

ARMINIAN THEORY OF REDEMPTION

by R. L. Dabney

Lecture 48 from Dabney's Systematic Theology

THE subjects which are now brought under discussion introduce us to the very center of the points which are debated between us and Arminians. I propose, therefore, for their further illustration, and because no better occasion offers, to consider here their scheme.

The five points handed in by the Arminians to the States General of Holland, in their celebrated Remonstrants, were so covertly worded as scarcely to disclose their true sentiments. The assertions concerning original Sin and Free will, were seemingly such as Calvinists could accept. The doctrine of common grace was but obscurely hinted; and the perseverance of Saints was only doubted. But their system soon developed itself into semi-Pelagianism, well polished and knit together. Discarding the order of the five points, I will exhibit the theory in its logical connection.

1. Its starting point is the doctrine of indifference of the will, and a denial of total depravity, as held by Calvinists. According to the universal consent of Pelagians and Socinians, this self-determination of the will is held necessary to proper free agency and responsibility. Take Whitby as a type of the grosser Arminians. He thinks Adam was created liable, but not subject, to bodily death, and his immunity in Paradise was secured by his access to the Tree of Life. His sin made death and its attendant pains inevitable; and this his posterity inherit, according to the natural law, that like begets like. This has produced a set of circumstances, making all men so liable to sin, that, practically, none escape. But this results from no moral necessity or certainty of the will. Man has natural desires for natural good, but this concupiscentia is not sin till formed into a positive volition. But the sense of guilt and fear drives man from God, the pressure of earthly ills tends to earthly mindedness ; man's pains make him querulous, envious, inordinate in desire; and above all, a general evil example misleads. So that all are, in fact, precipitated into sin, in virtue of untoward circumstances inherited from Adam. This is the only sense in which Adam is our federal head. This relation is not only illustrated by, but similar to that which exists between a bad parent and an unfortunate offspring now--in instance of the same natural law.

But Wesley and Watson repudiate this, as too low; and teach a fall in Adam, prior to its reparation by common grace, going as far as moderate Calvinists. Watson, for instance (Vol. 2, p. 53 &c.,) says that imputation is considered by theologians as mediate and immediate. Mediate imputation he says, is " our mortality of body and corruption of moral nature in virtue of our derivation from Adam." Immediate means "that Adam's sin is accounted ours in the sight of God, by virtue of our

federal relation." This, the student will perceive, is a very different distinction from that drawn by the Reformed divines. Watson then repudiates the first statement as defective; and the latter as extreme. Here he evidently misunderstands us; for he proceeds to say, with Dr. Watts, that Adam did act as a public person; our federal head, and that the penal consequences of our sin (not the sin itself), are accounted to us, consisting of bodily ills and death, privation of God's indwelling, (which results in positive depravity) and eternal death. In this sense, says he, "we may safely contend for the imputation of Adam's sin."

But in defending against Pelagians, &c., the justice of this arrangement of God, he says it must be viewed in connection with that purpose of redemption towards the human race which co-existed in the divine mind, by which God purposed to purchase and bestow common grace on every fallen man thus repairing his loss in Adam. (The fatal objection to such a justification is, that then God would have been under obligations to provide man a Savior; and Christ's mission would not have been of pure grace).

2. This leads us to their next point: God having intended all along to repair the fall, and having immediately thereafter given a promise to our first parents, has ever since communicated to all mankind a common precedaneous sufficient grace, purchased for all by Christ's work. This is not sufficient to effect a complete redemption, but to enable, both naturally and morally, to fulfil the conditions for securing redeeming grace. This common grace consists in the indifferency of man's will remaining notwithstanding his fall, the lights of natural conscience, good impulses enabling unregenerate men to do works of social virtue, the outward call of mercy made, as some Arminians suppose, even to heathens through reason, and some lower forms of universal spiritual influence. The essential idea and argument of the Arminian is, that God could not punish man justly for unbelief, unless He conferred on him both natural and moral ability to believe or not. They quote such Scripture as Ps. 81.13; Isa. 5.4; Luke 19.42; Rev. 3.20; Rom. 2.14; Jn. 1.9. So here we have, by a different track, the old conclusion of the semi-Pelagian. Man, then, decides the whole remaining difference, as to believing or not believing, by his use of this precedent grace, according to his own free will. God's purpose to produce different results indifferent men is wholly conditioned on the use which, He foresees, they will make of their common grace. To those who improve it, God stands pledged to give the crowning graces of regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. To the heathen even, who use their light aright, (unfavorable circumstance may make such instances rare), Christ will give gospel light and redeeming grace, in some inscrutable way.

3. Hence, the operations of grace are at every stage vincible by man's will; to be otherwise, they must violate the conditions of moral agency. Even after regeneration, grace may be so resisted by free will, as to be dethroned from the soul, which then again becomes unrenewed.

4. The redeeming work of Christ was equally for all and every man of the human race, to make his sins pardonable on the condition of faith, to purchase a common sufficient grace actually enjoyed by all, and the efficient graces of a complete redemption suspended on the proper improvement of common grace by free will. Christ's intention and provision are, therefore, the same to all. But as justice requires that the pardoned rebel shall believe and repent, to those who, of their own choice, refuse this, the provision remains forever ineffective.

5. In the doctrine of justification, again, the lower and higher Arminians differ somewhat. Both define justification as consisting simply of pardon. According to the lower, this justification is only purchased by Christ in this, that He procured from God the admission of a lower Covenant, admitting faith and the Evangelical obedience flowing out of it, as a righteousness, in place of the perfect obedience of the Covenant of works. According to the higher, our faith (without the works its fruits) is imputed to us for righteousness, according, as they suppose, to Rom. 4:5. Both deny the proper imputation of Christ's active (as distinguished from His passive) obedience, and deny any imputation, except of the believer's own faith; although the higher Arminians, in making this denial, seem to misunderstand imputation as a transference of moral character.

6. Hence, it will be easily seen, that their conception of election must be the following: The only absolute and unconditional decree which God has made from eternity, concerning man's salvation, is His resolve that unbelievers shall perish. This is not a predestinating of individuals, but the fixing of a General Principle. God does, indeed, (as they explain Rom. 9-11 chapters), providentially and sovereignly elect races to the enjoyment of certain privileges; but this is not an election to salvation; for free-will may in any or each man of the race, abuse the privileges, and be lost. So far as God has an external purpose toward individuals, it is founded on His foresight, which He had from eternity, of the use they would make of their common grace. Some, He foresaw, would believe and repent, and therefore elected them to justification. Others, He foresaw, would not only believe and repent, but also persevere to the end; and these He elected to salvation.

A thoroughly-knit system, if its premises are granted.

II. The refutation of the Arminian theory must be deferred, on some points, till we pass to other heads of divinity, as Justification and Final Perseverance. On the extent of the atonement enough has already been said. On the remaining points we shall now attempt to treat.

1. In opposition to the assertion of a common sufficient grace, we remark, 1st. That there is no sufficient evidence of it in Scripture. The passages quoted above do, indeed, prove that God has done for all men under the gospel all that is needed to effect their salvation, if their own wills are not depraved. But they only express the fact that God's general benevolence would save all to whom the gospel comes, if they would repent; and that the obstacles to that salvation are

now only in the sinners. But whether it is God's secret purpose to overcome that internal obstacle, in their own perverse wills, these texts do not say. It will be found, on examination, that they all refer merely to the external call, which we have proved, comes short of the effectual call; or that they are addressed to persons who, though shortcoming, or even backsliding, are regarded as God's children already. Look and see.

2. The doctrine is false in fact; for how can grace be sufficient, where the essential outward call, even, is lacking? Rom. 10: 14. God declares, in Scripture, He has given up many to evil. Acts 14 : 16; Rom. 1 :21, 28; 9:18. Again: the doctrine is contradicted by the whole doctrine of God, concerning the final desertion of those who have grieved away the Holy Ghost. See Hos. 4:17; Gen.6:3; Heb.6:1-6. Here is a class so deserted of grace, that their damnation becomes a certainty. Are they, therefore, no longer free, responsible and blameable ?

3. If we take the Arminian description of common sufficient grace, then many who have its elements most largely, an enlightened conscience, frequent compunctions, competent religious knowledge, amiability, and natural virtues, good impulses and resolutions, are lost; and some, who seem before to have very little of these, are saved. How is this? Again: the doctrine does not commend itself to experience; for this tells us that, among men, good intentions are more rare than good opportunities. We see that some men have vastly more opportunity vouchsafed them by God's providence than others. It would be strange if, contrary to the fact just stated, all those who have less opportunity should have better intentions than opportunities.

4. We have sometimes illustrated the Wesleyan doctrine of grace thus: "All men in the 'slough of despond' in consequence of the fall. There is a platform, say Arminians, elevated an inch or two above the surface of this slough, but yet firm, to which men must struggle in the exercise of their common sufficient grace alone, the platform of repentance and faith. Now, it is true, that from this platform man could no more climb to heaven without divine grace, than his feet could scale the moon. But God's grace is pledged to lift up to heaven all those who will so employ their free-agency, as to climb to that platform, and stay there." Now, we say, with the Arminian, that a common sufficient grace, which does not work faith and repentance, is in no sense sufficient; for until these graces are exercised, nothing is done. Heb. 11:6; Jn. 3:36. But he who has these graces, we further assert, has made the whole passage from death to life. That platform is the platform of eternal life. The whole difference between elect and non-elect is already constituted. See John 3: 36; 1 John 5:1 ; Acts 13:48; 2 Cor. 5: 17, with Eph. 3:17. If then there is sufficient grace, it is none other than the grace which effectuates redemption; and the Arminian should say, if consistent with his false premises, not that God by it puts it in every man's free will to fulfill the conditions on which further saving communications depend; but that He puts it in every man's free will to save himself.

5. If the doctrine is true, it is every man's own uninfluenced, and not the purpose of God, which determines his eternal destiny. Either the common grace effects its saving work in those who truly believe, in virtue of some essential addition made to its influences by God, or it does not. If the former, then it was not "common," nor "sufficient," in those who failed to receive that addition. If the latter, then the whole difference in its success must have been made by the man's own free will resisting less--i. e., the essential opposition to grace in some souls, differs from that in others. But see Rom. 3:12, 27 ; Eccl.. 8:11; Eph. 2: 8, 9; 1 Cor. 4:7; Rom. 9: 16; and the whole tenor of that multitude of texts, in which believers ascribe their redemption, not to their own superior docility or penitence, but to distinguishing grace.

To attain the proper point of view for the rational refutation of the doctrine of "common " sufficient grace, it is only necessary to ask this question: What is the nature of the obstacle grace is needed to remove? Scripture answers in substance, that it is inability of will, which has its rudiments in an ungodly habitus of soul. That is to say: the thing grace has to remove is the soul's own evil disposition. Now, the idea that any cause, natural or supernatural, half rectifies this, so as to bring this disposition to an equipoise, is absurd. It is the nature of disposition to be disposed: this is almost a truism. It is impossible to think a moral agent devoid of any and all disposition. If God did produce in a sinful soul, for one instant, the state which common sufficient grace is supposed to realize, it would be an absurd tertium quid, in a state of moral neutrality. As we argued against the Pelagian, that state, if possible, would be immoral, in that it implied an indifferent equipoise as to positive obligations. And the initial volitions arising out of that state would not be morally right, because they would not spring out of positive right motives; and such acts, being worthless, could not foster any holy principles or habits. The dream of common grace is suggested obviously, by the Pelagian confusion of inability of will with compulsion. The inventor has his mind full of some evil necessity which places an external obstruction between the sinner and salvation ; hence this dream of an aid, sufficient but not efficacious, which lifts away the obstruction, and yet leaves the sinner undetermined, though free, to embrace Christ. Remember that the obstruction is in the will; and the dream perishes. The aid which removes it can be nothing short of that, which determines the will to Christ. The peculiar inconsistency of the Wesleyan is seen in this: that, when the Pelagian advances this idea of Adam's creation in a slate of moral neutrality, the Wesleyan (see Wesley's Orig. sin. or Watson, ch. 18th), refutes it by the same irrefragable logic with the Calvinists. He proves the very state of soul to be preposterous and impossible. Yet, when he comes to effectual calling, he imagines a common grace, which results, at least for a time, in the same impossible state of the soul! It is a reversion to Pelagius.

The views of regeneration which Calvinists present, in calling the grace of God therein invincible, and in denying the synergism (sunergeia) of man's will therein, necessarily flow from their view of original sin. We do not deny that the common

call is successfully resisted by all non-elect gospel sinners; it is because God never communicates renewing grace, as He never intended in His secret purpose. Nor do we deny that the elect, while under preliminary conviction, struggle against grace, with as much obstinacy as they dare; this is ensured by their depraved nature. But on all those whom God purposes to save, He exerts a power, renewing and persuading the will, so as infallibly to ensure their final and voluntary submission to Christ. Hence we prefer the word invincible to irresistible. This doctrine we prove, by all those texts which speak of God's power in regeneration as a new creation, birth, resurrection; for the idea of successful resistance to these processes, on the part of the dead matter, or corpse, or faetus, is preposterous. Conviction may be resisted; regeneration is invincible. We prove it again from all those passages which exalt the divine and mighty power exerted in the work. See Eph. 1:19,20; Ps.110:3. Another emphatic proof is found in this, that otherwise, God could not be sure of the conversion of all those He purposed to convert; yea, not of a single one of them; and Christ would have no assurance that He should ever "see of the travail of His soul" (Isa. 53) in a single case ! For, in order for God to be sure of the result, He must put forth power adequate to overcome all opposing resistances. But see all those passages, in which the security and immutability of God's purposes of grace are asserted. Rom. 9: 21, 23; Eph. 1: 4; John xv ; 16, &c., &c. Eph. 2:10.

Here, the Arminian rejoins, that God's scientia media, or foreknowledge of the contingent acts of free agents (arising not from His purpose of control over those acts, but from His infinite insight into their character, and the way it will act under foreseen circumstances), enables Him to foreknow certainly who willing prove their common grace, and that some will. His eternal purposes are not crossed, therefore, they say, because He only purposed from eternity to save those latter. The fatal answer is, that if the acts of free agents are certainly foreseen, even with this scientia media, they are no longer contingent, but certain; and worse than this: Man's will being in bondage, all the foreknowledge which God has, from His infinite insight into human character, will be only a foreknowledge of obdurate acts of resistance on man's part, as long as that will is unsubdued. God's foreknowledge, in that case, would have been a foreknowledge that every son of Adam would resist and be lost. The only foreknowledge God could have, of any cases of submission, was one founded on His own decisive purpose to make some submit, by invincible grace.

The Arminian objects again, that our doctrine represents man as dragged reluctantly into a state of grace, like an angry wild beast into a cage; whereas, freedom of will, and hearty concurrence are essential elements of all service acceptable to God. The answer is, that the sinner's will is the very subject of this invincible grace. God so renews it that it neither can resist, nor longer wishes to resist. But this objection virtually reappears in the next part of the question.

Calvinists are accustomed also to say, in opposition to all Synergistic views, that the will of man is not active, but only passive in regeneration. In this proposition,

it is only meant that man's will is the subject, and not the agent, nor one of the agents of the distinctive change. In that renovating touch, which revolutionizes the active powers of the soul, it is acted on and not agent. Yet, activity is the inalienable attribute of an intelligent being; and in the process of conversion, which begins instantaneously with regeneration, the soul is active in all its exercises towards sin, holiness, God, its Savior, the law, &c., &c.

This doctrine is proved by the natural condition of the active powers of the soul. Man's propensities are wholly and certainly directed to some form of ungodliness, and to impenitency. How, then, can the will, prompted by these propensities, persuade itself to anything spiritually good and penitent? It is expecting a cause to operate in a direction just the opposite to its nature--as well expect gravity to raise masses flung into the air, when its nature is to bring them down. And this is agreeable to the whole Bible representation. Does the foetus procure its own birth? the dead body its own resurrection? the matter of creation its own organization? See, especially, John 1.13. Yet this will, thus renewed, chooses God, and acts holiness, freely, just as Lazarus, when resuscitated, put forth the activities of a living man.

The objections of the Arminian may all be summed up in this: that sinners are commanded, not only to put forth all the actings of the renewed nature, such as believing, turning from sin, loving God, &c., but are commanded to perform the very act of giving their hearts to God, which seems to contain the very article of regeneration. See Prov. 23:26; Is. 1:16; Ezek. 18:31; Deut. 10:16.

The answer is, 1st. That God's precepts are no test of the extent of our ability of will, but only of our duty. When our Creator has given to us capacities to know and love Him, and the thing which prevents is our depraved wills, this is no reason why He should or ought to cease demanding that which is His due. If the moral opposition of nature into which God's creatures may sink themselves by their own fault, were a reason why He should cease to urge His natural rights on them, He would soon have no right left. Again: the will of man, when renovated by grace, needs a rule by which to put forth its renewed activity, just as the eye, relieved of its darkness by the surgeon needs light to see. Hence, we provide light for the renovated eye; not that light alone could make the blind eye see. And hence, God applies His precepts to the renovated will, in order that it may have a law by which to act out its newly bestowed, spiritual free-agency. But 3d, and chiefly: These objections are all removed, by making a sound distinction between regeneration and conversion. In the latter the soul is active; and the acts required by all the above passages, are the soul's (now regenerate) turning to God.

The salvability of any heathen without the gospel is introduced here, because the question illustrate these views concerning the extent of the grace of redemption, and the discussions between us and the Arminians. We must hold that Revelation gives us no evidence that Pagans can find salvation, without Scriptural means. They are sinners. The means in their reach appear to contain

no salvation. a.) One argument is this: All of them are self-convicted of some sin (against the light of nature). "Without the shedding of blood is no remission." But the gospel is the only proposal of atonement to man. b.) Paganism provides nothing to meet the other great want of human nature, an agency for moral renovation. Is any man more spiritually minded than decent children of the Church are, because he is a Pagan ? Do they need the new birth less than our own beloved offspring? Then it must be at least as true of the heathen, that except they be born again, they shall not see the kingdom. But their religions present no agencies for regeneration. They do not even know the Word. So far are their theologies from any sanctifying influence, their morals are immoral, their deities criminals, and the heaven to which they aspire a pandemonium of sensual sin immortalized.

Now, the Arminians reject this conclusion, thinking God cannot justly condemn any man, who is not furnished with such means of knowing and as put his destiny in every sense within his own choice. These means the heathen do not fully possess, where their ignorance is invincible. The principle asserted is, that God cannot justly hold any man responsible, who is not blessed with both " natural and moral ability." I answer, that our doctrine concerning the heathen puts them in the same condition with those unhappy men in Christian lands, who have the outward word, but experience no effectual calling of the Spirit. God requires the latter to obey that Law and Gospel, of which they enjoy the clearer lights; and the obstacle which ensures their failure to obey is, indeed, not any physical constraint, but an inability of will. Of the heathen, God would require no more than perfect obedience to the light of nature; and it is the same inability of will which ensures their failure to do this. Hence, as you see, the doctrine of a common sufficient grace, and of the salvability of the heathens, are parts of the same system. So, the consistent Calvinist is able to justify God in the condemnation of adult heathens, according to the principles of Paul. Rom. 2 :12. On the awful question, whether all heathens, except those to whom the Church carries the gospel, are certainly lost, it does not become us to speak. One thing is certain: that "there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4 :12. Guilt must be expiated; and depravity must be cleansed, before the Pagan (or the nominal Christian) can see God. Whether God makes Christ savingly known to some, by means unknown to the Church, we need not determine. We are sure that the soul which "feels after Him if haply he may find Him," will not be cast off of God, because it happens to be outside of Christendom. But are there such ? This question it is not ours to answer. We only know, that God in the Scriptures always enjoins on His Church that energy and effort in spreading the gospel, which would be appropriate, were there no other instrumentality but ours. Here is the measure of our duty concerning foreign missions.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

ARMINIAN THEORY OF REDEMPTION.-Concluded.

by R. L. Dabney

Lecture 49 from Dabney's Systematic Theology

THE favorite Arminian dogma, that God's will concerning the salvation of individuals is conditioned on His simple foresight of their improvement of their common grace, in genuine faith, repentance, and holy obedience, is necessary to the coherency of their system. If grace is invincible, and all true faith, &c., are its fruits, then God's purpose as to working them must be absolute in this sense. If grace is only synergistic, and the sinner's free will alone decides the question of resisting it, or co-operating with it, then, of course, the sovereignty of decision, in this matter, is in the creature, and not in God; and He must be guided in His purpose by what it is foreseen the creature will choose to do. Thus we reach, by a corollary from the Arminian doctrine of "Calling," that which in time is first, the nature of the Divine purpose about it. The student is here referred to the Lecture on the Decree. But as the subject is so illustrative of the two theories of redemption, the Arminian and the orthodox, I shall not hesitate to discuss the same thing again, and to reproduce some of the same ideas.

And let me begin by reminding you of that plain distinction, by the neglect of which, Arminians get all the plausibility of their view. It is one thing to say that, in the Divine will, the result purposed is conditioned on the presence of its means; another thing to say that, God's purpose about it is also conditioned or dependent on the presence of its means. The former is true, the latter false. And this, because the presence of the means is itself efficaciously included in this same Divine purpose. Thus, a believer's salvation is doubtless dependent on his repentance; in the sense that, if he does not repent, he will not be saved. But God's purpose to save him is not dependent on his choosing to repent; for one of the things which God's purpose efficaciously determines is, that this believer shall have grace to repent. Remember, also, that when we say God's election is not dependent on the believer's foreseen faith, &c., we do not represent the Divine purpose as a motiveless caprice. It is a resolve founded most rationally, doubtless, on the best of reasons--only, the superior faith and penitence of that man were not, a priori among them; because had not God already determined,

from some better reasons unknown to us, that man would never have had any faith or repentance to foresee. And this is a perfect demonstration, as well as a Scriptural one. The Arminian opinion makes an effect the cause of its own cause. And that our faith, &c., are effects of our calling and election, see Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4, 5; 2 Thes. 2: 13; I Cor. 4: 7; Jno. 15:16 .

(b). But to this I may add the same idea in substance, which I used against Common Sufficient Grace: That, in fact, differences are made, in the temperaments and characters, opportunities and privileges of individuals and nations, which practically result in the death of some in sin. Thus: what practical opportunity, humanly speaking, had the man born in Tahiti, in the 18th century, for redemption through Christ? Now the Arminian himself admits an election of races or nations to such privilege, which is sovereign. Does not this imply a similar disposal of the fate of individuals? Can an infinite understanding fail to comprehend the individuals, in disposing of the destiny of the mass? But, under this head especially, I remark: the time of every man's death is decided by a sovereign Providence. But by determining this sovereignly, God very often practically decides the man's eternal destiny. Much more obvious is this, in the case of infants. According to Arminians, all that die in infancy are saved. So, then, God's purpose to end their mortal life in infancy is His purpose to save them. But this purpose cannot be formed from any foresight of their faith or repentance; because they have none to foresee, being saved without them.

(c). God's foresight of believers' faith and repentance implies the certainty, or "moral necessity " of these acts, just as much as a sovereign decree. For that which is certainly foreseen must be certain; The only evasion from this is the absurdity of Adam Clarke, that God chooses not to foreknow certain things, or the impiety of the Socinians, that He cannot foreknow some things. On both, we may remark, that if this faith and repentance are not actually foreknown, they cannot be the bases of any resolve on God's part.

(d) That any purposes of God should depend on the acts of a creature having an indeterminate, contingent will, such as Arminian describes, is incompatible with their immutability and eternity. But all His decrees are such. See Ps.33:11 ; 2 Tim. 2:19; Eph.1: 4; Is. 46:10. In a word, this doctrine places the sovereignty in the creature, instead of God, and makes Him wait on His own servant. It is disparaging to God.

Last: This very purpose of individual election to salvation is often declared to be uncaused by any foreseen good in us. See Matt. 11:26; Rom. 9: 11-16: 11: 5, 6, etc.

But Arminians cite many passages, in which they assert, God's resolve as to what He shall do to men is conditioned on their good or bad conduct. They are such as 1 Sam. 13:13; Ps. 81.13, 14; Luke 7: 30; Ezek. 18: 21, etc.; Luke 19: 42. Our opponents here make an obvious confusion of things, which should be

distinguished. When God preceptively reveals a connection between two alternative lines of conduct, and their respective results, as established by His law or promise, he does not at all reveal anything thereby, as to what He purposes with reference to permitting or procuring the exercise of that conduct by man. Of course, it does not imply that His purpose on this point is contingent to Him, or that the consequent results were uncertain to Him. We have seen that many of the results decreed by God were dependent on means which man employed; but that God's resolve was not dependent, because it secretly embraced their performance of those instrumental acts also. But the proof that the Arminians misconstrue those Scripture instances, is this : That the Bible itself contains many instances of these conditional threats and promises, and expressions of compassion, where yet the result of them is expressly foretold. If expressly predicted, they must have been predetermined. See, then, Is. 1:19, 20, compared with 7:17-20. And, more striking yet, Acts 27:23-25, with 31.

Rom. 9:11-18, is absolutely conclusive against conditional election. The only evasion by which the Arminian can escape its force, is, that this passage teaches only a national election of Israel and Edom, represented in their patriarchs, Jacob and Esau, to the outward privileges of the Gospel. We reply, as before, that Jacob and Esau certainly represented themselves also, so that here are two cases of unconditional predestination. But Paul's scope shows that the idea is false: for that scope is to explain, how, on his doctrine of justification by grace, many members of Israel were lost, notwithstanding equal outward privileges. And in answering this question, the Apostle evidently dismisses the corporate or collective, in order to consider the individual relation to God's plan and purpose. See the verses 8, 15, 24. That the election was not merely to privileges is clearly proved by the allusion of verse 8, compared with verses 4, 21, 24.

2. I am now to show that the Calvinistic scheme is consistent, and the Arminian inconsistent, with the philosophical theory of the will and free agency. Let me here refer you to Lecture 11, where the true doctrine of the will is stated and defended, and request you, if your mastery of the views there given is not perfect, to return and make it so, before proceeding. While I shall not repeat the arguments, the definition of the true doctrine is so important (and has so often been imperfectly made by Calvinists), that I shall take the liberty to restate it.

The Arminian says that free-agency consists in the self-determining power of the will, as a distinct faculty in the soul. The Calvinist says, it consists in the self-determining power of the soul. An Arminian says an agent is only free, when he has power to choose as the will may determine itself either way, irrespective of the stronger motive. The Calvinist says that an agent is free, when he has power to act as his own will chooses. The Arminian says that in order to be free, the agent must be exempt from the efficient influence of his own motives; the Calvinist, that he must be exempt from co-action, or external constraint; The Arminian says, that in order to be free, the agent must always be capable of having a volition uncaused. The Calvinist says that if an agent has a volition

uncaused, he cannot possibly be free therein, because that volition would be wholly irrational; the agent would therein be simply a brute. Every free, rational, responsible volition is such, precisely because it is caused I, e. by the agent's own motives; the rational agent is morally judged for his volitions according to their motives, or causes.

But when we ask: What is the motive of a rational volition, we must make that distinction which all Arminians, and many Calvinists heedlessly overlook between motive and inducement. The object offered to the soul as an inducement to choose is not the cause, the motive of the choice; but only the occasion. The true efficient cause is something of the soul's own, something subjective; namely, the soul's own appetency according to his prevalent, subjective disposition. The volition is not efficaciously caused by the inducement or object which appeals, but by the disposition which is appealed to. Thus, the causative spring of a free agent's action is within, not without him; according to the testimony of our consciousness. (The theory which makes the objective inducement the true cause of volition, is from that old, mischievous, sensualistic psychology, which has always been such a curse to theology). But then, this inward or subjective spring of action is not lawless; it is not indeterminate; if it were, the agent would have neither rationality nor character; and its action would be absolutely blind and brutish. This subjective spring has a law of its own activity--that is to say, its self-action is of a determinate character (of one sort or another). And that character is what is meant by the radical habitus, or natural disposition of the agent. And this subjective disposition is what gives uniform quality to that series of acts, by which common sense estimates the character of an agent. (And this, as we saw, was a sufficient proof of our doctrine; that otherwise, the exhibition of determinate character by a free agent, would be impossible). God is an excellent Agent, because He has holy original disposition. Satan is a wicked agent, because he has an unholy disposition, etc.

Now, this habitus or disposition of soul is not by any means always absolutely simple; it is a complex of certain active principles, with mental habitudes proceeding therefrom, and modified by outward circumstances. With reference to some sorts of outward inducements, these active principles may act with less uniformity and determinateness; with reference to others, with more. Here, modifying outward influences may change the direction of the principles. The avaricious man is sometimes prompted to generous volitions, for instance. But our common sense recognizes this truth: that the more, original and primary of those active principles constituting a being's disposition or habitus, are perfectly determinate and uniform in their action. For instance: no being, when happiness and suffering are the alternatives, is ever prompted by his own disposition, to choose the suffering for its own sake; no being is ever prompted, applause or reproach being equally in its reach, to prefer the reproach to the applause for its own sake. And last: this disposition, while never the effect of specific acts of volition (being always a priori thereto, and cause of them) is spontaneous; that is, in exercising the disposition, both in consideration and choice, the being is self-

prompted. When arguing against the Pelagian sophism, that man could not be responsible for his disposition, because it is "involuntary," I showed you the ambiguity wrapped up in that word. Of course, anything which, like disposition, precedes volition, cannot be voluntary in the sense of proceeding out of a volition; what goes before of course does not follow after the same thing. But the question is, "whether disposition is self-prompted." There is a true sense in which we intuitively know that a man ought not to be made responsible for what is "involuntary," viz.; for what happens against his will. But does any man's own disposition subsist against his will? If it did it would not be his own. There is here a fact of common sense, which is very strangely overlooked; that a man may most freely prefer what is natural to him, and in that sense his prior to his volition choosing it. Let a simple instance serve. Here is a young gentleman to whom nature has given beautiful and silky black hair. He, himself, thinks it very pretty, and altogether prefers it. Does he not thereby give us as clear, and as free an expression of his taste in hair, as though he had selected a black wig? So, were he to purchase hair dye to change his comely locks to a 'carrot red,' we should regard him as evincing very bad taste. But I ask, if we saw another whom nature had endowed with 'carrot red hair,' glorying in it with pride and preference, we should doubtless esteem him guilty of precisely the same bad taste, and precisely as free therein as the other. But the color of his hair was determined by nature, not by his original selection. Now, my question is: must we not judge the moral preference just as free in the parallel case, as the aesthetic? I presume that every reflecting mind will give an affirmative answer. If, for instance, a wicked man made you the victim of his extortion, or his malice, you would not think it any palliation to be told by him that he was naturally covetous or malignant, nor would you be satisfied by the plea, that this evil disposition was not at first introduced into his soul by his personal act of soul; while yet he confessed that he was entirely content with it and cherished it with a thorough preference. In fine: whether the moral agent is free in entertaining his connate disposition, may be determined by a very plain test. Does any other agent compel him to feel it, or does he feel it of himself? The obvious answer discloses this fact; that disposition is the most intimate function of our self-hood, and this, whether connate or self-induced.

Is not this now the psychology of common sense and consciousness? Its mere statement is sufficiently evincive of its truth. But you have seen a number of arguments by which it is demonstrated, and the rival theory reduced to absurdity. Now, our assertion is, that the Calvinistic doctrine of effectual calling is agreeable to these facts of our free-agency, and the Arminian inconsistent with them.

(a.) First, the equilibrium of will, to which Arminians suppose the gospel restores all sinners, through common sufficient grace, would be an unnatural and absurd state of soul, if it existed.

You will remember that the Wesleyans (the Arminian school which we meet) admit that man lost equilibrium of will in the fall; but say that it is restored through

Christ; and that this state is necessary to make man truly free and responsible in choosing the Savior. But we have shown that such a state is impossible for an active agent, and irrational. So far as it existed, it would only show the creature's action irrational, like that of the beasts. Hence, the evangelical choice arising in such a state would be as motiveless, as reasonless, and therefore, as devoid of right moral character, as the act of a man walking in his sleep. And, to retort the Arminian's's favorite conclusion, all the so-called gracious states of penitence, &c., growing out of that choice, must be devoid of right moral quality, how can those exercises of soul have that quality? Only as they are voluntary, and prompted by right moral motives. But as we have seen, motive is subjective; so that the action of soul cannot acquire right moral quality until it is prompted by right moral disposition. Hence, if that common sufficient grace were anything at all, it would be the grace of moral renovation; all who had it would be regenerate.

(b.) Second: We have seen that the notion of a moral agent without determinate, subjective moral character, of some sort, is absurd. The radical, ruling habitus has some decisive bent of its own, some way or other. Is not this simply to say that disposition is disposed? The question of fact then arises, which is the bent or determinate direction, which man's natural disposition has, touching spiritual things? Is it for, or against it? Or, as a question of fact, is the disposition of mankind naturally, and uniformly. either way? Or, are some men one way disposed by nature, and some the other, as to this object? The answer is, that they are all naturally disposed, in the main, the same way, and that, against the spiritual claims of Christ and God. What are these claims? That the sinner shall choose the holy will of God over his own, and His favor over sensual, earthly, and sinful joys in all their forms. Nothing less than this is evangelical repentance and obedience. Now note, we do not say that no men ever choose any formal act of obedience by nature. Nor, that no man ever desires (what he conceives to be) future blessedness by nature. Nor, that every natural man is as much bent on all forms of rebellion, as every other. But we assert, as a matter of fact, that all naturally prefer self-will to God's holy will, and earthly, sensual, and sinful joys (in some forms) to God's favor and communion; that this is the original, fundamental, spontaneous disposition of all; and that in all essential alternatives between self and God, the disposition is, in the natural man, absolutely determinate and certain. If this is true, then the unconverted man without sovereign grace is equally certain to choose carnally, and equally a free agent in choosing so.

But that such is the determinate disposition of every natural man, is obvious both from experience and from Scripture. Every renewed man, in reviewing his own purposes, is conscious that, before regeneration, self-will was, as against God, absolutely dominant in all his feelings and purposes; of which no stronger test can be imagined than this conscious fact ; that the very best religious impulses to which his soul could be spurred by remorse or alarm, were but modifications of self-will, (self-righteousness.) Every true Christian looks back to the time when he was absolutely incompetent to find, or even to imagine, any spontaneous good or joy in anything except carnality; and the only apprehension it was possible for

him to have of God's service, in looking forward to the time when, he supposed, the fear of hell would compel him to undertake it, was of a constraint and a sacrifice. So, when we look without, while we see a good many in the state of nature, partially practicing many secular virtues, and even rendering to God some self-righteous regards, we see none preferring God's will and favor to self-will and earth. All regard such a choice as an evil per se; all shrink from it obstinately; all do so under inducements to embrace it which reasonably ought to be immense and overwhelming. The experimental evidence, that this carnality is the original and determinate law of their disposition, is as complete as that which shows the desire of happiness is a law of their disposition. And all this remains true of sinners under the gospel, of sinners enlightened, of sinners convicted and awakened by the Holy Ghost in His common operations; which is a complete, practical proof that there is not any such sufficient grace, common to all as brings their wills into equilibrium about evangelical good. For those are just the elements which the Arminians name, as making up that grace: and we see that where they are, still there is no equilibrium, but the old, spontaneous, native bent, obstinately dominant still.

The decisiveness of that disposition is also asserted in Scripture in the strongest possible terms. All men are the "servants of sin," Jno. 8 :34; Rom. 6: 20; 2 Pet. 1.19. They are "sold under sin." Rom. 7:14. They are "in the bond of iniquity." Acts 8:23. They are "dead in sins." Eph.2.1. They are "blind;" yea, "blindness" itself. Eph. 4:18. Their "hearts are stony." Ezek. 36:26, They are "impotent" for evangelical good 2 Cor. 3:5; Jno. 15:5; Rom. 5:6; Matt. 7: 18 ; 12 : 34 ; Jno. 6: 44. "The carnal mind is enmity, and cannot be subject to the law of God." Rom. 8: 7. Surely these, with the multitude of similar testimonies, are enough to prove against all ingenious glosses, that, our view of man's disposition is true. But if man's free-agency is misdirected by such active principles as these, original, uniform, absolutely decisive, it is folly to suppose that the mighty revolution to holiness can originate in that free-agency; it must originate without, in almighty grace.

Nor is it hard for the mind which has comprehended this philosophy of common sense and experience, to solve the current Arminian objection; that the man in such a state of will cannot be responsible or blameworthy for his continued impenitency. This "inability of will" does not supersede either free-agency or responsibility.

There is here an obvious distinction from that external coercion, which the reason and conscience of every man recognizes as a different state, which would supersede responsibility. The Calvinists of the school of Jonathan Edwards make frequent use of the terms, "moral inability," "natural inability," to express that plain, old distinction. Turretin teaches us that they are not new. In his Locus, 10, que. 4, section 39, 40, you will find some very sensible remarks, which show that this pair of terms is utterly ambiguous and inappropriate, however good the meaning of the Calvinists who used them. I never employ them. That state which

they attempt to describe as "moral inability," our Confession more accurately calls, loss of all ability of will." (Ch. 9 section 3). It should be remarked here, that in this phrase, and in many similar ones of our Confession, the word "will" is used in a sense more comprehensive than the specific faculty of choosing. It means the "conative powers," (so called by Hamilton,) including with that specific function, the whole active power of soul. The "inability," then, which we impute to the natural man, and which does not supersede responsibility, while it does make his voluntary continuance in impenitence absolutely certain, and his turning of himself to true holiness impossible, is a very distinct thing from that physical coercion, and that natural lack of essential faculties, either of which would be inconsistent with moral obligation. It is thus defined in Hodge's outlines: "Ability consists in the power of the agent to change his own subjective state, to make himself prefer what he does not prefer, and to act in a given case in opposition to the co-existent desires and preferences of the agent's own heart." I will close with a statement of the distinction, which I uttered under very responsible circumstances. "All intelligent Calvinists understand very well, that " inability" consists not in the extinction of any of the powers which constituted man the creature he was before Adam's fall, and which made his essence as a religious being; but in the thorough moral perversion of them all. The soul's essence is not destroyed by the fall; if it were, in any part, man's responsibility would be to that extent modified. But all his faculties and susceptibilities now have a decisive and uniform, a native and universal, a perpetual and total moral perversion, by reason of the utter revolt of his will from God and holiness, to self-will and sin; such that it is impossible for him, in his own free will, to choose spiritual good for its own sake."

(c) Regeneration, correspondingly, does not constrain a man to will against his dispositions; but it renews the dispositions themselves. It reverse the morbid and perverse bias of the will. It rectifies the action of all faculties and affections, previously perverted by that bias. God's people are "willing- in the day of His power." Ps. 110:3. "He worketh in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2.13. In that believers now form holy volitions at the prompting of their own subjective principles, unconstrained by force, they are precisely as free as when, before, they spontaneously formed sinful volitions at the prompting of their opposite evil principles. But in that the action of intellect and desire and conscience is now rectified, purified, ennobled, by the divine renovation, the believer is more free than he was before. "He cannot sin, because the living and incorruptible seed" of which he is born again "liveth and abideth in him." Thus, regeneration, though almighty, does not infringe free-agency, but perfects it.

The standing Arminian objection is, that man cannot be praise or blame-worthy, for what does not proceed from his own free-will. Hence, if he does not primarily choose a new heart, but it is wrought in him by another, he has no more moral credit, either for the change or its consequences, than for the native color of his hair. This objection is, as you have seen, of a Pelagian source. By the same argument Adam could have had no concreated righteousness; but we saw that

the denial of it to him was absurd. By the same reasoning God Himself could have no moral credit for His holy volitions; for He never chose a righteousness, having been eternally and necessarily righteous. We might reply, also, that the new and holy state is chosen by the regenerate man, for his will is as free and self-moved, when renovated in preferring his own renovation, as it ever was in sinners.

To sum up, then: The quickening touch of the Holy Ghost operates, not to contravene any of the free actings of the will; but to mould dispositions which lie back of it. Second: all the subsequent right volitions of the regenerate soul are in view of inducements rationally presented to it. The Spirit acts, not across man's nature, but according to its better law. Third: the propensities by which the renewed volitions are determined are now noble, not ignoble, harmonious, not confused and hostile; and rational, not unreasonable. Man is most truly free when he has his soul most freely subjected to God's holy will. See those illustrious passages in John 8: 36; 2 Cor. 3:17 ; Rom. 8:21. Since this blessed work is like the free-agency which it reinstates, one wholly unique among the actions of God, and essentially different from all physical effects, it cannot receive any adequate illustration. Any parallel attempted, from either material or animal causes, would be incomplete. If, for instance, I were to say that the carnal man "in the bonds of iniquity," is like a wretch, who is hindered from walking in the paths of his duty and safety by some incubus that crushes his strength, I should use a false analogy: for the incubus is external: carnality is internal: an evil state qualifying the will itself. But this erroneous parallel may serve us so far; the fortunate subject of effectual calling has no more occasion to complain of violence done to his free-agency, than that wretch would, when a deliverer came and rolled the abhorred load off his body, restoring his limbs to the blessed freedom of motion, which might carry him away from the death that threatened him. You must learn to think of the almighty grace put forth in effectual calling, as reparative only; not violative. Augustine calls it a *Delectatio victrix*. It is a secret, omnipotent, silent, beneficent work of God, as gentle, yet powerful, as that which restored the vital spark to the corpse of Lazarus. Such are all God's beneficent actions, from the launching of the worlds in their orbits, to the germination of the seed in the soil.

Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.