

## DIFFICULTIES.

There are some very dark and strange things in the Bible--things which to many seem irreconcilable with the character of justice and love which we ascribe to our Heavenly Father. "God is love," and "by the grace of God Christ tasted death for every man." "He is the propitiation for our sins, and also for the sins of the whole world."

Why then did Christ say to his disciples: "Go not in the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not," &c. [Matt. 10:5](#). Again, He always spake to the multitude in parables, and *explained* them to the disciples. Because "Unto you it is *given* to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, but to them that are without all these things are done in parables, lest they should see, hear, understand: be converted and their sins should be forgiven them." [Mark 4:11,12](#).

Perhaps you would rather not look at such facts my Arminian brother. Here is election with a certainty. I can remember when I wished such statements were not in the Bible. But facts cannot be set aside by shutting our eyes, and we must face them. If we can not harmonize these statements with our theories, as the Bible is true, our *theories must be false*. If Christ had *wanted* the multitudes to be converted by his preaching, He would have preached to them so they would have *understood* him. The same text implicitly teaches the necessity of understanding the truth in order to be converted. He says he spoke in parables so they would not understand and be converted. Now who can believe for a moment that these multitudes were to be eternally lost because Christ, the loving Son of the God of love, *withheld* the bread of life from them? Do you wonder, my Christian brother, in view of popular teaching, that the church and world are flooded with infidels? I say here is election, and my Calvinistic brother rejoices in the confirmation of his theory.

But *why* did the Lord choose a few? If I have no right to ask such a question the Lord will not answer me, but He speaks in words of explanation. They are "called according to His *purpose*." [Rom. 8:14-28](#). But has He *revealed* His purpose? Do not think that because He chooses only a few for a "purpose" that [R25 : page 6] He means to torment or destroy eternally all the rest. Among the "little flock" chosen are no irresponsible persons incapable of believing, for the word says: "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through *sanctification of the Spirit* and *belief of the truth*." [2 Thess. 2:13](#). And yet it is nowhere taught that any but responsible, guilty rebels will be lost eternally.

Remember the few are not called merely because He purposed to call them, but He calls them for a purpose. Like a wise mechanic who makes an implement, He has an *object* in view; there is a *use* to which it has reference; and that object controlled the original choice. We freely affirm that the principle underlying the choice of God is: The few are chosen for the *good of the many*. Christ himself is chosen of God, and precious," ([1 Pet. 2:4](#)) and all admit that He is "anointed" and "exalted to be a *Prince* and a *Savior*." In him the fullness of *blessing* dwells. To the twelve He said: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and *bring forth fruit*." [John 15:16](#). The Jewish "remnant," the "sheep" that heard and knew "his voice" and were his "according to the election of grace," ([Rom. 11:5](#)) were in fact the nucleus around which the gospel church was afterward gathered, and it was proved that "*Salvation* is of the Jews." [John 4:22](#).

Paul was chosen of the Lord "to bear his name before the Gentiles," ([Acts 9:15](#)) and to be for *salvation* to the ends of the earth.

All the chosen--even the whole church --are chosen in Him, and consequently with reference to the same object--the blessing of others.

If any one thinks God has chosen him and given him light and salvation for his *own sake* merely, he greatly mistakes his calling. If God gives light it is that it may *shine* that *others* may see and be blest. What is true individually is true also of the church collectively and dispensationally. The *purpose* for which the church is called is revealed both directly and indirectly in the New Testament. "Then shall the righteous *shine forth* as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father." ([Matt. 13:43](#).) To *shine* now and then, can mean no less than to *give light*. And if the church *give*, the nations *receive*, and "walk in the light of it." [Rev. 21:24](#). "It is more blessed to give than to receive." The church are predestinated to a *work*--"the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself." ([Eph. 1:5](#).) Christ the Father and the church the mother of the family of children by the laws of spiritual regeneration. We are well aware that this text gives no such idea to the most of readers; but the fact that elsewhere Christ and the church are said to be related to each other as husband and wife gives good ground for the application. The great work is called the "mystery of His will" made known to us, "which He hath *purposed* in Himself." "That in the *dispensation* of the fullness of times He might gather together in one all things in Christ." (*vs. 9,10*.) The object of God in raising up the body of Christ to the level of the Head is expressly stated to be: "That in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of his grace." [Eph. 2:7](#).

In view of the *purpose* for which we are chosen, the doctrine of election is a glorious doctrine, and our calling is well named "the *high calling* of God in Christ Jesus." [Phil. 3:14](#). Oh! that all Christians might have "the eyes of their understanding enlightened," that they might "know what is the hope of his calling." ([Eph. 1:18](#).) They would not *grovel* here any longer, nor their souls go *heavily* in the heavenly journey. They need no longer be afraid to look at the supposed "difficulties," nor wish such passages were not in the Bible. They are parts of a great system of truth which would be *marred without them*. God is a God of order. The plan of salvation is under the laws of order. As in the natural, so in the spiritual family. Christ the second Adam, both husband and father is developed first. Next in order comes the church as both wife and mother. And after the marriage, which takes place at the Second Advent, the whole family of man will be regenerated (excepting willful rejectors). This view explains why He did not and does not call all at once. We vindicate the plan of God as revealed, by showing that it is in harmony with itself, and is a grand proof, when complete, of the fundamental statement of the Bible--"God is Love." J. H. P.

=====