

DOES THE DOCTRINE

OF

“CHRISTIAN STANDING & CONDITION”

LIMIT THE WORK OF THE LORD JESUS?

(Being a Letter to BRISBANE, revised.)

“Jesus . . . said, My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. If any man will do His will he shall know the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of (from) myself. He that speaketh of (from) himself seeketh his own glory; but he that seeketh His glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.”—John vii: 16-18.

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*London, September, 1886.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,

At last I attempt a reply to your two letters dated May 21st and 27th. I have deferred it for three reasons. 1. You speak too positively for me to hope that anything I may say will lead you to alter your decision. 2. I wished to read again the papers referred to by you with your light upon them before me. 3. I had, just before receiving yours, written both B. and yourself, fearing from what I had seen of a letter from C. B. to J. S. O., that you were in danger of coming to such a conclusion. Yet this last was in a certain sense written in the dark, as I had heard nothing myself from you in answer to previous letters, and B.'s did not give definitely what your thoughts and tendencies were; I can but feel now, with your letters before me, that mine was in a great measure beside the mark.

I think I have never been *more* astonished by letters than by yours. . . . One thing is however evident; the question has, as you say, "given you more exercise about the truth, than you had ever known before;" though whether the result has been "a deeper entering into it," remains to be proved. I still trust it may be so, yet at the same time I believe it ~~has landed~~ you for the present

in the wrong place ; you will not be surprised at this, as you anticipate it. I have no doubt also, from certain names upon your circular, that, while you boast of being unbiassed and unled, this is not as fully the case as no doubt you could wish. . . . .

Before replying to your letters, I would ask that dear H. and B., and the others with you, whom I have not ceased to love, may read this, as I wish it to reach them as well as yourself. I shall first notice your own statements briefly, and then seek to point out where the doctrine of "Christian Standing and Condition" is, to my mind, contrary to scripture, and utterly confusing and subversive of the truth it professes to teach.

In your first letter you make your strong point that of the action of the Bath, Battersea and London meetings, which you call "ungodly," and which you say I "treat lightly." This, I assure you, is not the case, but I must refuse the term "ungodly" as to the action of the meetings you refer to, while admitting a very serious failing in the way some of the things in connection with the matter were carried out by individuals. But I am sorry you "have yet to learn" that failure in action is less grave than wrong doctrine; this I hold to be patent in the word of God.

I have read again the article on "Ecclesiastical Independency," and there is no case which meets that of the other meetings in connection with Reading there, as the assembly as such had not come to a decision, a number being outside and dissenting from the judgment in toto; and although there was much irregularity in many ways, yet there was not after all a re-judging an assembly action as such, but the weighing the claims of two rival bodies to be considered on assembly ground.

All you say in this letter as to the doctrine is, that you see the tract "looks much higher than the position of a forgiven sinner being able to stand before the throne," that it "gives him all that God gives him '*in Christ*,' and the full place of blessing in nearness as a child of the Father." It need only be pointed out in answer to this,

that as to "*standing*" it limits *this* to justification before the throne of God, and calls it the highest possible creature-standing; ignoring altogether as part of that standing, "all that God gives us in Christ and the full place of blessing in nearness as a child of the Father," which it attributes to the Holy Spirit *as something additional to the work of Christ*. But just here I will say no more as to this.

You next quote Mr. Darby as an example, in connection with his "*Sufferings of Christ*," but you are utterly mistaken in supposing the conduct of the two brothers you compare to be similar. Mr. D. did not insist upon publishing and spreading what he had written, but on the contrary, would himself have withdrawn from fellowship rather than scatter and divide the saints, and came to England with the determination to stand outside until the truth—for it was the truth—should be made manifest; but was met upon landing by several brethren (a fact within my own recollection) who would not hear of his doing so, assured that what he had written *was* the truth; and time has vindicated this. Mr. S., on the contrary, insisted upon publishing, spite of the earnest entreaties of his brethren, and seems to have had no other thought in either moral or doctrinal question than to vindicate himself; he has, by such action, brought about the scattering of the saints, and time is not vindicating him nor his doctrine, which is seen to be more palpably wrong as time advances; and this without attributing to him any "*grave intention*," as you say, for I have no doubt he thinks his doctrine the true one; though there are certainly grave intentions of one behind him, and these none other than the overturning of the truth.

I turn now to your second letter, in which, to my further surprise, you defend the doctrine also, and that "in all earnestness." You say that I, with others, "have failed to grasp what has been written," and this you say charitably, not wishing to impute wilful perversion. Now, without even insinuating the latter, I am very sure, dear B., that it is you who have failed to grasp what is in

question, in what the tract states. But you seek to prove your point by an extract from my letter to you, as follows, namely, "Mr. S.'s doctrine lowers the christian position (and consequently Christ's work) to freedom before the throne of God judicially. This, he says, is the highest creature standing, thus denying relationship with God as children with the Father, and putting us practically where the Jew stood." Following this with the blank denial, "Excuse me, he does nothing of the sort," &c. Now I am quite prepared to admit, that the above paragraph may be made to seem to impute to the tract more than, in one view of it, is true; but if you will remember that the question is, What is christian standing? then it will be seen to be perfectly true; for it denies relationship with God as part of that standing, and certainly limits it to Jewish ground. With this before you, you may see that the quotation\* you give from the pamphlet (second edition, p. 8) on this point, perfectly justifies what I have stated as above.

\* Quotation as given in letter. "But more. If nothing can be added to make our standing more perfect, nothing can be added to give us in any higher position as *saints* before God. Nothing is higher in the universe than the throne of the majesty in the heavens. This the place of the mercy-seat at the extreme end of the *holiest* shadowed forth, and Hebrews xii. 23 and Revelation iv., v., plainly teach. No higher position can the *saint* have than a standing before that throne; for there is no higher position except to be on the throne of God, a place or position which of course no mere creature can ever have. Many of course are the blessings which we possess through grace, besides that of justification by faith. We are God's children, His sons too, His heirs likewise, and joint-heirs with Christ. . . . Yet none of these, nor all of them together, nor the being in Christ who is the beginning of the creation of God, the Head of a new race, can give us a higher position before God than the standing before His throne, which is ours in consequence of the death and resurrection of His Son. Relationship with God is one thing, standing before His throne is quite another. Relationship by birth speaks of nearness to Him as being His children, and having the Father's house as our home. . . . Our standing then before His throne is seen in Romans to be complete before one word is said of our being in Christ, which takes us into quite a different line of things." (Pages 8, 9.)

As to new creation and the denial of the fulness of it, you say you "do not gather it from the pamphlet at all." I think I shall be able to shew that you might do so, for it is certainly there. . . .

I will seek now to shew from the pamphlet itself that, however the subject has been treated, it is not in a scriptural way; and I can only trust that God in His infinite mercy will give you and others to see this, and to judge your present position, returning to the one you have left.

### *Christian Standing and Condition.*

The pamphlet is an attempt to prove from scripture that the christian standing is limited to *justification before the throne of God*; and is *by the work of the Lord Jesus Christ*; and that other blessings generally reckoned as part of the christian standing, such as "children," "sons," "in Christ," &c., are not part of this standing, but of "condition" or "circumstances," and are *by the Holy Spirit as something additional to the work of Christ*, and as a procuring cause of blessings which this of itself does not make ours.

First, as to "standing," which is limited to "before the throne," and which is everywhere assumed to be this only, and dragged in on all occasions to the utter confusion of the subject. That there is such a standing as "justified before the throne," is readily admitted, but the question is, Is it the highest? or Is it christian standing?

It may be well to note here that God's throne was not always judicial (which is supposed by the above definition), nor will it be. It was the throne of creatorial blessing in the beginning, and its acts caused joy to those who surrounded it, at least, when the earth was created. The morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Sin came in, and at once made it a throne of judgment, and God a judge. Christ's death has made it a throne of grace, the source whence one to whom it was a throne of judgment, can obtain justification

before it. In Revelation xxii. it is the source of the pure blessings of redemption; the pure river of the water of life proceeds from it, by which the tree of life grows and fructifies, yielding every month its fruit, and its leaves are for the healing of the nations. Beyond that, in the eternal state there will be no need even of healing, and the judicial aspect of the throne be past, and pure blessing alone the outcome.

One would not expect to find in the Old Testament any revelation of a higher standing than that of justification before the throne, that being reserved for us for whom God had prepared better things than for them, and so we may let the quotations from the Old Testament pass for what they are worth, only it is sought to gain a point there by what Ezra says (p. 6), "We are before thee in our trespasses." This is brought into prominence as shewing "*condition*," but it must be remembered that "in trespasses" is not the antithesis of "in Christ," and does not prove that the latter is "*condition*." Again, "dead in sins" is set over against "in Christ" (p. 13), as proving that "in Christ" is *condition*, which it does not prove, as the one is not the antithesis of the other.

Coming to the New Testament, the *only* scripture upon which the doctrine is founded is most certainly against it, and effectually disproves it. It is that in Romans v. 2. The other scriptures where the term occurs are referred to practice and this may be accepted, save in 1 Peter v. 12, which if J. N. D. is right, should read, "ye stand," and then it would substantiate the true doctrine of Romans v. 2. In "Christian Standing and Condition," the term "stand" in this verse is simply *assumed* to refer to justification before the throne; but in "Recent Utterances" (p. 10), in reply to it being pointed out that the word "*also*" seems to indicate something additional, the attempt to do away with what every one knows is a fact in both the Greek and English languages is most transparent, making what is called the "*grace of justification*," to be "*an effect of justification*;" that is to say, that cause and effect are the same things. This is certainly

special pleading. You will see this by the following from "Recent Utterances," page 10. "After shewing in chapter iii., how God is righteous in justifying the ungodly, and in chapter iv. the principle on which He justifies, the moral class which can be justified, and what must be received in order for God *now* to justify the individual, we read in chapter v. 1 of an *effect of justification*—namely, peace with God, which is ours through our Lord Jesus Christ. But not only is the effect just mentioned ours through the Lord, but *the grace of justification* itself." "Hence," he proceeds to say, "the force of the word 'also' in that verse, taking us back in thought to chapter iii. 24." Now this verse (24) really shews us that grace is the *source* of justification. God's grace needed a people near Himself, and their condition made it a necessity that they should be justified before they could be brought near, and grace provides this justification freely, which when it is an accomplished fact, the people can be shewn to be *more* than justified. They have, as effects of this, three things, namely:—

1. Peace with God.
2. *Also* a present standing in grace.
3. *And* they rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

On page 8 of "Christian Standing and Condition," *two* blessings are enumerated as the result of justification by faith. "We have peace with God, every question between the guilty one and God being settled, and that for ever. We rejoice too in hope of the glory of God." The standing in grace is quietly assumed there, without anything like proof, to be the same thing as justification by faith, being omitted in the list given in scripture of the results of this. As well assume the first or the last effect of justification to be the same thing as justification, but this is not attempted, because it is not the special thing sought to be proved, and which, alas! blinds the eyes (acute enough to see errors in others) of him who seeks thus to prove it. The "*this*" which precedes "*grace*" may well be admitted as giving force to the character of the grace, well known amongst all Christians, who did not so well know perhaps the character of the



justification needed to put them into it. But surely this does not make "justification" and "this grace in which we stand" the same thing. I affirm then, that to a simple-minded common-sense Christian—such a one for whom the blessed book of God was written—the sentence "by whom we have *also* access by faith into *this* favour wherein we stand," conveys (and I may say surely, is intended to convey) more than the thought of being justified by faith before the throne of God. It occurs in a list of blessings that flow from this, and which embraces our past, present and future. Peace with God as to all the past; standing in divine favour as to all our present, so that not even a trial but is for our good, a very different thought to a mere cold justification before the throne; and as to the future, boasting in hope of the glory of God. It is the sense of these things that makes the apostle glory in tribulation *also*, because of the present favour that orders all, and because of their blessed result in shedding abroad the love of God in the heart by the Holy Spirit given.

If then, this scripture proves "standing" (the only one in the New Testament quoted to prove it), it proves that this "standing" is not justification before the throne, but that it is the well-known favour of God—undeserved indeed—which enhances it, still it is in grace, and all that that grace delights to introduce us into. So that some of the "many blessings which we possess through grace beside that of justification by faith" (p. 8), *may be* part of our standing, and as to *fact are*, as "children," "sons" too, and "in Christ" (pp. 8, 9); which last is developed in this epistle as being such, spite of the attempt of the tract to disprove it. For admitting that "relationship with God is one thing," and "standing before His throne another," may they not both be part of our "standing"? And if "relationship by birth speaks of nearness to Him as being His children, and having the Father's house as our home" (p. 9), does it not also speak of a standing in the family? And this is "by faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. iii. 26), and not by the indwelling

Spirit, as the tract says. Scripture, on the contrary, says, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6.)

But this tract *limits* the work of Christ to justification before the throne, making all the other blessings dependent upon the coming of the Holy Spirit. It speaks in the following language of these blessings. "We are God's children, His sons too, His heirs likewise, and joint-heirs with Christ. God's purpose too is that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Yet none of these, nor all of them together, nor being 'in Christ,' who is the beginning of the creation of God, the Head of the new race, can give us a higher position before God than the standing before His throne, which is ours now in consequence of the death and resurrection of His Son." (Pages 8, 9.) Here it is distinctly stated that the standing which is ours now—limiting it to justification before the throne—is the consequence of the death and resurrection of His Son. On page 12 it is shewn that our receiving the Holy Ghost is really something *additional* to the value of the atoning sacrifice in his mind, which, if added to complete our standing (before the throne only, with him), necessarily detracts from the value of that sacrifice. Here it is plain in the tract, the coming of the Holy Ghost has value to procure certain blessings for us, in the same way as Christ's death and resurrection has value to procure justification before the throne; and inasmuch as this procures only justification before the throne, all the other blessings are procured for us by the coming of the Holy Spirit.

This it is now sought to prove as far as 'in Christ' is concerned, and for this point the tract has one scripture to build its doctrine upon, as we have seen also in the case of our standing. This scripture is quoted no less than five times in the tract, and every time with the cool assumption, that it means just what the writer asserts that it means, but which, upon the face of it, it evidently does not mean. On page 9 it is first quoted

(Rom. viii. 9) to prove that our being "in the spirit is effected by the Holy Ghost given to us, and not simply by what the Lord has done for us." Now this is not what the scripture says, but it gives the fact of the Spirit of God dwelling in us as a *proof* that we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, and does not say that it is *by* the indwelling of the Spirit that we come to be in the Spirit. This is first presented, and then it is sought to prove (p. 11) that to be in the Spirit is the same thing as to be in Christ and Christ in us; and then on page 16 Romans viii. 9, 10 is again quoted (for the fourth time) to prove that we come to be "in Christ" by the indwelling Spirit. Now the scripture quoted does *not* say so, although the tract does. What the scripture does say is that if a man has the Spirit of God he is not "in the flesh" but "in the Spirit;" these terms *characterising* those whose standing is respectively "in Adam" and "in Christ," but it no more says how we came to be "in Christ" than it says how we came to be "in Adam," and I am sure this is important as shewing the fallacy of the reasoning of the tract; we must look to other scriptures to find how we came to be "in Adam" or "in Christ," this one does not affirm either, indeed, has not to do with the standing, only as it shews the character of the two men. Ephesians i. 13 does not help the doctrine of the tract (quoted on p. 10), as that simply affirms that "*having believed, ye were sealed,*" and certainly does not warrant the conclusion come to upon page 11, which says, "yet he does not receive the Spirit because he is justified, nor is he justified because he has received the Holy Ghost." If this scripture says anything, it says a man receives the Spirit *after* he has believed, and as far as it is concerned, it may be *because* he has believed, and a man that has believed *is* justified by *faith*, page 10 being witness. And if the cleansing of the leper is a type, the oil only came where the blood was, which certainly seems to indicate that a man receives the Spirit *because* he is justified by blood and by faith, and to this the doctrine of Ephesians i. 13 agrees.

What Romans viii. 9, 10 does say, is that those who have the Spirit of God dwelling in them are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, and consequently it is not impossible for them to please God (ver. 8); that their mind is not enmity with God and death, but life and peace (vers. 6, 7); that not being after the flesh but after the Spirit, they are not compelled to mind the things of the flesh, but the things of the Spirit. (Ver. 5.) It then goes on solemnly to say, that "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ (that Spirit which came upon Him as a dove, indicating the meek and lowly character of the One upon whom it came), he is none of his." This speaks of the Spirit more as it was practically exhibited in Christ, and while being in the Spirit expresses character, and is closely allied to standing (as the other expressions, "according to the Spirit," ver. 5, and the "minding of the Spirit," ver. 6, shew that which is natural to the standing and character), this gives Christ as the One in whom it was all practically exemplified, and if this Spirit is not in us, then we are not of Him. This then gives practice, and if Christ be in us, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But this is not all. If the body is dead, there shall come a time when it shall be quickened, for the Spirit is the Spirit of Him who raised up Christ; and He who did this shall also quicken our mortal bodies because of His Spirit who dwelleth in us. It is the same Spirit all through: first, that gives us a nature and character according to Him in whom we stand; secondly, who enables us to give a practical exhibition of it after Christ the perfect pattern; and thirdly, who is the earnest and pledge that the body itself shall not always need to be treated as dead, but shall be quickened by, as well as because of, that Spirit that now dwells in us.

In chapter v. 12-21, we have the headship of race spoken of, and here the term "stand" is, as far as scripture is concerned, much more appropriate than that of "state," or "condition;" for, as we have seen, we are said to "stand in grace"—"this grace wherein we stand"

being the words which speak of it. Now grace connects us with Christ as the Head of the race, as is shewn in verse 21. "Even so might *grace* reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." Adam and Christ are here contrasted as heads of races; as is rightly said in the tract, in their persons (ver. 15); their acts (ver. 16); and the results. (Ver. 17.) In all these the *grace* of God (that in which we *stand*), and the gift by grace super-abounds towards those in Christ. But who are in Christ, and how? It is not said positively, any more than who are in Adam, and how. This latter is too well known. We are in Adam by being born of those who sprung from him, that is, by descent; a life and nature being communicated to us by those who before had partaken of the same; no act of our own bringing us into connection with Adam. So also no act of our own brings us into connection with Christ; but divine life and nature is not communicated in this way, but directly from Christ Himself. We have life communicated to us by faith in Christ's name. "Even to them which believe in his name, which were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 12, 13.) Nature too accompanies this: "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John iii. 6.) Such had *title* to become sons: "To them gave he title to become sons of God" (John i. 12); but were not yet ushered into the *position* of sons, could not be, until Christ rose from the dead. But *then* the position of sonship for believers became a fact joyfully announced by Christ Himself, in the words, "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." (John xx. 17.) Now also Christ breathes on them, saying, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." (John xx. 22.) He communicates resurrection life to them; they are in the position of sons, and with a title to receive the Spirit, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts," &c. (Gal. iv. 6); which, coming upon them at Pentecost, proves also that they were "in Christ,"

which thus dates from the communication of resurrection life from Christ Himself risen from among the dead; the only character of life communicated now, and in this way directly from Christ Himself, the last Adam, a quickening Spirit.

Consciousness of the fact of being in Christ *is* by the Spirit (John xiv. 20), but consciousness of the fact is not the fact itself. Reasoning from what is true of the Father and the Son will not do; we are not sons in the sense in which He is as "God the Son," or as "only-begotten;" it is as "first begotten" that we follow Him in relationship with the Father.

It is quite true also that we are linked with Christ in union as members of His body by the Spirit; scripture affirms this (1 Cor. xii. 13), but it never affirms, as far as I know, that we come to be "in Christ" by the indwelling Spirit, but rather indicates the opposite, that we are indwelt by the Spirit because we are "in Christ" and sons, although it does point to the fact of the indwelling Spirit as a proof that we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, as we have seen. I do not think I need dwell longer on this, my object not being to follow the tract in all its ramifications, but to point out that the scriptures upon which it founds its doctrine do not uphold it, but rather demolish it.

The point of new creation must now be looked at for a moment. The tract denies that our persons will be re-created, namely, our spirit, soul and body. (Page 21.) And "Recent Utterances" speaks thus (p. 29): "I affirm that new creation is quite different from re-creation, and that our spirit, soul and body will never be re-created, and that to predicate a fresh creation of the body is to deny its resurrection." "The one in Christ is a new creature or new creation, and this is a real and present thing." ("Christian Standing and Condition," p. 20.) There are three points here: I. New creation is a spiritual thing; II. The body of the saint will not be afresh created; and III. The person of the saint will not be re-created.

I. "There is new creation" where a man is in Christ, that is, it is a spiritual thing, and so a real and present thing now. "A spiritual race different from anything that had before been produced as the result of divine creatorial power." (Page 21.) Now this is true, but not all the truth, and when it is opposed to other parts of the truth, as exclusively *the* truth, it becomes untrue, and this is what the tract does. New creation is affirmed to be a spiritual creation as opposed to a material creation, and so the re-creation of the *body* and the *person* of the saint is denied.

II. The body of the saint will not be afresh created, or in the language of the tract, "to predicate a fresh creation of the body is to deny its resurrection." ("Recent Utterances," p. 29.) If scripture affirms both these truths, it is something worse than nonsense to oppose them to each other as exclusive of each other. As to resurrection, 1 Corinthians xv. is plain enough. As to the re-creation or new creation of the body, 2 Corinthians v. 1 says (New Translation), "For if our earthly tabernacle house be destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." This speaks of the dissolution or destruction of the old body as a possible thing, being only a tabernacle house or tent; and the fact that we have a new house or building from God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In every point it is in contrast with the present body. It speaks of:—

1. *This* body as a tent meant to be taken down; *that* as a house which is a stable thing, not meant to be destroyed.

2. *This* body in its present constitution as affected by sin—a vile body, or body of humiliation—is not "from God" in the sense in which *that* body is "from God," divine in its source.

3. *This* body is of *this* creation; *that* body is "not made with hands," which being interpreted in the light of Hebrews ix. 11 (N. T. and R. V.) means "*not of this*

creation." If of another, of what other if not of the new ?

4. *This* is temporal ; *that* eternal.

5. *This* is earthly ; *that* is heavenly.

This verse in the plainest way affirms what the tract denies.

There is no germ of resurrection in our mortal bodies of themselves, as there is in wheat, &c. ; corruption is all that can be looked for if the body were all ; but the Spirit is the earnest and pledge of resurrection and of new creation also. In Romans viii. the Spirit as the Spirit of resurrection, is the pledge of the quickening or change of our mortal body, as also the resurrection of the (now corrupt) bodies of the dead saints at the same time and by the same power. In 2 Corinthians v. 5, the Spirit is the earnest of our spirit being clothed upon with the new creation body. All will be accomplished by God's power (Phil. iii. 21) acting when nothing else could, and the very materials are in most cases dissolved.

III. If either of the constituent parts of the being, spirit, soul, body, is re-created, the *person* is re-created, or a new creation. This makes it true now that the saint is new creation, "If any man be in Christ there is new creation." So that if the body were not anew created but reformed, with the elements of sin done away, the person would still be re-created. Genesis i. sets this forth. The tract states (p. 21) "that man was created on the sixth day," &c. "And he, a fresh creation from God, appeared upon the scene." Now what was created ? Was it the person ? God had created matter to begin with : "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. i. 1), so that the *material* of the body was not created at the time man was created. He had created living souls on the fifth day, "And God said, Let the waters swarm with living souls . . . . and God created the great sea monsters and every living soul," &c. (Vers. 20, 21.) These living souls were composed of body (that is, matter previously created, and now made by



divine fiat into a body) and soul; the whole being was called a living soul, and creation affirmed of it. On the sixth day God said, "Let us make man in our image after our likeness, and let *them* . . . and God created man in his image, in the image of God *created* he him, male and female *created* he them." (Vers. 26, 27.) In chapter ii. 7 we have also, "And the Lord God *formed* man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." And again, "And Jehovah Elohim caused a deep sleep to fall upon man, and he slept, and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof; and Jehovah Elohim *built* the rib that he had taken from man into a woman, and brought her to man, and man said this time, it is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." (Vers. 21-23.) Here creation is affirmed of man, male and female (chap. i. 27), yet the verbs "to make" (chap. i. 26) and "to form" (chap. ii. 7) are used of Adam; and "to make" (chap. i. 26) and "to build" (chap. ii. 22) are used of Eve. Yet, as we have seen, the material of which Adam's body was composed was not then created, it was made of the dust of the ground previously created, and then formed by God's creative hand into a body suitable for the man about to be put at the head of creation. Still less the material of which Eve's body was composed could be said to be created: it was of Adam's body, previously created and *made*, but now again in God's creative hand *builded* into a new *person*, of whom it is affirmed also that she was *created*.

The body being thus made and formed, God breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. A fresh creation being affirmed of man, something additional is to be found in him to that found in the beings already created, of whom it is said that they are living souls. *That* something is the breath of God which is Spirit, and man a spiritual being indwelling the body prepared for him became a living soul (that is, in that way he became this, and not by the creative fiat of God simply), and a link between pure spiritual beings

and pure animal beings. There is *counsel* in "Let us make," and actual formative work in God "formed" and "builded;" and the communication of a spiritual and moral nature in "God breathed into his nostrils," and this last is all that was new as far as earth and its inhabitants were concerned, yet Adam is said to be created and Eve also. How much more then is it true of what God does, when in the resurrection He puts the new spiritual nature into a body, reformed and made, even if out of the elements of the old; its very life being different to that of the present body of which the blood is the life (and flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption), and constituted so as to dwell eternally in the heavens! Unquestionably the reference to Genesis i., ii. substantiates what the New Testament affirms, that the *body* of the glorified saint is a new creation; and his *person*—spirit, soul and body, a new creation, fresh from God's hand, and beauteous as Christ is beauteous, never more to fade or die. "As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." (1 Cor. xv. 49.)

Pages 55, 56 of "Is it the Truth of the Gospel?" makes the strange assertion, "As to the doctrine, we read that the body which is sown is raised." I have always read, "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened except it die, and that which thou sowest, thou sowest *not that body which shall be.*" And, "It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body."

Let us look now at what the tract says as to "state or condition." On page 27 we have, "By state or condition is meant what the person is, or the circumstances in which he is." This is certainly *not* what scripture says, spite of the tract. What a person is is not the same thing as the circumstances in which he is, that is plain upon the face of it to begin with, and scripture does not affirm it, though the tract does as suiting its system of things. None of the scriptures quoted in support of this definition refer to what the persons *are*, save as this is

effected by their state. "Kindred," in Genesis xliii. 7 comes nearest it, and is a different thing from "state," as shewn by the conjunction "and." A person may be a king, and not have the estate suitable, as David in rejection, or as Christ in like circumstances; or he may have the royal estate and have forfeited his standing, as Saul; or he may lose standing and estate together, as Vashti.

In Matthew xii. 45 the man had lost his standing, and a mere external reformation had not regained it, and he could consequently be indwelt by wicked spirits. We have a new standing in Christ, and can consequently be indwelt by the Spirit of God, but the Spirit of God being in us is not the same thing as our being in Christ, and therefore all this is inapplicable. There is constant confounding of things that differ in the tract, as "Can sitting in the heavenlies and in conflict there with evil spirits be viewed as our standing before God's throne?" (Page 28.) No one would say that, and the confusion arises only in the mind of one who makes "standing before God's throne" the whole of our standing. But it is evident that "being in the heavenlies" is one thing, and "in conflict there with evil spirits" is another. The Israelites had a divine title and standing in the land before they entered into conflict; the latter was the result of the former, and the circumstances into which a position in the land introduced them. Now certainly our being in Christ in the heavenlies is our position or standing, and Ephesians i. 6 gives us the *measure* of all that God has bestowed upon us; it is "in the Beloved," and what He is and has as man, is the measure of what the Christian is and has before God. To make "in the beloved" but the means by which we receive the grace, is to destroy the force of the language, as well as the immensity of the blessing.

Without noticing other points or asserting what other wrong doctrines underlie the tract (though we may be sure that the enemy has something that underlies, and

with which he is ready to back it all up), I think it is plain from scripture :—

1. That the definitions of Christian Standing and Condition &c., as given in the tract are not only not borne out by the scriptures, but are overturned by the very scriptures quoted to prove them.

2. That they curtail and limit the standing God has given His people to-day.

3. That they also limit the work of Christ to procuring justification before the throne.

4. That they make the coming of the Holy Spirit the Comforter to be a procuring cause of blessing for us, of a similar character to the blessed work of Christ; an insult to this work which it is impossible to believe the blessed Spirit of God has led to, who comes as the servant, and to take the things of Christ and to shew them unto us.

5. That they limit the new creation to the spiritual nature in us now.

In conclusion, I would say that—

Romans v. 2 does not say that we stand justified before the throne; but that “we stand in grace,” as a result of being justified. “*This*” grace it is true, a well-known grace to every Christian heart.

Romans viii. 9, 10 does not say that we come to be in Christ by the indwelling Spirit, nor that the being in the Spirit is the same thing as being in Christ and Christ in us. It does say that the Spirit of God being in us is a proof that we are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. Other scriptures indicate that we receive the Spirit after and consequent upon justification by faith (Eph. i. 13), and becoming children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. iii. 26; iv. 6), and that the coming of the Spirit is itself a blessing dependent upon the death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not a procuring cause of blessings for us Himself, although He leads into the consciousness of all the blessings that Christ has

purchased for us ; and we have *none* that He has not purchased.

2 Corinthians v. 17 does not say that the spiritual man is the whole of the new creation. It does say, "If any man be in Christ there is new creation."

Nor does any other scripture quoted say that the "body," or the "person," will not be re-created or anew created ; while 2 Corinthians v. 1 does say that the new body is "not made with hands," which, if it means anything in the light of scripture, means "not of *this* creation ;" so that to affirm the re-creation of the body is not to deny its resurrection, nor to upset the foundations of the faith, since scripture affirms both.

Faithfully yours in Christ,

GEO. JAS. STEWART.

