

from its very nature, must be a thing of time and not of a bygone eternity. The actual birth and life, and sufferings, and atonement of Christ, though purposed in eternity, could not in the very nature of things actually take place in a past eternity. They could only take place in time. So with *actual election*; it must be a thing of time and not of a bygone eternity. Hence believers are said to be chosen *in Christ*. Eph. i. 4. And "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." 1 Peter i. 2. They are also said to be "chosen to salvation *through* sanctification of the Spirit, and *belief of the truth*." 2 Thess. ii. 13." Since then believers are chosen *in Christ*, chosen *through* sanctification of the Spirit, and *through* the belief of the truth, it follows as a natural and a necessary consequence that though the purpose to elect, like all God's other purposes, is eternal, the execution of the purpose, or the actual election is, and in the very nature of things must be, a thing of time.

But Mr. Spurgeon denies all this, and contradicts as it seems to us, the plain teachings of the word of God. He says, "Election, we are sure is absolute, and altogether apart from the virtues which the saints have afterward." Page 77. Of course Mr. Spurgeon in the sermon from which we make this quotation does not attempt, or even profess to prove that election is absolute, and eternal; he says it, and that he thinks is enough to satisfy all his hearers and readers that it is and must be true. The substance of all he says is, "our election, then, is eternal. I will not stop to prove it; I only just run over these thoughts for the benefit of young beginners, that they may understand what we mean by eternal absolute election." Page 79.

According to Mr. Spurgeon we are to believe that all who shall ever be saved, were absolutely and unconditionally elected millions of millions of years before they had any existence. They were as much elected then as they never could be in time; and not only elected, they were virtually justified, adopted, reconciled, regen-