

Therefore salvation cannot be bestowed on us on the ground of our own merit. It must be bestowed on us in free and unmerited kindness. We must, as we are hell-deserving sinners, be debtors to the God of Grace, in the matter of our salvation.

*While salvation is a pure gratuity, a gift of God's unmerited kindness, it is bestowed on men in consideration of a work.* The unfallen angels retain their place in heaven and enjoy the favour of God, because of their perfect obedience to all his laws; they have a righteousness of their own. The fallen angels lost the favour of God, because they violated his law; they lost their righteousness and became sinners, and therefore they are reserved in everlasting chains, under dark ess, unto the judgment of the great day. While our first parents retained their innocence and purity, they remained in Eden. As soon as they sinned, they were expelled from Eden's lovely bowers. In order that any of the race of Adam may reach the heavenly paradise, where blooms the tree of life, and eat of its delicious, life-giving fruit, he must have a perfect righteousness. This we have not of our own, and never can have. What then shall we do? God cannot violate the grand principle of his moral administration to bestow heaven and its bliss on sinners, in consideration of perfect righteousness. How then can God admit hell-deserving sinners into heaven? How can he unfold the gates of his own blessed dwelling-place to those who deserve to be cast down to hell? This problem is solved in Christ. Christ is the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, who came to honour the law, which we have broken by our sins. He assumed our nature and for us made atonement. He has in his self-denying life, his unparalleled sufferings and his ignominious death, wrought out and brought in for sinners an everlasting righteousness. This righteousness is well-pleasing to God; it magnifies the law and makes it honourable. Where sin abounded, grace has much more abounded in providing a righteousness on the ground of which sinners may be justified and saved. GRACE REIGNS THROUGH THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST UNTO ETERNAL LIFE. The righteousness of Christ has been provided for all. It is a manifestation of God's grace to sinners. The state into which sinners are brought by faith therein is a state of grace, Rom. v. 2. In consequence of the merit that is in the righteousness of Christ, the believer in Jesus is no longer under the law, as a condemning law, but is under the canopy of his grace. He is still under the commanding authority of God's law; it is the rule of his obedience; and the grace to which he is indebted for pardon, and under which he is, constrains him to walk in obedience to it.

*The gratuitousness of salvation is not inconsistent with conditions imposed by God in wisdom and love which must be submitted to by man, in order that he may enjoy it.* Many are of opinion that we subvert the grace of God, unless we maintain that man is passive in his salvation. But grace is not opposed to all activity on the part of man. It is opposed to works, wrought with the view of obtaining salvation, because of the merit that is supposed to be in them. Paul expressly declares, that by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in God's sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Salvation is not of