

love and gratitude and gladness. How true it is that the gospel is to some the savour of life unto life, and to others the savour of death unto death!

Ob. II. *That many of those who heard the word were disposed to have eternal life.*

The original word, rendered *ordained* in the passage which we are considering occurs in seven other passages. Mat. 28, 16. Luke 7, 8. Acts 15, 2. Acts, 22, 10. Acts 28, 23. Rom. 13, 1. 1 Cor. 16, 15. If the reader will carefully examine each of these texts, he will, we are confident, find that in no instance is there any reference to decrees or purposes in a past eternity, but that there is on the contrary reference to *arranging, ordering appointing or disposing* of current events. *To constitute, to set in order, or to dispose* is the proper rendering of the Greek verb. We believe the obvious meaning of the passage to be, 'as many as were *set in order* to eternal life believed: or, as many as were *disposed* to eternal life believed.' There is no reference in the verse to the decrees of God properly so called. There is no reference whatsoever to unconditional fore-ordination, or predestination, but to the actual and practical fact that many who then heard the word of the Lord *were disposed* to receive it. Paul and Barnabas earnestly, affectionately, and with power, preached the gospel, and their preaching was not in vain; it took effect, for many were led to believe the glad tidings which were proclaimed in their hearing. By thus yielding to its influences, and believing it, they were saved, they were delivered from condemnation, they were justified, they were put in possession of the great blessing of spiritual and eternal life. Reader, this is a blessing which you need; and you may obtain it without money and without price, however numerous and aggravating your sins may have been. "God hath give to you eternal life, and this life is in his Son." "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Ob. III. *That as many of those who heard the word of the Lord as were disposed to have eternal life believed.*

THEY BELIEVED.—This is the divinely appointed human condition of salvation. They did not, like the Jesus-rejecting Jews judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, and disbelieve the gospel; no, they gladly received the word with all readiness of mind, they yielded to its evidence, its influence—they