

those Jews with whom Christ conversed did not like the doctrine of discrimination any better than Dr. Pierce does. At the mere mention of it: "all they in the synagogue were filled with wrath and rose up to thrust him out of their city." In the eleventh chapter and twenty-fifth verse of Matthew we have the doctrine of discrimination, not only by implication, but by plain declaration; our Savior there says, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes?" not to infants, to-be-sure, but to such as would no sooner comprehend without revelation. Now, these things revealed to the one class—specified and hid from the other—must be things of great importance, yea, things that accompany salvation: otherwise our Savior had not expressed, in such a manner, his thanks to the Father for his procedure. Where, then, is the evidence that the salvation of every son and daughter of Adam is as sure as God's pleasure?—to that end could make it, as Dr. Pierce affirms—his words imply nothing less. Read them again:

"Reason determines, in spite of prejudice, that no human soul can ever be justly lost, except it might and ought to have been saved in accordance with God's pleasure."

Now, is it the pleasure of God that every human soul shall be saved?—It either is or else it is not. If it is, then the salvation of every human soul is as sure as God's pleasure can make it; yea! I may add, ~~it is as sure as God's pleasure, wisdom,~~ ~~power could make it; for, whatever is pleasing to the Lord, his wisdom and power is engaged to obtain for him. But if it is not the pleasure of God that every human soul should be saved, then the Doctor declares that none can be justly lost, that is, that reason so determines, in spite of prejudice. If the sentence should be changed as follows, it would approach nearer the truth: "Carnal reason determines, in spite of God's revealed word, that no human soul can ever be justly lost unless it might and ought to have been saved in accordance with God's pleasure. But, according to the Doctor's teaching, a man may have fallen in Adam, which he grants all did; he may have been born of corrupt parentage, grown up in sin, lived a thief, a murderer, an adulterer, a liar, a persecutor, and a blasphemer of God's holy name; and yet, that soul could not be justly lost unless it might and ought to have been saved in accordance with God's pleasure—unless his wisdom, by which his plan was arranged, was deficient, or his power to carry out his will inadequate. Unless wicked men and devils have confused and defeated God's course, then no human soul can be justly lost. Nay! According to the Doctor's theory, God's justice in the damnation of the wicked must be inferred only from his pleasure and effort to save them; for, apart from these, their wickedness will furnish no plea for the Almighty if he be arraigned before Dr. Pierce for judgment.~~

We know that arminians, in common, hold for general redemption,

insisting that Christ died for those that are damned as well as for those that are saved; and, likewise, that the Spirit strives to enlighten all to the same purpose and end. But, if this be so, who were the wise and prudent from whom the Father hid the things pertaining to Christ, his kingdom and his grace? We know, by common sense, that to hide is one act, and that to reveal is its opposite. We know, moreover, that the two opposites imply discrimination—the very principle which arminians, in common, hate. How vague the thought, not to say the expression, that "no human soul can ever be justly lost unless it might and ought to have been saved in accordance with God's pleasure." If men universally were damned, would not God's justice approve it well? The answer must be, either yea, or nay. If yea, it antagonizes with Dr. Pierce's conclusion; if nay, the objector's next work is to show that God is under strict obligation to do somewhat for the salvation of man; for, we know that injustice is always, and always must be inferred from obligation; but to admit that which is not admissible, that God was under obligation to make a provision for the salvation of man, it would then follow that, what he did upon that principle, he did in discharge of an obligation. And such a conclusion, we know, antagonizes with the Bible doctrine of grace; for that which is due to us, that which one would be unjust to withhold from us, could not rightly be called a dispensation of grace to us.

~~is highly objectionable as implying rebellion against our Sovereign Lord:~~

"Of course, if in the exercise of sovereign grace, God ordained some to everlasting life just because he would do it as a Sovereign Lord, so also he must have ordained others to everlasting wrath, just because he would; for the moment Predestinarians drop out this idea, 'just because he would,' the bubble of grace explodes and the mind gravitates to the more complacent conception of God in Christ, providing salvation for all on condition of faith."

Now, notwithstanding Dr. Pierce writes thus contemptibly of God's decrees and of those that regard them, yet we know, that if God has ordained any or all to life, or to death—whatsoever he has done he hath done it "just because he would," with none save his own pleasure to move him. He made the world at first, "just because he would;" he formed man of the dust and breathed into his nostrils, &c., "just because he would;" he permitted Eve to be tempted and deceived, and Adam to sin wilfully, "just because he would;" he permitted the corrupt pair to multiply, and their generation to run until now, "just because he would;" and, whatsoever he hath not done, he hath not, just because he would not. And, "who art thou, O man! that repliest against God?" Does Dr. Pierce with others think the Lord hath said in vain that "all have sinned and come short of his glory?" Why then can he not see that God's justice itself would well approve the condemnation of all? Until he can see this he will never be able to show how the salvation of any can be of free mercy

and grace.

Reader, let us now consider the Lord's description of mankind, as penned by St. Paul. The apostle speaks of being slanderously reported as saying, "Let us do evil that good may come;" however, he concludes the damnation of these slanderers to be just (see Rom. 3: 8). The apostle then puts forth a grave question, which, with his answer, the reader will please note: "What! then, are we better than they?" Answer: "No, in no wise, for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." There is much meaning here: perhaps all but arminians would admit that the damnation of slanderers is just. But, St. Paul declares that himself and the saints at Rome were no better than those whose damnation is just. And, as they were not, let Dr. Pierce show if he can, why their damnation would not have been as just, or, if he can, admit Paul's declaration, that he was no better than such, let him say the same of himself, and then doubtless he will say less against God's decrees, by which alone he maketh his people to differ from others whose damnation is both just and certain. But, how shall we regard St. Paul's confession, that himself and brethren were no better than slanderers? Were they likewise slanderers? By nature they were "the children of wrath, even as others."—(See Eph. 2: 3.) This, the saints were by relation to Adam when he transgressed: and they never could be better but by relation to another head. Nay: as the Ethiopian cannot "change his skin" nor the leopard "his spots"—no sooner can they be anything else than what they naturally are. Note: I do not argue here that immoral men could not be moral men if they would; but, as they will not, I see not how they could. But, the apostle continues his account of men, saying: "There is none righteous—no not one." Then the righteousness of any could not be pleaded as a reason why God would be just to leave them without mercy. "There is none that understandeth," therefore "there is none that seeketh after God"—none do while unregenerate; but, when men are "quickened" and called by grace from death unto life, the examples in the scriptures show that all such do seek after God. But, now, as it is a fact penned by inspiration, that there is none (Jews nor Gentiles,) that seeketh after God, nor none that understandeth, where is the evidence of man's capacity to exercise faith in Christ, and thus make successful the Lord's enterprise of salvation? Of course, such as have any faith to exercise, have some understanding also—at least sufficient to enable them to detect such errors as arminians in common hold. But shall we regard natural men's lack of spiritual understanding and voluntarily refusing to seek after God as a sufficient reason why he should be regarded as unjust if he should leave them to perish without mercy? Could that saying, "There is none that understandeth," possibly be true if, as arminians affirm, all men are capable of faith? Nay: I should rather ask, Can that which they affirm be true, since the Lord,

the just Judge, declares "there is none that understandeth." But of faith, and the source of it, more hereafter? St. Paul continues his account of the natural state of men, as follows: They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good—no not one. They are all (Jews and Gentiles) gone out of the way, &c. Then I ask, Would it be good for them to repent Evangelically?—There is none that doeth it! Would it be good for men to seek the Lord as humble penitents?—There is none that doeth it! Would it do for them to believe in Christ to the saving of their souls, without a high, holy and effectual calling?—There is none that doeth any of these things! "They are together become unprofitable." Then, the Lord owes none a reward, that Dr. Pierce and others should regard him as unjust to leave them without mercy. "There is none that doeth good—no, not one:" and if their salvation is nevertheless conditional, what must be supposed the condition of it is? Will the Rev. Dr. Pierce inform us?

Besides the foregoing, and much more to the same point, "there is no fear of God before their eyes." Now, as "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," I must be allowed to believe that wisdom hath not begun with those that fear not God. And then it follows, that all men are not sufficiently enlightened to perceive and attain their best interest as arminians affirm. Dr. Pierce says, the other hard-to-be-understood scriptures referred to by St. Paul, which "they that are unlearned and unstable, wrest," are Paul's quotations from the Old Testament concerning the hardening of Pharaoh's heart; the loving of Jacob and the hating of Esau, before the children were born; and the potter's power over the same lump of clay, to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor.—Well, suppose that opinion should be admitted, it would furnish no argument for the Doctor's creed, since it is a fact that God loved Jacob sooner than he could be supposed to secure his love upon arminian principles, even before he was born; and Esau, we know, was hated of the Lord before he singled himself out by a whole life in unbelief. And why so?—"That the purpose of God, according to election, might stand." Hence I conclude, that the Lord loved Jacob "just because he would," and hated Esau just because he did.—However, Dr. Pierce says:

"The moment Predestinarians drop out of this idea, 'just because he would,' the mind gravitates to the more complacent conception of God in Christ providing salvation for all on condition of faith."

"It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Yea, the Lord showeth mercy! And why so? The Predestinarian answers, "Just because he would." And it is so, or else the Lord is moved by some work or carriage of the subject, which, if he is, it would appear that the first cause of mercy to man is in himself, or in his works: and every effect, we know, is of the first cause that produces it.