

What Saith the Scripture?

<http://www.WhatSaithTheScripture.com/>

The Eyes Opened to the Law of God- No. 1

by Charles Grandison Finney
President of Oberlin College

from "The Oberlin Evangelist" Publication of Oberlin College

Lecture II
July 17, 1844

Public Domain Text
Reformatted by Katie Stewart

Text.--Ps. 119: 18: "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."

LECTURE II.

In this discourse I shall show--

- I. In what sense the term law is used in the text.*
- II. The meaning of the request-- "open thou mine eyes."*
- III. What is implied in making the request.*
- IV. The consequences of receiving an answer to the request.*
- V. The condition of an answer to the request.*

I. In what sense the term Law is used in the text.

The term "law" is used in various senses in the Bible. Sometimes it means that which was written on the two tables of stone; sometimes the ceremonial law given to Israel by God through Moses; sometimes the five books of Moses in distinction from the books of the prophets and the Psalms, &c.; and sometimes it means the whole revealed will of God. This last is its widest sense, and this I suppose to be the meaning in the text; to wit: the whole Old Testament Scriptures--that is, the whole revealed will of God. The prayer of the Psalmist is as if he had said--Open Thou mine eyes to behold wondrous things in the Bible.

II. The meaning of the request--"Open thou mine eyes."

- 1. It does not mean create new eyes for me. Nor,

- 2. Does the Psalmist pray for any physical operation as removing a cataract, or taking away a film from the surface of the eye; for it is not the natural eye with which we see spiritual things. But,
- 3. The Psalmist does intend to pray for spiritual light. A man may have good eyes, bodily and mental, and yet he will perceive nothing if light be wanting. I suppose the Psalmist to pray for spiritual light, the medium of spiritual vision, by which, supplied by the in-dwelling Spirit, he may apprehend the wondrous things really revealed in the Bible. Many will inquire--What is this spiritual light? I answer, that I cannot tell what it is, any more than I can tell what natural light is. Ask me what natural light is, and I cannot tell. I can tell what philosophers speculate about it, and that is all. I know this, that in its absence I cannot see, and that in its presence I can see. So there is spiritual light. What it is I know not, but that there is such a thing I do know, (and what Christian does not know it?) Every man enlightened by the Spirit of God knows the fact full well. He may be ignorant of its nature of the manner of its operations, as we doubtless are of both natural and spiritual light, but of the fact of the existence of both we may be perfectly sure; and of the existence of spiritual light, he upon whose eyes it has shone, is as certain as any man can be of the existence of the sun in the heavens. He knows that in its presence he can discern spiritual objects, and that in its absence they are hid from his eyes. Now I say, that the Psalmist in the text, expresses his desire to have spiritual light--his desire for the Spirit to shed his light upon the Bible, without which, he could not see and apprehend the truth of the Bible, and by which, they might be made to stand forth as actual realities to his soul. I pass to show

III. What is implied in the request.

- 1. It is implied that we possess the faculties requisite for the perception of spiritual objects. The Psalmist prays for no change or new creation, and there needs no change in the nature or organization of our faculties.
- 2. That our spiritual eyes are useless without light--that they are of no avail till God opens them, or till He supplies the light by which alone we can see--that we shall not and cannot behold the wondrous things in God's law, only as the medium of vision is supplied.
- 3. That the Psalmist knew very well that there were wonderful things concealed from his spiritual eye in the absence of spiritual light. He knew some of the things contained in the Scriptures doubtless. His eyes had been opened perhaps, and more than once. Indeed, no spiritual man can read the 119 Psalm with any good degree of attention, and not feel that he who wrote it had drunk, and that deeply, into the spirit of God's holy law. Every verse almost, any every verse but two, expresses in some way his love for God's law, the importance of God's law, or the glory of God's law. And the knowledge he already had gained had ravished his heart and made him cry out more earnestly to have his eyes fully opened, that he might be able to see clearly the glories of the Scriptures. The Psalmist had without doubt been enabled to get in some degree, behind the veil of types and shadows of the Old Testament, he had taken a peep beneath the drapery, and had seen Christ revealed and the wonderful things of salvation; he had looked through and beyond the outward types and shadows and the sight had so enraptured his

soul, that he prayed with agonizing earnestness and importunity--"Open mine eyes. O Lord open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law." The wonders are in the Bible if we could only see them. We might be walking in the midst of the splendors of nature, and see nothing if there were not light. What are the glories of vision to a blind man? He may encircle the globe, go over its mountains and through its valleys, cross its oceans and its continents, pass among all its beauties and its luxuriance, and yet see nothing. Without eyes they are nothing; or with eyes if there be no light, all is midnight darkness. It is so as to spiritual things. Read the Bible, pass through its paragraphs, go over its pages, and you may after all see nothing of its beauties--like a man traversing a country in a stage-coach at midnight, he can get nothing of its scenery, how picturesque so ever it may be. When men with eyes not opened in the sense of the text read the Bible, they do not see its beauties, do not behold the wondrous things which are nevertheless contained therein, and they should with all earnestness make the prayer of the Psalmist. He prayed because he felt there were things in the law of God which he had never seen.

- 4. It is implied that we need to know the wonderful things which are spoken of. It is not to be supposed that the Psalmist wished to gratify a vain curiosity. Did he utter this inspired prayer, I ask you, merely from idle curiosity? No. He needed to know, and he felt it; he perishingly needed knowledge, and he cried in view thereof, and not for his own benefit alone, but that he might teach others also, that he might declare the praises of God in the great congregation.
- 5. It is implied that none but God can open our eyes. The Psalmist knew that a mere knowledge of language, of grammar and philology could avail him nothing. He understood the language of the Scriptures well enough. He did not pray to be taught the language of the Bible, to have the ability to decipher all the philology thereof--he would not pour contempt upon these, but value them in their place. But after all, with all his knowledge of the language, he felt that not any man, not even the wisest, not an angel, could give him the light. No, none but God, none but God by the Spirit which indited the sacred pages could open his eyes, and hence his prayer to God--"Open Thou mine eyes." It should never be forgotten that the Bible is a mere dead letter except to those to whom the Spirit makes it a personal revelation. Do you understand me? What did the Psalmist pray for? To read the Bible? He could read it. To understand the words? He could define them. To become acquainted with the literature of the Bible? No, he knew all these things well enough. What then? That God would make the Bible a special and personal revelation to him. Not through Moses and the prophets, not by having the Scriptures in his hands, but to him, for himself--not by giving light to others, but directly to him--by opening his eyes. Lord "open Thou mine eyes." People are mistaken who think that the Bible is a revelation to them in any such sense as to save their souls, except their eyes are opened by the Holy Ghost. The Psalmist himself could not see without this, and he prayed God to supply to him that light, by the aid of which he might apprehend the truths of God's word. He sees the words--he reads the sentences--but what is the meaning? What are the things said? Open my eyes that I may see them. His prayer was to God for he felt that none but God could supply his need. But I hasten to notice,

IV. The consequences of having our eyes opened in the sense of the text.

- 1. Ourselves will be revealed. We shall see our own portrait drawn in a manner that will

convince us instantly that the pencil of the Omniscient has done the work. It will be as if you had been sitting in the blaze of the Omniscient eye. The clearness and exactness will be startling. You will seem never to have seen yourself before, you will be astonished at the fearful fidelity with which every feature will be sketched. Sinner, let your eyes be opened, and you will have another view of yourself altogether. Though it never entered into your heart to sit for your portrait, yet there is drawn every lineament, there you are, your face blazing right out, staring upon you, every feature and lineament blazing from the page of inspiration. Look where you will, there you are--a vile sinner, and you will wish to flee and get away from the horrible picture of your own face.

- 2. God will be revealed. God and yourself--and this in proportion to the degree of light. If the light be obscure, you will see indistinctly--"men as trees walking"--like moon-light or star-light. In the star-light you can see the fences, the trees, and the houses; in moonlight you can distinguish more; but yet things are not clear. As the sun approaches, as it puts out the stars and makes the moon dim, as it rises more and more till it appears in perfect day, your view grown fuller and clearer till the whole landscape is bathed in a flood of light. God is revealed--Father, Son, and Holy Ghost--but especially the Son, Christ, is revealed. You will find Christ in places without number, in passages where before you never dreamed Christ was to be found. The more I read my Bible and pray the prayer of our text the more am I convinced of the spirituality of those who find Christ revealed every where in the Bible. Once I thought differently. I remember a few years ago reading Edward's Notes on the Bible, and that I thought him visionary because he found Christ hinted at so often. He saw Christ every where. I saw no such thing. So some writers will find clear proofs of the divinity of Christ, where others can see no reference thereto at all. Now the difficulty with me was, I lacked spiritual light, so that I was unable to see what was really revealed in the Bible. The Jews, the great body of them, could not see Christ in the Jewish law, they did not see the drift and bent of the Scriptures. Why not? They were carnal, sensual, they had not the Spirit. Where persons' eyes are thus opened, they will have revelations of Christ such as to surprise them exceedingly; such a fullness and glory as will astonish them greatly. O what love! And in proportion to the clearness of the light of the Spirit, you will see that the design of the Bible every where, is to reveal Christ directly or indirectly. Christ is the subject, and the end--in history, in prophecy, in poetry, the Old Testament and the New--every where, Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the sum and the substance, the beginning and the end. Let your eyes be opened, and Christ is every where--our righteousness, our wisdom, our sanctification, and our redemption.
- 3. We shall differ very much in our views from all those whose eyes have not been opened. Impenitent young men, you sympathize with each other, you are alike self-wise and vain, you meet and scoff at religion and religious men, you agree in your notion that all piety is superstition and beneath your notice. But let the Spirit open the eyes of one of your number, and how changed his tone. How he will differ from those with whom he so perfectly agreed but just now in his views of himself and of them, of his works and their works, of his relations to God and of theirs. He can no longer sympathize with them, and join their wicked scoffings--he sees with a strong light, and is astonished at their darkness and his former darkness--he shuns them as the gate of hell. Why? His eyes are opened to behold eternity, and the judgment, and his sins. He sees himself, and them, standing upon the slippery steep, and fiery billows rolling beneath,

and he cries out, and flees in terror. All this may be true while he is impenitent. But suppose he is converted; then he differs from them still more. He goes farther and farther and farther from them, and as he progresses in grace, and the light of the Spirit's illumination beams stronger and brighter upon his soul, he presses on to the perfect day, while they remain where they were or plunge into deeper darkness.

This difference in views is true moreover of the different stages of Christian experience. As a man's eyes are opened more and more, he differs more and more from those who are below him; he sees things which they cannot see, and has a clear view of what they see but dimly. His view differs from theirs, as a view in the bright noon-day differs from one at evening twilight. Their experience will differ from his, as the description of a village, or a mountain, or a landscape, seen in the evening, would differ from a description of them as seen under broad day-light. Just as far as we get our eyes open we view the Scriptures differently, as naturally as cause produces its effect. As our light increases, our views must enlarge and expand of course. We must see more and better surely, when we stand with the great sun pouring upon our heads his flood of light, than when in the dim star-light we cast our eyes abroad.

And here let me remark--it is unspeakable folly to stereotype religious opinions, as if men were of course to agree in all their views. A young convert just born into the kingdom, wishes to be admitted into the fold of the Good Shepherd. Well, the whole system of religious doctrine is read over. Do you subscribe to this? the whole of this? And then not a step farther may they go, at the peril of heresy. How strange it is that men should imagine that here can be such a thing as for Christians to be just alike in their views of religious truth. They may be alike as far as they go. They may each be correct, while one may be far in advance of his fellow. And as a new truth comes to view, it always sheds its light over all the rest, and modifies the form in which they appear. And while the Spirit continues to throw its light upon the sacred pages, we may expect to modify and enlarge, and in some degree change our view of truth. How absurd to nail down our system and say--There, never change more. I have heard persons reckon it a virtue that they had never changed their views of truth. But I ask, have such persons prayed the prayer of the Psalmist? Have their eyes been opened?

- 4. The Bible will become to us a new book. Converts say so, and with truth; but it is not true with them alone. Old men, men who have long known God, are made by their experience to say the same thing. A few years since I was laboring in a revival with an elderly minister, a man sixty years old. I shall never forget how that man would say to me time after time, with deep emotion--"I have a new Bible. How striking the promises are. It seems to me as though I had never read them before. So rich they are, so full, so precious!" Ah, yes! Nor is this a singular nor an uncommon case. In many, very many instances have persons who have long been Christians, thus found their Bible a new book, and growing fresh and new as it were every day. It has become so precious, so glorious, so sweet, they could, so to speak, devour it, as the hungry soul devours its needful food. In my own case, let me say, beloved, within the last year the Lord has given to me such views of the Bible, that I have found it difficult to realize that I had ever known before any thing thereof at all. Many a time have I cried out, as the light poured upon the truth--"Lord, I never knew this before,"--and I could scarcely for the time believe that

I had ever seen the thing at all. I do not mean I had not, for I know I had before seen great beauties in the Bible, but the light was so great that the spots that before seemed bright, were now hidden in the added splendor, as stars are lost in the light of dawn. Whole trains of passages would crowd through my mind with such glory and freshness--passages which I had preached from again and again, would come in review under a light so new and striking, and with a meaning so full, that it would seem as though I had never known anything of them before, and the thoughts would crowd, and roll, and swell like an infinite tide, till it would appear as if I could preach and preach, and never be done preaching from almost any one of them.

- 5. Persons will be astonished at their former ignorance of the Bible when God opens their eyes. They will see so much that is new where they thought they knew all before, that they will be forced to exclaim in amazement--how could I have passed these things and not see them. I have read the passages a hundred times, why have I not seen these things before? As if a person should pass through a village in the dark, not knowing it was night, but supposing it was day, and then should go through the same village in actual broad day, and see the houses, and streets, and gardens, and wonder (as he would) why he did not see the village before. Without spiritual light, persons fail to see almost every spiritual truth in the Bible. They are like persons in the dark, while yet they say "We see;" and when God does indeed open their eyes, and they really see, they are astonished above measure that they had never seen before.
- 6. Those whose eyes are opened will see a great multitude of things in the Bible which others do not see, and which they will not believe are there, even though you tell them of their existence therein. Read the Bible under the illumination of the Spirit, and you will see myriads of things, which if you tell to others, they will smile at you for a crazy man; they will declare no such things are there, and suspect you to be a little beside yourself. Well let them alone. Let them have their say. They cannot see what you have seen, till they stand in the like strong and clear light. Let two persons pass through a place one in the night, and one in the day, and let the one who passed in the dark think that it was day, and that he saw all that was to be seen. Can he convince him? Wait till he goes through in the day-time, and then talk with him.

And here let me remark, as I said a little ago of the doctrine of Christ's divinity, so it is of the doctrine of Entire Sanctification. Once I could not see that doctrine in the Bible, and now I wonder much why I did not, for now I see it every where, almost. It is true with me as a good sister said of herself--when I first heard of the doctrine of Entire Sanctification, I thought it was no where in the Bible, but now I see that it is everywhere. I can adopt that language myself. It is not strange however, that persons whose eyes are not opened cannot see that doctrine in the Bible. The Bible, much of it, is so written, and perhaps from the necessity of the case, that the soul must be in a certain state, in order to see at all what was in the mind of the Spirit. "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost," says Paul. That is, no man can see Christ as He is--the Lord of our salvation--but by the light of the Holy Spirit spread upon the sacred page. It is curious to see how many notions and conceits men will have of the meaning of the Bible, or how dull of apprehension they will be, and then how clear it will seem when the Lord has opened their eyes. Before, nothing could convince them, now they need nothing to convince them. If a man should pass this meeting-house, supposing he could see when he

could not, you could not convince him of its presence; but let his sight be restored or the light shine upon his eyes, and there needs no more--there it stands before his own eyes. The doctrines of Atonement, of Christ's Divinity, of Sanctification--when the light from heaven bursts upon the page, you need no voice to tell you; all silent, you gaze upon the revealed wonders, as when from the deepest midnight the sun breaks from the darkness and the whole landscape lies before you in an ocean of glories. Now Christian friends, I mean what I say; there is a spiritual illumination, a supplying the spiritual eyes with light, in which light the mind sees with a power of demonstration, like that which attends natural vision, the spiritual truths revealed in the Bible. Before this light is supplied, the mind may doubt, and reason, and cavil, and deny; but O, when the sun rises and pours forth its glorious blaze, then everything is revealed, every cavil is hushed, every doubt forgotten, and the soul gazes in silent rapture on the wondrous scene.

- 7. Our views will become a wonder to others, and just in proportion as our eyes are opened. Our views will be reckoned peculiar. Yes indeed, peculiar light will produce peculiar views of course. As far as the Spirit gives us light and we see thereby, our views will be modified, and those who have not the same light, will think them strange, and will wonder at us. How is it, they say, that they find such and such things? We find nothing like that. The Jews think the Christian doctrine blasphemous; they cannot find our Jesus in their Old Testament Messiah. We shall surely be regarded as heretics by those who have not our light. If God gives us light, if the revelations of His word be made to our souls, and especially if we proclaim them to the world, who shall be thought heretics. Let any man push his prayer before God, "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law," and let an answer be granted, and his eyes be really unsealed, and the presbytery will begin to watch him, the whisper will begin to go around, "The brother has a good spirit, but his views are dangerous"--they must have an eye to him, a committee must be appointed, and they must confer with him to rid him of his strange and peculiar views. What is the matter? Nothing, only the Spirit sheds light upon his mind, and he has got a step or two beyond the stereotype form, that is all. He understands the Bible better than before, has a richer insight into the richness of its promises; the Spirit has anointed him for his work--that is all. And if he ventures to say meekly to his fellow-servants, "Brethren, the Lord hath shown me such things in His word," their counsel will be--our brother seems to have a sweet, heavenly spirit, but his views are peculiar and dangerous, and they must be pronounced heterodox, and he be silenced. This has always been so, and men who are led in advance of their fellow Christians, must be content to be suspected of heresy.
- 8. Those who are enlightened, will be counted mystical. The most spiritual have in all ages been reckoned mystical. There are real mystics to be sure; there are extremes and delusions, and men think they see when they do not; but that does not alter the fact that spiritual men are reckoned mystical by those who are in the dark. Why? Because the former have spiritual eyes, they have spiritual light, and they see and understand things that are entirely invisible, and a complete mystery to others.
- 9. Those who are enlightened will be considered deranged by those whose eyes are not opened. Christ was thought to be mad. Festus said to Paul, "Thou art beside thyself, much learning hath made thee mad," you have studied so hard, have gone so deeply into philosophy and theology that you are deranged. Paul indeed answered him most solemnly, "I am not mad most noble

Festus, but speak forth the words of truth and soberness." But now wherein lay the difference? Paul had met Jesus by the way and had seen a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun, shining round about him. The light of God had fallen upon him, and now people thought him mad--Festus thought him mad. And why should it not be so? It will be so. It will surely be so. When do we judge a man deranged? Suppose a man's eyes should really be opened as Elisha's were, and those of the young man who was with him, and he should behold the angel of God encamped about him, which is in fact true, or like Stephen's, so that he could look into heaven and see the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God, could behold the realities of the invisible world--would he not be pronounced deranged? Yes indeed. "Put a strait jacket on him--do hear him" they will cry, "he says he sees angels, and chariots, and horses all round him--he sees heaven opened! Blasphemy--away with him--stone him to death!" Why? He tells what he really sees. Let a man but speak out what he sees, and surely he must be deranged. Now men do become deranged--surely they do; they do sometimes become visionary--most certainly; but men's eyes may really be opened too, as Stephen's and Elisha's were, and then others will imagine they are deranged. Those who think so may be honest in their opinion too.

- 10. Such will almost certainly be persecuted. Why was Paul persecuted? Because his eyes had been opened to see the fullness of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, and because he was constrained by his love to preach the cross. He had been a persecutor and injurious; he had many friends; but Christ's love had ravished his soul, and he would joyfully pour out his whole being for his Master. And what did he say? Hear him. "As I came nigh to Damascus, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me, and I heard a voice saying unto me--Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" and he went on and finished the story of his conversion. They bore impatiently with this, but soon he began again--"while I prayed in the temple I was in a trance, and saw [the Lord] saying unto me, make haste and get thee out of Jerusalem," and they could bear it no longer. They gave him audience till this word, and then lifted up their voices and said--"Away with such a fellow from the earth, it is not fit that he should live." And "they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air." And why? Surely Paul was beside himself, and a horrid blasphemer, and to kill him would be to do God service. They persecuted him. Why? He could see and they were blind. And those who are thus blind often will think that they ought to do many things contrary to those who are spiritual, and whom they regard as dangerous fanatics. I am very far from believing that all persecution arises from mere malicious wickedness. Many in high places and in low, oppose and persecute because they are in the dark, and think they see, and they persecute "in all good conscience." They may be, (as indeed they are) wicked for being in the dark, but in the dark, they think their spiritual brethren are mischievous, and must be put down and put out of the church; and think to do God service when they use the excising knife. But are they innocent? With all the light around them which God has proffered and now proffers, are they innocent while they remain in the dark? I think not.
- 11. The illumination of the Spirit will make us cease from man. We shall cease to expect any such instruction from human lips as shall suffice to qualify us to be useful. Not that God may not use creatures to instruct us in a degree. He does so. But we shall cease to rest in them, and we shall go to God feeling entirely sure that from Him alone cometh our help--that He alone can supply the light by which we are to see the things which lie hid in the Word of God.

- 12. In proportion to the light we enjoy, we shall find ourselves dwelling in the spiritual instead of the natural world. Let a man see as with open vision, the realities which we all believe to exist in the invisible world, let him apprehend them as we now do the objects of this visible scene, and with which world think you will he be most conversant? With God, heaven, Christ, and the eternal world, or this gross and earthly clod on which we tread? As the mind is opened, it dwells in and communes with the spiritual world, it loses sight of earthly objects--there is a state of mind in which persons can feel the light shining broad and deep upon the soul--God draws near--the soul withdraws from all the outward senses, and retires into its inner sanctuary--God approaches and comes into the inner-most chamber of the mind, and there is silence, far, far from all the world of sense and sight, the soul communes with the eternal God, and if all the world were to throng around and clamor for a hearing, still the soul, withdrawn far within, would heed them not, but in bliss ecstatic drink draughts of ineffable joy from the presence of infinite love, and God be all in all.

I remember well how once I read with astonishment the account of such men as Xavier, where they would have such communion with God as utterly to drive from them all thoughts of earth, and every object of sense. Xavier, you know, on a certain day, was to have a visit from a prince--the viceroy. He went to his chamber, directing his servant to call him at such a time. When the servant entered his room to call him at the hour, there was his master kneeling on the floor, his eyes upturned, and his face shining like that of an angel, wholly insensible to outward things--the servant dared not disturb him. At the end of an hour he came again, still he was so--again, there he knelt. The servant spoke, no answer--he spoke again, no reply--he shook him and succeeded in awakening him from his trance--"Is the viceroy come?" inquired he, "tell him I have a visit from the King of Kings today, and I cannot leave it"--and he sank back into insensibility, and was shut up in the presence of the Living God. Time was when I could not understand how Paul could be in such a state of mind, that, speaking as an honest man, he could not tell, as he says, whether in the body or out of the body. But now I can see how he could say so. The mind is so absorbed with spiritual views, as to be insensible to natural objects entirely. The senses are all swallowed up, laid aside. The senses you know are but the organs which the mind uses; but she can do without them; she can retire from the touch, the hearing, the sight, and in the deep sanctuary of the soul sit alone with God. And this occurs when the light of the Spirit shines broadly and fully on the mind. Speak to him he does not hear you--touch him, it does not arouse him--he is gone--gone to the spiritual world; and when he returns and his soul comes back to earth, whether I was in the body I could not tell.

You remember a case among ourselves some years ago. A beloved sister--the Spirit came upon her, and she thought she was in heaven; her heart was there, and she thought she was there; she forgot she was in the body, the glories of heaven were around her, and she literally leaped for joy. I heard of a case, I think it was in the state of New York. It was that of a deacon. He was sitting in the "deacon's seat," facing the congregation; as the minister was preaching, the Holy Ghost fell upon the deacon. He rose up unwittingly, stretched out his hands upward, his face pale and gazing as it were into heaven, and his countenance radiant as an angel's. The assembly were amazed, the Spirit of God ran like fire through the whole congregation, the arrows of conviction flew like lightning, and

the whole body were convulsed with emotion, and many were broken down before the Lord.

- 13. He whose eyes are opened, will be solemn, but it will be a cheerful solemnity. It is related of Xavier, that his cheerfulness was so great, that those who were not familiar with him thought him gay. David, in his joy, danced with all his might before the ark, when he brought it up from the house of Obed-Edom. There will be nothing like levity, but a deep and solemn cheerfulness, such a cheerfulness as we may suppose God to possess--a broad, universal smile; the mind smiles in its deepest being; to the very bottom of the heart, there is one deep, broad smile--as God looks forth over His whole creation with a smiling face--the soul is cheerful, peaceful as an ocean of peace.

GLOSSARY

of easily misunderstood terms as defined by Mr. Finney himself.

Compiled by Katie Stewart

1. **Complacency, or Esteem:** "Complacency, as a state of will or heart, is only benevolence modified by the consideration or relation of right character in the object of it. God, prophets, apostles, martyrs, and saints, in all ages, are as virtuous in their self-denying and untiring labours to save the wicked, as they are in their complacent love to the saints." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE VII)*. Also, "approbation of the character of its object. Complacency is due only to the good and holy." *Lectures to Professing Christians (LECTURE XII)*.
2. **Disinterested Benevolence:** "By disinterested benevolence I do not mean, that a person who is disinterested feels no interest in his object of pursuit, but that he seeks the happiness of others for its own sake, and not for the sake of its reaction on himself, in promoting his own happiness. He chooses to do good because he rejoices in the happiness of others, and desires their happiness for its own sake. God is purely and disinterestedly benevolent. He does not make His creatures happy for the sake of thereby promoting His own happiness, but because He loves their happiness and chooses it for its own sake. Not that He does not feel happy in promoting the happiness of His creatures, but that He does not do it for the sake of His own gratification." *Lectures to Professing Christians (LECTURE I)*.
3. **Divine Sovereignty:** "The sovereignty of God consists in the independence of his will, in consulting his own intelligence and discretion, in the selection of his end, and the means of accomplishing it. In other words, the sovereignty of God is nothing else than infinite benevolence directed by infinite knowledge." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LXXVI)*.
4. **Election:** "That all of Adam's race, who are or ever will be saved, were from eternity chosen by God to eternal salvation, through the sanctification of their hearts by faith in Christ. In other words, they are chosen to salvation by means of sanctification. Their salvation is the end- their sanctification is a means. Both the end and the means are elected, appointed, chosen; the means as really as the end, and for the sake of the end." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LXXIV)*.
5. **Entire Sanctification:** "Sanctification may be entire in two senses: (1.) In the sense of present, full obedience, or entire consecration to God; and, (2.) In the sense of continued, abiding

consecration or obedience to God. Entire sanctification, when the terms are used in this sense, consists in being established, confirmed, preserved, continued in a state of sanctification or of entire consecration to God." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LVIII)*.

6. **Moral Agency:** "Moral agency is universally a condition of moral obligation. The attributes of moral agency are intellect, sensibility, and free will." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE III)*.
7. **Moral Depravity:** "Moral depravity is the depravity of free-will, not of the faculty itself, but of its free action. It consists in a violation of moral law. Depravity of the will, as a faculty, is, or would be, physical, and not moral depravity. It would be depravity of substance, and not of free, responsible choice. Moral depravity is depravity of choice. It is a choice at variance with moral law, moral right. It is synonymous with sin or sinfulness. It is moral depravity, because it consists in a violation of moral law, and because it has moral character." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE XXXVIII)*.
8. **Human Reason:** "the intuitive faculty or function of the intellect... it is the faculty that intuits moral relations and affirms moral obligation to act in conformity with perceived moral relations." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE III)*.
9. **Retributive Justice:** "Retributive justice consists in treating every subject of government according to his character. It respects the intrinsic merit or demerit of each individual, and deals with him accordingly." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE XXXIV)*.
10. **Total Depravity:** "Moral depravity of the unregenerate is without any mixture of moral goodness or virtue, that while they remain unregenerate, they never in any instance, nor in any degree, exercise true love to God and to man." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE XXXVIII)*.
11. **Unbelief:** "the soul's withholding confidence from truth and the God of truth. The heart's rejection of evidence, and refusal to be influenced by it. The will in the attitude of opposition to truth perceived, or evidence presented." *Systematic Theology (LECTURE LV)*.