

Many of you, no doubt, have concluded that the doctrine of election and reprobation is true, and you do so with propriety, for it is true; it is a scriptural doctrine. Others do not believe this doctrine, affirming with all their faith, might, and skill that free grace and free will are or ought to be the foundation of man's faith in his Creator. Very well. I can also say to them that free grace and free will are scripturally true. The first-named doctrine is as true as the second, and the second as the first. Others, again, declare that mankind have no will, neither free nor restrained, in their actions; for instance, the Rationalists or Freethinkers, who deny the existence and divinity of the Gods that we believe in. But so far from their believing their own theory, Mr. Neil, of Boston, while in prison for having no religion, wrote an essay, in which he declared that "All is God."

I might enumerate many more instances, and say that they are all right so far as they go in truth. The doctrine of free will and conditional salvation, the doctrine of free grace and unconditional salvation, the doctrine of foreordination and reprobation, and many more that I have not time to enumerate, can all be fully and satisfactorily proved by the Scriptures, and are true.

On the other hand, many untrue doctrines are taught and believed, such as there being infants, not a span long, weltering in the flames of hell, there to remain throughout the countless ages of eternity, and the doctrine of total depravity. Some have gone so far as to say that a man or woman who wishes to be saved in the kingdom of God—who wishes to be a servant or handmaid of the Almighty, must feel that deep contrition of heart, that sound repentance, and such a sense of his or her unworthiness and nothingness, and of the supremacy, glory, and

exaltation of that Deity they believe in, as to exclaim before God and their brethren and sisters that they are willing to be damned. To me that is one of the heights of nonsense; for if a person is willing to be damned, he cares not to make the efforts necessary to secure salvation. All this confusion is in the world—party against party—communities against communities—individuals against individuals. One sets out with five truths and fifteen errors, making the articles of his faith twenty; another dissents from him, rejects those five truths, selects perhaps five more, and adds as many errors as did the former one, and then he comes out a flaming reformer. Men, in dissenting from one another, have too often exercised no better judgment than to deny and dissent from many truths because their ancestors cherished and believed them, which has produced numerous parties, sects, and articles of faith, when, in fact, taking them in mass, they have an immense amount of true principles.

It was the occupation of Jesus Christ and his Apostles to propagate the Gospel of salvation and the principles of eternal life to the world, and it is our duty and calling, as ministers of the same salvation and Gospel, to gather every item of truth and reject every error. Whether a truth be found with professed infidels, or with the Universalists, or the Church of Rome, or the Methodists, the Church of England, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, the Quakers, the Shakers, or any other of the various and numerous different sects and parties, all of whom have more or less truth, it is the business of the Elders of this Church (Jesus, their elder brother, being at their head), to gather up all the truths in the world pertaining to life and salvation, to the Gospel we preach, to mechanism of every kind, to the sciences, and to philosophy, wherever it may be found in every