who believe "*that Jesus is the Christ in a different sense from the apostles*" and "*who [maintain things] in connection with these words subversive of their real meaning,*" and who therefore "*[believe] a [damning] falsehood.*"

Sandeman had written:

"Let us, then, lay aside all questions about faith, or how a man believes; and let the only question be: What does he believe?" (Sandeman)

Calvinists who cloud the gospel with malignant mysticism, do not so much care about WHAT essential gospel doctrines every believer believes, as they do about HOW every believer believes – the "HOW" for these Calvinists being some psychologically nebulous state that is MORE THAN a bare assent to understood propositions of the true gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

Flameout

“To believe in vain, then, is to hold along with the truth some error which undermines it, makes it void and of no effect. And the same Apostle shows us at large in his epistle to the Galatians that however zealous Christians we may be, if we add to Christ’s death any requisite whatsoever in the matter of acceptance with God, Christ shall profit us nothing; Christ is become of no effect unto us. In general, the apostles ascribe every opinion or practice which they condemn to some error in faith, or a lie held in the place of the truth, 1 John i 8, and ii 4” (Sandeman).

This calls to mind the popular Calvinist doctrine of ADDING “non-meritorious conditions” to the work of Jesus Christ.

“Among those who appear to have the same faith with the apostles we are not allowed to make any difference, till some event make that difference appear. Some are said to believe only for a time, while others believe to the saving of the soul. Though, during the time that the former are said to believe we can by no means distinguish them from the latter; yet Jesus Christ plainly intimates to us that there is a real difference, even at the first instance, betwixt the faith of the former and that of the latter. The only use then, that this intimation can serve for while appearances are good, is to lead every man to examine himself and prove his own work. The real difference I speak of is pointed forth in the parable of the sower, Matthew xiii. In distinction from all who believe only for a while, to believe in vain, he who believes unto the saving of the soul is thus described, v. 23: *'But he that received seed into the good ground, is he that heareth the word, and UNDERSTANDETH IT, &c'*” (Sandeman).

I read (cannot recall where) that at least one Scripture twisted by Augustine to his own destruction, was the parable of the soils. Berkhof details this damnable heresy of Augustine:

“The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is to the effect that they whom God has regenerated and effectually called to a state of grace, can neither totally nor finally fall away from that state, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved. This doctrine was first explicitly taught by Augustine, though he was not as consistent on this point as might have been expected of him as a strict predestinarian. With

him the doctrine did not assume the form just stated. He held that the elect could not so fall away as to be finally lost, but at the same time considered it possible that some who were endowed with new life and true faith could fall from grace completely and at last suffer eternal damnation” (Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1953), p. 545; underlining mine).

Berkhof then goes on to note the Wesleyan Arminians' version of this denial of preservation or perseverance. Consider a serious *a fortiori*. Calvinists who know that Augustine denied perseverance (at least for a time), and yet still believe he was saved during this denial, HOW MUCH MORE will they judge as saved those perseverance-denying Wesleyan Arminians?

Consider Dr. James R. White's spiritual fellowship with Dr. Michael L. Brown (Brown believes that regenerate persons can unregenerate themselves). White is familiar with a lot of theological history, so presumably he knows about Augustine's heresy. So, if Brown and Augustine denied essential gospel truths in similarly-minded ways, then what face-respecting Calvinist is going to judge either of these two men lost? Of course, some Calvinist who is aware of both men's views, might judge Brown lost and Augustine saved. And then one question could be, why the inconsistency, when both men espoused similar heresy?

Sandeman writes:

“Those others may appear to men to understand the word of faith as clearly as the last. Their faith may have the same marks with his, of being genuine. It may be attended with the same signs of repentance, with the same expressions of desire and joy, or the same appearances of hope and love; while yet they do not understand the word of faith as he does. They do not understand how the bare word of faith or Christ's death alone can give them peace with God without some pious requisite or other, which they secretly either hope to attain or presume they have already acquired. Some secret notion of the necessity of some difference betwixt themselves and others is lodged in their minds along with the knowledge they have of the truth. And though the new knowledge they have got may make many warm and kindly impressions on their hearts and show itself in many amiable appearances in their lives; yet the little old leaven which is still retained, however much it may lie hid for a time, will, by degrees, leaven the whole lump. Their whole religion will become subservient to the darling reserve made for their pride, and it will require only a proper temptation to lay them open” (Sandeman; underlining mine).

At least one reason why God causes His people to endure persecutions, afflictions, etc., is to humble and test them (cf. Deuteronomy 8:2). There are many more passages than the Deuteronomy one, of course.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

The Thief On The Cross

“He who hopes to be saved on any other footing than the thief on the cross, or who hopes to stand on more honourable terms with his Maker than he, must be saved by another kind of grace, so by another God, a God who delights in such a character as is highly esteemed among men and who has no grace to bestow but to such a character.

To show what a vast difference there is betwixt the Divine character and what is worshiped by the popular preachers, I would have it observed that such mercy as was shown to the thief on the cross is characteristic of the true God and is made use of to exhibit to us the grandest view of the Divine majesty and glory” (Sandeman).

Gordon H. Clark was one whose doctrinal views concerning the thief on the cross blasphemes the Divine character. Here is something my brother in Christ wrote regarding Clark:

“Recently I was skimming a couple books by Gordon Clark. The more I read of Clark, the more I see how evil he really was. Check out what Clark thinks of the atonement:

'The thief on the cross said, 'Lord, remember me;' and Jesus replied, 'Today thou shalt be with me in paradise.' After a life of crime one of the three worst criminals in the nation — Barabbas had been released — this thief received assurance of heaven. He could hardly have known much about Jesus. He certainly had no notion of saving faith, let alone of the Trinity, the Atonement, or the second advent. Yet, on the authority of Jesus, we know that he was saved' (*Faith and Saving Faith*, p. 1).

Clark goes on to say that 'the thief knew more than most people think he did,' but, according to Clark, the thief did not know about the Atonement. Thus, if we assume that Clark believed that every saved person believes the gospel, we must conclude that Clark believed that the gospel does not include the Atonement.

And speaking of that book (*Faith and Saving Faith*), one would think that, since Clark believed that saving faith is assent to certain propositions, his book on saving faith would include what specific propositions are assented

to in saving faith. Or else, what good is the book? Well, does Clark give the essential propositions to which all with saving faith assent? No. He asks the question, but he never answers it. For example, he says,

'Still a most embarrassing question has not yet been answered, or even asked. It is this: If the object of saving faith is a proposition, what is that proposition? ... Surely no one is justified by believing that Abraham lived about 2000 B.C., or that Saul was the first King of Israel, though both of these propositions are completely Scriptural. Nor can we as Protestants believe implicitly whatever the Bible says. Calvin put it tersely: implicit faith is ignorance, not knowledge. What one has never heard or read cannot be believed, for faith cometh by hearing. Hearing what? We do not hear or read the whole Bible every day; we cannot remember it, if we read it through once a year. And a recent convert has probably never read it all. Then which verse, of the several an evangelist might quote, is the one which, believed, justifies the sinner? Has any reader of this study ever heard a minister answer or even ask this question? When this subject was touched on many pages back, it was said that repentance was necessary. 'Repent and be baptized' is a well-known command. But it does not answer the present question. To repent is to change one's mind. But in what respect? Beliefs, resolutions, ideas come and go. We are always changing our minds, and obviously there are many changes of mind that have nothing to do with justification. The question presses upon us: which change of mind?' (pp. 107-108)

The reader would then expect Clark to answer the question. What propositions make up justifying faith? What is that change of mind that is true evangelical repentance? But look at what Clark says next:

'Any attentive reader — there are many inattentive — must face the problem. But though the question is so obvious, the answer is not. Indeed, the question has no answer; that is, it has no single answer' (p. 108).

Oh? So Clark will not give us the answer to the life or death question — what is to be believed? When Clark commanded people to repent and believe, what did he mean? Clark goes on to give the examples of Justin Martyr, whose 'view of the atonement was abysmal,' according to Clark (p.109), and the people in Corinth who denied the resurrection, and asks this question:

'But to what justifying propositions did he [Justin Martyr] or they [those in Corinth who denied the resurrection] assent?' (p. 109)

He is assuming that Justin Martyr, whose 'view of the atonement was abysmal' and those in Corinth who denied the resurrection assented to justifying propositions! He goes on:

'Now, Justin Martyr was not a moron. Morons have doubtless been regenerated and justified. Some members of extremely primitive tribes also, with their minds incredibly confused. What propositions did they believe?' (p. 109)

So is he going to answer the question or not? What "justifying propositions" did Justin Martyr believe? What "justifying propositions" did the people in Corinth who denied the resurrection believe? (Clark's questions, not mine. The truth is that Justin Martyr and the people in Corinth who denied the resurrection were NOT believers.) What "justifying propositions" did the thief on the cross believe? Is Clark going to tell us? No! What does Clark conclude?

'There seems to be no other conclusion but that God justifies sinners by means of many combinations of propositions believed' (p. 110)

And can some of these combinations NOT include the proposition of the atonement? YES, according to Clark. Right at the beginning of the book, in the first two paragraphs of the introduction to a book on saving faith, Clark used the example of the thief on the cross to show that saving faith does NOT NECESSARILY INCLUDE BELIEF IN THE ATONEMENT!!

And how does Clark end the book? The last paragraph is this:

'Faith, by definition, is assent to understood propositions. Not all cases of assent, even assent to Biblical propositions, are saving faith; but all saving faith is assent to one or more Biblical propositions' (p. 118).

No mention of what these Biblical propositions are — just a statement that all saving faith is assent to one or more Biblical propositions. This is how a book on Faith and Saving Faith ends? That we don't know specifically what saving faith believes?

Now, according to Clark, is one of the Biblical propositions that is part of all saving faith a proposition about the atonement? NO!!! According to Gordon

Clark, on page ONE of this book, the thief on the cross, who *HAD SAVING FAITH*, HAD NO NOTION OF THE ATONEMENT.”

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Westminster Dolts Trifle With God's Word

“Still it must be said that faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. This is the only mean which God makes use of for making men wise unto salvation. And his sovereignty appears not a little in the conveyance of his word to nations and particular persons. The gospel is called '*a testimony exhibited in his own times*'” (Sandeman).

The dolts of Westminster must demur from the Scriptural testimony of Romans 10:13-17 because there is no light in them (Isaiah 8:20):

“The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts; and is ORDINARILY WROUGHT by the ministry of the Word” (WCF 14.1; emphasis mine)

In other words, for the cavalier men of Westminster Abbey, the truth revealed in Romans 1:16 and Romans 10:14-15 is ORDINARILY TRUE. And it is not ALWAYS the case, but only ORDINARILY the case, that those who are ignorant of God's righteousness are seeking to establish their own righteousness. Evidently, there are EXTRAORDINARY INSTANCES in which people are able to submit to a righteousness they are ignorant of (cf. Romans 10:1-4).

“Now it shines in one region and leaves another in darkness: then it takes its residence in the latter, and forsakes the former; and thus takes its course through all nations in different ages, as the lightning shining from under one part of heaven to the other. Wherever God purposes to save men of any nation, thither he sends his gospel in his proper time. Paul and Silas essayed to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit suffered them not. And they were directed by a heavenly vision to go into Macedonia, where the word of the Lord had free course and was glorified. Paul met with great opposition when he came to Corinth, but the Lord encouraged him to continue there: '*For (said he) I have much people in this city*'” (Sandeman).

Certain learned and perspicacious triflers of God's Word would say that the word of the Lord ORDINARILY has free course, and is glorified in the hearts of His people — a brazen assertion that is diametrically opposed to the redemptive glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ:

“Because it is God who said, Out of darkness Light shall shine, who shone in our hearts to give the brightness of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:6).

CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Celebrity Calvinist: Contorting Coxcomb

“In Christian countries the people are generally taught to make the same use of the Scripture as the bulk of the Jews did; that is, to learn how they may work the works of God in order to justification. Yet it is a great blessing to mankind to have the Scripture among them. By means of it God will bring to the knowledge of the truth all whom he intends to save, in spite of all the arts of the teachers. And when any diligent votary of the popular doctrine is overcome by the evidence of the sacred truth, he will find himself, like Paul, happily delivered from that path wherein his former zealous wish and choice led him to walk” (Sandeman).

The majority of professing Christians are taught to use the law of God, NOT as a schoolmaster to lead them to Christ (Galatians 3:24), but rather as a tool of self-righteousness misused in order to establish a righteousness of their own (cf. Romans 10:1-4).

God’s gospel will be a great blessing to the elect of mankind who are in time infallibly regenerated by it. It is certainly NOT a blessing to the non-elect or reprobate among mankind, for they will be infallibly hardened for destruction by it, which is God’s intended purpose (cf. 2 Corinthians 2:14-16; Romans 9:18).

If any of the diligent votaries of Conditionalist Calvinism (cf. Romans 10:1-4) are regenerated by the Spirit of God, they will immediately repent of their false gospel of salvation conditioned on the sinner and believe in the true gospel of salvation conditioned SOLELY on the penal and preceptive work of Jesus Christ. Emulating Paul in Philippians 3:8, they will count their former self-righteous religion as dung.

“I would be far from refusing even to the popular preachers themselves, what they so much grudge to others, the benefit of the one instance of an hardened sinner’s finding mercy at last: for I know no sinners more hardened, none greater destroyers of mankind, than they” (Sandeman).

Tax collectors, prostitutes, and the not many wise and mighty according to flesh, enter the kingdom of heaven before those “astoundingly amicable” and “epistemically humble” tolerant Calvinists who graduated *cum laude* from Veritas Viper Seminary.

“Now let us suppose that one of these, after having spent half a century in perverting the gospel to the ruin of himself and his hearers, is busily employed in studying for the usual entertainment of his audience to accommodate some part of the gospel to his favourite scheme. The text proves too hard for him. He is difficulted. He is perplexed. He sweats in vain. It will not do. The glory and excellency of the work of Christ, which he had been all his life labouring to throw a veil over, arises in his view in full opposition to all the heartwork he had been preaching up. He is ashamed and confounded, yet filled with wonder at the glorious exchange. He comes forth to his congregation, acquaints them in the fulness of his heart, that he and they had hitherto been walking in the '*broad way to destruction, the blind leading the blind, &c.*' What must be the effect? No less than such a revolution as happened in the synagogue of Nazareth. Yea, if the laws and manners of the country allowed, I dare say the devout people would tear him in pieces if they did not conclude he had gone distracted” (Sandeman).

Celebrity Calvinists are busily employed, entertaining their audience with vain reveries of “compatibilist freedom” from their Maker. “He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; the Lord shall mock at them” (Psalm 2:4). Watch, with fascination, as Celebrity Calvinist contorts himself into a pernicious pretzel as he preaches through Romans 9. Observe, with the affable head-tilt of the curious canine, as this preacher transforms himself into a tumultuous teapot, short and stout, shaking his handle, and emitting seditious steam from his spout (cf. Romans 9:19-20).

Celebrity Calvinist also labors to throw a veil over the glorious truth conspicuously set forth in 2 Corinthians 4:6:

“Because [it is] God who said, Out of darkness Light shall shine, who shone in our hearts to [give the] brightness of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ” (2 Corinthians 4:6).

Celebrity Calvinist preaches up the LIE that the false christ of universal atonement (e.g., “Arminianism”) is revealed to the elect sinner upon regeneration, instead of the True Christ. If said Calvinist were to actually judge righteous judgment based on the true gospel, his unstable and fickle congregants might speedily lead him to the edge of a steep cliff.

“I shall close this letter with observing that though the intricacies of error be endless, yet nothing is more simple than the gospel; and its simplicity is one great reason why it is so much despised” (Sandeman).

The lightless labyrinth of the unregenerate mind is a good reason for asking professing Christians MANY questions, in order to discern whether or not they believe in the true God, the true Christ, the true gospel. **[1]** If they are sound in the faith, then they believed the true gospel upon regeneration. If the “light of their true gospel profession” is false gospel darkness, then they believed the false gospel upon regeneration, and perhaps later “grow into” the true gospel.

“The lamp of the body is the eye. Then if your eye is sound, all your body is light. But if your eye is evil, all your body is dark. If, then, the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! No one is able to serve two lords; for either he will hate the one, and he will love the other; or he will cleave to the one, and he will despise the other. You are not able to serve God and wealth” (Matthew 6:22-24).

And you are not able to serve the true gospel, and the false gospel. The gospel that is truly defended, is the gospel truly served and loved. The gospel that is hated and despised is not defended. Celebrity Calvinist cleaves to the false gospel atonement he believes regenerated him, and he despises and denies the true gospel atonement which he believes one may (or may not) “grow into” at a later point in time.

“And as He was in Jerusalem, at the Passover, at the Feast, many believed into His name, seeing the miracles which He did. But Jesus Himself did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all, and because He had no need that anyone should witness concerning man, for He knew what was in man” (John 2:23-25).

The Celebrity Calvinist who tolerates an anathematized gospel and spiritually fornicates with God-haters, epitomizes those “believers” whom Jesus Christ would NOT commit Himself to.

[1] Some may consider these MANY questions a display of uncharitable interrogation in a peevish attempt to make them an offender for a word. This is not true. We are sincerely seeking out true believers. We also desire that people build upon the Rock of Christ, and not on deceptive sand. We want to emulate Jeremiah in rooting up, tearing down, and destroying the refuge of lies; and to build upon the Rock of God's gospel atonement.

"Behold, I have today appointed you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to tear down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:10).

CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

By His Blood Emboldened

“The popular preachers do indeed admit something like the Scriptural notion of believing, into a corner of their account of faith, under the title of *the assent* of faith. But, then, it lies in so remote and so dark a corner as scarcely to be seen. And if it be at all thought of, it is made little or no account of; yea, it is often marked with dishonourable epithets” (Sandeman).

Many popular present-day preachers, teachers, and theologians denigrate the gospel of Jesus Christ by asserting that “merely” or “simply” believing, makes a person, not a regenerate believer, but a demon. Preachers of this pseudo-pious pestilence commit a category fallacy, and engage in *eisegesis*, with their abhorrent enunciation that demons believe that their salvation is conditioned on the work of Christ alone, apart from their own efforts.

More Sandeman:

“Many of the popular preachers are sworn enemies to the belief of the truth as the sole ground of hope. For instance, Mr. E. Erskine says: [1] *'Christ is offered particularly to every man; there is not a soul hearing me, but, in God's name, I offer Christ unto him as if called by name and surname. Beware, my friends, of a general, doubtsome faith, abjured in our national covenant as a branch of Popery. A general persuasion of the mercy of God in Christ, and of Christ's ability and willingness to save all that come to him, will not do the business: no; devils and reprobates may, and do actually believe it. There must, therefore, of necessity be a persuasion and belief of this, with particular application thereof unto a man's own soul.'*

The doubtsome faith he complains of is that which admits of a doubt concerning one's own state. Now, a man may have some doubts about this, who is very firmly persuaded of the truth of the gospel; yea, Paul calls upon some whom he himself looked upon as believers, to examine themselves, whether they were in the faith; and he exhorts others about whom he observed the surest tokens of their being true Christians, to give all diligence to remove every doubt concerning their state; plainly intimating, that they could not warrantably be assured of their happy state by any exercises of mind, without the fruits of faith, or the self-denied works of obedience.

The more we search into the doctrine of the popular preachers, the more will our inquiry resemble Ezekiel's digging through the wall. We shall still see greater abominations" (Sandeman).

[1] Sermon on Luke ii. 28, called *Christ in the Believer's Arms*.

Some observations:

What exactly does Erksine mean by "A general persuasion of the mercy of God in Christ"? What does Erksine think a "general persuasion" is?

Sandeman reveals his unregenerate state by asserting that a person can be "*very firmly persuaded of the truth of the gospel,*" while doubting his own spiritual state. This is patently false. A person who doubts his state before God does NOT believe that Jesus Christ is his SOLE ground of acceptance before God.

Sandeman FATALLY CONFOUNDS sure tokens of evidence (e.g., fruits of faith & obedience) with assurance of salvation. Good works are indeed an evident token or fruit of true faith. But, if these supposed "good works" form at least some part of the ground of one's assurance, then they are nothing but dead works, evil deeds, and fruit unto death. This quote shows that Sandeman's conscience had NOT been purged by the blood of Christ from dead works, since, in his self-righteous scheme, the blood of Jesus Christ was NOT the SOLE ground of EVERY BELIEVER'S confident assurance to enter into the Holy of Holies (cf. Hebrews 9:14, 10:19).

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

Crest Of Human Pride

Robert Sandeman writes:

“Having briefly pointed at some of the methods by which the popular preachers set aside the Divine justice, so as to render the sacred truth of little or no value in the eyes of men, let us next observe how they set themselves in opposition to the Divine sovereignty — and we shall find that for every jewel they rob from the crown of the Most High they plant a feather in the crest of human pride. They are disaffected to the simple belief of the gospel as the sole ground of hope because it leaves a man even in the full assurance of faith, or when the truth is most present to his thoughts, entirely at the mercy of God for his salvation; or because it leads him to the greatest reverence for, and submission to the Divine sovereignty without having any claim upon God whatsoever, or finding any reason why God should regard him more than those who perish.

Hence it is, that in leading their hearers to faith, they constantly instruct them how to qualify themselves so as they may be in a condition to advance some claim upon the Deity and treat with him on some rule of equity; or so as they may find some reason why he should regard them more than others, and, accordingly, grant the favours they desire of him. They maintain, indeed, that men can obtain no benefit from the Deity but in the way of grace; yet, it is evident that grace obtained in the way they direct is improperly so called, at least it is very different from the apostolic notion of the Divine grace.

Paul, when speaking of the sovereignty of the Divine choice of men to salvation as proceeding upon grace, in opposition to every notion of desert in those who are chosen, distinguishes that grace in the following manner: 'And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no work.' If this one text were well understood, the whole body of the popular doctrine would fall to the ground at once” (Sandeman; underlining mine).

This well describes Calvinists who say salvation and justification are conditioned on the sinner’s “*graciously*” enabled faith. Thus, according to this view, they are “*graciously enabled*” to put God in their debt (contra Romans 4:4-5). It is quite true that if these conditionalist Calvinists well understood Romans 11:6, “*the*

whole body of [their] popular doctrine would fall to the ground at once.”

CHAPTER THIRTY

Eagerly Studying The Scriptures Is Bad, Then?

Sandeman citing from Romans, and commenting:

"But I say. Did not Israel know?" To this a twofold answer is given, the one from Moses, and the other from Isaiah. In the first the Spirit of prophecy intimates, that, in sacred learning the Jews would far excel the Gentiles, who, in comparison with them are described as having no wisdom, and as unworthy to be accounted a people; yet declares that these fools would obtain the right hand of them as to the true knowledge of God and access to his favour, and so provoke them to jealousy. In the second it is declared that this knowledge, with its attendant blessings, would be bestowed on them that were no way in quest of it. The two answers run thus:

'First, Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.'

Though the Jews then eagerly studied the Scriptures, and had all the knowledge of them that the utmost of human zeal and sagacity could lead them to, yet all their knowledge only prompted them the more to gainsay and disobey the great scope and end of the law and the prophets"
(Sandeman; underlining mine).

So, eagerly studying the Scriptures is bad? Eagerly studying the Scriptures is bad, then. Well, uh, no.

"And you do not have His Word abiding in you, for the One whom that One sent, this One you do not believe. You search the Scriptures, for you think in them you have everlasting life. And they are the ones witnessing concerning Me. And you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. I do not receive glory from men; but I have known you, that you do not have the love of God in yourselves. I have come in the name of My Father, and you do not receive Me. If another comes in his own name, you will receive that one. How are you able to believe, you who receive glory from one another, and the glory which is from the only God you do not seek? Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one accusing you,

Moses, in whom you have hoped. For if you were believing Moses, you would then believe Me; for that one wrote concerning Me. But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe My Words?" (John 5:38-47)

The knowledge of many Calvinist-Reformed persons (e.g., seminarians; theologians) prompts them to gainsay Jesus Christ as the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes (Romans 10:1-4). For they receive those "Arminians" and "moderate Calvinists" who vilify the efficacious blood of Christ with their universal atonement doctrine. This theologically-idolatrous and adulterous-reception of God-haters is to seek the glory of man, instead of the redemptive glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 4:3-6).

CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

Swayed By Sound Instead Of Sense

“I shall end this postscript with observing that when the popular preachers can find no other way of showing their contempt of the simple belief of the truth, as the sole requisite to justification, they call it the '*faith of devils.*' Yet, however keen the intended reproach be, it can have weight with none but those who are swayed by sound instead of sense” (Sandeman; underlining mine).

Sandeman reveals *his contempt* for salvation conditioned on Christ's work ALONE. Sandeman's statement that “simple belief of the truth” is “*the sole requisite to justification*,” highlights his ignorance of Jesus Christ being the end of law for righteousness to everyone believing (see Romans 10:1-4). The “SOLE REQUISITE to justification” is the propitiating blood and imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, NOT “simple belief of the truth.”

Indeed, simple belief of the truth is an immediate and inevitable FRUIT (or result) of a person having been regenerated and justified; but it is NOT a “requisite.” Those who believe that “simple belief of the truth” is a requisite, ironically, do NOT yet possess this “simple belief of the truth.” Simple belief of the truth is simple belief of the gospel, which is God's promise to save His people conditioned SOLELY on the cross-work of the God-Man-Mediator, Jesus Christ. Simple belief of the gospel of Christ believes that He met ALL the requisite conditions for salvation (Leviticus 18:5; Romans 10:1-5; Galatians 3:10-14) .

“For, according to the Scripture, the same truth which saves Christ's people, torments the devils. So we find them saying, ‘What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?’ They believe, they hate, and yet they tremble at that truth which Christ's people believe, love, and find salvation in. With them are ranked all those of mankind who know as much of the truth as inclines them to hate and pervert it, but not so much as to make them love and obey it from the heart” (Sandeman; underlining mine).

The devils' acknowledgment of “Jesus, thou Son of God” obviously includes within it several significantly different propositions, as compared with true Christians.

Tolerant Calvinists are among those who know much truth, but who do not love and obey it from the heart. Rather, they treat the truth contemptuously as optional gospel doctrine, or as non-essential additions to an otherwise “sufficiently-orthodox” faith.

More from Sandeman:

“... for as to all those it must be said that the spirit which conducts them blinds their minds, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. Yet so much of the evidence of the truth shines into the hearts of many, as to furnish matter of condemnation to them, for their loving darkness rather than the light. In this view, the same truth is the savour of life unto life unto some, and of death unto death unto others. In this view, the same truth is the object of contempt and chagrin to some, and of love and joy to others” (Sandeman).

Tolerant Calvinists – and *especially* Tolerant Calvinists – and other tolerant religionists of varying stripe, are PRIME EXAMPLES of those who hate the LIGHT and refuse to come to the LIGHT, lest their deeds be exposed and reprov'd as dead works, evil deeds, and fruit unto death (Romans 7:5; Hebrews 9:14). It is customary for Tolerant Calvinists to cast up all kinds of attention-deflecting dust into the air, when they are confronted with Biblical views of true faith in the gospel and true repentance of former God-hating, idolatrous religion.

“Moreover, according to the Apostle James, let a man make ever so sound a profession of the faith, and talk of ever so many illuminations and experiences, if we find him seeking to pass these upon us as proofs of his being a Christian without showing his faith in the works of love commanded by Jesus Christ, we may safely repel his confidence by telling him, '*The devils also believe.*' We ought, then, to keep our eye on the Scripture, when we hear the popular preachers charging others with the faith of devils and reprobates, lest in agreeing with them, we be found despising the most holy faith and at the same time obnoxious to the awful censure of the Apostle James; for their acts of faith serve equally to set aside the precious faith of the apostles, and the works of love, by which that faith is evidenced and perfected” (Sandeman).

Critics of Sandeman have asserted that the “Sandemanian” doctrine of faith was completely devoid of any accompanying works (Sandeman has clearly been misrepresented in that case). Those whose profession of faith is not backed up with evidential fruits of its genuineness, are called “liars” by John in his epistle. James, countering similarly to John, says, “The devils also believe.” The devils

believe what? NOT the gospel, obviously. Rather, the devils believe that “God is One” (cf. James 2:14-26).

James’ point, I think, is NOT that devils and religious pretenders BOTH profess belief in the gospel, but is that devils and religious pretenders BOTH *profess a belief*. What is the difference between these professions of belief? The devils’ profession is accompanied by the “work” of shuddering — “the demons believe and shudder.” The religious pretenders, on the other hand, “believe” that God is One and WHAT? Nothing. There are no accompanying works to demonstrate that their profession is not a lie; nothing but hypocritical hot-air. So, NO, the demons do NOT believe the gospel as some clueless Calvinists have imagined. They simply believe that God is One, and this belief causes them to shudder. The demons shudder; the hypocritical religionists do not shudder. Thus, it seems, that at least one of James' points is that demons do more than those religionists who mouth empty words.

CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

The Powder-Puffed Prince

“As to the ends of Christ’s death, many think he died to purchase grace and spirit to help men to establish their own righteousness, or acquire some requisite to justification; and accordingly their zeal is directed” (Sandeman).

Hypocritical Sandeman lacks self-awareness here, since he earlier acknowledged that “simple belief of the truth” was the “sole requisite” to justification. Here is one such ignorant exhibition of purchasing or procuring “*grace and spirit to help men to establish their own righteousness.*” Behold! The English Puritans’ Powder-Puffed Prince:

“The second part also may be reduced to these two heads: – First, Whether Christ did not make full satisfaction for all their sins for whom he died, and merited glory, or everlasting happiness, to be bestowed on them upon the performance of those conditions God should require? Secondly (which is the proper controversy I shall chiefly insist upon), Whether Christ did not procure for his own people a power to become the sons of God, merit and deserve at the hands of God for them, grace, faith, righteousness, and sanctification, whereby they may be enabled infallibly to perform the conditions of the new covenant, upon the which they shall be admitted to glory?” (John Owen, *A Display Of Arminianism*, Ch. 9: Of the death of Christ, and of the efficacy of his merits, pp. 88-89, Old Paths Gospel Press; underlining mine).

CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

The Sum Of All Holiness

“Charity contains the sum of all holiness* of heart and life. No action, however commendable, no character, however highly esteemed, that is not formed upon the love of the truth can be well pleasing to God. All love to the truth is influenced by the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of the truth, who is therefore likewise called the Spirit of love. And thus we see the true difference betwixt the Spirit of God and the spirit of the world, or the spirit of pride by which men fortify themselves in their disobedience to God, and flatter one another down to eternal perdition” (Sandeman; underlining mine).

For a fairly detailed explanation of what constitutes Biblical charity (love), please look for upcoming agrammatos posts (the Lord willing) on true vs false love, etc.

Sandeman’s explanation of his asterisk above:

*“All sanctification solely springs from the bare truth, so much set at nought by our preachers. Jesus Christ said in his prayer, John xvii: *'Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth; And for their sakes I sanctify myself that they also might be sanctified through the truth.'* Only by this truth are the consciences of the unclean sanctified and encouraged to draw nigh to God. Only by this truth is the heart purified from evil affections, for obeying the new commandment of love; Only by this truth do men overcome the world: *'Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?'* If we attend to these passages of Scripture, we will readily be disentangled from many volumes of nonsense that have been writ by many famous preachers on sanctification (Sandeman).

Some “volumes of nonsense” containing damnable heresy include:

Walter Marshall’s *Gospel-Mystery Of Sanctification*.

John Owen’s volume containing this treatise (I’ve shortened the title): *The Nature, Power, Deceit, and Prevalency of the Remainders of Indwelling Sin in Believers*.

Jerry Bridges’ *The Pursuit Of Holiness*

CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

The Fervency Of Charity

This concludes my comments and observations on select portions of Robert Sandeman's *Letters On Theron & Aspasio*.

“And Paul speaking of the great apostacy, as prefigured by ancient idolatry, called it the '*mystery of iniquity*,' and says it comes '*with all deceivableness [sic] of unrighteousness*.' And he declares that it comes as a judgment on them who '*received not the love of the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness*.' Thus we have an extensive view of his account of charity, as it '*rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth*'” (Sandeman).

Tolerant Calvinists, such as James White and Douglas Wilson, are salient examples of those who receive NOT the truth of Christ's efficacious cross-work, but who take pleasure in the nullified “cross-work” of Arminianism. How so? Very briefly, they think that those who DENY the [dunamis](#) (power) of the cross believe the gospel (1 Corinthians 1:17-31; cf. 2 Corinthians 4:6). Of course, there are MULTITUDES of less popular and less influential false religionists would agree with Wilson and White, but I deem it more efficient to take aim at the Theological Big Birds and Church Nerds, rather than any low hanging fruit.

“As charity, then, always holds pace with the truth and keeps company with it wherever it goes; so it is very jealous in its behalf, as finding all its joy in it. No injury can be done to the truth, but charity feels the wound. Christian zeal is nothing else but the fervency of charity; and as there are many counterfeits of the truth, so there are likewise of charity. We may easily know, then, what sort of charity any man has by inquiring what does he hold for truth, or what is his justifying faith” (Sandeman; underlining mine).

The “charity” of the two aforementioned Tolerant Celebrity Calvinists “holds for a truth” that those ignorant of the sole ground of acceptance before God, believe the gospel (contra Romans 10:1-4). They who are ignorant of how a sinner is made right with God, believe that Jesus Christ died for everyone without exception. True charity is consumed with a holy zeal for Christ's efficacious atonement. It does NOT suffer or allow this gospel atonement truth to be defiled and defamed by the God-hating despisers of Christ's precious propitiatory blood.

“The spirit of pride, which is the spirit of the world, under the borrowed name of charity always opposes the truth. Yea, it can take pleasure in anything but the truth. Among some devout people it takes the name of catholic charity; among the more fashionable, that of universal benevolence. But whatever name it assumes, it always looks with an evil eye on the truth, as a narrow way of thinking, exceedingly odious to it; and whenever it smells the breath of ancient charity, it is ready to oppose it with the same temper as it did of old, 'Say we not well, that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?' It always charges ancient charity with some malignant disposition” (Sandeman; underlining mine).

Here's a popular and fashionable Calvinist whose “charitable temper” charges ancient charity with some sort of malignant disposition:

<https://agrammatos.wordpress.com/2010/12/09/james-white-slanderer-spiritual-harlot-hypocrite/>

Sandeman:

“The spirit of love as it works in them that believe leads them to a careful jealousy over each other (as well as every one to be) in the first place, jealous over himself. Charity delights in the just living by faith: yet it is ready to join with God in saying: *'If he draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.'* The language of charity to its favourites may be thus summed up: *'If ye know Christ, as I am bound by your profession to judge ye do, happy are ye if ye obey him.'* Charity regards its favourites only for the truth's sake dwelling in them, and is grieved at everything about them unbecoming the truth. Hence it is led to rebuke them; and when they repent, so return to the truth, to forgive them; and if they repent not, to reject them as hypocrites and unbelievers. Here I am reminded of some lines in a song, which, after addressing charity as the offspring of God, proceeds thus:

‘True as the object to the glass,
With him yon wake your fire,
Frown when he frowns, hate what he hates,
And what he loves, desire” (Sandeman).

Nice rhyme. [I recall looking up that poem (rhyme) and it was written by John Glas (not endorsing Glas as a true Christian).]