

True Submission

by Charles Finney

True submission to God requires perfect acquiescence in His providential dealings, moral law, and actual obedience, which involves disinterested benevolence and a willingness to sacrifice one's own interests for the glory of God.

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 9:24, John 15:13, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 10:31, 2 Corinthians 5:15, Galatians 5:13, Philippians 2:3-4, James 4:7, 1 John 3:16-18

Topics: "True Submission", "Disinterested Benevolence"

Description

Charles Finney emphasizes that true submission to God involves a complete surrender of selfish desires and a genuine acquiescence to His will, rather than a mere acceptance of punishment or indifference. He warns against the dangers of false hopes built on selfish motives and highlights that true submission requires obedience to God's moral law and a focus on the glory of God above personal interests. Finney explains that genuine submission is characterized by disinterested benevolence, where one's primary aim is to promote God's kingdom and the good of others, rather than seeking personal happiness. He concludes that true submission is essential for salvation and must be rooted in love for God and others, rather than fear of punishment or self-interest.

Transcript

TEXT.--"Submit yourselves therefore to God."--James iv. 7.

THE subject of this lecture is, "WHAT CONSTITUTES TRUE SUBMISSION?"

Before I enter on the discussion of this subject, I wish to make two remarks, introductory to the main question.

1. The first remark is this: If any of you are deceived in regard to your hopes, and have built on a false foundation, the fundamental error in your case was your embracing what you thought was the gospel plan of salvation from selfish motives. Your selfish hearts were unbroken. This is the source of your delusion, if you are deceived. If your selfishness was subdued, you are not deceived in your hope. If it was not, all your religion is vain, and your hope is vain.

2. The other remark I wish to make is, that if any of you are deceived, and have a false hope, you are in the utmost danger of reviving your old hope, whenever you are awakened to consider your condition. It is a very common thing for such professors, after a season of anxiety and self-examination, to settle down

again on the old foundation. The reason is, their habits of mind have become fixed in that channel, and therefore, by the laws of mind it is difficult to break into a new course. It is indispensable, therefore, if you ever mean to get right, that you should see clearly that you have hitherto been wholly wrong, so that you need not multiply any more the kind of efforts that have deceived you heretofore.

Who does not know that there is a great deal of this kind of deception? How often will a great part of the church lie cold and dead, till a revival commences? Then you will see them bustling about, and they get engaged, as they call it, in religion, and renew their efforts and multiply their prayers for a season; and this is what they call getting revived. But it is only the same kind of religion that they had before. Such religion lasts no longer than the public excitement. As soon as the body of the church begin to diminish their efforts for the conversion of sinners, these individuals relapse into their former worldliness, and get as near to what they were before their supposed conversion, as their pride and their fear of the censures of the church will let them. When a revival comes again, they renew the same round; and so they live along by spasms, over and over again, revived and backslidden, revived and backslidden, alternately, as long as they live. The truth is, they were deluded at first, by a spurious conversion, in which selfishness never was broken down; and the more they multiply such kind of efforts, the more sure they are to be lost.

I will now enter upon the direct discussion of the subject, and endeavor to show you what true gospel submission is, in the following order, viz.:

I. I shall show what is not true submission.

II. Show what true submission is.

I. I am to show what true submission is not.

1. True submission to God is not indifference. No two things can be more unlike than indifference and true submission.

2. It does not consist in being willing to be sinful for the glory of God. Some have supposed that true submission included the idea of being willing to be sinful for the glory of God. But this is a mistake. To be willing to be sinful is itself a sinful state of mind. And to be willing to do any thing for the glory of God, is to choose not to be sinful. The idea of being sinful for the glory of God is absurd.

3. It does not consist in a willingness to be punished?

If we were now in hell, true submission would require that we should be willing to be punished. Because then it would be certain that it was God's will we should be punished. So, if we were in a world where no provision was made for the redemption of sinners, and where our punishment was therefore inevitable, it would be our duty to be willing to be punished. If a man has committed murder, and there is no other way to secure the public interest but for him to be hung, it is his duty to be willing to be hung for the public good. But if there was any other way in which the murderer could make the public interest whole, it would not be his duty to be willing to be hung. So if we were in a world solely under law, where there was no plan of salvation, and no measure to secure the stability of government in the forgiveness of sinners, it would be the duty of every man to be willing to be punished. But as it is in this world, genuine submission does not imply a willingness to be punished. Because we know it is not the will of God that all shall be punished, but on the other hand, we know it is his will that all who truly repent and submit to God shall be saved.

II. I am to show what genuine submission is.

1. It consists in perfect acquiescence in all the providential dealings and dispensations of God; whether relating to ourselves, or to others, or to the universe. Some persons suppose they do acquiesce in the abstract, in the providential government of God. But yet, if you converse with them you see they will find fault with God's arrangements in many things. They wonder why God suffered Adam to sin? Or why he suffered sin to enter the universe at all? Or why he did this or that? Or why he made this or that thus or so? In all these cases, supposing we could assign no reason at all that would be satisfactory, true submission implies a perfect acquiescence in whatever he has suffered or done; and feeling that, so far as his providence is concerned, it is all right.

2. True submission implies acquiescence in the precept of God's moral law. The general precept of God's moral law is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Perhaps some will say, "I do acquiesce in this precept, I feel that it is right, and I have no objection to this law." Here I want you to make the distinction carefully between a constitutional approbation of God's law, and actual submission to it. There is no mind but what naturally, and by its own common sense of what is right, approves of this law. There is not a devil in hell that does not approve it. God has so constituted mind, that it is impossible to be a moral agent, and not approve his law. But this is not the acquiescence I am speaking of. A person may feel this approbation to so great a degree as to be even delighted without having true submission to it. There are two ideas included in genuine submission, to which I wish your particular attention.

(1.) The first idea is, that true acquiescence in God's moral law includes actual obedience. It is vain for a child to pretend a real acquiescence in his father's commands, unless he actually obeys them. It is in vain for a citizen to pretend an acquiescence in the laws of the land, unless he obeys the laws.

(2.) The main idea of submission is the yielding up of that which constitutes the great point in controversy. And that is this; that men have taken off their supreme affection from God and his kingdom, and set up self-interest as the paramount object of regard. Instead of laying themselves out in doing good, as God requires, they have adopted the maxim that "Charity begins at home." This is the very point in debate, between God and the sinner. The sinner aims at promoting his own interest, as his supreme object. Now, the first idea implied in submission is the yielding up of this point. We must cease placing our own interest as supreme, and let the interests of God and his kingdom rise in our affections just as much above our own interests as their real value is greater. The man who does not do this is a rebel against God.

Suppose a civil ruler were to set himself to promote the general happiness of his nation; and should enact laws wisely adapted to this end, and should embark all his own resources in this object; and that he should then require every subject to do the same. Then suppose an individual should go and set up his own private interest in opposition to the general interest. He is a rebel against the government, and against all the interest which the government is set to promote. Then the first idea of submission, on the part of the rebel, is giving up that point, and falling in with the ruler and the obedient subjects in promoting the public good. Now, the law of God absolutely requires that you should make your own happiness subordinate to the glory of God and the good of the universe. And until you do this, you are the enemy of God and the universe, and a child of hell.

And the gospel requires the same as the law. It is astonishing, that many, within a few years, have maintained that it is right for a man to aim directly at his own salvation, and make his own happiness the great object of pursuit. But it is plain that God's law is different from this, and requires every one to prize God's interest supremely. And the gospel requires the same with the law. Otherwise, Jesus Christ is the

minister of sin, and came into the world to take up arms against God's government.

It is easy to show, from the Bible, that the gospel requires disinterested benevolence, or love to God and love to man, the same as the law. The first passage I shall quote is this, "Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness." What does that mean? Strange as it may seem, a writer has lately quoted this very text to prove that it is right to seek first our own salvation or our own happiness and to make that the leading object of pursuit. But that is not the meaning. It requires every one to make the promotion of the kingdom of God his great object. I suppose it to enjoin the duty of aiming at being holy, and not at our own happiness. Happiness is connected with holiness, but it is not the same thing, and to such holiness or obedience to God, and to honor and glorify him, is a very different thing from seeking supremely our own interests.

Another passage is, "Whether ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." Indeed! What? may we not eat and drink to please ourselves? No. We may not even gratify our natural appetite for food, but as subordinate to the glory of God. This is what the gospel requires, for the apostle wrote this to the Christian church.

Another passage is, "Look not on your own things, but every man on the things of another." But it is vain to attempt to quote all the passages that teach this. You may find, on almost every page of the Bible, some passage that means the same thing, requiring us not to seek our own good, but the benefit of others.

Our Savior says, "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life shall save it." That is, If a man aims at his own interest, he shall lose his own interest; if he aims at saving his own soul, as his supreme object, he will lose his own soul; he must go out of himself, and make the good of others his supreme object, or he will be lost.

And again he says, "There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come, eternal life." Here some people may stumble, and say, There is a reward held out as a motive. But, mark! What are you to do? Forsake self for the sake of a reward to self? No; but to forsake self for the sake of Christ and his gospel; and the consequence will be as stated. Here is the important distinction.

In the 13th chapter of Corinthians Paul gives a full description of this disinterested love, or charity, without which a person is nothing in religion. It is remarkable how much he says a person may do, and yet be nothing. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though, I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." But true gospel benevolence is of this character. "Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." She seeketh not her own. Mark that; it has no selfish end, but seeks the happiness of others as its great end. Without this kind of benevolence, we know there is not a particle of religion. You see, I might stand here all night quoting and explaining passages to the same point; showing that all pure religion

consists in disinterested benevolence.

Before I go farther, I wish to mention several objections to this view, which may arise in your minds. I do this more particularly, because some of you may stumble right here, and after all get the idea that it is right to have our religion consist in aiming at our own salvation as our great object.

OBJECTION 1. "Why are the threatenings of the word of God given, if it is selfishness to be influenced by a fear of the wrath to come?"

Many answers may be given to this objection.

ANSWER 1. Man is so constituted that by the laws of his being he dreads pain. The scripture threatenings therefore answer many purposes. One is, to arrest the attention of the selfish mind, and lead it to examine the reasons there are for loving and obeying God. When the Holy Spirit thus gets the attention, then he rouses the sinner's conscience, and engages that to consider and decide on the reasonableness and duty of submitting to God.

OBJECTION 2. "Since God has given us these susceptibilities to pleasure and pain, is it wrong to be influenced by them?"

ANSWER. It is neither right nor wrong. These susceptibilities have no moral character. If I had time to-night, I might make all plain to you. In morals, there is a class of actions that come under the denomination of prudential considerations. For instance: Suppose you stand on a precipice, where, if you throw yourself down, you will infallibly break your neck. You are warned against it. Now, if you do not regard the warning, but throw yourself down, and destroy your life, that will be sin. But regarding it is no virtue. It is simply a prudential act. There is no virtue in avoiding danger, although it may often be sinful not to avoid it. It is sinful for men to brave the wrath of God. But to be afraid of hell is not holy, no more than the fear of breaking your neck down a precipice is holy. It is simply a dictate of the constitution.

OBJECTION 3. "Does not the Bible make it our immediate duty to seek our own happiness?"

ANSWER. It is not sinful to seek our own happiness, according to its real value. On the contrary, it is a real duty to do so. And he that neglects to do this, commits sin. Another answer is, that although it is right to seek our own happiness, and the constitutional laws of the mind require us to regard our own happiness, still our constitution does not indicate that to pursue our own happiness as the chief good, is right. Suppose any one should argue, that because our constitution requires food, therefore it is right to seek food as the supreme good--would that be sound? Certainly not; for the Bible expressly forbids any such thing, and says--"Whether ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God."

OBJECTION 4. "Each one's happiness is put particularly in his own power; and if everyone should seek his own happiness, the happiness of the whole will be secured, to the greatest amount that is possible."

This objection is specious, but not sound. I deny the conclusion altogether. For,

(1.) The laws of the mind are such, that it is impossible for any one to be happy while he makes his own happiness the supreme object. Happiness consists in the gratification of virtuous desires. But to be gratified, the thing must be obtained that is desired. To be happy, therefore, the desires that are gratified must be right, and therefore they must be disinterested desires. If your desires terminate on yourself; for instance--if you desire the conversion of sinners for the sake of promoting your own happiness, when

sinners are converted it does not make you happy, because it is not the thing on which your desire terminated. The law of the mind, therefore, renders it impossible, if each individual pursues his own happiness, that he should ever obtain it. To be more definite. Two things are indispensable to true happiness. First, there must be virtuous desire. If the desire be not virtuous, conscience will remonstrate against it, and therefore a gratification would be attended with pain. Secondly, this desire must be gratified in the attainment of its object. The object must be desired for its own sake, or the gratification would not be complete, even should the object be attained. If the object is desired as a means to an end, the gratification would depend on obtaining the end by this means. But if the thing was desired as an end, or for its own sake, obtaining it would produce unmingled gratification. The mind must, therefore, desire not its own happiness, for in this way it can never be attained, but the desire must terminate on some other object which is desired for its own sake, the attainment of which would be a gratification and thus result in happiness.

(2.) If each one pursues his own happiness, as his supreme end, the interests of different individuals will clash, and destroy the happiness of all. This is the very thing we see in the world. This is the reason of all the fraud, and violence, and oppression, and wickedness in earth and hell. It is because each one is pursuing his own interest, and their interests clash. The true way to secure our own happiness is, not to pursue that as an end, but to pursue another object, which, when obtained, will afford complete gratification--the glory of God and the good of the universe. The question is not, whether it is right to desire and pursue our own happiness at all, but whether it is right to make our own happiness our supreme end.

OBJECTION 5. "Happiness consists in gratifying virtuous desire. Then the thing I aim at, is gratifying virtuous desire. Is not that aiming at my own happiness?"

ANSWER. The mind does not aim at gratifying the desire, but at accomplishing the thing desired. Suppose you see a beggar, as mentioned last week, and you give him a loaf of bread. You aim at relieving the beggar. That is the object desired, and when that is done, your desire is gratified, and you are happy. But if, in relieving the beggar, the object you aimed at was your own happiness, then relieving the beggar will not gratify the desire, and you render it impossible to gratify it.

Thus you see, that both the law and the gospel require disinterested benevolence, as the only condition on which man can be happy.

3. True submission implies acquiescence in the penalty of God's law.

I again advert to the distinction, which I have made before. We are not, in this world, simply under a government of naked law. This world is a province of Jehovah's empire, that stands in a peculiar relation to God's government. It has rebelled, and a new and special provision has been made, by which God offers us mercy. The conditions are, that we obey the precepts of the law, and submit to the justice of the penalty. It is a government of law, with the gospel appended to it. The gospel requires the same obedience with the law. It maintains the ill desert of sin, and requires the sinner's acquiescence, in the justice of the penalty. If the sinner were under mere law, it would require that he should submit to the infliction of the penalty. But man is not, and never has been, since the fall, under the government of mere law, but has always known, more or less clearly, that mercy is offered. It has, therefore, never been required, that men should be willing to be punished. In this respect it is, that gospel submission differs from legal submission. Under naked law, submission would consist in willingness to be punished. In this world, submission consists in acquiescence in the justice of the penalty, and regarding himself as

deserving the eternal wrath of God.

4. True submission implies acquiescence in the sovereignty of God.

It is the duty of every sovereign to see that all his subjects submit to his government. And it is his duty to enact such laws, that every individual, if he obeys perfectly, will promote the public good, in the highest possible degree. And then, if any one refuses to obey, it is his duty to take that individual by force, and make him subserve the public interest in the best way that is possible with a rebellious subject. If he will not subserve the public good voluntarily, he should be made to do it involuntarily. The government must either hang him, or shut him up, or in some way make him an example of suffering; or, if the public good admits of mercy, it may show mercy in such a way as will best subserve the general interest. Now God is a sovereign ruler, and the submission which he requires is just what he is bound to require. He would be neglecting his duty as a ruler, if he did not require it. And since you have refused to obey this requirement, you are now bound to throw yourself into his hands, for him to dispose of you, for time and eternity, in the way that will most promote the interests of the universe. You have forfeited all claim to any portion in the happiness of the universe or the favor of God. And the thing which is now required of you is, that since you cannot render obedience for the past, you should acknowledge the justice of his law, and leave your future destiny entirely and unconditionally at his disposal, for time and for eternity. You must submit all you have and all you are to him. You have justly forfeited all, and are bound to give up all at his bidding, in any way that he calls for them, to promote the interests of his kingdom.

5. Finally, it requires submission to the terms of the gospel. The terms of the gospel are--

(1.) Repentance, hearty sorrow for sin, justifying God and taking his part against yourself.

(2.) Faith, perfect trust and confidence towards God, such as leads you without hesitation to throw yourself, body and soul, and all you have and are, into his hand, to do with you as he thinks good.

(3.) Holiness, or disinterested benevolence.

(4.) To receive salvation as a mere matter of pure grace, to which you have no claim on the score of justice.

(5.) To receive Christ as your mediator and advocate, your atoning sacrifice, your ruler and teacher, and in all the offices in which he is presented to you in God's word. In short, you are to be wholly acquiescent in God's appointed way of salvation.

REMARKS.

I. You see why there are so many false hopes in the church.

The reason is, that so many persons embrace what they consider the gospel, without yielding obedience to the law. They look at the law with dread, and regard the gospel as a scheme to get away from the law. These tendencies have always been manifested among men. There is a certain class that hold to the gospel and reject the law; and another class that take the law and neglect the gospel. The Antinomians think to get rid of the law altogether. They suppose the gospel rule of life is different from the law; whereas, the truth is, that the rule of life is the same in both, and both require disinterested benevolence. Now, if a person thinks that, under the gospel, he may give up the glory of God as his supreme object, and instead of loving God with all his heart, and soul, and strength, may make his own salvation his supreme object,

his hopes are false. He has embraced another gospel--which is no gospel at all.

II. The subject shows how we are to meet the common objection, that faith in Christ implies making our own salvation our object or motive.

ANSWER. What is faith? It is not believing that you shall be saved, but believing God's word concerning his Son. It is no where revealed that you shall be saved. He has revealed the fact that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. What you call faith, is more properly hope. The confident expectation that you shall be saved is an inference from the act of faith; and an inference which you have a right to draw when you are conscious of obeying the law and believing the gospel. That is, when you exercise the feelings required in the law and gospel, you have a right to trust in Christ for your own salvation.

III. It is an error to suppose that despair of mercy is essential to true submission.

This is plain from the fact that, under the gospel, every body knows it is the will of God that every soul shall be saved that will exercise disinterested benevolence. Suppose a man should come to me and ask, "What shall I do to be saved?" and I should tell him, "If you expect to be saved you must despair of being saved," what would he think? What inspired writer ever gave any such direction as this? No, the inspired answer is, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart," "Repent," "Believe the gospel," and so on. Is there any thing here that implies despair?

It is true that sinners sometimes do despair, before they obtain true peace. But what is the reason? It is not because despair is essential to true peace; but because of their ignorance, or of wrong instructions given to them, or misapprehension of the truth. Many anxious sinners despair because they get a false impression that they have sinned away their day of grace, or that they have committed the unpardonable sin, or that their sins are peculiarly aggravated, and the gospel provision does not reach them. Sometimes they despair for this reason--they know that there is mercy provided, and ready to be bestowed as soon as they will comply with the terms, but they find all their efforts at true submission vain. They find they are so proud and obstinate, that they cannot get their own consent to the terms of salvation. Perhaps most individuals who do submit, do in fact come to a point where they give up all as lost. But is that necessary? That is the question. Now, you see, it is nothing but their own wickedness drives them to despair. They are so unwilling to take hold of the mercy that is offered. Their despair, then, instead of being essential to true submission under the gospel, is inconsistent with it, and no man ever did embrace the gospel while in that state. It is horrid unbelief, then, it is sin to despair; and to say it is essential to true submission, is saying that sin is essential to true submission.

IV. True submission is acquiescing in the whole government of God.

It is acquiescing in his Providential government, in his moral government, in the precept of his law, and in the penalty of his law, so that he is himself deserving of an exceeding great and eternal weight of damnation; and submission to the terms of salvation in the gospel. Under the gospel, it is no man's duty to be willing to be damned. It is wholly inconsistent with his duty to be willing to be damned. The man who submits to the naked law, and consents to be damned, is as much in rebellion as ever; for it is one of God's express requirements that he should obey the gospel.

V. To call on a sinner to be willing to be punished is a grand mistake, for several reasons.

It is to set aside the gospel, and place him under another government than that which exists. It sets before him a partial view of the character of God, to which he is required to submit. It keeps back the true motives to submission. It presents not the real and true God, but a different being. It is practising a deception on him, by holding out the idea that God desires his damnation, and he must submit to it; for God has taken his solemn oath that he desires not the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his wickedness and live. It is a slander upon God, and charging God with perjury. Every man under the gospel, knows that God desires sinners to be saved, and it is impossible to hide the fact. The true ground on which salvation should be placed is, that he is not to seek his own salvation, but to seek the glory of God; not to hold out the idea that God desires or means he should go to hell.

What did the apostles tell sinners, when they inquired what they must do to be saved? What did Peter tell them at the Pentecost? What did Paul tell the jailer? To repent and forsake their selfishness, and believe the gospel. This is what men must do to be saved.

There is another difficulty in attempting to convert men in this way. It is attempting to convert them by the law, and setting aside the gospel. It is attempting to make them holy, without the appropriate influences to make them holy. Paul tried this way, thoroughly, and found it never would answer. In the 7th of Romans he gives us the result in his own case. It drove him to confess that the law was holy and good, and he ought to obey it; and there it left him in distress, and crying, "The good that I would, I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do." The law was not able to convert him, and he cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Just here the love of God in sending his Son, Jesus Christ, is presented to his mind, and that did the work. In the next chapter he explains it; "What the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." The whole Bible testifies that it is only the influence of the gospel which can bring sinners to obey the law. The law will never do it. Shutting out from the soul that class of motives which cluster around it from the gospel, will never convert a sinner.

I know there may be some persons who suppose they were converted in this way, and that they have submitted to the law, absolutely, and without any influence from the gospel. But was it ever concealed from them for a moment, that Christ had died for sinners, and that if they should repent and believe, they should be saved? These motives must have had their influence, for all the time that they think they were looking at the naked law, they expected that if they believed they should be saved.

I suppose the error of attempting to convert men by the law, without the gospel, lies here; in the old Hopkinsian notion that men, in order to be saved must be willing to be damned. It sets aside the fact, that this world is, and since the fall always has been, under a dispensation of mercy. If we were under a government of mere law, true submission to God would require this. But men are not, in this sense, under the law, and never have been; for immediately after the fall, God revealed to Adam the intimations of mercy.

An objection arises here in the mind of some, which I will remove.

OBJECTION. "Is not the offer of mercy, in the gospel, calculated to produce a selfish religion?"

ANSWER. The offer of mercy may be perverted, as every other good thing may be, and then it may give rise to a selfish religion. And God knew it would be so, when he revealed the gospel. But observe: Nothing is calculated to subdue the rebellious heart of man, but this very exhibition of the benevolence of God, in

the offer of mercy.

There was a father who had a stubborn and rebellious son, and he tried long to subdue him by chastisement. He loved his son, and longed to have him virtuous and obedient. But the child seemed to harden his heart against his repeated efforts. At length the poor father was quite discouraged, and burst out into a flood of convulsive weeping--"My son! my son! what shall I do? Can I save you? I have done all that I could to save you; O! what can I do more?" The son had looked at the rod with a brow of brass, but when he saw the tears rolling down his father's furrowed cheeks and heard the convulsive sobs of anguish from his aged bosom, he too burst into tears, and cried out, "Whip me father! do whip me, as much as you please, but don't cry!" Now the father had found out the way to subdue that stubborn heart. Instead of holding over him nothing but the iron hand of law, he let out his soul before him; and what was the effect? To crush him into hypocritical submission? No, the rod did that. The gushing tears of his father's love broke him down at once to true submission to his father's will.

So it is with sinners. The sinner braves the wrath of Almighty God, and hardens himself to receive the heaviest bolt of Jehovah's thunder; but when he sees the LOVE of his Heavenly Father's heart, if there is any thing that will make him abhor and execrate himself, that will do it, when he sees God manifested in the flesh, stooping to take human nature, hanging on the cross, and pouring out his soul in tears and bloody sweat and death. Is this calculated to make hypocrites? No, the sinner's heart melts, and he cries out, "O, do any thing else, and I can bear it; but the love of the blessed Jesus overwhelms me." This is the very nature of the mind, to be thus influenced. Instead, therefore, of being afraid of exhibiting the love of God to sinners, it is the only way to make them truly submissive and truly benevolent. The law may make hypocrites; but nothing but the gospel can draw out the soul in true love to God.

Next Thursday, evening I design to pursue the same subject farther.

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