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Department of
Systematic Theology

THE CALVINISTIC DOCTRINE OF SECURITY

BY LEWIS SPERRY CHAFER, D.D., LITT.D., TH.D. (hon.)

Unavoidably, much that enters into the Calvinistic doctrine of security has been alluded to by way of contrast or comparison in the foregoing analysis of the Arminian position. Perhaps enough has been presented respecting the Calvinistic view of the doctrines of original sin, efficacious calling, decrees, the fact and character of the fall, divine omniscience, divine sovereignty, and sovereign grace, though it may safely be restated that what is termed Calvinism—largely for want of a more comprehensive cognomen—is, so far as devout men have been able to comprehend it, the essential Pauline theology, especially in its soteriological aspects. After all, Systematic Theology is the attempt on the part of men to state in orderly arrangement what God has revealed in the Bible. The Word of God is consistent with itself and it is regrettable that good men do not agree among themselves about the interpretation.

In seeking a reason, or reasons, for this lack of unity, certain suggestions may be advanced. First, it has pleased God so to embed the truth in the Sacred Text that only those who study unceasingly and who are qualified for the task by educational background, all of this coupled with true spiritual insight, are able to discern with some degree of accuracy its revelation in its length and breadth, its height and depth. Men with little or no conformity to these educational requirements have rendered superficial opinions, which are based on mere human reason and claim to be final. This shallow dogmatism has swept multitudes who think but little into cults and sporadic religious movements. It has long been recognized that the man who is least qualified to speak with authority will be, very often, the most dogmatic. A second

explanation of disagreement in Bible interpretation is slavish conformity to human leaders. This tendency can easily beset the best interpreters. Each sect feels called upon to maintain its theological schools and to pursue its peculiar point of view. Their theology is published and defended by those who are run in their specific molds. In the light of the fact that there is but one body of revealed truth setting forth but one system, that which God has given, the disagreement which obtains between sincere and educationally disciplined men may be accounted for on the basis of this tendency to cleave to the human authorities identified with a given sect. The creed of the denomination is more to be defended than the Word of God itself. In the present day, there is but little resentment when the Scriptures are discredited, but there is strong opposition experienced when the position occupied by the denomination is questioned. Men seldom change their preconceived views whether good or bad. Their early training and theological discipline serve as a mold from which the individual will seldom be extricated. Such a slavish bondage to human leaders and creeds may impede Calvinists as well as Arminians. It will be recognized by all, however, that Calvinists as a body, judging from their writings, are more concerned to be conformed to the Bible than any other group that is held together by common theological beliefs. Ignorance, intolerance, unteachableness, and slavish devotion to human leaders are the roots of doctrinal confusion with the attending evils which that confusion engenders.

The names *Calvinism* and *Arminianism* may well be dismissed if only a clear understanding of the Word of God may be gained. However, these appellations do represent, in the main, two conflicting schools of theological thought, and it is the purpose of this thesis to defend the Word of God and Calvinism is favored only because it, in turn, favors the Scriptures of Truth. The Calvinistic interpretations, especially respecting security, are unstrained and show an amenableness to the Word of God. The great doctrines of Scripture bearing on security—universal depravity, effectual calling, decrees, the fall, omniscience, divine sovereignty,

and sovereign grace—are taken by the Calvinists in the plain and natural meaning which may be drawn from the Sacred Text. It is not claimed that there are no truths which are too deep for human understanding; but these, when received in the natural sense of the language of the Scriptures, if not fully understood, are found to be harmonious with the revealed plan and purpose of God.

It has been demonstrated in the previous section of this thesis that the Scriptures upon which the Arminian depends, for such Biblical appeal respecting insecurity as he chooses to make, are none of them in any final sense a support for his contention. His interpretation of these portions of the Word of God is well described by the text: "as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Over against these passages to which the Arminians resort is the positive, constructive, and consistent declaration of uncounted New Testament passages which in unqualified terms assert that the believer is secure. Added to these positive assertions of the Word of God are those deductions to be drawn from every doctrine which is at all related to a complete soteriology. No Arminian undertakes to demonstrate that the positive passages are uncertain in their meaning. Their only recourse is to claim that human responsibility must be read into these passages in order to make them harmonize with the interpretation they have placed on so-called insecurity texts. John 5:24 must read, "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation—that is, *if he holds out to the end.*" Romans 8:30 must read, "Moreover whom He did predestinate by foreknowing their faith and works, them He also called provided they are willing to be called: and whom He called, them He also justified provided they do not sin: and whom He justified, them He also glorified provided they do not fall from their own steadfastness." It is no small responsibility to add to, or take from, the Word of God (Rev.

22:18-19), or to handle that Word deceitfully (2 Cor. 4:2).

Having previously discussed the Calvinistic belief respecting the great soteriological doctrines, it remains now to consider the direct and positive unfolding of eternal security as presented in the New Testament.

While there are unnumbered secondary declarations and inferences respecting the security of the true Christian, this article will present twelve major reasons, declared in the New Testament, why the believer once saved can never be lost. Liberty is to be claimed in connection with each of these reasons to point out what the rationalistic denial of the truth in question involves. These twelve reasons, it will be found, are equally divided in their relation to the three Persons of the Godhead—four are the responsibility of the Father, four are the responsibility of the Son, and four are the responsibility of the Spirit. This threefold fact at once lifts this theme to the level of a major doctrine of Soteriology. Of these twelve reasons it may be said that any one of them is in itself a final and sufficient basis for confidence that the child of God will be preserved unto heaven's glory. When twelve reasons, each complete and conclusive in itself, are contemplated, the evidence is overwhelming. In general, the New Testament presents the Father as purposing, calling, justifying, and glorifying those who believe on Christ; the Son is presented as becoming incarnate that He might be a Kinsman-Redeemer, as dying a substitutionary and efficacious death, as rising to be a living Savior both as Advocate and Intercessor, and as Head over all things to the Church; the Holy Spirit is presented as administering and executing the purpose of the Father and the redemption which the Son has wrought. It is reasonable, then, that all three Persons of the Godhead should have their individual share in preserving to fruition that which God has determined.

I. THE REASONS WHICH DEPEND ON GOD THE FATHER

The four reasons for security which are assigned to the Father are: (1) the sovereign purpose of God, (2) the Father's infinite power set free, (3) the infinite love of God, and (4) the influence on the Father of the prayer of His Son.

1. **THE SOVEREIGN PURPOSE OF GOD.** By no process of worthy reasoning and certainly by no word of revelation can it be concluded that He who created all things according to His sovereign purpose—which purpose extends on into eternity to come and comprehends every minute detail that will ever come to pass—will be defeated in the realization of all His intention; nor should there be failure to accept the truth that the bringing of redeemed men into heaven's glory is a major divine purpose behind all His creative undertaking. The assumption is unfounded and vain which declares that the saving of souls and the outcalling of the Church is but a minor detail which, if unsuccessful, would, on account of its insignificance, have no important bearing on the main divine objective. It is true that, on the human side, man exercises his will in that he acts according to his desires and best judgment. It is also true and of greater importance that God molds those desires and enlightens that human judgment. It is natural for men to conclude that, since in the range of their own experience their acceptance of Christ is optional, the salvation of a soul and its attaining to heaven's glory is a matter of indifference or uncertainty in the mind of God. The failure of one soul to be saved and to reach glory whom God has ordained to that end means the disruption of the whole actuality of divine sovereignty. If God could fail in one feature, be it ever so small, He could fail in all. If He could fail in anything, He ceases to be God and the universe is drifting to a destiny about which God Himself could know nothing. None would doubt that the incarnation and death of Christ were major features in the purpose of God; but all this, it is revealed, is for the purpose of bringing many sons into glory. It is written: "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man. For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings" (Heb. 2:9-10). God did not give His Son as a fortuitous venture,

with uncertainty about whether a remnant of His purpose would be realized. Every devout mind would be shocked by the recital of such God-dishonoring insinuations; yet every feature of this impious sequence is unavoidably admitted if it be allowed that God could fail in the realization of His purpose in the instance of one soul.

Ephesians 1:11-12 is a proper declaration in respect to the divine purpose: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." And, though often referred to previously, Romans 8:28-30 proclaims the same immutable divine intention, with plenary assurance that the sovereign purpose of God will be realized. The passage reads: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." The primary pronouncement of this passage is that "all things work together for good to them that love God [a reference to those who are saved], to them who are the called according to his purpose." This entire program centers in His *purpose*, which began with predestination and foreknowledge acting in their combined effectiveness. That this intent which was foreseen and predetermined might be achieved, He calls, He justifies, and He glorifies. This purpose is for each individual who is saved. If it is inquired whether the individual must believe by the action of his own will, it will be remembered that the divine call consists in the moving of the human will—not by coercion, but by persuasion—and that, by so much, the only human responsibility—believing, which is of measureless importance—is guaranteed.

All that God has purposed in behalf of those who are saved He has promised in unconditional covenant and His

covenant cannot be broken, else the holy character of God is defamed. Would any pious individual assert that God might promise and not fulfill? Yet He has, by the very revelation of His sovereign intent, promised complete preservation of those who are saved at all. He does not hesitate to include the element of human faith in this great undertaking. When it is thus included, it is not the introduction of an uncertainty, as it is easily supposed. There is no uncertainty whatever where He is the Author of faith. When God says He will save those who believe, it is understood from other Scriptures that His elect, under the persuasion which cannot fail, will believe.

God's ability to make unconditional covenants in the outworking of His sovereign purpose is demonstrated in the covenants made with Abraham and David. The only responsibility in either of these covenants is contained in the sovereign "I will" of Jehovah. Both covenants reach on for their fulfillment to future ages. Because of their duration, if for no other reason, these covenants could not rest on the faithfulness of either of the men involved. The span of their lives scarcely marked the beginning of the realization of all that God promised in these covenants. It is of peculiar interest to note that in the case of David—and this may be perplexing to Arminians—God declared that the sins of David's sons, through whom the covenant was to be perpetuated, would not in any case abrogate the covenant; besides it should also be observed, Jehovah reserved the right to chastise those in David's line who offended (2 Sam. 7:8-16; Ps. 89:20-37).

The word *promise* as employed by the Apostle Paul (cf. Rom. 4:13-14, 16, 20; Gal. 3:17-19, 22, 29; 4:23, 28) though much neglected in doctrinal study, represents precisely the form of unconditional promise which God made to Abraham—not the promise of the same thing, but that which in each case is unconditional and therefore an expression of divine sovereignty. The promise made to the believer of this age is not only concerning different objectives, but reaches out to realms unrevealed to Abraham. God did not covenant with

Abraham that He would present Abraham faultless before the presence of His glory (Jude 1:24); nor did He promise that Abraham would be accepted in the Beloved (Eph. 1:6). Under present relationships, the word *promise* represents all that God in sovereign grace designs for the believer. Abraham is the divinely determined pattern of salvation by promise (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3, 20-25); but the scope of the promise now is widely different in the case of the believer as compared to that which was addressed to Abraham. The force of this divinely revealed principle to make a sovereign covenant of promise and to execute it apart from every human condition is seen in Romans 4:16, where it is written: "It is of faith [nothing on man's part], that it might be by grace [everything on God's part], to the end the promise might be sure." If the end in view depended at any point on human resources or factors, the promise could not be *sure*; but, being an unconditional, sovereign work of God, the result is as sure as the existence of the eternal God. Similarly, in Galatians 3:22 it is written that "the scripture hath concluded all [Jew and Gentile alike] under sin," which means that God accepts no merit from man which might be credited to his account in his salvation. This is so in order that "the promise," which is realized by faith in Jesus Christ, "might be given to them that believe"—meaning, who do no more than to believe. The Apostle is careful to point out that, in the case of Abraham, he was declared righteous by believing. It could not be because of law observance, since the law was not given until five hundred years later; nor could it have been merited by circumcision, since Abraham was not then circumcised (Rom. 4:9-16). Thus the grace-promise with all it includes is addressed to the believer apart from the merit system which the law would impose, and apart from all ceremonials. It is the sovereign purpose of the sovereign God, which is accomplished to infinite perfection through sovereign grace on the sole condition of faith in Christ as Savior.

The Arminian insists that human merit is essential for safekeeping and by so much he denies that the eternal purpose in salvation is to be accomplished by unconditional

sovereign grace. To him the promise is not sure, and he denies that God has concluded all under sin for the very intent that the human element should be dismissed forever. This Arminian misrepresentation is not an insignificant matter. The gospel he preaches is perilously near being "another gospel," that which merits the unrevoked anathema of Galatians 1:8-9.

The unconditional divine covenant of promise is the substance of a vast body of Scripture. It enters into every passage in which salvation and safekeeping are made to depend upon faith in Christ. The following texts will serve as illustration: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16); "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); "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37); "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand" (John 10:28); "Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:30).

2. THE FATHER'S INFINITE POWER SET FREE. The problem related to the exercise of divine power in the safekeeping of the believer is more complex than it would be were there no moral features involved. Granting that God is omnipotent, and to this all pious souls will agree, it would not be difficult to imagine a situation in which God could preserve an individual Christian by His arbitrary domination, or a situation in which He could surround the believer with influences which would safeguard him throughout his days; but Christians sin and are imperfect, which fact introduces a moral problem when their safekeeping is considered. Without doubt, it is this moral problem which is the formidable obstacle to security in the Arminian's mind. This issue will

be discussed more fully sometime later. The Arminian readily discloses his mind when asked the direct question, What would serve to unsave the Christian? His answer, of course, is *sin*—but not minor sins, such as all believers commit, else no Christian would endure at all and they evidently do endure; even Christians of the Arminian faith endure to some extent, and some do reach heaven at last. No Arminian would contend that those of their number who reach heaven do so on the basis of a sinless life. The contention is, rather, that those thus favored did not commit sins sufficiently wicked to unsave them. By so much, as all will admit, a rationalistic and unscriptural claim is introduced which distinguishes between big sins and little sins. Yet even more daring in its unbelief is the obvious confession involved, which asserts that sin may unsave after Christ has borne it. The Scriptures declare that Christ by His death became the propitiation for *our* sins (1 John 2:2), which certainly means that the believer's sins, in contrast to "the sins of the whole world," have had their specific and perfect judgment wrought out by Christ in His death—a judgment so perfect that the Father is rendered infinitely propitious by it. It would seem unnecessary to state here the qualifying truth that, though the Christian's sin does not surpass the propitiation which is originated to disannul its power, it does carry with it other penalties, and not the least of these is chastisement by the Father should the sinning Christian continue to sin without repentance and confession (1 Cor. 11:31-32).

The special point which this division of this theme aims to establish is that God the Father not only is able because of omnipotence to keep His own, but that He is set *free* through the death of His Son to keep them, in spite of the moral problem which the imperfection of each Christian engenders. The New Testament bears abundant testimony to the unrestrained ability of God to keep those whom He has saved through Christ. It is written: "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 10:29); "and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform"

(Rom. 4:21); "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? . . . For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:31, 38-39); "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand" (Rom. 14:4); "Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Eph. 3:20); "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself" (Phil. 3:21); "For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim. 1:12); "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them" (Heb. 7:25); "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy" (Jude 1:24). To all this may be added the specific disclosure of Ephesians 1:19-21, wherein it is revealed that the very power which wrought in Christ to raise Him from the dead—the supreme power—is "to usward." Who, indeed, is able to estimate the advantage to the child of God of that immeasurable power?

To maintain his position, the Arminian must insert his own unwarranted qualifications into each of these divine declarations and must deny that God's power is free to act in the preservation of believers. The Arminian denial of the revelation that God is propitious toward the believer's sins is equivalent to the denial of all that enters into the doctrine of sovereign grace.

3. THE INFINITE LOVE OF GOD. That which actuated God from all eternity in His elective choice of those whom He

would bring into glory was His love for them. If, as many scholars believe, the words *in love*, which in the Authorized Version are at the end of Ephesians 1:4, are to be made the opening words of that which follows, a flood of light falls on this important revelation respecting the motive of God. Under this arrangement, the passage would read and probably should read, "in love having predestinated us." Love is one of the attributes of God. "God is love," which means that He has never acquired love. He does not maintain it by any effort whatsoever, nor does His love depend upon conditions; for He is the Author of all conditions. God loved before any being was created, and at a time—if time it be—when there was no other than His own triune Being. He loved Himself supremely, but upon a plane far above that of mere self-complacency. His love is as eternal and unchangeable as His own existence, and it was in that incomprehensible past that He also loved the beings He would yet create. Though expressed supremely by the death of Christ at a moment in time, and though seen in the preservation of, and providence over, His redeemed, His is a love of the dateless past and its continuation is as immutable as the predestination it devises. Yes, predestination is, so far from being a hard and awful predetermination of God, in reality the supreme undertaking and satisfaction of His infinite compassion.

At an earlier point in this thesis, attention has been called to the truth that salvation springs not from the misery of men which God in mercy might choose to relieve, but it springs from the love God has for His creatures, which love can be satisfied by nothing short of their conformity to Christ in His eternal presence. It is this unchangeable endearment that the student of doctrine must contemplate and in the light of it he must form his conclusions. In this contemplation, it will not do to invest the divine compassion with the fitfulness and capriciousness which characterize human love, as though God loved His creatures when they were good, but withdrew His love when they were wrong. The fact is, though incomprehensible, that God loved men enough to give His Son to die for them even when they were enemies and sin-

ners (Rom. 5:7-10). He was not merely shocked by their unworthiness enough to provide some relief; He actually died for them in the Person of His Son. It is in this connection—and at Roman 5—that the words “much more” occur twice and when contrasting the outworking of the love of God for the unsaved with the outworking of the love of God for the saved. It is not implied that He loves more, though the individual saved by His grace is more lovable than when unregenerate; it is rather that the opportunity has been made, through salvation, for His love to have a much more manifestation in those who are saved. “Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled, we shall be saved by his life” (Rom. 5:9-10). The preservation declared in the end of this passage is not due to the indwelling Christ, which is eternal life (Col. 1:27), but is due to the essential fact of Christ’s own life and all that He, the resurrected Son of God, is to the believer.

If this truth respecting the immeasurable and immutable love of God for believers is recognized, it will be seen that, because of this unalterable motive, God will conclude perfectly what He has begun—that which He predestinated with infinite certainty. Love removed every barrier that sin erected and love will keep, by a much more manifestation even than that exhibited at Calvary, all whom He hath chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world.

Little place, indeed, does the Arminian make in his system for this unalterable, undefeatable love of God for those whom He has saved. To deny this love its full manifestation and satisfaction, as it is disclosed by God Himself, is to attempt to impair, if not to deny, the essential reality of one of God’s most glorious attributes.

4. THE INFLUENCE ON THE FATHER OF THE PRAYER OF HIS SON. Many cognomens are used in the New Testament to designate those from among Jews and Gentiles who are saved—Christians, believers, brethren, children of God, the household of faith, the family of God, “my sheep,” a kingdom of priests, His Body, saints—and each of these, to which

others might be added, carries a specific meaning and suggests a peculiar relationship. There is, however, one title which, because of the One who used it and the circumstances under which it was employed, surpasses in hallowed exaltation all other appellations combined. The Lord Himself used it exclusively in that supreme hour when He was leaving this world and was returning to the Father—an hour when He was accounting to the Father respecting the completion of His incomparable mission to this world. The time and circumstances thus marked the climax of all that He had wrought while here in the world. Whatever term the Savior might employ at any time would be of the greatest significance, but above all and exalted to the highest heaven is that designation which He employs when He is in holy and familiar converse with His Father in heaven. At once the devout mind is aroused to its supreme attention to catch the terminology which is current in the intercourse between the Father and the Son. It is then in His High Priestly prayer that the Savior seven times refers to those who are saved as "those whom thou hast given me" (John 17:2, 6, 9, 11-12, 24). This so exalted company includes all that believe on Him throughout the age (John 17:20). This title at once suggests an event of measureless import in past ages concerning which but little may be known. It is reasonable to believe that each individual ever to be saved by the grace of God through the Savior, Jesus Christ, was in the ages past individually presented as a particular love gift from the Father to the Son; that each individual represents a thought that could never be duplicated; and that if one of these jewels should be missing from the whole company, the Lord would be deprived as only infinity could be injured by imperfections.

While referring to believers as "those whom thou hast given me," the Son brings the Father this definite petition: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (John 17:11). The prayer that they may be *one* no doubt refers to the organic unity of all believers, which is illustrated by the figure of a body and in its relation to its head. The implica-

tion is that no member shall be absent. But, more to the point, is the fact and force of the direct prayer to the Father by the Son, in which He makes request that the Father keep through His name those whom He has given to the Son. Naturally, the question arises whether this prayer of the Son will be answered. The Arminians hesitate to believe that it will be answered in the case of every believer, while the Calvinists assert that the prayer will be answered and point to the fact that no prayer by Christ has ever been unanswered, nor could it be. The request itself which this prayer presents should not be overlooked. The Son asks the Father to keep those saved whom the Father has given to the Son. If it could be demonstrated—which it cannot—that the Father has no interest of His own in these elect people, it must be observed that He, for the Son's sake, to whom nothing is denied, must employ His infinite resources to accomplish precisely what the Son has requested. It is thus that the prayer of the Son of God to the Father becomes one of the major factors in the believer's security. To deny the safekeeping of the believer is to imply that the prayer of the Son of God will not be answered.

II. THE REASONS WHICH DEPEND ON GOD THE SON

While the four reasons for the Christian's security which depend on God the Son are discussed separately in various places in the New Testament, they all appear together in one verse and as a fourfold answer to a challenging inquiry whether the child of God is secure. The passage reads: "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:34).

The question with which this passage opens is preceded by a similar inquiry—"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"—which question draws out the assuring answer, "It is God that justifieth." The argument is that if God has already justified, which is the case with everyone who believes in Jesus (cf. Rom. 3:26; 8:30), how can He lay anything to the charge of His justified one? It is in no wise the common problem of some person discovering imper-

fections or sin in another person. In such an undertaking, God, above all others, could identify the Christian's failures. He has never shut His eyes to those failures, nor does He fail to give righteous consideration to them. The believer's justification is secured on the ground of the imputed merit of the Son of God and it is legally his, being, as he is, in Christ Jesus. There could never be such a thing as a justification before God which is based upon human worthiness. On the other hand, a justification which is not subject to human merit could hardly be subject to human demerit. As in human relationships where there are ways by which an earthly father may correct his erring son without disrupting either sonship or family standing, in like manner God as Father maintains the perfect standing—even complete and eternal justification—of His child at the very moment it is necessary for Him to correct that child. The truth therefore stands that God, having justified the ungodly (Rom. 4:5), will not and cannot contradict Himself by charging them with evil, which charge amounts to the reversing of their justification. Bearing on this truth, Dean Alford quotes Chrysostom as saying: "He saith not, 'God who remitteth sins,' but which is much more, 'God who justifieth.' For when the vote of the judge himself acquits, and of such a Judge, of what weight is the accuser?" (*N.T. for English Readers*, new ed., on Rom. 8:34). The absolute equity of this arrangement must be comprehended, else the student will never understand that type of salvation which is wrought by sovereign grace and which he is appointed to preach.

The second question and the one which draws out the fourfold answer now under consideration—"Who is he that condemneth?"—is quite similar to the one which precedes it, though a different body of truth is summoned to serve as the answer. Here, as throughout the New Testament, the inquiry whether the believer is unconditionally safe forever through the provisions of infinite grace is answered in the affirmative. Concerning the complete answer to this second question, De Wette remarks: "All the great points of our redemption are ranged together, from the death of Christ to

His still enduring intercession, as reasons for negating the question above" (Alford, *loc. cit.*).

A sincere attention to this question and its fourfold answer is demanded, to the end that there may be a worthy understanding of the truth embraced in this particular theme which occupies so great a place in Soteriology. This interrogation whether the true believer will ever be condemned is both propounded and answered by the Holy Spirit. These are the words of God and not the words of a man alone. It is as though the divine Author anticipated the doctrinal confusion that was to arise and, with that in view, caused these momentous questions to be recorded with their unequivocal answers. Nevertheless, such direct questions and conclusive answers have not deterred a form of rationalistic unbelief, which poses as pious and sound, from denying the entire revelation.

The four answers to the question "Who is he that condemneth?" are here taken up separately and in their order, since they constitute the four reasons for the believer's security which belong, for their achievement, to the Son of God. These answers are: (1) Christ has died, (2) Christ is risen, (3) Christ advocates, and (4) Christ intercedes.

1. CHRIST HAS DIED. The first answer to the question "Who is he that condemneth?" is a citation of the fact that Christ has died, and properly so, since that death is a major ground for the assurance that the believer cannot be condemned. To a degree that is complete and final, Christ has Himself borne the condemnation which otherwise would fall on the Christian who has sinned. No new principle is thus introduced. It was on the basis of the efficacy of Christ's death for his sins that the believer was saved in the first place and apart from all penalty or punishment, a holy God being thus set free to pardon righteously every sin that ever was or ever will be, with respect to its power to condemn (Rom. 8:1, R.V.). It is the same divine freedom, based on the fact that Christ died for the Christian's sins (1 John 2:2), which creates the freedom of God to forgive righteously the sin—now within the sphere of fellowship with God—

of the believer who confesses that sin (1 John 1:9). The solution of the problem of the salvation of the unregenerate person and of the preservation of those who are saved is identical. This divinely wrought solution is not only equitable and legal, but it is practical and reasonable. Though Satan-blinded minds do not see this truth until they are enlightened, the fact that the Substitute has borne the penalty is the simplest of methods by which a problem, otherwise impossible of solution, may be wholly solved. Though God reserves the right to correct and chasten His child, He has never allowed an intimation to go forth by His authority, that His child would be condemned. In defense of his theological position, the Arminian must either deny that the death of Christ is a sufficient divine dealing with sin and, therefore, the believer may be disowned for the very sins which Christ bore, or he must abandon the testimony of the Bible outright and conclude that Christ did not die efficaciously for anyone. Such conclusions are the inescapable deductions from the Arminian position respecting the doctrine of substitution. Naturally, there is no intermediate ground. Either the believer must be condemned for each and every sin—which is the logical contention of Arminianism—or his sins are in no way a ground of judgment, the judgment of them having been borne by Another. There is no question about what the Bible teaches on these two propositions, nor about which one it favors.

2. CHRIST IS RISEN. The glorious truth of the resurrection of Christ becomes at once the ground on which two conclusive reasons for the security of the child of God are found to rest: (a) that the believer has partaken of the resurrection life of the Son of God, and (b) that the believer is a part of the New Creation over which the resurrected Christ is the all-sufficient Head. The latter of these two reasons will be discussed under those features of security which are the responsibility of the Holy Spirit. The former, now to be considered, is that the child of God partakes of the resurrection life of the Son of God. An exceedingly important statement of truth appears in Colossians 2 and 3. It is

to the effect that the Christian is already in the sphere of resurrection by virtue of the fact that he is in the resurrected Christ. In chapter two, the Apostle asserts directly that the Christian is raised with Christ (vs. 12). This reality is not a mere symbolism or figure; it is as real as Christ's own resurrection, in which it shares. To be "quicken" is to be made alive by the receiving of the resurrection life of Christ. The Christian has been, and is said to be even now, raised up and seated with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6). To be in the resurrected Christ and to have the resurrected Christ within, constitutes a spiritual resurrection which, as to the believer's whole being, will be completed in due time by the resurrection of the body or by its transformation in translation. With this spiritual reality in mind, the Apostle writes in Colossians 3:1-4 and in respect to the believer's daily life, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

The life which the believer receives in regeneration is the life of Christ in resurrection. That life cannot decrease or perish. It is the common claim of Arminians that, whatever eternal life may be, it can, and in many instances does, depart. Some have said that it is eternal, resurrection life while it is possessed, but that the Christian may become dispossessed of it. But that life is not a detached something which may come or go. It is a nature secured by divine generation and, like any nature which is possessed, it cannot be detached and dismissed. There seems to be a peculiar bond of relationship between two realities—"eternal life" and "shall not perish"—as these are twice used together by Christ (John 3:16; 10:28).

The denial of eternal security for the child of God—one who has received the resurrection life of Christ as an imparted nature—is to deny either the reality of this life or to deny its imperishable and abiding character.

3. CHRIST ADVOCATES. In 1 John 1:1—2:2, two important questions are answered, namely, what the effect of the Christian's sin is upon himself and what its cure, and what the effect of the Christian's sin is upon God and what its cure. In a previous section of this work this specific ministry of Christ has had a more complete consideration. At this point, however, the issue is crucial in its bearing on the security of those who are saved. Turning for the moment to the effect of the Christian's sin upon himself, it will be seen that in 1 John alone there are at least seven damaging consequences which result from that sin; yet it is not intimated that the believer will be lost again. One of these penalties is that of the loss of communion with God the Father and the Son, and the cure—far removed, indeed, from being a regeneration—is a simple confession of the sin to God from a penitent heart (1 John 1:3-9). Attention has been called before this to thirty-three divine undertakings which together constitute the salvation of a soul. Among them is the truth that all sin is forgiven. Not one of these thirty-three transformations could be claimed alone or separated from the whole, nor could thirty-two be selected with the intentional omission of one. They constitute one indivisible whole; nor is one of these subject to a second experience of reception. Even the forgiveness of sin—which is unto union with Christ and into a state where there is no condemnation—is never repeated. The Christian's forgiveness in the household and return to fellowship with the Father and the Son is quite another thing; yet it, too, is based on the same substitutionary death of Christ. The removal of the effect upon himself of the Christian's sin is, through divine grace, perfect and complete when the requisite confession is made. The provision is specific and sufficient whereby the sin is forgiven and the sinner cleansed (1 John 1:9).

On the other hand, the effect of the Christian's sin upon his holy God is most serious indeed. It is asserted with all possible emphasis that the least sin—such as believers habitually commit, as omissions and commissions—has the power in itself to hurl the believer down from his exalted position into

perdition, were it not for that which Christ has wrought. It is here that the form of rationalism which characterizes Arminianism asserts itself. Apart from revelation, it is natural to conclude that God cannot get along with one who is sinning, even though that one is His own child by regeneration; but if it is discovered that God does get on with those who are imperfect, then the problem of the security of the believer is solved in so far as the Christian's sin affects God.

The central passage, 1 John 2:1, opens with the address, "My little children," which is complete evidence that this declaration—as is true of this entire Epistle—is addressed to those who are born of God (John 1:12-13). "The things" of which the Apostle writes are doubtless the particular doctrine of forgiveness and cleansing for the Christian as revealed in chapter one, and that, also, which immediately follows in this verse, wherein the divine way of dealing with the Christian's sin is disclosed. The effect of these truths upon the believer—quite contrary to the claims of Arminians—is to deter him from sinning. The "natural" or unregenerate man who delights to sin will embrace a doctrine which lifts the penalty of sin; and at this point Arminians seem able to comprehend no more than the view of the natural man. That there are greater incentives to purity, holiness, and faithfulness than the mere dread of punishment, they fail to recognize. At least in their writings they make no mention of those higher motives. All this is largely due to the fact that they cannot, because of the very beliefs they profess, look upon themselves as accepted and sealed in Christ. Were they to see themselves in such a relation to God, reason as well as revelation would remind them of the corresponding obligation to live as an accepted and sealed person should live. So to live is the greatest motive that can actuate a human life. It far transcends in its effectiveness the mere fear of a law or punishment which, after all, everyone on every hand is disregarding.

On the antinomian charge against the Calvinists which the Arminians universally enter, Dr. Charles Hodge writes: "Antinomianism has never had any hold in the churches of

the Reformation. There is no logical connection between the neglect of moral duties, and the system which teaches that Christ is a Saviour as well from the power as from the penalty of sin; that faith is the act by which the soul receives and rests on Him for sanctification as well as for justification; and that such is the nature of the union with Christ by faith and indwelling of the Spirit, that no one is, or can be partaker of the benefit of His death, who is not also partaker of the power of His life; which holds to the divine authority of the Scripture which declares that without holiness no man shall see the Lord (Heb. xii. 14); and which, in the language of the great advocate of salvation by grace, warns all who call themselves Christians: 'Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God.' (1 Cor. vi. 9, 10.) It is not the system which regards sin as so great an evil that it requires the blood of the Son of God for its expiation, and the law as so immutable that it requires the perfect righteousness of Christ for the sinner's justification, which leads to loose views of moral obligation; these are reached by the system which teaches that the demands of the law have been lowered, that they can be more than met by the imperfect obedience of fallen men, and that sin can be pardoned by priestly intervention. This is what logic and history alike teach" (*Systematic Theology*, III, 241).

Evidently the Apostle John anticipates that the power of the truth he is disclosing will tend to a separation from sin. This is the force of the words, "that ye sin not." The phrase which follows, "if any man sin," refers to Christians exclusively. It could not include the unsaved along with the saved. It is *any man* within the Christian fellowship. A similar usage, among several in the New Testament, is found in 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 where the restricted classification is equally evident. The term *any man* corresponds numerically to the pronoun "we" which follows here immediately. The sufficient provision for the sinning Christian is indicated by

the words, "We have an advocate with the Father." The scene is set in the high court of heaven with the Father as Judge upon the throne (incidentally, it should be noted that, though the child of God has sinned, God is still his Father). A prosecuting agent is present also. The record of his activity as a prosecutor is found in Revelation 12:10, which reads: "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." If any accusing voice were needed, that need Satan himself supplies. The question "Who is he that condemneth?" easily includes in the sphere of its possibilities vastly more than the charges which one human being might prefer against another. But even the prosecution by Satan cannot avail, for there is an Advocate, a Defender. What this means every hour to the believer will never be known in this life. The truth respecting the advocacy of Christ is in view in these declarations: "who is even at the right hand of God" (Rom. 8:34) and "now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Heb. 9:24).

If inquiry be made concerning what influence the Advocate brings to bear on the Father by which the believer is cleared from condemnation, some might venture the opinion that He is making excuses; but there are no excuses. Another might suggest that He pleads with the Father for leniency; but the Father, being holy, cannot be, and therefore is not, lenient with sin. Still another might propose that this Attorney, or Advocate, is a shrewd lawyer who is able to make out a case where no case exists; but—and great is the force of it—at this very point and in connection with the specific work of delivering the sinning Christian from condemnation, the Advocate wins an exalted title which He gains for no other service, namely, *Jesus Christ the Righteous*. The claim to this unique appellation is probably twofold: (1) He presents the evidence of His own sacrifice for the sin in question—the truth that He bore it fully on the cross. Thus when the Father withholds condemnation, His ground for

doing so is *just*, since the Savior has died. It is in direct line with this aspect of the Advocate's work that this very context goes on to say: "And he is the propitiation for our sins." By the death of His Son for the Christian's sin, the Father is rendered propitious. (2) Christ is made unto the believer *righteousness* (1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:21), and He, as the Source of this imputed righteousness, is the One by whom the Christian is saved and in whom he stands forever.

It is evident that, while paternal discipline will be exercised by the Father over His erring child according to His good pleasure (Heb. 12:3-15), that child will not be condemned, since Christ who bore the Christian's sin appears in heaven for him and Christ is the very righteousness in which the Christian is accepted before God.

4. CHRIST INTERCEDES. Among the neglected doctrines—and there are many—is that which brings into view the present intercession of Christ in behalf of all that are saved. The very fact that He thus intercedes implies the danger which besets the believer in this the enemy's land, and the necessity of Christ's prayer in his behalf. The strange inattention which obtains with regard to this ministry of Christ may be due to various causes and none, it is probable, more than the influence and power of Satan, who would rob the believer of the advantage and comfort which this intercession secures. As a practical experience, believers are without the knowledge of this intercession in their behalf and therefore deprived of the help and strength which this knowledge affords. The neglect cannot be attributed to the lack of revelation, for it stands out with more than usual clearness on the Sacred Page. Four major passages appear, and these should be given careful attention. It will be seen that the divine purpose in Christ's intercession, as exhibited in these passages, is the security of all those for whom He intercedes.

John 17:1-26. A quotation, or reproduction, of the text of this supreme chapter is uncalled for. The passage embodies the prayer of Christ and the reasonable conclusion is that it is the norm or pattern of that prayer which Christ continues to pray in heaven. If it were fitting for Him to inter-

cede for His own who were then in the *cosmos* world, it is fitting that He shall pray for those who are now in the *cosmos* world. In this prayer His solicitude for all who are in the *cosmos* world is most apparent, so, also, His dependence upon the Father to keep them from the evil one. As before indicated, the request of the Son in behalf of the safekeeping of those who are saved, can be refused by the Father only on the supposition that Christ's prayer might not be answered; or that it is beyond the power of Infinity, even though the Father is released from all moral restraint by the death of Christ for sin. The latter position—that to preserve the believer is beyond the power of God even when the sin question is eliminated—Arminians have not hesitated to assume. Nevertheless, the Savior ceases not to intercede in behalf of those He has saved and to the end that they may be preserved forever.

Romans 8:34. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

In this Scripture it is declared that there is no condemnation for the child of God because of the truth, among others already considered, that the Savior "maketh intercession for us." On the divine side of the problem of the eternal security of the Christian, there is evidently a definite dependence upon the prayer of the Son of God.

Luke 22:31-34. "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: but I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me."

While this is the record of Christ's prayer for but one man and that man the one who was to deny his Lord, it is reasonable to assume that Christ sustains this same solicitude and care over each individual believer. Doubtless He could say to every believer many times in the day, "I have prayed

for thee." The petition which Christ presented for Peter was secured. He prayed that Peter's faith should not fail, and it did not fail, though through all this experience Peter manifested the traits of a believer who is out of communion with his Lord. There is no intimation that Peter became unsaved, or that he was saved a second time. The doctrine respecting the believer's restoration to fellowship with God—confused by Arminians with salvation—is that which Peter illustrates. And finally,

Hebrews 7:23-25. "And they truly were many priests, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death: but this man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

No more direct and unqualified declaration respecting the eternal security of the believer than this is recorded in the New Testament, and that security is here made to depend wholly on the intercession of Christ; that is, the believer is said to be secure in the most absolute sense because Christ prays for him—else language ceases to be a dependable medium for the conveying of thought.

In His priesthood over believers, Christ differs widely from the priests of the old order and in the one particular especially: that as they were subject to death and by death their ministry was interrupted, Christ's priesthood is interminable. He hath an immutable, or unchangeable, priesthood, and that corresponds to the equally important truth that He liveth forever. "Wherefore?" Because He liveth forever and, on that account, His ministry as Priest has no end. He is able to save the Christian (some say "to completeness" and others say "evermore" or "eternally": εἰς τὸ παντελές will sustain both conceptions; for that which is saved unto completeness is saved without end)—all those that come unto God by Him; that is, those that trust in the Savior. This certitude is based on the enduring Savior's interminable ability as Priest to bring to pass eternal security. The assertion is unqualified and the unequivocal divine guarantee is

made to depend directly and only, so far as this passage is concerned, upon the prevailing power of Christ's intercession. Such is efficacious power, and the infinite reality of it cannot be comprehended by the mind of man; indeed, to deny its supreme potency, as all do who disbelieve in the absolute security of the child of God, is to enter the sphere of unwarranted assumption.

The intercession of Christ, it is well to observe, is more than the mere exercise of prayer. Christ is a Shepherd and Bishop to those whom He saves. He guides His own away from the pitfalls and snares of Satan. The Christian could never know in this life what he owes to the interceding Shepherd who sustains him every hour of his life. David caught the same assuring confidence concerning his own relation to Jehovah when he said, "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Ps. 23:1). David did not testify merely that he had not wanted anything up to that moment, but he boldly declares that his future is as certain as the Shepherdhood of Jehovah could make it.

Returning for the moment to the one text (Rom. 8:34) into which all four reasons for the believer's security which depend on God the Son are compressed, it may be restated that, by His substitutionary death, Christ provides the Father with righteous freedom to undertake eternal blessedness for those who believe. By His resurrection Christ provides the Christian with imperishable resurrection life. By His advocacy He meets the condemning effect of the believer's every sin as that sin is seen by God in heaven. And by His intercession He engages the infinite power of God—including His own Shepherdhood—in behalf of those who believe. Every step in this incomprehensible service of the Savior is in itself wholly sufficient to achieve the end in view; yet every step is challenged and disowned by Arminian rationalism.

What the Savior undertakes—especially as Advocate and Intercessor—is at His own appointment. He saves and keeps simply because of the truth that His salvation is by its very nature eternal. It follows, then, that He should never be

implored to advocate or intercede, though unceasing thanksgiving should ascend to Him for these accomplishments.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES BELONGING TO GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

Much, indeed, is directly undertaken by the Holy Spirit to the end that the child of God shall be safe forever. Under the present divine arrangement, He is the Executor of very much that the Godhead undertakes; however, as in the case of the Father and the Son, four distinctive achievements are wrought by the Third Person and these demand recognition.

1. THE HOLY SPIRIT REGENERATES. The widespread Arminian emphasis upon human merit has tended to obscure one of the primary realities of a true Christian, which reality is secured, not by merit, but by divine grace, in answer to saving belief in Christ. That reality is that the believer is regenerated and thus is introduced into a new estate, a new existence, a new relationship which is well defined as a new creation. In 2 Corinthians 5:17 it is written: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." The Apostle likewise declares that "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:10). This passage reveals the truth that, as a result of the divine workmanship, the Christian is no less than a divine creation—a form of being which did not exist before. That new being is said to partake of the "divine nature," which implies that it is as enduring as the eternal God. Similarly, the same Apostle writes: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature" (Gal. 6:15). Upon this specific aspect of the truth the Lord placed the greatest emphasis when speaking to Nicodemus. It is significant that, when declaring the necessity of the birth from above, Christ did not select a dissolute character, but He chose one who ranked highest in Judaism and whose character was beyond reproach. It was a personal message when He said to Nicodemus, "You must be born again," and the universally acknowledged mystery of it must not be suffered to detract from either the reality or the necessity of that divine regeneration. In the instance of human generation, a being origi-

nates who did not exist before and who will go on forever. Likewise, in spiritual regeneration a being originates which was not identified as such before and this being will go on forever. By what law of reasoning can it be assured that eternal existence belongs to a form of existence which outwardly seems to be temporal, and not to that form of existence which because of its source and essential character is not temporal but eternal? An earthly parent imparts a nature to his child by human generation, and that nature is immutable. Thus, and to a degree which is far more exalted, the Holy Spirit forms a new creation which is immutable. An earthly father might disinherit and utterly abandon his son, but he cannot stop the son from resembling himself, and the reason is obvious.

The Arminian's difficulty is initial. To him salvation itself is no more than a state of mind, a good intention, a resolution, or an outward manner of life. Such passing or transient verities as these are far removed from that inviolable, divine creation which Christ pressed upon Nicodemus and that which is presented in every New Testament reference to this theme. It may be safely asserted that regeneration, as presented in the Scriptures, is an enduring actuality and the one who questions the eternal continuation of the child of God, questions the process (and its result) by which he becomes a child of God. When God is declared to be the Father of all who believe, reference is not made to a faint moral resemblance which a good life might suggest; it is a reference to legitimate Fatherhood and legitimate sonship grounded on an actual regeneration by the Holy Spirit.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT INDWELLS. Closely akin to the truth respecting the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is the fact that He indwells every true child of God. Besides, there is a distinct and extended testimony of the Scriptures to the specific truth of the Spirit's indwelling. The more complete induction bearing on this theme will appear under Pneumatology. Out of a formidable list of passages bearing on this particular theme, one declares specifically that the Spirit who indwells abides forever. This passage records the words of

Christ and reports His prayer respecting the coming of the Holy Spirit into the world. These are the words of the Savior, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:16-17). Thus the assurance is given that the Holy Spirit indwells the believer and that His presence is abiding. He may be grieved; but He will not be grieved away. He may be quenched—which carries the thought of resisting—but He cannot be extinguished. He never leaves the Christian, else the word of Christ is untrue and His prayer is unanswered. The Apostle writes, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9). This great declaration is not a warning to the believer that he might lose the Spirit and be unsaved again; it is a direct statement to the effect that, if the Spirit is not present in the heart, that one has never been saved. The Apostle John points out (1 John 2:27) that the Spirit is identified among other characteristics of His presence within, as the One who *abides*. This determining Scripture reads: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

Again, the Arminian position can be sustained only by a denial of the truth set forth in those notable Scriptures which not only aver that the Spirit indwells each believer, but that He abides forever.

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT BAPTIZES. Not many New Testament doctrines are more misunderstood than that of the Spirit's baptism; and few misunderstandings could be more misleading than this, for on the right apprehension of that which is involved in this divine undertaking the believer's discernment of his possessions and positions depends, and the knowledge of these constitutes the true incentive for a God-honoring daily life. The fuller meaning of this ministry

of the Spirit and its importance as the foundation of other doctrines must be reserved for a later time. As a ground upon which the certainty of eternal security rests, the baptism of the Spirit should be recognized as that operation by which the individual believer is brought into organic union with Christ. By the Spirit's regeneration Christ is resident in the believer, and by the Spirit's baptism the believer is thus in Christ. This union is illustrated in the Word of God by various figures—notably, by that of the members of a body in their relation to the head. This union is also said to be a New Creation humanity in its relation to the new and unfallen Last Adam, Christ Jesus. It would be enough to point out here that the glorious Body of Christ will not be marred or maimed because of amputated members, and that there will be no fall in the Last Adam; but the members of Christ's Body are constituted what they are on the sole basis of the truth that the merit of Christ is their standing, which merit is neither withdrawn nor does it fail in its potentiality. Likewise, the New Creation Headship guarantees the same perfect standing. Were it not for the fact that minds seem to be darkened on this point, it would be unnecessary to restate the obvious truth that God undertakes, along wholly different and adequate grounds, to govern in the matter of irregularities which appear in the Christian's life, and quite apart from holding over them the threat that an impossible separation from the New Creation Headship will follow should so much as one sin be committed. It would be simple, indeed, to devise a scheme by which sinless, unfallen human beings may reach heaven on the basis of their own worthiness; but God is undertaking to bring sinful, fallen beings into glory, and the plan He has devised, of necessity, can take no account either of human merit or demerit. Immeasurable grace is manifested in the provision of a righteous way by which fallen men may be translated from a ruined estate to a new creation; but, after one is translated, there is no passing back and forth from one estate to the other as changing merit or demerit might seem to require.

Let it be restated that, by that baptism which the Spirit

accomplishes, the believer is vitally joined to the Lord. Being in Christ, he is partaker of the righteousness of God which Christ is. He is thus perfected to that point which satisfies infinite holiness, and on that ground and on no other God declares him justified in His own sight. Though He may discipline the justified one, God, having justified, cannot consistently lay anything to the charge of His elect (Rom. 8:33).

To the Arminian, salvation is no more than an indefinite divine blessing upon a life that is worthy of it, which blessing endures as long as personal worthiness continues. To the Calvinist, salvation is a divine achievement which is unrelated to human merit, which secures the forgiveness of sin, the gift of eternal life, imputed righteousness, justification, acceptance and standing in Christ, and final conformity to Christ in eternal glory.

4. THE HOLY SPIRIT SEALS. The last of the twelve reasons why the believer is secure, to be named in this connection, is that he is sealed by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit indwelling as an anointing is Himself the Seal. His presence in the Christian indicates a finished transaction, divine ownership, and eternal security. The believer is a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:19) and, though woefully unrecognized and unappreciated by the best of men, that fact of indwelling is, apparently, a most distinguishing reality in the reckoning of God. It is an age-characterizing fact (Rom. 7:6; 2 Cor. 3:6). Three references to the Spirit's sealing are found in the New Testament. (1) *2 Corinthians 1:21-22*: "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." Every one of the four parts in this passage speaks of security, and the truth is asserted that the presence of the Spirit in the believer's heart is a foretaste of the knowledge-surpassing experience of divine blessing yet to be enjoyed in glory. The passage breathes no intimation of uncertainty either about present blessings or about a future consummation. (2) *Ephesians 1:13-14*: "in whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were

sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." More correctly the passage begins, "upon believing, ye were sealed," etc. (cf. R.V.). Here, again, the thought of the earnest, which the presence of the Spirit is, appears and it is made clear that the blessings which the present relation to the Spirit secures are but an indication of the glory yet to be. As the Spirit is an earnest of the future inheritance, He is also the "first-fruits" of it (Rom. 8:23). (3) *Ephesians 4:30*: "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." This signal passage declares that the believer is sealed unto the day of redemption. The redemption to which reference is made is its final aspect when the body is changed so as to become like unto the body of Christ (Rom. 8:23), and the sealed one is complete forever—even conformed to the image of Christ in glory. Like every other declaration respecting security, this one presents no human condition, but is set forth as a work of God, and on a basis so righteous and so independent of human cooperation that no human responsibility could be included as a factor in this sublime outworking of grace through Christ.

In concluding this division of this treatment of the doctrine of security, it may be restated that, of these twelve major reasons why the true believer is safe, any one of them would suffice to end all doubt and terminate all controversy for the individual who gives unprejudiced attention to the Word of God. These reasons cover an incomprehensible range of truth Arminianism does not enter; for that system, if consistent with itself, must deny every one of these twelve reasons, or else vitiate them by writing into them the human element which God, of necessity and for His own glory, has left out. Some among the Arminians may not comprehend this body of immeasurable truth; others may prefer to avoid assuming an attitude of bold rejection of these portions of the New Testament. At any rate and for whatever reason, the Arminian does not attempt even a feeble exposition of what are well classed as security passages.