

Present Salvation

W. Kelly.

A LETTER TO A FRIEND, IN REVIEW OF A SERMON BY THE REV. G. SALMON

(Regius Professor of Divinity in the University of Dublin).

My dear brother,

Have you seen a sermon on John 3: 36 by the Dublin Regius Professor of Divinity, preached in the chapel of Trinity College toward the close of last year?

There is this inconvenience in noticing it that one does not, cannot, sympathize with the preachers objected to, if they are fairly represented by their censor. What can be more offensive or dangerous than crying up grace without righteousness, faith without repentance, pardon without life? The Professor may be assured that there are those who, preaching salvation as an actual state, hold quite as firmly as himself the importance of viewing salvation as future also. But they deny that the formularies he seeks to justify express the truth as it is revealed.

It is rather unhappy however that Professor Salmon's second paragraph, the opening of the case, exhibits reasoning and criticism far from exceptionable. For no intelligent Christian doubts that the New Testament speaks of salvation in these two senses, present or future, not to speak of others. But there is neither confusion of the two, nor uncertainty how each is used. In general the line of truth pursued by an inspired writer in a particular book excludes one or other, though there are subjects, and hence books containing them, which admit of both; but in no case is there vagueness for a mind imbued with revealed truth. Thus in Ephesians salvation is viewed exclusively as a thing complete and now enjoyed by the Christian; in Hebrews it is regarded as going on and only consummated in resurrection-glory when Christ appears to those that look for Him. Does Dr. S. make this distinction? or the Prayer-book?

Again, scripture speaks of eternal life both as a present possession, and as a future privilege in glory: but are they ever confounded? The believer has remission of sins, and yet was taught to ask forgiveness: but are they the same? The Prayer-book jumbles both, whereas scripture discriminates. What is the worth of an argument then from scripture to the Prayer-book?

Now the grounds of objection I press are far deeper than questions as to any words or forms employed in the Book of Common Prayer; and I wholly disapprove of every effort to overthrow the National Establishment in England any more than in Ireland, regarding politics as at best beneath a Christian, and these changes as playing into the hands of infidels or papists, though most of the godly dissenters seem to be beguiled into them.

But in plain straightforwardness it seems indisputable that the petitions, "O God, make speed to save us," "O Lord, save thy people," "Show thy mercy upon us, and grant us thy salvation," being drawn from the Old Testament, express the hopes of Israel before the work of redemption and the distinctions it maintains could even exist. The want of seeing this involved the Reformers, not to speak of the Fathers and the mediaeval writers, in great darkness. Has Dr. S. emerged into light, as far as this momentous matter is concerned, more than his predecessors or his neighbours?

Till Christ died and rose and went to heaven, it could not be said of any, as in Ephesians 2: 4-10, "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love where. with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come he might Show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

Nor could Isaiah or Malachi have said of the Jew as Paul (2 Tim. 1) of Christians, that God "hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought light and immortality [incorruption] to light through the gospel." So the same apostle adds to Titus, "according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour."

In the Psalms and the Prophets we hear the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of prophecy, stimulating and guiding the cry of the saints of old before the cross of Christ. It could not be otherwise. They were petitions in due season. To have spoken as St. Paul did later would have been presumptuous and false. The basis was not yet laid, the Saviour not even come. To adopt the language as to this of David or Jeremiah now is ignorance and unbelief; for it is to blot out the infinite work of the Son of God, it is to slight the witness the Spirit of grace is now rendering to its value in God's sight — its efficacy as a present fact for the believer, who cannot worship as he ought unless he know and enjoy it.

It is not only want of knowledge to confound distinctions so well defined, which the accomplishment of atonement has necessarily brought in; but I ask, Is it really meant that we are saved and not saved in the same sense? If this be rejected as absurd, the question is, Do the Anglican formularies, does Dr. S., truly draw the distinction according to the New Testament? I should rejoice to believe that they did: but both appear to be self-evidently at fault here. Dr. S. seeks to justify the Prayer-book's use of these petitions on the ground that they are the words of scripture found in the Psalms. (Page 5.) Such a defence is the best proof that, as the framers of the prayers did not know the real difference introduced by redemption in Christ, so neither has Dr. S. learnt it to this day.

Indeed it is the lamentable state of Christendom generally. They are like the virgins who, weary of going out to meet the bridegroom, have gone in somewhere to slumber. Instead of going forth to Christ bearing His reproach, they go or keep within the camp. Scripture accurately employs the term "save" or "salvation," for soul and for body, for past, present, and future; the Prayer-book confounds all together, so as to impair if not destroy the enjoyment of peace with God, leading believers to perplexity and producing false hopes in unbelievers: the former never receiving the true, simple, constant fact of salvation, while waiting for its complement at Christ's coming; the latter using the same language for their condition, fearing yet hoping, without any adequate sense of utter present ruin or divinely given faith in Christ. What loss to the believer! what danger for the unbeliever!

Dr. S. cites Acts 15: 11, 1 Thessalonians 5: 8, Romans 8: 24* (ἐσώθημεν would be curious for the *future*), and Romans 5: 9, 10. One can give another from the same Epistle (Rom. 13: 11, 12), which may help the reader to understand these all the better: "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand." Now I ask any competent man, any Christian: Is it just to mix up New Testament texts which speak of salvation in glory by-and-by (which no Christian

questions), with the use men have made of Old Testament passages which merge soul and body together, as all must have done till Christ died? Is it not increasingly plain that Dr. S. defends the liturgy because he is himself in a confusion akin to that of its compilers? He is not entitled to say as he does, "I will not delay to examine the correctness of a theory, according to which the Christian Church has been wrong from its first foundation to the present day, in supposing that whether in its public worship or in the private devotions of generation after generation of its most saintly members, it could find in the Psalms of David adequate expression for its deepest feelings." (Page 5.) "Wrong from its first foundation!" nay, but since the enemy contrived to Judaize it.

* No one doubts that "hope" distinctively looks at the future; but there is neither uncertainty nor a weakening of the actual present blessing in Scripture. The redemption of our body is wholly future; and therefore, the apostle says, were we saved in hope. It is not seen yet.

Nor do I think that any Romanist need ask more than Dr. S. here concedes, to land alike Episcopalians and Presbyterians in the darkness of his own superstition; being fully assured that such an use or rather abuse of the Psalms of David, as the "adequate expression for the deepest feelings" of the church or the Christian, if not derived from Romanism, is traceable to that scarcely better catholic system which preceded the ambitious politics of the papacy. *Not one clause in one psalm*, I am bold to affirm, expresses the proper and peculiar feelings of the Christian or of the church. There is not a single cry of Abba Father; nor a hint of drawing within the veil; nor an unequivocal expression of membership of Christ; still less of the distinctive love of Christ for the church as His body for which He gave Himself.

Further, I maintain that the Psalms abound with expressions just and proper for Israel of old, and for Israel in the last days, but utterly incongruous and unsuited and improper on any fair interpretation for the Christian or the church ever since its first foundation till now. Does Dr. S. soberly pray that our foot may be dipped in the blood of our enemies, and the tongue of our dogs in the same? Is it the "deepest feeling" of the Christian that God should persecute our enemies with His tempest, that they should be confounded and troubled for ever, yea, perish? Would he be happy to take and dash the little ones of Babylon against the stones? Certainly he ought, without scruple or limit, if the christian church can find in the Psalms of David adequate expression for its deepest feelings.

Not for a moment are those expressions impugned in themselves. They are righteous altogether; and they will express the feelings of the Jewish saints adequately in that day when Jehovah is Himself judging the earth and the quick upon it. But now God is showing the riches of grace and long-suffering, not yet judging the habitable world in righteousness; and we are called to speak to ourselves and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, that is, *not in the Psalms*, but in christian compositions of these various characters; as indeed believers are constantly found to do so, and did from the first.

But an opening criticism of Dr. S. was referred to, which must now be noticed. Speaking of the Prayerbook, he says, "It contains the prayer, 'O Lamb of God that takest away the sins of the world, grant us Thy peace,' whereas it is said [by the preachers he is chastising], St. Paul teaches us, that being justified by faith we *have* peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Now it is clear that, if the Prayer-book mean the same peace, it is at issue with Romans 5, and indeed the general teaching of the New Testament. Does Dr. S. seriously deny that the Epistles contemplate the Christian as having peace with God? Can he say that the Prayer-book does?

I only notice by the way the fact that the liturgies of Rome and England misquote scripture gravely in their reference to John 1: 29, which speaks of "sin," not sins; and the difference of force is great to

anyone familiar with God's word: so great that, while the, Gospel expresses perfect truth, the Anglican or other misquotations would imply, if true, that there was nothing more against the world, its sins being gone. Logically they seem to warrant the destructive lie of universalism, or to annul Christ's work.

Another point notable is the following: "I may remark in passing that this very text (Rom. 5: 1), which is one of the main pillars of the system of doctrine which I am considering, is now given by the principal critical editors, in the form, 'Let us have peace,' according to which reading the text changes sides, and makes St. Paul guilty of the same error which is reprehended in our church, namely, exhorting his converts to a peace which they had already. I mention this various reading, not that I myself prefer them altered reading, but as the immense preponderance of ancient witnesses, whether manuscripts or early citations, is in favour of it, the example shows how very precarious is the deduction of a doctrine from a single text," etc. (Page 4.) Does it not Show rather how precarious is such a critical judgment? For the question between \omicron and ω is precisely one of that class as to which the ancient manuscripts are least reliable. Whether we can best account for their frequent lapses in the interchange of these letters by ignorant copyists deceived by the ear may be a question; but the fact that the most ancient and best cannot be depended on in such cases is certain. Compare 1 Corinthians 15: 49,* Hebrews 12: 28. This explains why the reading of several of the oldest MSS. may be merely a clerical blunder. If Tischendorf is gone over to $\xi\chi\omega\mu\epsilon\nu$ with the uncorrected text of the Sinai, with Vat., Alex., etc., Lachmann abandoned it for $\xi\chi\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu$ in his maturer edition. There is no deficiency whatever in external authority, for the majority of uncials, and cursives, supports $\xi\chi\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu$. The criterion for a spiritual mind under such circumstances is the bearing of the context: and, if so, I have not a doubt that this reading and not $\xi\chi\omega\mu\epsilon\nu$ is required by the scope of the verse and the argument generally. But the odd thing is that Dr. S. himself accepts the reading $\xi\chi\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu$, "we have." If he does so on solid grounds, why is it precarious to use it? If he have no solid grounds, why "prefer" it?

* Professor Tischendorf in his eighth edition of the New Testament reads $\varphi\omicron\rho\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\omega\mu\epsilon\nu$ on the authority of , A, C, D, E, F, G, K, L, P, the great mass of cursives, It. Vulg. Go. Cop. and many Fathers Greek and Latin. In his seventh he had followed B. 46, and perhaps a few others with some Fathers in giving $\varphi\omicron\rho\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\omega\mu\epsilon\nu$, which seems to me beyond doubt the true meaning. The form $\xi\chi\omega\mu\epsilon\nu$ is rejected by R, K, P, 17. 31. 37. 73. and at least twenty-five cursives more, not to speak of several old versions and Fathers. So also $\lambda\alpha\tau\rho\acute{\epsilon}\mu\epsilon\nu$ appears in yet more of the ancient authorities. Yet who can doubt that the, subjunctive mood is right?

Rom. 1: 3, 21, 32; Rom. 2: 14; Rom. 3: 8, 9, 22, 28, 31; Rom. 4: 25; Rom. 5: 3, 10, 11, 17; Rom. 6: 1, 2, 8, 15; Rom. 7: 4, 9; Rom. 8: 2, 17, 22, 26; Rom. 9: 16, 17, 31; Rom. 10: 14 (thrice), 15; Rom. 11: 15, 27; Rom. 12: 9, 21; Rom. 13: 13; Rom. 14: 8 (thrice), 13, 19, Rom. 15: 4, 13, 15, 20, 24, 33;

1 Cor. 1: 31; 1 Cor. 2: 7, 11; 1 Cor. 3: 9, 14, 21; 1 Cor. 4: 2, 4, 8, 19; 1 Cor. 5: 8; 1 Cor. 9: 11, 16, 23, 27; 1 Cor. 10: 8, 9; 1 Cor. 11: 19, 34; 1 Cor. 13: 12; 1 Cor. 14: 14, 15, 24; 1 Cor. 15: 29, 32, 51; 1 Cor. 16: 3, 6:

Heb. 2: 3, 9; Heb. 3: 18; Heb. 4: 3, 11, 16; Heb. 5: 3; Heb. 6: 1, 3, 12, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19; Heb. 7: 3, 11, 12, 14, 15, 19, 20, 22, 24, 26; Heb. 8: 1, 6, 11, 12; Heb. 9: 5, 10, 11, 20; Heb. 10: 8, 22, 23, 25; Heb. 11: 25, 27; Heb. 12: 1, 9, 10; Heb. 13: 10, 11, 13, 15, will be evidence enough from these three epistles alone elsewhere to show the tendency there was similarly to confound these letters on almost every occurrence of either letter where such an error was possible; and this, observe, even in MSS. otherwise of the highest character. In many of these verses the itacism is found twice.

It is not contended then by any man sound or instructed in the faith, that it is improper to speak of

salvation as a future thing. But future salvation in scripture is the close of present temptation, up to the redemption of the body at Christ's coming again. Does this justify the unbelief which overspreads the confessions and theologians of Christendom in their attenuation of that which grace has already given the Christian? or the effort to cover over the consequent ignorance of our actual privileges in Christ, prevalent not merely in the greater national systems but among dissenters generally? An appeal to the Psalms of David seems to be a plain and conclusive proof that this charge is just: where Christ's light is enjoyed, who could doubt it? Again, texts like 2 Thessalonians 3: 16, or Romans 15: 13, do not warrant Christians in asking for peace in *the sense of Romans 5: 1*, which they are supposed to have already. Distinguish the nature of the peace, and the argument is powerless; for it assumes the identity of what is quite distinct. Peace with God, founded on our soul's submission to His righteousness in Christ, is a wholly different thing from practical peace in the midst of the questions apt to agitate believers, then especially so when the association of Jews and Gentiles, for the first time in the history of God's dealings with man, brought up many serious occasions of discord. If those who has peace with God needed (as they surely did and do) peace from Him in these and all other trials, we have the truth of scripture as to this, but no real apology for the feeble and indeed false teaching of the Prayerbook, which habitually (though I am sure most unwittingly) tends to hinder and deny peace with God. The reasoning, criticism, and use of scripture by the Professor in page 6 are far from exact.* The Bible does not speak of the very admission into the christian church as an act of salvation; nor does it interchange the terms of being saved and "being added to the church;" nor does τοὺς σωζομένους mean those that were then being saved, but the class destined to salvation, which is fairly enough rendered in our version. There were οἱ σωζέμενοι in Israel before; now the Lord, instead of leaving them there, was adding them ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτό (if, as seems required by the best evidence, we omit τῆ ἐκκλησίᾳ). But this is in no way to speak interchangeably of their salvation and of their addition together; still less does it speak of their admission as an act of salvation. It rather distinguishes the two things, and makes their being the class destined to salvation the ground for putting them in the new position. Those who believed in Christ were henceforth to form an assemblage apart; in Acts 4: 23, called "their own company;" in Acts 5: 11 (if not in Acts 2: 47), styled "the church" or assembly, according to our Lord's words in Matthew 16: 18, Matthew 18: 17.

* "The Bible speaks of the very admission into the Christian church as an act of salvation. In the account of the miracle of the day of Pentecost, 'being saved' and being added to the church are spoken of interchangeably. . . . And subsequently the Lord added daily, not as our version has it, those that were afterwards to be saved, but τοὺς σωζομένους, those that were then being saved. And in remarkable conformity. with this, St. Peter in his Epistle, speaks of baptism saying us (1 Peter 3: 21;) but yet it would be unscriptural if baptism were represented as anything more than the first step in the Christian's life, and in the 2nd Epistle of Peter (2 Peter 2: 21), it is said" etc.

As to the stress laid on the participle, it is certainly a mistake; for, though such a form of the word is in itself capable of being so used, it is quite wrong to, infer that it necessarily so means. For the participle is equally susceptible of an abstract signification, which expresses simply that the persons are objects of the operation in question without reference to present or past time. For, if the point were the present time, such persons could not be said to be σωθέντες or σεσωσμένοι, both of which terms are used or implied of Christians in this life as to salvation, no, less than σωζόμενοι. They are used of the godly Jews expressly in the Septuagint, σωζόμενοι being the character, σωθέντες the fact, and σεσωσμένοι the present result of what is past. It is evidently therefore not a question here of a fact or date; for, if it were,, it would be impossible consistently to employ about them the other terms, all referring to the same salvation in a similar sense. For manifestly, if οἱ σωζόμενοι meant those in actual process of salvation, they could not also be described as οἱ σωθέντες, by which nevertheless the same

translators describe them in the same book of Isaiah. (Compare Isa. 10: 20; Isa. 37: 32; Isa. 66: 19 in the LXX,) The conclusion therefore is irresistible that οἱ σωζόμενοι must have been technically employed in its abstract application of a character and class, and not of time present as Professor S. conceived.

Again, a somewhat similar reasoning applies to his use of 1 Peter 3: 21. Baptism unquestionably is the well known initiatory sign, the figure of salvation by Christ's death and resurrection; but this is abused, if used, as apparently it is, to weaken the grand truth that according to His mercy He *saved* (ἔσωσεν) us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. The present tense is frequently used, as here, for a moral fact irrespective of time: else, if present were emphatic, ἔσωσεν could not be applied to the Christian now. Nor does 2 Peter 2: 21 modify that truth; for it speaks of the ruinous turning away of those who had once confessed Christ, but it carefully avoids all idea that they had ever gone beyond knowledge, nor hints that they had at any time, possessed life in Christ. Thus theology has misled Dr. S., and the desire to extenuate the forms of his own religious connection not only fails but throws him, as far as it works, outside the limits of scripture.

Dr. S. justly feels that God's gospel is inseparable from holiness of walk, in contrast with heathenism (p. 7) which allowed of sin alike in the false gods and in their votaries; as does priestcraft now and of old in Christendom: witness any system of penance, indulgence, and the confessional. The mere revelation of a future life had not of itself, as he says, the power to bring morality and religion into closer union. And no doubt it is delusive to flatter oneself that thinking rightly about God, or paying Him due honour, will stand without practical righteousness (p. 8). "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness,, and the unrighteousness of men that hold the truth in unrighteousness." Thus, whatever the self-deceiving thoughts of the Newmans now (p. 9), or of the Jeromes of old, if there be a difference as there surely is in judgment, *their* unrighteousness is to Him most offensive, who know most or are most orthodox, for they hold fast the truth in unrighteousness. God is not mocked: as men sow, they reap. Nor is antinomianism confined to Romanists, but as widely found as the unrenewed heart when it adopts a form of godliness. Most freely and fully do I grant that God holds to His principles immutably, as the apostle elaborately insists in the earlier half of Romans 2. In fine, Christ being life as well as righteousness, the believer has both in Him, and thus holiness is secured no less than justification.

But is it not strange for any one who knows the truth of the gospel to deduce from the fact of God's moral government, however certain and important it may be, the doctrine of salvation, present, future, or any other? "Future happiness is represented, not as coming by an arbitrary decree on certain favourites of heaven, but as following in strict conformity with the laws God has ordained. 'Be not deceived,' says St. Paul; (Gal. 6: 7); 'God is not mocked,' etc. . . . From this doctrine that what a man soweth he must reap, that future happiness or misery is the natural fruit, according to God's appointed order, of the character that is formed in us here, the doctrine of present salvation necessarily follows." . . . "Only embrace that salvation, only join yourself to Christ now, only strive to be like Him through the aid of that Holy Spirit whom He has promised to give you, and you will not have to wait for a future life in order to taste the happiness which is the portion of His people" (pp. 10, 11). Is this Dr. S.'s gospel? It might suit those not too infirm who could step down after the angel's visit into the pool of Bethesda; but how for the lost, for the dead in trespasses and sins? Does he recognize the need of quickening? not merely of a new walk but of a new and divine life? yea, of deliverance from the law of sin, and not only of remission of sins? There is no adequate statement of these truths here or anywhere else in the sermon, though it is a discourse on "present salvation." Nay, what is said seems scarcely consistent with the truth. Salvation is by grace, not by moral government, however God may

vindicate His grace in justifying the ungodly by the fruit of righteousness which is by Jesus Christ to His glory and praise in the result: Scripture is urgent and express that it was not by works of righteousness which we had done, but according to His own mercy He saved us.

On the other hand it may be granted to Dr. S. that there is need to warn souls against self-delusion, for a man's own favourable opinion about his condition in the sight of God must be false, if he rest not on Christ and His work; and it is a wicked and dangerous absurdity to teach that, if a man pronounces himself saved, he is saved (p. 12). But is it really believed that God justifies freely by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus? that to him who worketh not but believeth on Him who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness? that David was inspired to tell us of the blessedness of the man to whom God reckons righteousness without works? It is the Master who says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life." (John 5: 24.) It is an inspired servant who says, "Yea, he shall be holden up; for God is able to make him stand." But why should Dr. S. add (p. 12), "No matter into what sins he may afterwards fall, his acceptance with God remains unshaken, for he has once for all passed from death unto life?"

The doctrine for which I contend puts no arbitrary break between our future portion and our present life: for the Christ we shall have in glory is the Christ we have now in grace. No doctrine so excludes any gap whatever as our Lord's words, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (John 10: 27-29.) I complain of Dr. S.'s language, not for its strength but for its weakness. How different the words of St. Paul, with death and judgment before him, when speaking of the power of life in Christ possessed by Christians! "Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we [it is nothing peculiar, but the common expression of christian feeling] are always confident." (2 Cor. 5.)

Entirely do I accept the statement that faith is in Christ, not in ourselves.* True faith sets to its seal that God is true, not that my hopes about my acceptance are well founded. But it is a painful descent from faith, to silence doubts by "those rules of practical probability which are the very guide of our present life" (p.14). Do we not read that "whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world"? "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" But it is hard to conceive how on Dr. S.'s showing a young believer, or an upright old one, could have unbroken confidence. His gospel seems to be partly Christ, partly the believer's conviction that he is saved in detail from sins in practice.

* "The cure for such apprehensions is faith; but by faith I mean, as the New Testament teaches, faith in Christ, not, as some modern teachers would have it, faith in ourselves. . . . Nothing is more unscriptural than any teaching which makes your hope depend on your looking into yourself, instead of looking unto Christ" (p. 13).

"I too, brethren, would ask each of you the question — Are you saved? But saved from what? Are you saved from sin? Are you saved from anger, bitterness, uncharitableness, untruthfulness? Are you saved from sloth and frivolousness? Are you saved from impurity, from unclean thoughts and words and deeds? Are you saved from selfishness in all its manifestations? Ask these questions to yourselves, ask them of any one who tells you he is saved. If you have learned to mortify these works of your earthly members, bless God for it; and be confident that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ. But if you dream that you can be saved from the punishment of

sin without being saved from sin itself, Christ has commissioned me to preach no such gospel to you. It is not true that you can; and if it were true, a miserable gospel it would be" (pp. 15, 16).

Does not this teaching tend to make your hope depend on your feelings, thoughts, words, ways, on yourself in short, instead of looking only to Christ? Does it not savour of "faith in ourselves" quite as much as what is objected to? It is not Paul's gospel.

For my part I see in scripture a much richer salvation than that poor evangelicalism which is apparently the object of Dr. S.'s attack.* His own statement too seems to be just as meagre and otherwise as objectionable. The written word declares that God sent His 'Son into the world that we might live through Him, and that He might be the propitiation for our sins. Without life in the Son we could not enjoy God; without His expiation we could not be purged so as to have no more conscience of sin. Children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, we have not redemption only but the Spirit of His Son sent into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. We believe in His death for us, and we know that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. We have died to sin and live no longer therein. Thus we have, by grace not remission of sins only but deliverance from sin — a privilege virtually (I do not say ignored merely but) denied by the Prayer-book. For I am compelled to go farther than the Professor, and am assured that it is a most "miserable" system of theology, which represents the Christian as still tied and bound by the chain of his sins — a dark and enslaving tradition, which ignorantly abuses the latter part of Romans 7 (the parenthetic discussion of a soul in bondage to the power of sin) to set aside the liberty wherewith the law of the Spirit of life in Christ sets one free, as in Romans 8. For we cannot rightly be under both husbands, as this unhappy and unholy scheme supposes (and Dr. S. tells us, p. 14, that holiness and happiness are one); but dead to the law by the body of Christ we are married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

*"If the gospel be, what some would reduce it to, a mere contrivance for quieting men's fears of hell, it would have been simpler if such fears had never been excited" (p. 13). Most godly minds will not accept so slighting a sentence on those who alarm sinners with the just judgment of their sins before the great white throne, and in the lake of fire, in order to drive them to the Saviour and Him crucified. Such preaching may be in some sort imperfect; but there is more truth in it, and more fruit from it, and, I venture to think, it will have more honour from the Lord another day, than the calmer essays of an erudite pulpit which please the world now.

None of our heavenly privileges is here touched on so that I am not going into what might seem deep. But what sort of theology is it which blinds men even to the meaning of baptism as set forth in Romans 6? Assuredly young evangelists are often superficial, are old theologians much better? Is it not ominous that both have to learn what their baptism means? and that the wildest Irish evangelist is not so far from this elementary truth as is the Anglican Office for Baptism or its apologists?

May it please the Lord to recall His own to the living and abiding word of God.

Ever yours, affectionately in Him, W. K.