

The Standard
Of
Orthodoxy
Joseph Frons

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Agape Chapel Ministries
P.O.Box 59084
Norwalk, CA 90652 USA
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enjoyment, as pledges and earnest of their future salvation; a salvation which enables the recipient to live in constant anticipation of eternal glory; a salvation which cannot be revoked, cannot be destroyed, cannot be forfeited, cannot be warred against with success by any of his enemies; which cannot fail to realize in its recipient's experience more than eye hath seen, or ear heard, or hath entered into the heart of man to conceive, until in the immediate presence of the Eternal Jehovah, the God of salvation, the whole ransomed family, the entire election of grace in the general assembly, shall burst forth in one eternal, unceasing shout, "salvation unto our God!"

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The Standard Of Orthodoxy *Joseph Irons*

A Discourse,

Delivered in Grove Chapel, Camberwell, Sunday Morn., July 9, 1848

*Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine,
but his that sent me." -John 7:16*

Would to God that every public preacher, professing to be a preacher of the Gospel, could make this assertion, which their Divine Master has made. No man can open his mouth to attempt to instruct others in Christianity without offering a direct insult to God and man, unless he can in his limited sense make the declaration, "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." But these are the words of Him who spake as never man spake, and display, in the most striking colors, the deep humility to which He bowed. There is something like a self-contradiction in the statement at the first glance, because the Redeemer says, "My doctrine," and then says, "not mine." But both these senses are true, and we shall have to look a little into them this morning, in order to see how far they are correct, both with regard to Him and all His sent servants.

With regard to Himself, the doctrine was His essentially, as God from everlasting; but, as regards His manhood, it was not during the few days He tabernacled upon the earth, and the few years He ministered. As regards His humiliation, it was not His as man in a subordinate sense, but His by reception, and as dear to His heart, having been His from everlasting in the sacred purposes of His infinite love. So also may His sent servants, without any exception, be able to say, by His grace, "My doctrine" "my doctrine," and yet "not mine," by invention, "not mine," by any new discovery, "not mine," as originating with

the creature; "my doctrine," because revealed to my soul by the Holy Ghost- "my doctrine," because applied to my heart with invincible power, just as St. Paul says, "my gospel." "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel." He did not mean that it was his own gospel-the gospel of his own invention, as a system originating with himself, but as in his possession-as dear to his heart-as made known to his soul, because his whole life and salvation were wrapped up in it, and could by no possibility be separated from it. Just so our precious Christ, viewed in His eternal Godhead, as we shall presently see: the doctrine was mine, it was His from everlasting; and yet in His humiliation He could say, It is "not mine" as appertaining only to my manhood, it is "not mine" only, but it is my Father's who sent me. "My doctrine is not mine." He might with safety add, Not mine only, but His that sent me.

It is my intention, this morning, first of all, to inquire, what was the essential doctrine of Christ, for that is of vast importance as our standard of orthodoxy. Then we shall glance at the antiquity and authority of it: He traces it up to the Father. And then, in the last place, the triumphs of it. God grant that we may realize some of these triumphs amongst us today.

1. First of all, let us pay a little minute attention to the inquiry. What was the essential doctrine of Christ? Because, in the days in which we live there are so many new inventions, and so many pretenders to this, that, and the other authority for them, that it becomes us well to investigate and examine whether the doctrines we receive, and which may in a subordinate sense be called our doctrines, are really those of Jesus. And if you examine the history of His three year's ministry on earth, if you read attentively all that He spoke, and if you notice all that He did, you will come to the conclusion, I think, that three things constituted at least an epitome of the doctrine of Christ. The first was, the honor of the Deity, it lay near His heart. The second was, the interest of His church, for which errand He came into the world. And the third was, the substitution of His

the glorifying of all the perfections of the Deity, the interests of the Church dear to the heart of Christ, and His substitution of His own person to effect both. They are our standard of orthodoxy. The man who rejects them and adopts contingencies who would argue carnally against their harmony, is not a happy man, nor yet a holy one. A happy man is he that knows there is now no condemnation, a man who can say that "my beloved is mine, and I am His," a man who goes on singing, "I know who I have believed." He is a happy man who is free from Satan's bondage, who is at war with sin, and in vital union with Christ, accustomed to hold conversion in heaven, and thence looking to the Savior, who is dead to the world, and the world dead to him; crucified, yet living by faith in the Son of God, putting on a perfect righteousness, decked with all the jewels of the Holy Spirit's graces, and waiting the marriage supper of the Lamb, to sit down with Him in the realms of glory. This is a happy man, and moreover this will be a godly man.

Some profess to argue the reverse, if argument it can be called, that when a man knows he is free from condemnation, this doctrine will make him careless, will make him licentious, will make him trifle and parley with his known duties, both moral and Christian. Now we know that the reverse is the fact; for most certain it is, that the higher the believer in Jesus climbs, the nearer he gains the summit of believing confidence, the farther he is from the mud-pool, the dirt-heap, the dust and the muck of the wilderness state; the purer the air he inhales, the brighter the prospect he attains, and the more spiritual and holy his ordinary desires from day to day.

One triumph more, and I close. The triumphs of the doctrine of Christ may be summed up in one word, salvation, not the offer of it, not the chance of it, not a condition about it, not a query concerning it; salvation itself, perfect, full, free, finished, everlasting salvation; salvation from sin, curse, law death, and hell, from all pharisaic pride and worldly influence; a salvation that brings down the participation of glory to present

before you this morning, the doctrine of Christ. The very first sermon we read of, which was Peter's, was a simple statement of the doctrine of substitution by Christ, according to the eternal appointment of the Father, it being the determined council and foreknowledge of God. We have got our doctrine in one sermon, and that one sermon especially contains the three things epitomized of which I have been speaking. And while he was simply delivering the doctrine of Christ, the Holy Ghost descended, and by His transforming power created 3,000 souls anew in Christ Jesus, by one sermon. Did you ever know such a thing done under an Arminian sermon? Never. It is a doctrine upon which God puts His honor, because it honors Him; and therefore the soul-transforming power, which goes forth with! The doctrine is to be esteemed one of the triumphs of Christ's gospel.

Think for a moment, beloved, what effects have been produced upon you by the doctrine of grace. I sometimes solemnly apprehend that my thirty years' ministry among you will only serve as one long continued testimony for the eternal condemnation of some, hardened, unmoved, unregenerate, living and dying strangers to God. Wherever the grace of God goes forth with the doctrine of Christ, there, be it observed, the soul is so transformed, as that having borne the image of the earthly, it bears the image of the heavenly; having been the servants of sin, you are transformed to the servants of Christ; having been in bondage and slavery, you are transformed to freedom and liberty; having been alienated from God by wicked works, you are transformed into the most endearing, affectionate, and close intercourse with Him. Oh, the blessedness of the soul-transforming power of the doctrine of Christ!

Then, among the triumphs of this doctrine, you must include the happiness and holiness - I put them together for brevity's sake - the happiness and holiness of its recipients. I do not believe there is a happy man to be found upon the earth, but the man who has embraced this threefold view of Christ's doctrine;

own person to effect both. Just a word or two on each of these three particulars.

The doctrine of Christ, first of all, held forth the honor of all the persons of the Deity, to such an extent, that when He closes up His ministry He says, "I have glorified Thee on the earth;" it was His very declaration; to such an extent, that the law of God was within His heart, hidden there, within His own bowels, and so dear to Him that He vowed that not a jot or tittle of it should fall to the ground or fail, all must be fulfilled. And even the cup of vengeance He must drink He saw was so essential to the honoring of Divine justice; He says, "The cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?" The powers of darkness had rebelled in heaven and on earth against the Father's honor; and so tenacious was He of His honor, that having "spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them, openly triumphing over them in it." In fact, the sacred errand, which the prophet Zechariah was commissioned to set forth of His coming, was followed out closely by him when! He says, "Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, After the glory hath He sent me unto the nations;" a direct prophesying of Christ. The glory of Jehovah had been warred against, the glory of His moral government had been rebelled against, the glory of His absolute sovereignty had been defied, the glory of His almighty power had been continually insulted by His fallen creatures. "After the glory hath He sent me unto the nations," sent after it, to restore it; sent after it, to bring back that praise and glory due to the name and the essential perfections and attributes of the Deity. It was His errand upon the earth that all the persons of the Deity should be equally honored, that the Father should be glorified in the absolute sovereignty of His predestinating enactments; that the Son should be glorified equally with the Father, and equally exalted. The Holy Spirit put an honor on His ministry when He descended in a dove-like form, anointing Him without measure; and the voice of the Father exclaimed, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." And while this honor is put on Christ by the Father, Christ failed not

to speak of the honor put on the Holy Ghost, as the Teacher of all things, the Sanctifier of all the family of God, the indwelling Power, making all His saints His, and consecrating them to His glory to dwell with Him for ever; "for," says Jesus, "He shall abide with you for ever."

This was the tendency of His doctrine, that all the attributes of the Deity should be glorified; hence the beautiful order, the grand economy of salvation and redemption. This was so arranged and ordered, so effected and carried out, that the grand display of mercy and love to poor ruined sinners should not violate one of the perfections of the Deity, that the justice of God should be wholly satisfied on behalf of every sinner saved, that the holiness of God should remain unsullied, that unholy, wicked depraved sinners should be washed thoroughly from their iniquities, and cleansed from their sins, that the truth of God should remain inviolate; although it is said He will by no means clear the guilty: but then, said our glorious Redeemer, "I will bear the guilt," and the guilty are then no longer guilty; for the guilt is then removed from them, and transferred to the substitute. So the truth of God remains unsullied. Yea, all the attributes, all the perfections, all the personalities of the Deity are equally honored and glorified in the great work of the Redeemer, and in the doctrine that He preached.

Now this is what I want among the preachers of the present day, if God would but turn their hearts to it, that with all their zeal for what they term conversion, with all their zeal and concern for any party notions, they should just keep this one point in view, "Will the doctrine I am delivering honor all the persons of the Deity alike?" That is the fair standard of orthodoxy; and I beg of you to bring everything you hear and read to that test; for if all will not bring equal honor to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, you may be sure it is of the devil, and not of God - that it is not Christ's doctrine. Now, when I speak of the pardon, and justification, and acceptance of the poor, ruined undone children of Adam, I speak of them in

consequently all are at war with the followers of the Lamb. Do not let us wonder, then, that a few fiery darts are hurled at us; do not let us wonder that the powers of darkness are so busily employed in beating up for recruits, and employ every agent come-at-able to distress, discourage, and disturb those whom they cannot destroy. Do no expect to pass through the wilderness unmolested. The prince of darkness is as hostile now as when Moses led the children of Israel through the desert. The agents of the prince of darkness, call them by what name you may, are on the alert; one will allure, another will menace, another will tempt, another will frown, another will lay schemes, and plans, and plots, and conspiracies for every description of mischief against the followers of the Lamb; but He that sitteth in heaven shall laugh at them, "the Lord shall have them in derision." I wish I could laugh at them as my God does, and hold them in as much contempt and derision. But I must leave them with Him; it is His own will.

Let us pass on, in the third place, to say a word or two about the triumphs of Christ's doctrines. I begin to feel them glow already, I must acknowledge. The triumph of Christ's doctrine: "It is mine, and it is my Father's," He says. The first feature of triumph I shall mention is that of the transforming power that goes forth with these doctrines. I know very well that silly men, who would fain be in the priest's office, insinuate that the preaching of the doctrine of Christ may serve to gratify mere dry critics, but has no tendency to the conversion of souls. A willful falsehood, a foul libel upon Christ's preaching! Instead of this, I am prepared to show that the preaching the doctrine of Christ in its fullness, experimentally and practically, is honored of God with more transforming power upon the souls of sinners, than any other doctrine ever broached among men. "They were astonished at His doctrine, for His word was with power." Again, says He, "the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The gospel was preached by the apostles with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, and we know what gospel the preached, they preach just the one I set

such wise that the Father must be honored in His sovereign choice, in His electing love, in His predestinating adoption of that poor worm into His family; the Son must be honored in His obedience and suffering, His taking into union with Himself the poor sinner's soul to be saved, and the payment of his debts canceling all demands, and bringing in a perfect righteousness for him to all eternity; and the Holy Ghost must be equally honored, in giving all efficiency unto Him, and pointing out the fact, that no sinner upon earth will accept or receive, or seek to enjoy, or be willing to obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory, until the Holy Ghost puts that willingness into his heart, and brings him to Jesus' feet. So that when I speak of the salvation of the ruined sinner, I speak so as to honor all the Persons of the Deity alike.

If I made any hesitating statement, implying any uncertainty or contingency in the grand matter of a sinner's coming to Jesus Christ, all the persons of the Deity would be at once dishonored, and consequently I should preach a doctrine the very reverse of the doctrine of Christ; for if there fails one of the whole family of God getting to heaven, then the predestinating love of God is forfeited, then the efficacy of the blood of Christ is insufficient, then the work of the Holy Spirit has failed; and the sinner by his sin and rebellion has conquered the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, to damn himself. But God will not have it so. He is an Almighty God, and our Almighty Savior. God the Father orders and purposes. The Son fails not in the satisfaction He has given. The Spirit withholds not the power that must carry on and complete the work He has once begun in the poor sinner's heart. Away, then, with your Popish doctrine of contingencies; it is an offense to one's common sense, and much more so the one's genuine Christianity.

Moreover, the doctrine of Christ included the interest of His church; and hence we find, when He speaks of laying down His life, He says, "It is for my sheep;" hence we find, that when He is engaged in prayer, He positively distinguishes them, and

John, "and we know that the record is true, and these Three are One." There is the union of the Deity, the union of the personalities of the Godhead. The Church is but one: "My love, my dove, my undefiled, is but one," as you read in the Canticles, "the only one of her mother." The Redeemer's prayer confirms this grand truth, when he prays "that they may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee, that they may be one in us." Again, "One is your master, even Christ," and "all ye are brethren." And it will be found, however the children of God may sometimes disagree (more shame for them), they have all one faith, one hope, one Lord, one baptism, even the baptism of the Holy Ghost; they are all anointed with the same oil, redeemed with the same precious blood, accounted as of one root, one family. So that this union is of ancient date. It was formed in the council of peace; it was constituted by fixed decrees, and is made known in the love and power of God on the earth, when He brings the souls of His people together in spiritual union; and it is seen and hated of the devil and his crew and consequently they are united against the Church of the living God. When the persons of the Deity are honored by the grand plan of salvation, and the Church united in all things essentially one with another, the powers of darkness are all united. "Come, let us cast away their cords from us, and break their bonds asunder." The powers of darkness and the agents they employ on the earth are all of one mind against the Christ of God, and against His redeemed; and while they cast away their cords, and burst their bonds asunder, and try to raze the Church even to the ground, He that sits in heaven laughs at them: "the Lord shall have them in derision." But while "the carnal mind is enmity against God," it will vent itself somewhere or other; there is a pique, and old grudge, an unconquerable dislike to the doctrine of God, and the people of God, and the God of the people. So that there is union in heaven with the Persons in the Deity for the salvation of the Church, union among saints on earth in all things essential to salvation; union in hell against the Church of God, and

says, "I pray not for the world, but those whom Thou hast given me out of the world." The interests of His church were dear to His heart. And still further, we discover that He says expressly to the world around, "Ye believe not, because ye are not my sheep," thus marking the distinction in as conspicuous a manner as possible.

Well, then, to deliver the doctrine of Christ, I must be intent upon the interests of the Church; and you will bear with me while I explain that by "the Church," I don't mean any national hierarchy - I don't mean any piles of building; but by "the Church," I mean the whole election of grace, all that the Father gave to the Son, all that the Son claims as His own - of whom He thus speaks in the 17th chapter of St. John, - "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me;" "And all mine are Thine, and Thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." That is the Church of the living God. Now, Jesus and all His sent servants are intent upon the interests of the Church. "They are not of the world," says He, "even as I am not of the world; I have chosen them out of the world, and therefore the world hateth them." They stood in union with me from everlasting, and I recognize them as such by grace, as a family and an organized body of my own, members appertaining to one covenant Head, - chose! n, redeemed, set apart, sanctified, heaven born, supplied with precious grace and the fullness of the covenant, and accustomed to glorify Jesus' name, I am glorified in them. This is Christ's doctrine, that His Church is a distinct body from the world.

I may be here asked, what I mean by the interests of the Church; and I reply, I mean her salvation, her preservation, and her eternal glorification. All lay near to Jesus' heart. He came forth as her salvation; and therefore the prophet was commissioned to give this declaration concerning Him, "Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh," emphatically His name, "thy salvation." Glory to His name, He has rendered Himself responsible for that salvation. See how the interests of the Church lay near His heart, appealing to the

we have been dwelling upon. The plain matter of fact is, that there are very few Christians in these days who believe the doctrine of the fall; they don't receive it as the word of God sets it down. They admit there is a deal that is wrong, and may use the term "fallen creature," but they say he has not fallen so low but that he may pick himself up again, or recover himself if he chooses. I can hardly think any man supposes such a thing possible, for it has been tried for 1800 years since Christ went to glory, and no person has succeeded yet; and they must be worse than idiots, when having tried for 1800 years, and failed, and for 2000 years before that, and failed: who suppose they can succeed now? But there are some few who pretend this. There are others, however, who don't pretend to deny the doctrine of the fall: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And the Apostle, taking it up, says, "Therefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." And then, congratulating the recipients of grace Divine, he says, "You hath He quickened who were dear in trespasses and sins." The man who believes the doctrine of the fall, believes that every capacity to enjoy God was utterly lost in the fall; that man thereby became the slave of the devil, the dupe of sin, and a rebel to God, conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity; and when examined by the great Jehovah Himself, the verdict returned is, "They have all gone out of the way, they have all become abominable, there is none that doeth good, no, not one." This is the doctrine of the Bible, and serves to enhance the value of the substitution of Christ.

Moreover, nothing is more conspicuous relative to the antiquity and authority of this doctrine of Christ, than the union of the interested parties. And let us dwell a few moments on this point. The parties interested I might speak of as four - five. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, the whole election of grace, and the devil and his crew. They are all interested parties. God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost, "bear their record in heaven," saith the Holy Ghost by

which testify of me," that the whole testimony of Scripture from beginning to end is about Him.

Now, I would advise and exhort my hearers to turn a deaf ear to all the persuasions to look for doctrines, for principles, for first causes anywhere but in the word of God. Come, then, to the word and to the testimony. It is written, "If they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." If they go to traditions, to ceremonies, to the fathers, to the councils, and the rest of the Infidel gangs who profess to be Christians, there is no light in them. So saith my Bible. You must reject the Bible or the follies of men. You must reject the precious word of God, or those who teach for doctrine the commandments of men. Now just come to the revelation of God Himself, in His precious holy word, and you will find there is nothing more prominent than the three things I have named as the doctrines of Christ. Through the whole of the sacred volume the Divine glory is set forth and proclaimed. Again and again we find it written, "As truly as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord." And when He speaks of judgment over His enemies, it is that the Lord may be glorified; in the salvation of Israel, that the Lord may be glorified. And the apostle, in the New Testament language, says, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty. And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen; yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are. That no flesh should glory in His presence." So that the whole tenor of the law and the prophets and the New Testament agree and accord in this one particular, that God shall be glorified in His Trinity of Persons, and in His absolute sovereignty, as God over all, blessed for ever.

Moreover, in the oracles of God I find revealed, in the clearest possible terms, the total ruin of man, which serves to enhance the glory of God, and set forth the importance of the interests of His Church, as well as to demand the substitution doctrine

Father, He says, "Thou hast given to the Son power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life unto as many as Thou hast given Him."

I pray you beloved, where are contingencies here, where are probabilities, where are proposals, when the sole salvation of the Church lies in three gifts, and all these three in Christ? The gift of power to Christ, to accomplish the work in His mediatorial character; the gift of persons to Christ, to be saved; and the gift of eternal life, to be bestowed upon the persons for whom He lived and died. I cannot conceive anything more clear and distinct than the interests of the Church set forth in this, as regards our salvation, that Jesus undertook it all, and accomplished it all in His own person, by His own doing and dying, to prove how much He was interested in His Church, that her preservation and perseverance (I put them together), lay near His heart; and therefore the apostle speaks of them as preserved in Christ Jesus. Jesus Himself speaks of loving His own in the world, and loving them to the end. Jesus Himself declared, "they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." Jesus opens the will of the Father, and reads concerning them, that it is the will of Him who sent Him, that of all that He hath given Him He shall lose nothing, but raise it up at the last day. Again, I ask, where are the contingencies, again, I ask, where are the probabilities and the uncertainties? All are secure in Christ, not only as to the justification and acceptance, the pardon and sanctification of the Church in the matter of salvation, but in her preservation too, surrounded as she is with evils, assaulted by Satan, carrying about her in her own bosom enough to ruin her in an hour if left to herself. Yet she is preserved, even by Christ Jesus, from the world, from sin, from Satan and self, from finally falling and apostatizing from Him, and preserved from all unto everlasting life.

Moreover, the interests of His Church are such, that He will have His Bride glorified with Himself. Her eternal glorification lays near His heart; and therefore, just before He suffers, He says, "Father, I will that those whom Thou hast given me be

with me where I am, to behold my glory." That "I will" He never revokes - that "I will" can never be denied Him - that "I will" appears to be the spirit of His intercession and advocacy, now that He is seated at the right hand of the Majesty on high; and that "I will" encourages the faith of all that know and love Him, to expect with confidence to sit down with Him upon His throne, even as He has overcome and sat down with His Father upon His throne.

What a scene, then, is before us, as the followers of the Lamb, redeemed by His precious blood from among men, save by the Lord with an everlasting salvation, just as is recorded in Isaiah, "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory:" preserved amidst ten thousand foes, devils, and dangers: kept by the mighty power of God through faith unto salvation; and then to be absent from the body and present with the Lord, enthroned with the glorious exalted Head on high, and everlastingly enjoying the smiles of His countenance. That is the doctrine of Christ concerning His Church.

I must just touch upon one other point relative to the doctrine of Christ, that all this, as far as it related to the glorifying of the Deity, the honor of the Godhead, and as far as it related to the interests of His Church, is to be accomplished by the substitution of His person, His standing in the Church's place, just as it is written, "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin." He put Himself in our position, he allowed all our sins to be charged upon Himself, met all the demands of law and justice, fought with the powers of darkness in the name and on the behalf of His Church, accomplished all as our substitute. Glory to His name, that this is set forth of Him through the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures, revealed in the types and shadows mentioned and published through out the Mosaic economy, all the bleeding sacrifices and victims upon the altar, God setting forth the one grand doctrine of substitution, Jesus smitten, that I might go free; Jesus dying, that I might live; Jesus obeying, that I might enjoy the fruits of His obedience for ever, and that the law might have nothing to demand of me;

covenant transaction, to which our dear Redeemer refers. You will find it in the 3rd Galatians, in which the apostle calls the covenant of grace the covenant confirmed before of God in Christ. He goes on to say the law could not make it void, could not disannul it; it was an ancient thing, it was confirmed before of God in Christ.

Talk they to me about antiquities! Foolery - perfect absurdity, the talk among the Puseyites about the antiquities of the darkest ages, and the most Infidel period that ever disgraced Christianity. Talk about antiquities! They must go back to the apostles' days, they must go back to the prophetic declarations, they must go back to David's psalmody, they must go back to the kings that did good in the sight of the Lord; they must go back to the Mosaic economy, and see the types and shadows pointing out the doctrine Christ preached; they must go back still farther, to Abraham's offering and sacrifice, when he passed between the pieces of the victim laid apart; they must go back to Abel's offering, which was by faith in Christ; they must go back to Adam's salvation, which was in the promise that the seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head; they must go back before time, to the scene prior to the fall of the angels or the existence of sin, and in the everlasting council of Divine love find all the doctrines which Christ preached, and which Christ's servants preach, settled, arranged, ordered, and determined in the council of peace, by the infinite wisdom and love of Israel's Triune Jehovah.

Then you should remark that this antiquity of the doctrine is revealed clearly in the oracles of inspiration; and there are many beautiful passages in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, which set forth this sacred fact. Take, for instance, to begin with, the injunction, "Search the Scriptures," for our Lord was addressing the Jews, who professed to believe in them; He says, "for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they, which testify of me." Therefore, search and read them. The holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. What shall we find there? Why, "they are they,

of ancient date and of Divine authority. "It is His that sent me." I here recognize my beloved Redeemer tracing out the transactions of the covenant of grace, when the covenant of peace was held between the Persons of the Deity. And here let one or two Scriptures suffice. In the chapter we have been reading, the 42nd Isaiah, you will find the Father speaking to Him, "I have given Thee for a covenant of the people." And then when the Father made this grant, if I may so speak, this present to His Church, and gave Christ, it was for a covenant of His people. Mind, not merely to manage the covenant, not merely to be the Head of the covenant, but to be the covenant itself: just to intimate, or rather positively to state, that all the blessings of the covenant, all the doctrines of the covenant, all the provisions of the covenant, all the mercies of the covenant, the entire salvation of the covenant, were made to the saints in Christ. And with all these provisions centering in Himself as the Father's gift to the Church, I wonder not that the apostle should call Him his unspeakable gift; "Oh, beloved, to undervalue this gift is to seal your own doom to eternal misery; to undervalue this gift is to offer a willful insult to God. What could He give more? What can He withhold now that He has given that? See that beautiful reasoning of the apostle: "He that spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up for us all," look for the antecedent, that is the Church - "but freely delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things." Then here is the antiquity of the doctrine of Christ, which we dare call ours - our doctrine. The antiquity is such that He says, "My glory will I not give to another, nor my praise to graven images." The antiquity is such that the Church was said to be chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

There is the antiquity, and there is the authority. His doctrine is of the Father, originating in the bosom of the Deity; and the antiquity is such, that the Lord Jesus says in that covenant compact, "The Lord God and His Spirit hath sent me." Now, we have one New Testament confirmation of this grand

Jesus vanquishing all the powers darkness, that I might have nothing to do but follow on to the spoil, and engage in a few skirmishes with the tempter, for which He has promised to furnish me with strength; Jesus buried and rising from the dead, that the very tomb might be perfumed for me, that He might be the resurrection and the life for me, that in His resurrection He might take a receipt in full of all demands on my account, and consequently allow me to sin, "There is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

The doctrine of substitution is the very marrow of the gospel, the foundation of all our hopes; and I insist that there is not a shadow of hope for any ruined sinner before God, without the doctrine of substitution. Let the Arians, the Socinians, and the free-willers of every caste tell us, if they please, of God being merciful; let them tell us of man's power to repent, and urge it upon him; let them bring forth, if they can - but I know they cannot - some instance in which something like repentance has been effected by man's own power. Even if I were to grant all this, what becomes of the demands of law and justice, which, according to their own account have been only imperfectly, although they tell us sincerely met? What becomes of original sin, and all the guilt appertaining to it? What becomes of our daily transgressions in thought, word, and deed? Miserable wretches, that can rely on such a subterfuge as this, such a refuge of lies! The prophet is right when he says that the bed is shorter than that a man can stretch himself on it, and the covering too narrow for him to wrap himself in it. He will find that all is wrong, and if he were possessed with spiritual discernment, he would find out that those very things that he would present as meritorious before God, have the nature of sin in them, and will do more to damn than to save him.

When the poor sinner is brought to this, and able to discover he is ruined and undone, and feels, as the poet says, that "his soul is stained and dyed with sin, and his all nothing worth," nothing will save him but the doctrine of substitution. When he finds a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world - a Lamb

whose blood atones for all Israel - a Lamb whose sufferings and death have concealed for ever all the transgressions of the election of grace - all he has got to do then is to find out whether he possesses any trace, or mark, or feature of the family, whether he belongs to the election of grace, and he will discover it with very great ease, if the Lord be his teacher.

Let us examine what is the Christian character. God the Savior says His elect cry to Him day and night. Have I got that feature? Has the cry been put into my heart? Has the spirit of prayer been bestowed upon me? Has there been an earnest wrestling with God for salvation in the Person and righteousness of Jesus Christ? That is the characteristic of God's elect. Peter thus describes them, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." Now, what think you, poor sinner? Are you convinced that you can do nothing meritorious in the sight of God? Is there this characteristic of the Lord's work in thee? Can you cry unto Him for pardon day and night? Is the sprinkling of the precious blood of Christ felt on the conscience? Is the sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost experienced in the heart? And then, is there obedience, the obedience of children, according to Jehovah's injunction in His precious word? "This is the obedience, that we should believe in His only begotten Son, whom He hath sent."

Thus we see the doctrine of substitution was the doctrine of Christ. He came into the world on purpose to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself; and, glory to His name, He has done it effectually and eternally for all His Church. I may sum up the doctrine of Christ, the first head of the discourse, in these few words: - The doctrine of Christ, which He and all His sent servants will preach and must preach, is the doctrine of absolute sovereignty in God the Father, demanding and obtaining the glorification of all the Divine perfections in the matter of salvation; the doctrine of Christ's deep distinguishing interest for the Church of the living God, to prove that all the

Book of God was written, all the promises of God were made, and all the work of God was going on, for the sake of the salvation of His Church with eternal glory. And in order to accomplish the interests of the Church, and secure the glory of God, He submits His own person, substitutes His own life, substitutes His own blood, substitutes His own official character, in order to become our Advocate on high, ever living to intercede for His Church. That is the doctrine He preached, the doctrine of substitution.

"Well, but," some say, "does this leave the creature nothing to do?" I should like to put the question in reply, "pray what can you do?" Supposing I were wicked enough to represent that there is something like a contingency for the creature, what part will you undertake? - Where will you begin? Suppose I were to tell you, it is only to weep over your sins that is left to you; can you create a tear? You can neither create nor restrain one. Suppose I say, it is only to pray: can you create the spirit of prayer? If you can, I shall account you almighty; you do not want a God at all, you are independent of Him. After all the talk about man being a mere machine, as they sometimes ridiculously term it; after all, it comes to this, that if they will have some terms and conditions to be performed by the creature, they must find the creature capable of performing them; and if they ransack all creation over, they will never find such a one. They never have found such a one since Adam's fall. I am going to make a bold statement; that these advocates for contingencies seek to damn the whole human race, by denying the only method of saving them, and proposing terms to them that not a creature of mankind can meet. Cruel system: tantalizing, man-cursing, God-dishonoring system, that rejects the substitution of Christ. That is the doctrine of Christ, substitution.

Now let us glance, in the second place, at its antiquity and authority. I believe His intention was to show not some modern thing trumped up or thought of for the occasion, not a mere moonshine appearance, or a whim of a creature, but that it was