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Wherefore Do The Wicked Live

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Text.--Job 21:7; first clause of the verse: "Wherefore do the wicked live?"

Job's three friends seem to have been of the opinion that this, the present state of the existence, is a state of rewards and punishments; and that therefore a man's character might infallibly be known by God's dealings with him. Hence they interpreted the dealings of God with Job in his affliction as conclusive proof that he was not what he professed to be. They accused him of hypocrisy and exhorted him to repentance. They insisted that God does not afflict men except for their sins; and that their afflictions, or the discipline under which they pass, are to be regarded as punishment, and therefore Job must be a wicked man. Job denied this, and maintained that this is a state of probation. He argued at length that nothing certain could be known of a man's character by the providential dealings of God with him in this state of existence. This chapter is a part of Job's vindication of this doctrine. In this text he asks them to account for the fact that the wicked do live, and grow rich, and are mighty in power. In his argument he insists that they are often prospered in this world, and even pass through less trial and affliction than many of the godly do. How then, he insists, can you maintain the doctrine, that God deals with men according to their characters in this life?

In discoursing upon this subject I propose to enquire,

I. Who are wicked?

II. Why do the wicked live?

I. Who are wicked?

Answer: All who know, but do not do their duty, are wicked.

- 1. God's law and government are positive, and require supreme love to God and equal love to man, with all the appropriate expressions of this love in all the relations of life. To neglect to render this love and its fruits; in other words, to neglect to do one's duty, is disobedience; it is to

refuse to fulfill any obligation to God or man. Nothing is good in God's sight but love and its fruits. To withhold these, is to withhold the whole of duty; it is to violate the whole law; it is to set aside all moral obligation; it is to condemn divine authority; it is to trample on all the divine rights; it is to reject the rights of all those whom we ought to love, and to set up our own will and our own way, and our own pleasure, as supreme.

- 2. Let it be understood, then, that the true definition of a wicked man is one who knows but does not do his duty. This is the essence of wickedness. And it should be said that neglect to do duty is always a refusal to do it; for it is impossible to know our duty and to be indifferent with respect to it. We cannot remain passive in the presence of revealed obligation. In such a case the will must act. Man is a free agent; but his freedom does not imply that in the presence of obligation, he can remain entirely passive, acting neither one way nor the other. His freedom consists precisely in this, that, in the presence of obligation, he can universally act as a sovereign, the one way or the other, can comply with obligation or refuse to do so. Neglect to obey is therefore always refusal to obey. He therefore who knows but does not do his duty, withholds from God and man their due, and is a wicked man.

II. We come to answer the enquiry, Why do the wicked live?

God is benevolent, He is love, and always has and must have some good and sufficient reasons for all that He does or omits. He is never arbitrary or capricious in anything that He does or declines to do. Therefore there must be benevolent reasons for the existence of the wicked.

In answering this question it will not be expected that all the reasons that actuated the divine mind are known to us, or can be stated in a sermon. There are, however, revealed in various ways, many reasons why the wicked live.

I shall divide these, and remark upon them, under three heads.

1. Notice some reasons that respect God Himself.
 2. Some reasons that respect His people.
 3. Some reasons that respect the wicked themselves.
- 1. I am to notice some reasons that respect God.
 - (1.) He created them for Himself. When I say that He created them for Himself, I do not mean that He created them wicked. Wickedness is always a voluntary act, or state of mind. It is not and cannot be the subject of creation, as bodies and souls are created. It is a sheer absurdity to suppose that a being could be created wicked. This would confound all ideas of wickedness. A being can be created who shall by his own act become wicked; but no being in the universe can make him wicked but himself. Wickedness is always a violation of moral obligation, therefore no one being can be the author of another's wickedness. God therefore did not create men wicked. He created them moral beings; they become wicked by their own voluntary choice.
 - (2.) God no doubt created the wicked or those who become wicked, because their

creation was essential; in His judgment, to the promotion of the highest universal good. Not that their wickedness was essential to the promotion of the highest good, but their existence was essential, and that, too, notwithstanding God foresaw that they would be wicked; since He at the same time foresaw that He could so over-rule their wickedness and make such use of their existence as to promote the highest universal good, that is, the highest good of the whole universe taken together.

- o (3.) He created the wicked as objects of regard, that He might have them to care for -- even after they became wicked, that He might care for them notwithstanding. He wanted objects of affectionate regard; a family to take care of, to exercise His natural and moral attributes, to busy Himself with their nurture, and with providential arrangements to promote their good. He did not desire to live alone; the infinite overflowings of the riches of His own mind sought objects to nurse and take care of, and make holy and happy. He spares them since He has created them and they have become wicked. They continue to live, not because they deserve to live, but still to exercise His natural and His moral attributes. Notwithstanding that they have become wicked He loves them still. He has harbored no feelings of resentment or revenge.

He is infinitely generous, and rises above the faults of His creatures, and is infinitely willing to forgive and bless them still; and if He can reclaim the wicked, is infinitely willing and ready to save them. They have become wicked, but He pities them. He knows very well that they cannot endure His displeasure. He is long-suffering, "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." He has no pleasure in their death. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." He cannot take pleasure in the misery and destruction of any of His creatures. If the wicked persist in wickedness, He will have pleasure in the execution of justice, in the vindication of authority and law; but in the misery of His creature He can have no pleasure.

- o (4.) It is a trial to Him to destroy them. This must be if He loves them. Parents find it a great trial to banish their children, although they are sometimes obliged to do so. And if it is a trial to us who are evil to banish our children when they become incorrigibly wicked, how much more must it grieve the heart of God.
- o (5.) He can benevolently suffer them; and as long as He can do this He no doubt will suffer them. He cares for the whole of His creatures, and cannot consistently spare guilty individuals at the expense of the higher public good. It were neither wise nor benevolent in Him to spare the wicked when to do so is no longer consistent with the highest good of the public at large, the society in which they dwell. He must not spare those who deserve to be banished, nor suffer them to live, to be only an injury and a curse to the innocent.

But the fact that God does spare the wicked is evidence that thus far He sees that He can benevolently and wisely let them live; He therefore preserves their lives. But you who are wicked should know that whenever you come into a relation to God and society in which it is no longer benevolent in Him

to let you live, in which to spare you longer would be upon the whole an injury to the innocent or virtuous; He will then spare you no longer; He will put you out of their way; He will wipe the nuisance from the face of the earth.

- (6.) He preserves the lives of the wicked that He may set a good example to His creatures. He wishes to reveal Himself as a God of love, of compassion, of long suffering, as one "slow to anger, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, for giving iniquity, transgression and sin;" but He will also, in due time, show that He "will by no means clear the guilty."

He wishes to set an example of good-will to enemies; of self-sacrifice for enemies; of pains taking for enemies; of forbearance; patience; long-suffering. He wishes to show His people for their good, and to show the wicked also for their good, what kind of a being He is, what spirit and temper are in Him, how unselfish He is, how slow to anger, how preserving He can be in bestowing favors on those that requite Him with disobedience and opposition.

- (7.) He wishes to confer all the good He wisely can on the wicked. He is infinitely rich, an eternally over-flowing fountain of riches and He wishes to make even the wicked the recipients of all the favors that He wisely can. He causes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sends His rain on the just and on the unjust. He loves to see the wicked enjoy His favors. "He opens His hand and supplies the wants of every living thing." All creatures, wicked and all, return to Him; and each receives "his portion of meat in due season."

He watches over the wicked when they sleep, and loves to see them calm and quiet in sleep. He wakes them in the morning and feeds them, and Himself enjoys their repast. All the day He fans their heaving lungs, and although they breathe out their breath in opposition to Him, still He follows them from place to place, watches over them to do them good, protects them from harm, and in ten thousand ways repeats His acts of kindness and care, while they regard Him only with contempt.

But all this He does, and will do, because He is love. He can have patience with them and can forbear; can do them good and not evil as long as is consistent with the highest good of His kingdom at large. The fact that in His wisdom He can over-rule your sins thus far, and in some way make good account of your lives, is the reason why you still live.

- (8.) The wicked live because God wishes to realize in facts His own ideal of goodness in His treatment of them.

To the righteous He cannot in fact realize all the refinements of goodness. To treat the righteous and well-deserving with kindness, is good; but to treat the

wicked with kindness, to render good for evil, blessing for cursing, is a still more refined form of goodness. In His treatment of the wicked in this world, He has an opportunity to exhibit all men some of the most delicate and exquisite forms of goodness of which we can form any conception. Justice is goodness, treating individuals as they deserve. But to treat them better than they deserve, nay, the opposite of their deserts, is a still more refined form of goodness. To love our friends is well; to love our enemies is better. To deny ourselves, to be at great pains-taking, to incur great expense, to do our enemies good; to hear and forbear, and sacrifice self, and be at great expense and suffering for the sake of doing good to enemies, is to exhibit forms of goodness almost too refined for our gross conceptions.

- (9.) God spares the wicked to secure the respect and confidence of the universe. This He does not do selfishly. He knows that the good of the universe depends on their having confidence in Him, and respect and affection for Him. He knows that He cannot save the universe unless they will consent to be governed by Him. His government is moral, and not a government of force; He must therefore secure the admiration, applause, confidence, affection, and obedience of His subjects, or He cannot save them. Now in His treatment of the wicked He knows very well that He shall commend Himself to the admiration, affection, and confidence of all His intelligent subjects, thus strengthening His influence over them, and binding their hearts to His throne and government.
- (10.) He spares the wicked to glorify Himself in their destruction, if it comes to that, that He must destroy them.

To execute wholesome law is always just, of course; but justice is all the more honored and glorified when the subject punished has not only violated law but has contemned the law giver, and contemned the offer of mercy. If the rebellious subject has been treated with the greatest kindness and forbearance; if much pains has been taken with him to reclaim and save him; if the government has exhausted all its available resources to do him good, to conciliate him, to humble and reclaim him, and has failed to do so, then justice is rendered all the more sacred in its execution. When the penalty of the law falls upon such a subject it makes a deep impression; the subjects of the government feel that that is done which was demanded. Justice is glorified, law is honored, authority established, iniquity rebuked, order preserved.

- 2. I must notice some reasons that respect His people.

- (1.) He spares the wicked to provide benevolent employment for His people.

He has stationed the wicked providentially throughout the whole regions and domains of the church. They have in their midst persons unsaved, persons who will not obey God, who are in the way to hell. Now to save these is the very work which the church needs. To sympathize with Christ in taking hold

of this work, is one of the ways in which God sanctifies His people, and fits them for heaven.

- (2.) He spares the wicked to exercise and develop the graces of His people, to promote their self-denial to try and develop their patience, to lead them in all things to be like the Savior.
- (3.) He wishes to prove the sincerity of His people, to prove to themselves and others that they do really love the souls of men, that they are God's sincere friends, that they are the sincere friends of humanity.
- (4.) He wishes to prove the insincerity of the self-deceived, or of mere pretenders to religion. Some there are who profess to be God's friends, and the friends of man, who are not really so. By placing these in the midst of the wicked, He demonstrates their insincerity, shows that they are not what they profess to be, the friends of God, but that they sympathize with the world and go with the multitude to do evil. Thus, on the one hand, He wishes, by suffering the wicked to live, to prove to all around that His people will sympathize with Him and not with the wicked; and on the other, that false professors will sympathize with the world and not with Him.
- (5.) He spares the wicked as subjects of prayer, that He may multiply occasions that shall draw His people to commune with Him. He loves His children; He loves to see them deeply affected with the state of the wicked; He loves their sympathy in this respect; He wishes to secure as much communion with His children as He can for their good. He therefore places them in circumstances where the state of the wicked around them shall multiply occasions of their coming to commune with Him and ask favors of Him for the wicked. He loves to grant them favors for the wicked; He loves to see His children interest themselves in the happiness and well-being of sinners, and is well-pleased when they come with their petitions and requests for those who have deserved no favors, and who are yet needy.
- (6.) He spares the wicked to excite the compassion of His people, to break up their sensibility, to make their feelings mellow and tender.
- (7.) He spares the wicked that their wickedness may be seen by His people, and that they may learn more and more to hate and abhor iniquity. This is in fact the result of their living in the presence of sinners, that their righteous souls are vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked every day. They see more and more the hatefulness of sin, its inexcusableness, its abomination, and thus the very hatefulness of sin, when viewed by His people makes them better.

Thus He spares the wicked to make them and their wickedness useful to His people.

- (8.) Many of the wicked are so related to His own people as to be useful to them in many ways. Ungodly men are married to pious women; ungodly parents sometimes have pious

children; pious parents sometimes have ungodly children. The wicked and the righteous, in the relations of this life, are so inter-located that it is impossible to destroy all the wicked without doing a great evil to His own people. It is often the case that they are spared that God may win the hearts of generations that shall proceed from them, and thus may gather from their descendants a seed to serve Him. He often spares the wicked to provide the means of temporal support for His own people. The Bible says, "The wealth of the wicked is laid up for the just."

Wicked men often succeed in business, and accumulate a great deal of wealth, which will eventually be disposed of for the promotion of religion. Now wicked men mean no such thing. They do not accumulate property for the sake of promoting God's cause. They do not support God's children because they are God's children, but because of their particular relations to them. The unconverted husband does not support his pious wife because she is God's child but because she is his wife. Nevertheless God over-rules many things that the wicked do to support His own cause to benefit His own people. He makes them in many ways useful to the church; although they mean no such thing, yet so He uses them, and so He will use them.

- o (9.) He spares the wicked because His people love them. They love them oftentimes partly because of their relations to those who are His people. Some of them are their husbands, wives, parents, children, neighbors, friends. But they also love them with a love of benevolence, with a sacred regard for their good.

His people therefore dread to see them die in their sins; and because He dislikes to pain His own people by cutting off these wicked persons, He spares them as long as He wisely can.

- o (10.) He spares them because His people pity and pray for them. He no doubt keeps the wicked alive very often a long time because His people continue to cry to Him not to cut them off, but to spare them a little longer, and a little longer, till they shall dig about them and see if they will not bring forth fruit.

It sometimes happens, no doubt, that the wicked are cut off in answer to the prayer of God's people, but it is not because they pray for their destruction. But when they pray for things that cannot be granted without removing the wicked, God, no doubt, in answer to prayer, removes the wicked out of the way; not because His people prayed for their destruction, but because they prayed for the things that could not be granted without their destruction.

- o (11.) He dislikes to grieve His people. Indeed He does not willingly grieve or afflict any of the children of men and especially is this true of His own people. He will, therefore, from regard to His own people, spare their unconverted neighbors and friends as long as He wisely can. Many a Christian, from mere natural affection, clings to his earthly relatives and friends notwithstanding they are wicked; and it would sadly grieve him to see them cut off and sent to hell. God pities His people, and out of regard to their feelings

will spare these unconverted ones as long as He can.

- (12.) He wishes to spare the ungodly until His people have made so much effort to save them, that they have themselves become convinced that they are incorrigible. He wishes His people to know this, that they may be all the better reconciled to their destruction when He destroys them. He wants to prove even to His own people that the wicked are incorrigible, that their friends may see that to have spared their wicked relatives and wicked neighbors any longer would not have resulted in their conversion.
- 3. I will now mention some reasons that respect the wicked themselves.
 - (1.) God wishes to convince them of His sincere regard for them; to make them see and feel that He loves them still, and is trying to save them.
 - (2.) He wishes to convince them in such a manner as if possible to shame them out of their wickedness, that the exhibition of His goodness may lead them to repentance. He wishes thus, if possible, to constrain them to break off from their sins by righteousness, and to turn to God.
 - (3.) He wishes to make them realize their obligation. He gives them therefore plenty of time to reflect, to consider; He meets them at every turn with kindness; He bears with them and perseveres in showing them favors, if by any means He may win their confidence, their heart, and their souls to salvation.
 - (4.) At any rate, He intends to leave them without excuse. He thus tries to remove their prejudices against Himself and against His people; to subdue their unbelief, and constrain them, if possible, to have confidence in Him, and to realize His true regard for them. He wishes to subdue their enmity, to overcome their obstinacy, to soften their hearts and gain them for their salvation.

I conclude this discourse by a few questions and remarks addressed, first, to Christians; and secondly, to the wicked themselves.

First -- To Christians.

My brethren and sisters, what influence, as a matter of fact, has the preservation of the wicked had upon you?

(1.) Have their lives been useful to you? Is it a fact that residing in their midst, and having them before your faces as objects of benevolent regard has made you better, more watchful, more humble, more holy, more self-denying? Has their living among you made you more prayerful, more self-sacrificing, more patient, more forbearing and long-suffering? Has it made you more pitiful, more charitable; has it led you to love your enemies? Here you live in the midst of those who have not been your true friends, if you are God's friends. But have you loved them notwithstanding? Have you returned blessing for cursing, kind words for railing and accusation? Have you persisted in doing them

good with all lowliness of mind, however they have treated you?

(2.) Has their living in the midst of you made you more watchful over your tongue, over your life, over your spirit, and in all your ways?

(3.) Has their living in the midst of you made you more heavenly minded and Christ-like? Has it shown you more and more how little the world can do for men; and more and more the value of religion? Has it led you to hate sin? Has it made you firm and bold in kindly rebuking it?

Now that these effects should result from their living in the midst of you, is plainly the design of God in sparing the wicked; and if you are truly God's friends, these effects must have followed with you.

(4.) Has the presence of the wicked in your midst led you to stand up more thoroughly, and openly, and steadily, for Jesus, and take His part in the midst of a gain-saying world? Have you been faithful to Jesus in the presence of His enemies, and in your treatment of them?

(5.) Have you been faithful to the wicked themselves? and are you ready to die, and to have them die and to meet them in the judgment? Are you clear of their blood, so that when you meet them before God you shall be able to say, " O lord, I am clear of the blood of all these souls. I did what I could to save them, Thou knowest. I lived before them as much like Jesus as was possible. I prayed for them, I wept over them, I admonished them, I warned and entreated them, I besought them by all that was sacred in heaven and in earth to turn to Thee; but they would not. I give my testimony against them, and consent that they should give their testimony against me. I am clear of their blood."

(6.) Have any of them anything against you? Have you wronged any of them? Have you given them any occasion to think that you have? Have you stumbled any of them? Have you neglected their souls? Have you been selfish in your dealings with them? Have you manifested a bad spirit towards them? Have you spoken against them, unkindly, in an unchristian manner? Have you even published their faults unnecessarily, and in an unchristian spirit? How then can you meet them in the judgment?

Have you neglected to pray for them? Ah! have you gone with them in worldly ways and in a worldly spirit? How then are you prepared either to die yourself, or to have them die?

(7.) Have you set a good example before them, and rightly represented Christ and His religion? Has your life, your temper and spirit, been such as to lead them to understand the true nature of Christ's religion? Have they gotten from you the true idea of what Christianity is; that it is love; that it is love to enemies as well as friends; that it is love universally; that it involves all the beauties of holiness and all the forms of real goodness? In seeing your example, and spirit and temper, and life, do you think that they

have been irresistibly, favorably impressed with your religion?

Have they, by your good works, been constrained to glorify Christ? Or, on the other hand, have they been stumbled by you? Have you misrepresented Christ and His religion? Have you led them to loathe and abhor your profession of Christianity? Have you filled their mouth with cavils and objections against Christianity by your inconsistent life? Has your spirit and temper, your daily life and dealings with men repelled them and led them to infer irresistibly either that you are no Christian, or that Christianity is a nuisance? Have you so misrepresented Christ as that the wicked have no good opinion of Him or His religion?

(8.) Have any of the wicked died in sin through your neglect and fault? Can you remember any that you have stumbled; any in respect to whom you have failed in duty; any for whom you have not prayed, that are dead, gone to their account in their sins? How then will you meet them?

(9.) Have you stumbled any, and are you stumbling any that are now living? In short, are you now guilty, or have you been guilty of anything unchristian, in respect either to the dead or the living? Has the living of the wicked in your midst confirmed you and all around you, in the settled conviction that you are a Christian; that you are a friend of God; that you are truly a representative of Christ on earth?

Has their living in your midst proved your sincerity to God, or has it proved you a hypocrite, a false professor, a worldly professor? Now one of these two things has been accomplished by their living in the midst of you.

Have you seen that their presence was an influence that was working for your sanctification? Have you overcome the world; or has the world overcome you?

Have you drawn them towards Christ; or have they drawn you to the world? Are you today more prayerful, more heavenly-minded, more like Christ, for having lived in the midst of these subjects of prayer, and these objects of Christian compassion and effort? Or have you lived in the midst of God's enemies, in the midst of these subjects of prayer, and never acted, and lived, and prayed like a Christian? Then you are no Christian! Then the lives of the wicked have been the occasion of proving you a self-deceived professor. What think you would be the honest testimony of all your unconverted acquaintances if today they should be summoned with you to the solemn judgment? Would their real testimony be that you are a friend of God; that they believe it; that they have seen that in you which has proved it? Or would it turn out that you had been a stumbling block, a nuisance in the midst of them?

Secondly -- I must ask some questions, and make some remarks to the wicked themselves.

(1.) What has your life done for you thus far? Your life is a fact. You are; you are here; you have passed thus far on in life. You must die. You are going to the solemn judgment. Your life has been a constant development in one direction or another. You have either

been growing better or worse. You have been floating upon life's ocean; and which way have you been drifting? What is your reckoning? Where on this great stormy ocean are you? What is the bearing of this drifting of your soul?

How many years have you lived? and where are you now? and what has life done for you up to this point?

(2.) Is your life likely to be a blessing to you, or a curse? This is a question which you shall yourself decide. You will, you must make your own existence an eternal blessing or an eternal curse, as you take this course or that. But taking account of all that is passing, considering your present age, your surroundings, the drift you have made, taking into account your present position and the bearings of everything around you, what are your prospects? How great are the chances of your eternal salvation, or eternal damnation?

I asked you, How long have you lived? You are aware that the great majority of persons that are ever converted, are converted quite young; especially where persons live under the means of grace, they are converted early or become gospel-hardened. How has it been with you? Comparatively few persons are converted after they are forty years of age. By far the majority of converts are converted under twenty, in all ages of the world. Now how many years have you lived? Have you not already lived out half of your days, so far as all hope of your salvation is concerned? Have not many of you gone even already beyond the point where there is much likelihood that you will ever be converted?

(3.) How long do you expect to live? Some of you may live for years; and some of you may live but a few moments. But can you ask, with any honor or honesty, that you may live and be spared if you continue in your sins? Your sins are a great trial to God; they are a great nuisance in society. God may see cause to spare you notwithstanding your sins; but your sins are nevertheless a great abomination to Him, and a great abomination to His people. Now can you honestly pray to God, and ask Him to spare you that you may continue to mark your way all along with sins and rebellion against Him?

(4.) Will a longer life be a blessing or a curse to you? Judging from the past, have you not reason to fear that the longer you live the worse it will be for you? No doubt you hope to amend, and to break off from your wickedness; but is there really much prospect that you ever will? Is it not highly probable that you never will, but will wax worse and worse?

Now please reflect -- Have you more selfishness now than you had when you were young?

Are you more susceptible of religious impressions, or less susceptible? Have you more prejudice against Christian people than you used to have or have you less? Have you more attachment to the house and worship of God; or have you less? Have you fallen out from association with God's people, and fallen out from His worship, more and more, or less and less? Does the Spirit of God strive with you still, and even more than formerly; or has He almost, if not entirely, ceased to strive with you? Are the moral principles that

you were taught in your childhood more potent to influence you now than formerly; or less so? In short, is life to you a hardening process, or is it a subduing and sanctifying process?

(5.) Why are you still neglecting the Savior? And have you not reason to believe that you shall always neglect Him, and that no length of days in this life will make you a Christian?

(6.) Where will you soon be? You cannot live long. Where shall you and I soon meet? We cannot meet here much longer. We must soon depart hence to be here no more; and the places that now know you and me will soon know us no more forever. Where then shall we be? Where will you be? What will be your employment when this life is ended? Can you not see that the answer to that question must turn upon the manner in which you spend this life? "Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap. He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." If you sow to the wind, you must reap the whirlwind. If you live to minister to your appetites and propensities, when the body is torn down, when the flesh is gone and sensual enjoyments are no more -- what then must you reap? If you have sown to the Spirit of God; if you have lived to please Him; if you have lived in the Spirit, and prayed in the Spirit, and walked in the Spirit, and communed in the Spirit -- then tear the body down and you have life everlasting. But mark again, I pray you, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." When you understand what life is doing for you, you need not be a prophet to decide what your eternal destiny must be. If you are prepared for heaven, to heaven you will go; if not prepared for heaven, you must have your portion with hypocrites and unbelievers.

(7.) Shall God spare you and love you and try to save you in vain? Will you perversely turn away; will you continue to rebel and be wicked until His forbearance can no longer spare you, and He is obliged to wipe you from the earth as a nuisance? What shall be said of you when you are dead? Shall it truly be said of you that you have lived, and sinned, and died in your sins; and then shall a cloud settle over you; -- shall the darkness of eternal night rest upon you forever?

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)*.