

14. This must mean that Christ destroyed the Devil entirely, that is his being, or else it means that he destroyed his power against the children—not the former, for if the Devil was destroyed in his being, then his work in opposing the truth would not be so abundant and manifest; but that Satan's power against the children is destroyed is comfort enough for the present—manifesting to them the sufficiency of grace.—Again St. Paul speaking of Christ and his glorious triumph in behalf of his people, says that he “having spoiled principalities and powers made a show of them openly, triumphing over them,” Col. 2: 15, and who in his senses could believe that a power, or even powers which are spoiled and triumphed over, can spoil the purpose of him who has spoiled the power. Thus Christ has triumphed over sin, death, and the Devil, whereby he obtained a right to his and his chosen, and has spoiled every power that could otherwise hinder his possessing them. Trusting that the candid reader may be able to perceive from the foregoing quotations and considerations that the saints are “complete in him” (Christ), and that his grace is sufficient for them, we will pursue the subject still further for instruction and comfort. We have considered the grace of election and redemption, finding clear expressions of each in the scriptures, and we need more still for Saul was chosen and redeemed at the very time he was blaspheming the name of the Lord and persecuting his saints; or who could or would insinuate that he would have been saved in any how whether he had repented or not, or who, understanding the gospel system, would suppose that there was merit in the repenting and seeking of Saul or any other. So far from it Christ himself by his death, resurrection and intercession merited all that Saul or any other of his people can need in order to their final and eternal settlement in heaven.—Just here is the Arminian's fatal mistake. He regards the repentence, penitence, seeking and believing of sinners as meritorious whereby they secure grace—whereas the Bible shows plainly that all these are themselves graces of the Spirit freely bestowed upon such as Saul, Mary, the Gadarine, and others possessed of the Devil; which, as the case formerly stood with them, they neither would nor could have received—hence that grace should appear sufficient with the grace of election and redemption—clear expressions of an holy and effectual calling, “Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works (whether good or bad) but according to his own purpose (election) and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,” 2 Tim. 1: 9. Again “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the

Holy Ghost,” Tit. 3: 5. In these quotations Paul instructs both negatively and affirmatively. We are saved and called (if at all) “not according to our works”—showing that works, the best we are capable of performing, would not induce our calling nor make it effectual. Then affirmatively “but according to his own purpose and grace” &c., from which, with the many examples of the Scriptures, we may legitimately infer that the worst works Satan can influence men to perform, cannot hinder their calling or make it ineffectual—and why not? The text shows the reason—because they are called according to God's purpose, which purpose against sin stands more firm than sin does against the purpose—otherwise none would be either saved or called. Again, negatively—“not by works which we have done” &c.,—why not from such motives? Because men are not capable of performing righteous works except they have a will to do so—and if they have both will and capacity, and then they will be legally just and therefore need no mercy. But affirmatively “according to his mercy he saved us by the regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” But if such as are called saints walk as do others, where is the evidence of their renewal? does not the professed religious world walk as do the openly wicked world? do they not hold the same doctrine? If we preach the absolute predestination and election of God the openly wicked rails and affirms that he has as good a chance to be saved as any others. Likewise does the religious world, if we preach the doctrine of special, full, and finished redemption through Christ. The most wicked class in the land affirms that Christ died for all men, and that to the same end, and so does the religious world if we preach the Spiritual depravity of the human heart, and that natural men are Satan's captives. Such as make no pretensions to religion feel that they have a judgment to change their state whenever they will. But that they will not now shows the defect in their judgment, or rather that they have none, which if they had they would see, feel, and acknowledge the impotency of men. But does not the religious fully agree with the wicked world in all this?—Nay! Does not their teaching confirm the wicked in their false faith? and as the professedly righteous and the openly wicked are fully associated in faith, where shall we look for an evidence of their renewal? their righteousness in the law and devotion to their creeds is no evidence of it—for Saul had both of these before he was renewed. Then as all things also are defective and therefore deficient, should we not be glad that God and his grace is sufficient for the poor and destitute? Oh! says some, I do not question the sufficiency of grace, but the greatest matter is, am I a subject of that grace? Truly that is a point which more directly concerns

(or should) every one of us. If we are the children of God and subjects of his grace we are not without some evidence of it? If grace is manifestly sufficient for us it has been exercised or applied in our calling or renewal, and if we are called and renewed by the Holy Ghost, the sentiment and feeling of our heart is as was expressed by one of old, “whereas I was blind I now see.” We may not have suddenly been smitten to the earth as Saul was, we may not have realized the deep and long continued sorrow of heart for sin that some of our time have, but if we have been renewed by grace we have certainly felt the need of assistance that we were assured was far out of the reach of mortal power to afford. Therefore whether we uttered a word in prayer, our desires were often flowing out that the Lord would remember us.—Before we could see no reason why we should be saved, hence the sentiment and feeling of the heart was,

If thou shouldst send my soul to hell,  
Thy righteous law approves it well.

But though we could not see how such an one as we viewed ourselves to be could be “just with God;” yet our incapacity to discern the source of mercy did not lessen our need nor hinder our calling upon the Lord, who when we had been sufficiently humbled by the application of his grace, manifested to us in some way as it pleased him that his grace was sufficient, not only to lay us low but to lift us up again and finally save us. I said above, when we had been sufficiently humbled by the application of his grace—and I view the matter, that we are humbled by grace—not that we humble ourselves and thereby obtain grace; for one (and such are all by nature) that is proud, vain, and presumptuous, before whose eyes the fear of God is not, will no sooner humble himself before him than Satan will cast out Satan. But do I not teach that sinners are or might be saved without repentance? Nay! but that by grace it is given—“him being with the right-hand of God exalted to give unto Israel repentance and forgiveness of sins,” nor do I teach that any are or could be saved without faith? Nay! But that faith is the gift (and therefore a grace) of God as St Paul declares, Eph. 2: 8. And when all these and all other spiritual blessings are received, they do not produce or cause, but manifests the election of their recipients and their appointment to salvation whereby they are prepared to sing with the Spirit that “new song” and the understanding which David said the Lord put in his mouth, which is this—

Amazing grace how sweet the sound,  
That saved a wretch like me—  
I once was lost but now I'm found,  
Was blind but now I see.

Yes, amazing, surprizing grace! But what is the Arminians' wonder and surprise? It seems not to be that grace is sufficient for any, but that it is not sufficient for all, and yet they sing those lines with apparent delight

—but I cannot think with the spirit and the understanding, for they not only affirm, but even glory in their affirmations that all men are sufficiently enlightened to perceive and attain their best interest, and if so none are “lost” and “blind” as the poet said he once was. Then why do they not denounce as falsehood the words of the poet rather than sing them in their assemblies? But though others may not be, yet David was, in sentiment agreed with the poet, as we gather from his words in the 8th Psalm, “When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars which thou hast ordained, what is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?” Oh! what is man? Let the scripture answer; his heart is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things, whose feet are swift to shed blood, the whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint, there is no soundness in it but wounds, bruises and putrifying sores.” &c. Then he is not such an excellent creature now that God would be unjust to leave him to perish without mercy as Arminians suppose and allege. But now as it does appear from the scriptures that grace is sufficient in the election, redemption, and holy calling of the saints; let us consider in the light of revelation whether or not it is sufficient in their perseverance, or to cause them to persevere to the end, if not common judgment would teach us that it could not be sufficient at all; for every rational man must know after he considers that if a real saint ever did fall into hell at last, that neither God's grace nor his own works were sufficient for his salvation. But note, I do not teach this point, that the saints persevere by giving a loose rein to the flesh, as some affirm they would do if they believed the doctrine. Nay, it is not in that way—but by resisting the Devil and sin, that the saints persevere. But from whence do they receive the Spirit of resistance if not from the Lord—as a gift; and if the Lord first gives the Spirit of resistance that the saints may persevere, will he not continue to give it to the same end? The very moment his Spirit be withdrawn from us (which may be at times to show us our weakness) we deny him verbally as Peter did, or by transgression as David did. Then the question is not whether a real saint may fall into transgression and “pierce himself through with many sorrows,” but whether he may be cast off in the end—the former I suppose all would admit may be, but if the latter is possible, there are strange words written in the scriptures of the language of Christ—in John 10: 27, 28—“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,” &c. Now how could that be eternal which Christ gives his sheep, except they live eternally?—and if it be admitted that they do