

latter were the better course of the two.

Surely it cannot be helpful towards securing obedience to the commandments to spend much thought and labor on the effort to prove that it is impossible to keep them. Fancy a British officer cheering on his men in the midst of the battle by shouting to them the impossibility of being victorious!

One would think that the lowest form of prudence would dictate the propriety of seizing upon even the obscurest passages in Scripture or creed which seemed to promise complete obedience, and bringing them to the front, leaving all others in the background whenever it was possible.

Now, we promise for every Scripture passage the Doctor produces, which contains even a faint hint at the impossibility of obeying all the commands of God, to produce a large number of those which preach a contrary thought; for we hesitate not to say that the number of these latter Scriptures far exceeds the former. Hence we assert that one is flying in the face of the general teaching of the Bible when emphasizing the impossibility of keeping the commandments.

We are not as familiar with the Confession of Faith as with the Bible, and yet, from our recent somewhat careful study of it, we are prepared to make the following observations concerning its teachings on the subject in hand. Whilst the framers of that book have by no means observed the *relative* value of the two thoughts under consideration as observed in the Bible, and whilst there is an evident tendency in their deliverances to emphasize the necessity of sinning rather than the possibility of complete obedience, nevertheless we are glad to know that they neither ignored nor contradicted the Scriptures which seem to teach the possibility of walking in all the commandments blameless.

This they show not only by fully quoting as authoritative numerous passages bearing on this fact, but also in their deliverances they now and then touch the subject approvingly.

Even in the chapter "Of God's eternal decree" it is admitted that the elect "are justified, adopted, sanctified and

kept by His power through faith unto salvation," and in this connection are quoted without adverse comment such passages as "That we should be holy, and without blame before Him in love." "That He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."

On page 36 is quoted, "I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them."

In chapter xviii. it is said that "such as truly believe . . . may in this life be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace," and the immediate Scripture authority for this deliverance is given as 1 John ii. 3, "And hereby we do know that we know Him if we keep His commandments." Surely no one will dispute the fact that this verse seems to teach that we may not only keep His commandments, but know that we do so keep them and thence gather the fact of *assurance*.

Clause 11 in the same chapter is equally emphatic in its teaching, or even more so. "This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion founded on a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith, founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God: which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption," and we are further taught in the next paragraph that this *infallible* assurance may be the experience of all true believers, and in the ordinary use of the means without *extraordinary* revelation. It is also intimated that one may be a true believer for some time before obtaining this special experience, whilst the following Scripture references are given, amongst others, to establish this teaching, "And he that keepeth His commandments dwelleth in Him and He in him: and hereby we know that He abideth in us by the Spirit which He hath given us," "for if ye do these things ye shall never fall." "For our rejoicing is this, the *testimony* of