

What Saith the Scripture?

<http://www.WhatSaithTheScripture.com/>

God's Love for A Sinning World

by Charles Grandison Finney
President of Oberlin College

from "The Oberlin Evangelist" Publication of Oberlin College

Lecture V
June 22, 1853

Public Domain Text
Reformatted by Katie Stewart

Text.--John 3:16: "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."

Sin is the most expensive thing in the universe. Nothing else can cost so much. Pardoned or unpardoned, its cost is infinitely great. Pardoned, the cost falls chiefly on the great atoning substitute; unpardoned, it must fall on the head of the guilty sinner.

The existence of sin is a fact everywhere experienced -- everywhere observed. There is sin in our race, everywhere, and in awful aggravation.

Sin is the violation of an infinitely important law, -- a law designed and adapted to secure the highest good of the universe. Obedience to this law is naturally essential to the good of creatures. Without obedience there could be no blessedness even in heaven.

As sin is a violation of a most important law, it cannot be treated lightly. No government can afford to treat disobedience as a trifle, inasmuch as everything -- the entire welfare of the government and of all the governed--turns upon obedience. Just in proportion to the value of the interests at stake is the necessity of guarding law and of punishing disobedience.

The law of God must not be dishonoured by anything He shall do. It has been dishonoured by the disobedience of man; hence the more need that God should stand by it, to retrieve its honour. The utmost dishonor is done to law by disowning, disobeying, and despising it. All this, sinning man has done. Hence, this law being not only good but intrinsically necessary to the happiness of the governed, it becomes of all things most necessary that the law-giver should vindicate his law. He must by all means do it.

Hence sin has involved God's government in a vast expense. Either the law must be executed at the expense of the well being of the whole race, or God must submit to suffer the worst results of disrespect to His law--results which in some form must involve a vast expense.

Take for example any human government. Suppose the righteous and necessary laws which it imposes are disowned and dishonoured. In such a case the violated law must be honoured by the execution of its penalty, or something else not less expensive, and probably much more so, must be endured. Transgression must cost happiness, somewhere, and in vast amount.

In the case of God's government it has been deemed advisable to provide a substitute, one that should answer the purpose of saving the sinner, and yet of honouring the law. This being determined on, the next great question was--How shall the expense be met?

The Bible informs us how the question was in fact decided. By a voluntary conscription--shall I call it,--or donation? Call it as we may, it was a voluntary offering. Who shall head the subscription? Who shall begin where so much is to be raised? Who will make the first sacrifice? Who will take the first step in a project so vast? The Bible informs us. It began with the Infinite Father. He made the first great donation. He gave his only begotten Son--this to begin with--and having given him first, He freely gives all else that the exigencies of the case can require. First, He gave his Son to make the atonement due to law; then gave and sent his Holy Spirit to take charge of this work. The Son on his part consented to stand as the representative of sinners that he might honor the law, by suffering in their stead. He poured out his blood, made a whole life of suffering a free donation on the altar--withheld not his face from spitting, nor his back from stripes--shrunk not from the utmost contumely that wicked men could heap on him. So the Holy Ghost also devotes himself to most self-denying efforts unceasingly, to accomplish the great object.

It would have been a very short method to have turned over his hand upon the wicked of our race, and sent them all down quick to hell, as once He did when certain angels "kept not their first estate." Rebellion broke out in heaven. Not long did God bear it, around his lofty throne. But in [the] case of man he changed his course--did not send them all to hell, but devised a vast scheme of measures, involving most amazing self-denials and self-sacrifices, to gain men's souls back to obedience and heaven.

For whom was this great donation made? "God so loved the World," meaning the whole race of men. By the "world" in this connection cannot be meant any particular part only, but the whole race. Not only the Bible, but the nature of the case shows that the atonement must have been made for the whole world. For plainly if it had not been made for the entire race, no man of the race could ever know that it was made for himself, and therefore not a man could believe on Christ in the sense of receiving by faith the blessings of the atonement. There being an utter uncertainty as to the persons embraced in the limited provisions which we now suppose to be made, the entire donation must fail through the impossibility of rational faith for its reception. Suppose a will is made by a rich man bequeathing certain property to certain unknown persons, described only by the name of "the elect." They are not described otherwise than by this term, and all agree that although the maker of the will had the individuals definitely in his mind, yet that he left no description of them which either the persons themselves, the courts, nor any living mortal can understand. Now such a will is of necessity altogether null and void. No living man can claim under such a will, and none the better though these elect were described as residents of Oberlin. Since it does not embrace all the residents of Oberlin, and does not define which of them, all is lost. All having an equal claim and none any definite claim, none can inherit. If the atonement were made in this way, no living man would have any valid reason

for believing himself one of the elect, prior to his reception of the Gospel. Hence he would have no authority to believe and receive its blessings by faith. In fact the atonement must be wholly void--on this supposition--unless a special revelation is made to the persons for whom it is intended.

As the case is, however, the very fact that a man belongs to the race of Adam--the fact that he is human, born of woman, is all-sufficient. It brings him within the pale. He is one of the world for whom God gave his Son, that whosoever would believe in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.

The subjective motive in the mind of God for this great gift was love, love to the world. God so loved the world that he gave his Son to die for it. God loved the universe also, but this gift of his Son sprang from love to our world. True in this great act he took pains to provide for the interests of the universe. He was careful to do nothing that could in the least let down the sacredness of his law. Most carefully did he intend to guard against misapprehension as to his regard for his law and for the high interests of obedience and happiness in his moral universe. He meant once for all to preclude the danger lest any moral agent should be tempted to undervalue the moral law.

Yet farther, it was not only from love to souls, but from respect to the spirit of the law of his own eternal reason, that he gave up his Son to die. In this the purpose to give up his Son originated. The law of his own reason must be honoured and held sacred. He may do nothing inconsistent with its spirit. He must do everything possible to prevent the commission of sin and to secure the confidence and love of his subjects. So sacred did he hold these great objects that he would baptize his Son in his own blood, sooner than peril the good of the universe. Beyond a question it was love and regard for the highest good of the universe that led Him to sacrifice his own beloved Son.

Let us next consider attentively the nature of this love. The text lays special stress on this--God so loved--his love was of such a nature, so wonderful and so peculiar in its character, that it led Him to give up his only Son to die. More is evidently implied in this expression than simply its greatness. It is most peculiar in its character. Unless we understand this, we shall be in danger of falling into the strange mistake of the Universalists, who are forever talking about God's love for sinners, but whose notions of the nature of this love never lead to repentance or to holiness. They seem to think of this love as simply good nature, and conceive of God only as a very good-natured being, whom nobody need to fear.-- Such notions have not the least influence towards holiness, but the very opposite. It is only when we come to understand what this love is in its nature that we feel its moral power promoting holiness.

It may be reasonably asked, If God so loved the world with a love characterized by greatness and by greatness only,-- why did He not save all the world without sacrificing his Son? This question suffices to show us that there is deep meaning in this word so, and should put us upon a careful study of this meaning.

1. This love in its nature is not complacency--a delight in the character of the race. This could not be, for there was nothing amiable in their character. For God to have loved such a race complacently would have been infinitely disgraceful to himself.
2. It was not a mere emotion or feeling. It was not a blind impulse, though many seem to

suppose it was. It seems to be often supposed that God acted as men do when they are borne away by strong emotion. But there could be no virtue in this. A man might give away all he is worth under such a blind impulse of feeling and be none the more virtuous. But in saying this we do not exclude all emotion from the love of benevolence, nor from God's love for a lost world. He had emotion, but not emotion only. Indeed the Bible everywhere teaches us that God's love for man, lost in his sins, was paternal--the love of a father for his offspring--in this case, for a rebellious, froward, prodigal offspring. In this love, there must of course blend the deepest compassion.

3. On the part of Christ, considered as Mediator, this love was paternal. "He is not ashamed to call them brethren." In one point of view he is acting for brethren, and in another, for children. The Father gave him up for this work and of course sympathizes in the love appropriate to its relations.

4. This love must be altogether disinterested, for he had nothing to hope or to fear--no profit to make out of his children if they should be saved. Indeed it is impossible to conceive of God as being selfish, since his love embraces all creatures and all interests according to their real value. No doubt he took delight in saving our race--why should he not? It is a great salvation in every sense, and greatly does it swell the bliss of heaven;--greatly will it affect the glory and the blessedness of the Infinite God. He will eternally respect himself for love so disinterested. He knows also that all his holy creatures will eternally respect him for this work and for the love that gave it birth. But let it also be said, he knew they would not respect him for this great work unless they should see that he did it for the good of sinners.

5. This love was zealous--not that cold-hearted state of mind which some suppose--not an abstraction, but a love, deep, zealous, earnest, burning in his soul as a fire that nothing can quench.

6. The sacrifice was a most self-denying one. Did it cost the Father nothing to give up his own beloved Son to suffer, and to die such a death? If this be not self-denial, what can be? Thus to give up his Son to so much suffering,--is not this the noblest self-denial? The universe never could have the idea of great self-denial, but for such an exemplification.

7. This love was particular because it was universal, and also universal because it was particular. God loved each sinner in particular, and therefore loved all. Because He loved all impartially, with no respect of persons, therefore He loved each in particular.

8. This was a most patient love. How rare to find a parent so loving his child as never to be impatient. Let me go round and ask, how many of you, parents, can say that you love all your children so well, and with so much love, and with love so wisely controlling, that you have never felt impatient towards any of them;--so that you can take them in your arms under the greatest provocations, and love them down, love them out of their sins, love them into repentance and into a filial spirit? Of which of your children can you say, Thank God, I never fretted against that child; Of which, if you were to meet him in

heaven, could you say--I never caused that child to fret? Often have I heard parents say, I love my children, but oh how my patience fails me! And after the dear ones are dead you may hear their bitter moans, --O my soul, how could I have caused my child so much stumbling and so much sin!

But God never frets--is never impatient. His love is so deep and so great that He is always patient.

Sometimes when parents have unfortunate children, poor objects of compassion, they can bear with anything from them; but when they are very wicked, they seem to feel that they are quite excusable for being impatient. In God's case, these are not unfortunate children, but are intensely wicked, intelligently wicked. But O, his amazing patience--so set upon their good, so desirous of their highest welfare, that however they abuse Him, He sets himself to bless them still, and weep them down, and bleed them down, and die them down by the death of His Son in their stead!

9. This is a jealous love, not in a bad sense, but in a good sense--in the sense of being exceedingly careful lest anything should occur to injure those he loves. Just as husband and wife who truly love each other are jealous with ever wakeful jealousy over each other's welfare, seeking always to do all they can to promote each other's true interests.

This donation is already made--made in good faith--not only promised, but actually made. The promise, given long before, has been fulfilled. The Son has come--has died, has made the ransom and lives to offer it--a prepared salvation, to all who will embrace it.

The Son of God died not to appease vengeance, as some seem to understand it, but under the demands of law. The law had been dishonoured by its violation. Hence Christ undertook to honour it by giving up to its demands his suffering life and atoning death. It was not to appease a vindictive spirit in God, but to secure the highest good of the universe in a dispensation of mercy.

Since this atonement has been made, all men in the race have a right to it. It is open to every one who will embrace it. Though Jesus still remains the Father's Son, yet by gracious right he belongs in an important sense to the race--to every one; so that every sinner has an interest in his blood if he will only come humbly forward and claim it. God sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world--of whomsoever would believe and accept this great salvation.

God gives his Spirit to apply this salvation to men. He comes to each man's door and knocks, to gain admittance if he can, and show each sinner that he may now have salvation. O, what a labor of love is this!

This salvation must be received, if at all, by faith. This is the only possible way. God's government over sinners is moral, not physical, because the sinner is himself a moral and not a physical agent. Therefore God can influence us in no way unless we will give him our confidence. He never can save us by merely taking us away to some place called heaven--as if change of place would change the voluntary heart. There can, therefore, be no possible way to be saved but by simple faith.

Now do not mistake and suppose that embracing the gospel is simply to believe these historical facts, without truly receiving Christ as your Saviour. If this had been the scheme, then Christ had need only to come down and die; then go back to heaven and quietly wait to see who would believe the facts. But how different is the real case! Now Christ comes down to fill the soul with His own life and love. Penitent sinners hear and believe the truth concerning Jesus, and then receive Christ into the soul to live and reign there supreme and for ever. On this point many mistake, saying, If I believe the facts as matters of history, it is enough. No! No! This is not it by any means. "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." The atonement was indeed made to provide the way so that Jesus could come down to human hearts and draw them into union and sympathy with himself--so that God could let down the arms of his love and embrace sinners--so that law and government should not be dishonoured by such tokens of friendship shown by God toward sinners. But the atonement will by no means save sinners only as it prepares the way for them to come into sympathy and fellowship of heart with God.

Now Jesus comes to each sinner's door and knocks;--hark--what's that? what's that? Why this knocking? Why did He not go away and stay in heaven if that were the system, till men should simply believe the historical facts and be baptized, as some suppose, for salvation. But now, see how He comes down--tells the sinner what He has done--reveals all his love--tells him how holy and sacred it is, so sacred that He can by no means act without reference to the holiness of his law, and the purity of his government. Thus impressing on the heart the most deep and enlarged ideas of his holiness and purity, He enforces the need of deep repentance, and the sacred duty of renouncing all sin.

REMARKS.

1. The Bible teaches that sinners may forfeit their birthright and put themselves beyond the reach of mercy. It is not long since I made some remark to you on the manifest necessity that God should guard himself against the abuses of his love. The circumstances are such as create the greatest danger of such abuse, and, therefore He must make sinners know that they may not abuse his love and cannot do it with impunity.

2. Under the gospel, sinners are in circumstances of the greatest possible responsibility. They are in the utmost danger of trampling down beneath their feet the very Son of God. Come, they say, let us kill Him and the inheritance shall be ours. When God sends forth, last of all, his own beloved Son, what do they do? Add to all their other sins and rebellions the highest insult to this glorious Son! Suppose something analogous to this were done under a human government. A case of rebellion occurs in some of the provinces. The king sends his own son, not with an army, to cut them down quick in their rebellion, but all gently, meekly, patiently, he goes among them, explaining the laws of the kingdom, and exhorting them to obedience. What do they do in the case? With one consent they combine to seize him and put him to death!

But you deny the application of this, and ask me, Who murdered the Son of God? Were they not Jews? Aye, and have you, sinners, had no part in this murder? Has not your treatment of Jesus Christ shown that you are most fully in sympathy with the ancient Jews in their murder of the Son of God? If you had been there, would any one have shouted louder than you, Away with him--crucify him, crucify him? Have you not always said--Depart from us--for we desire not the knowledge of Thy

ways?

3. It was said of Christ that, Though rich He became poor that we through his poverty might be rich. How strikingly true is this! Our redemption cost Christ his life; it found Him rich but made Him poor; it found us infinitely poor but made us rich even to all the wealth of heaven. But of these riches none can partake till they shall each for himself accept them in the legitimate way. They must be received on the terms proposed, or the offer passes utterly away, and you are left poorer even than if no such treasures had ever been laid at your feet.

Many persons seem entirely to misconceive this case. They seem not to believe what God says, but keep saying, If, if, if there only were any salvation for me--if there were only an atonement provided for the pardon of my sins. This was one of the last things that was cleared up in my mind before I fully committed my soul to trust God. I had been studying the atonement; I saw its philosophical bearings--saw what it demanded of the sinner; but it irritated me and I said--If I should become a Christian, how could I know what God would do with me? Under this irritation I said foolish and bitter things against Christ--till my own soul was horrified at its own wickedness and I said--I will make all this up with Christ if the thing is possible.

In this way many advance upon the encouragements of the gospel as if it were only a peradventure, an experiment. They take each forward step most carefully, with fear and trembling, as if there were the utmost doubt whether there could be any mercy for them. So with myself. I was on my way to my office, when the question came before my mind--What are you waiting for? You need not get up such an ado. All is done already. You have only to consent to the proposition--give your heart right up to it at once--this is all. Just so it is. All Christians and sinners ought to understand that the whole plan is complete--that the whole of Christ--his character, his work, his atoning death, and his ever-living intercession--belong to each and every man, and need only to be accepted. There is a full ocean of it. There it is. You may just as well take it as not. It is as if you stood on the shore of an ocean of soft, pure water, famishing with thirst; you are welcome to drink, and you need not fear lest you exhaust that ocean, or starve any body else by drinking yourself. You need not feel that you are not made free to that ocean of waters; you are invited and pressed to drink--yea to drink abundantly! This ocean supplies all your need. You do not need to have in yourself the attributes of Jesus Christ, for his attributes become practically yours for all possible use. As saith the Scripture--He is of God made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. What do you need? Wisdom? Here it is. Righteousness? Here it is. Sanctification? Here you have it. All is in Christ. Can you possibly think of any one thing needful for your moral purity, or your usefulness which is not here in Christ? Nothing. All is provided here. Therefore you need not say, I will go and pray and try, as the hymn--

"I'll go to Jesus tho' my sin
Hath like a mountain rose,
Perhaps He will admit my plea;
Perhaps will hear my prayer."

There is no need of any perhaps. The doors are always open. Like the doors of Broadway Tabernacle

in New York, made to swing open and fasten themselves open, so that they could not swing back and shut down upon the crowds of people thronging to pass through. When they were to be made, I went myself to the workmen and told them by all means to fix them so that they must swing open and fasten themselves in that position.

So the door of salvation is open always--fastened open, and no man can shut it--not the Pope, even, nor the devil, nor any angel from heaven or from hell. There it stands, all swung back and the passage wide open for every sinner of our race to enter if he will.

Again, sin is the most expensive thing in the universe. Are you well aware, O sinner, what a price has been paid for you that you may be redeemed and made an heir of God and of heaven? O what an expensive business for you to indulge in sin!

And what an enormous tax the government of God has paid to redeem this province from its ruin! Talk about the poor tax of Great Britain and of all other nations superadded;--all is nothing to the sin-tax of Jehovah's government--that awful sin-tax! Think how much machinery is kept in motion to save sinners! The Son of God was sent down--angels are sent as ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation; missionaries are sent, Christians labour, and pray, and weep in deep and anxious solicitude--all to seek and save the lost. What a wonderful-enormous tax is levied upon the benevolence of the universe to put away sin and to save the sinner! If the cost could be computed in solid gold, what a world of it--a solid globe of itself! What an array of toil and cost, from angels, Jesus Christ, the Divine Spirit, and living men. Shame on sinners who hold on to sin despite of all these benevolent efforts to save them! who instead of being ashamed out of sin, will say--Let God pay off this tax: who cares! Let the missionaries labour, let pious women work their very fingers off to raise funds to keep all this human machinery in motion; no matter: what is all this to me? I have loved my pleasures and after them I will go! What an unfeeling heart is this!

Sinners can very well afford to make sacrifices to save their fellow sinners. Paul could for his fellow sinners. He felt that he had done his part toward making sinners, and now it became him to do his part also in converting them back to God. But see there--that young man thinks he cannot afford to be a minister, for he is afraid he shall not be well supported. Does he not owe something to the grace that saved his soul from hell? Has he not some sacrifices to make, since Jesus has made so many for him, and Christians too, in Christ before him--did they not pray and suffer and toil for his soul's salvation? As to his danger of lacking bread in the Lord's work, let him trust his Great Master. Yet let me also say that churches may be in great fault for not comfortably supporting their pastors. Let them know God will assuredly starve them if they starve their ministers. Their own souls and the souls of their children shall be barren as death if they avariciously starve those whom God in his providence sends to feed them with the bread of life.

How much it costs to rid society of certain forms of sin, as for example, slavery. How much has been expended already, and how much more yet remains to be expended ere this sore evil and curse and sin shall be rooted from our land! This is part of God's great enterprise, and He will press it on to its completion. Yet at what an amazing cost! How many lives and how much agony to get rid of this one sin!

Woe to those who make capital out of the sins of men! Just think of the rumseller--tempting men while God is trying to dissuade them from rushing on in the ways of sin and death! Think of the guilt of those who thus set themselves in array against God! So Christ has to contend with rumsellers who are doing all they can to hinder his work.

Our subject strikingly illustrates the nature of sin as mere selfishness. It cares not how much sin costs Jesus Christ--how much it costs the Church, how much it taxes the benevolent sympathies and the self-sacrificing labours of all the good in earth or heaven;--no matter; the sinner loves self-indulgence and will have it while he can. How many of you have cost your friends countless tears and trouble to get you back from your ways of sin? Are you not ashamed when so much has been done for you, that you cannot be persuaded to give up your sins and turn to God and holiness?

The whole effort on the part of God for man is one of suffering and self-denial. Beginning with the sacrifice of His own beloved Son, it is carried on with ever-renewed sacrifices and toilsome labours--at great and wonderful expense. Just think how long a time these efforts have been protracted already--how many tears, poured out like water, it has cost--how much pain in many forms this enterprise has caused and cost--yea, that very sin which you roll as a sweet morsel under your tongue! God may well hate it when He sees how much it costs, and say--O do not that abominable thing that I hate!

Yet God is not unhappy in these self-denials. So great is his joy in the results, that he deems all the suffering but comparatively a trifle, even as earthly parents enjoy the efforts they make to bless their children. See them; they will almost work their very hands off;--mothers sit up at night to ply their needle till they reel with fatigue and blindness--but if you were to see their toil, you would often see also their joy, so intensely do they love their children.

Such is the labour, the joy, and the self-denial of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, in their great work for human salvation. Often are they grieved that so many will refuse to be saved. Toiling on in a common sympathy, there is nothing, within reasonable limits, which they will not do or suffer to accomplish their great work. It is wonderful to think how all creation sympathizes too in this work and its necessary sufferings. Go back to the scene of Christ's sufferings. Could the sun in the heavens look down unmoved on such a scene? O no, he could not even behold it--but veiled his face from the sight! All nature seemed to put on her robes of deepest mourning. The scene was too much for even inanimate nature to bear. The sun turned his back and could not look down on such a spectacle!

The subject illustrates forcibly the worth of the soul. Think you God would have done all this if he had had those low views on this subject which sinners usually have?

Martyrs and saints enjoy their sufferings--filling up in themselves what is lacking of the sufferings of Christ; not in the atonement proper but in the subordinate parts of the work to be done. It is the nature of true religion to love self-denial.

The results will fully justify all the expense. God had well counted the cost before He began. Long time before He formed a moral universe He knew perfectly what it must cost Him to redeem sinners, and He knew that the result would amply justify all the cost. He knew that a wonder of mercy would

be wrought--that the suffering demanded of Christ, great as it was, would be endured; and that results infinitely glorious would accrue therefrom. He looked down the track of time into the distant ages--where, as the cycles rolled along, there might be seen the joys of redeemed saints, who are singing their songs and striking their harps anew with the everlasting song, through the long long, LONG eternity of their blessedness; --and was not this enough for the heart of infinite love to enjoy? And what do you think of it, Christian? Will you say now, I am ashamed to ask to be forgiven? How can I bear to receive such mercy! It is the price of blood, and how can I accept it? How can I make Jesus so much expense?

You are right in saying that you have cost Him great expense--but the expense has been cheerfully met--the pain has all been endured, and will not need to be endured again, and it will cost none the more if you accept than if you decline; and moreover still, let it be considered Jesus Christ has not acted unwisely; he did not pay too much for the soul's redemption--not a pang more than the interests of God's government demanded and the worth of the soul would justify.

O, when you come to see Him face to face, and tell Him what you think of it--when you are some thousands of years older than you are now, will you not adore that wisdom that manages this scheme, and the infinite love in which it had its birth? O what will you then say of that amazing condescension that brought down Jesus to your rescue! Say, Christian, have you not often poured out your soul before your Saviour in acknowledgment of what you have cost Him, and there seemed to be a kind of lifting up as if the very bottom of your soul were to rise, and you would pour out your whole heart. If any body had seen you they would have wondered what had happened to you that had so melted your soul in gratitude and love.

Say now, sinners, will you sell your birthright? How much will you take for it? How much will you take for your interest in Christ? For how much will you sell your soul? Sell your Christ! Of old they sold Him for thirty pieces of silver; and ever since, the heavens have been raining tears of blood on our guilty world. If you were to be asked by the devil to fix the sum for which you would sell your soul, what would be the price named? Lorenzo Dow once met a man as he was riding along a solitary road to fulfil an appointment, and said to him--Friend, have you ever prayed? No. How much will you take never to pray hereafter? One dollar. Dow paid it over, and rode on. The man put the money in his pocket, and passed on, thinking. The more he thought, the worse he felt. There, said he, I have sold my soul for one dollar! It must be that I have met the devil! Nobody else would tempt me so. With all my soul I must repent, or be damned forever!

How often have you bargained to sell your Saviour for less than thirty pieces of silver! Nay, for the merest trifle!

Finally, God wants volunteers to help on this great work. God has given himself, and given his Son, and sent his Spirit;--but more labourers still are needed; and what will you give? Paul said, I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus. Do you aspire to such an honour? What will you do--what will you suffer? Say not, I have nothing to give. You can give yourself--your eyes, your ears, your hands, your mind, your heart, all; and surely nothing you have is too sacred and too good to be devoted to such a work upon such a call! How many young men are ready to go? and how many young women? Whose heart leaps up, crying, Here am I! send me?

GLOSSARY

of easily misunderstood terms as defined by Mr. Finney himself.

Compiled by Katie Stewart

1. **Complacency, or Esteem:** "Complacency, as a state of will or heart, is only benevolence modified by the consideration or relation of right character in the object of it. God, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and saints, in all ages, are as virtuous in their self-denying and untiring labours to save the wicked, as they are in their complacent love to the saints." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE VII)*. Also, "approbation of the character of its object. Complacency is due only to the good and holy." *Lectures to Professing Christians (LECTURE XII)*.
2. **Disinterested Benevolence:** "By disinterested benevolence I do not mean, that a person who is disinterested feels no interest in his object of pursuit, but that he seeks the happiness of others for its own sake, and not for the sake of its reaction on himself, in promoting his own happiness. He chooses to do good because he rejoices in the happiness of others, and desires their happiness for its own sake. God is purely and disinterestedly benevolent. He does not make His creatures happy for the sake of thereby promoting His own happiness, but because He loves their happiness and chooses it for its own sake. Not that He does not feel happy in promoting the happiness of His creatures, but that He does not do it for the sake of His own gratification." *Lectures to Professing Christians (LECTURE I)*.
3. **Divine Sovereignty:** "The sovereignty of God consists in the independence of his will, in consulting his own intelligence and discretion, in the selection of his end, and the means of accomplishing it. In other words, the sovereignty of God is nothing else than infinite benevolence directed by infinite knowledge." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LXXVI)*.
4. **Election:** "That all of Adam's race, who are or ever will be saved, were from eternity chosen by God to eternal salvation, through the sanctification of their hearts by faith in Christ. In other words, they are chosen to salvation by means of sanctification. Their salvation is the end- their sanctification is a means. Both the end and the means are elected, appointed, chosen; the means as really as the end, and for the sake of the end." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LXXIV)*.
5. **Entire Sanctification:** "Sanctification may be entire in two senses: (1.) In the sense of present, full obedience, or entire consecration to God; and, (2.) In the sense of continued, abiding consecration or obedience to God. Entire sanctification, when the terms are used in this sense, consists in being established, confirmed, preserved, continued in a state of sanctification or of entire consecration to God." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LVIII)*.
6. **Moral Agency:** "Moral agency is universally a condition of moral obligation. The attributes of moral agency are intellect, sensibility, and free will." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE III)*.
7. **Moral Depravity:** "Moral depravity is the depravity of free-will, not of the faculty itself, but of its free action. It consists in a violation of moral law. Depravity of the will, as a faculty, is, or would be, physical, and not moral depravity. It would be depravity of substance, and not of free, responsible choice. Moral depravity is depravity of choice. It is a choice at variance with moral law, moral right. It is synonymous with sin or sinfulness. It is moral depravity, because it

consists in a violation of moral law, and because it has moral character." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE XXXVIII)*.

8. **Human Reason:** "the intuitive faculty or function of the intellect... it is the faculty that intuits moral relations and affirms moral obligation to act in conformity with perceived moral relations." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE III)*.
9. **Retributive Justice:** "Retributive justice consists in treating every subject of government according to his character. It respects the intrinsic merit or demerit of each individual, and deals with him accordingly." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE XXXIV)*.
10. **Total Depravity:** "Moral depravity of the unregenerate is without any mixture of moral goodness or virtue, that while they remain unregenerate, they never in any instance, nor in any degree, exercise true love to God and to man." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE XXXVIII)*.
11. **Unbelief:** "the soul's withholding confidence from truth and the God of truth. The heart's rejection of evidence, and refusal to be influenced by it. The will in the attitude of opposition to truth perceived, or evidence presented." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LV)*.