

PART II - THE FAITH OF FREE WILL BAPTISTS

CHAPTER I

The Holy Scriptures These are the Old and the New Testaments; they were written by holy men, inspired by the Holy Spirit,¹ and are God's revealed word to man. They are a sufficient and infallible rule and guide to salvation and all Christian worship and service.² Since the Bible is the word of God, it is without error in all matters upon which it speaks, whether history, geography, matters relating to science or any other subject.³

CHAPTER II

Being and Attributes of God The Scriptures teach that there is only one true and living God,⁴ who is Spirit,⁵ self-existent,⁶ eternal,⁷ immutable,⁸ omnipresent,⁹ omniscient,¹⁰ omnipotent,¹¹ independent,¹² good,¹³ wise,¹⁴ holy,¹⁵ just,¹⁶ and merciful,¹⁷ the Creator,¹⁸ Preserver,¹⁹ and Governor²⁰ of the Universe; the Redeemer,²¹ Savior,²² Sanctifier,²³ and Judge²⁴ of men; and the only proper object of worship.²⁵ The mode of His existence, however, is a subject far above the understanding of man²⁶ - finite beings cannot comprehend Him.²⁷ There is nothing in the universe that can justly represent Him, for there is none like Him.²⁸ He is the fountain of all perfection and happiness. He is glorified by the whole creation, and is worthy to be loved and served by all intelligence.²⁹

CHAPTER III

Divine Government and Providence

1. God exercises a providential care and superintendence over all His creatures,³⁰ and governs the world in wisdom and mercy, according to the testimony of His Word.³¹
2. God has endowed man with power of free choice, and governs him by moral laws and motives; and this power of free choice is the exact measure of man's responsibility.³²
3. All events are present with God from everlasting to everlasting; but His knowledge of them does not in any sense cause them, nor does He decree all events which He knows will occur.³³

CHAPTER IV

Creation, Primitive State of Man, and His Fall

SECTION I: Creation

1. *Of the World.* God created the world, and all things that it contains, for His own pleasure and glory and the enjoyment of His creatures.³⁴

2. *Of the Angels.* The angels were created by God³⁵ to glorify Him³⁶ and obey His commandments.³⁷ Those who have kept their first estate He employs in ministering blessings to the heirs of salvation³⁸ and in executing His judgments upon the world.³⁹

3. *Of Man.* God created man, consisting of a material body and a thinking, rational soul.⁴⁰ He was made in the image of God, to glorify his Maker.⁴¹

SECTION II: Primitive Man, and His Fall

Our first parents, in their original state, were upright. They naturally preferred and desired to obey their Creator, and had no preference or desire to transgress His will⁴² until they were influenced and inclined by the tempter to disobey God's commands. Previous to this, the only tendency of their nature was to do righteousness. In consequence of the first transgression, the state under which the posterity of Adam came into the world is so different from that of Adam that they have not that righteousness and purity which Adam had before the fall; they are not willing to obey God, but are inclined to evil.⁴³ Hence, none, by virtue of any natural goodness and mere work of their own, can become the children of God,⁴⁴ but they are all dependent for salvation upon the redemption effected through the blood of Christ, and upon being created anew unto obedience through the operation of the Spirit;⁴⁵ both of which are freely provided for every descendant of Adam.⁴⁶

CHAPTER V

Of Christ

SECTION I: His Divinity

Jesus Christ, the Son of God, possesses all divine perfections. As He and the Father are one, He in His divine nature, filled all the offices and performed the works of God to His creatures that have been the subjects of revelation to us. As man, He performed all the duties toward God that we are required to perform, repentance of sin excepted. His divinity is proved from His titles, His attributes, and His works. A. *His Titles.* The Bible ascribes to Christ the titles of Savior,⁴⁷ Jehovah,⁴⁸ Lord of hosts,⁴⁹ the first and the last,⁵⁰ God,⁵¹ true God,⁵² great God,⁵³ God over all,⁵⁴ mighty God, and the everlasting Father.⁵⁵ B. *His Attributes.* He is eternal,⁵⁶ unchangeable,⁵⁷ omnipresent,⁵⁸ omniscient,⁵⁹ omnipotent,⁶⁰ holy,⁶¹ and to be worshipped.⁶² C. *His Works.* By Christ the world was created.⁶³ He preserves⁶⁴ and governs⁶⁵ it; He has provided redemption for all men⁶⁶ and He will be their final Judge.⁶⁷

SECTION II: The Incarnation of Christ

The Word, which in the beginning was with God and which was God, by whom all things were made, condescended to a state of humiliation in being united with human nature and becoming like us, pollution and sin excepted.⁶⁸ In this state, as a subject of the law, He was liable to the infirmities of our nature,⁶⁹ was tempted as we are,⁷⁰ but lived our

example,⁷¹ perfect obedience to the divine requirements.⁷² As Christ was made of the seed of David, according to the flesh, He is 'the Son of man,'⁷³ and as the divine existence is the fountain from which He proceeded, and was the only agency by which He was begotten,⁷⁴ He is "the Son of God,"⁷⁵ being the only begotten of the Father,⁷⁶ and the only incarnation of the Divine Being.

CHAPTER VI

The Atonement and Mediation of Christ

1. *The Atonement.* As sin cannot be pardoned without a sacrifice, and the blood of beasts could never wash away sin, Christ Himself a sacrifice for the sins of the world,⁷⁷ and thus made salvation possible for all men.⁷⁸ He died for us, suffering in our stead, to make known the righteousness of God, that He might be just in justifying sinners who believe in His Son.⁷⁹ Through the redemption effected by Christ, salvation is actually enjoyed in this world, and will be enjoyed in the next by all who do not in this life refuse obedience to the known requirements of God.⁸⁰ the atonement for sin was necessary.⁸¹ For present and future obedience can no more blot out our past sins than past obedience can remove the guilt of present and future sins. If God pardoned the sins of men without satisfaction for the violation of His law, it would follow that transgression might go on with impunity; government would be abrogated, and the obligation of obedience to God would be, in effect, removed.

2. *Mediation of Christ.* Our Lord not only died for our sins, but He arose for our justification,⁸² and ascended up to heaven,⁸³ where, as the only mediator between God and man, He makes intercession for us until He comes again.⁸⁴

3. We believe that all children dying in infancy, having not actually transgressed against the law of God in their own persons, are only subject to the first death, which was brought on by the fall of the first Adam, and not that any one of them dying in that state shall suffer punishment in hell by the guilt of Adam, and not that any one of them dying in that state shall suffer punishment in hell by the guilt of Adam's sin for of such is the Kingdom of God.⁸⁵

CHAPTER VII

The Holy Spirit

1. The Scriptures ascribe to the Holy Spirit the acts and attributes of an intelligent being. He guides,⁸⁶ knows,⁸⁷ moves,⁸⁸ gives information,⁸⁹ commands,⁹⁰ forbids⁹¹ sends forth,⁹² reproves,⁹³ and can be sinned against.⁹⁴

2. The attributes of God are ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

3. The works of God are ascribed to the Holy Spirit: creation,⁹⁵ inspiration,⁹⁶ giving of life,⁹⁷ and sanctification.⁹⁸

4. The apostles assert that the Holy Spirit is Lord and God.⁹⁹ From the foregoing the conclusion is that the Holy Spirit is in reality God and one with the Father in all divine perfections. It has also been shown that Jesus Christ is God-one with the Father. Then these three-the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit-are one God. The truth of this doctrine is also proved from the fact that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are united in the authority by which believers are baptized; and in the benedictions pronounced by the apostles,¹⁰⁰ which are acts of the highest religious worship.¹⁰¹

CHAPTER VIII

The Gospel Call

The call of the Gospel is co-extensive with the atonement to all men,¹⁰² both by the word and strivings of the Spirit,¹⁰³ so that salvation is rendered equally possible to all;¹⁰⁴ and if any fail of eternal life, the fault is wholly his own.¹⁰⁵

CHAPTER IX

Repentance

The repentance which the Gospel requires includes a deep conviction, a penitential sorrow, an open confession, a decided hatred, and an entire forsaking of all sin.¹⁰⁶ This repentance God has enjoined on all men; and without it in this life the sinner must perish eternally.¹⁰⁷

CHAPTER X

Faith

Saving faith is an assent of the mind to the fundamental truths of revelation,¹⁰⁸ an acceptance of the Gospel, through the influence of the Holy Spirit,¹⁰⁹ and a firm confidence and trust in Christ.¹¹⁰ The fruit of faith is obedience to the Gospel.¹¹¹ The power to believe is the gift of God,¹¹² but believing is an act of the creature, which is required as a condition of pardon, and without which the sinner cannot obtain salvation.¹¹³ All men are required to believe in Christ, and those who yield obedience to this requirement become the children of God by faith.¹¹⁴

CHAPTER XI

Regeneration

As man is a fallen and sinful being, he must be regenerated in order to obtain salvation.¹¹⁵ This change is an instantaneous renewal of the heart by the Holy Spirit,¹¹⁶ whereby the penitent sinner receives new life, becomes a child of God,¹¹⁷ and is disposed to serve Him.¹¹⁸ This is called in Scripture being born again,¹¹⁹ born of the Spirit,¹²⁰ being quickened,¹²¹ passing from death unto life,¹²² and a partaking of the divine nature.¹²³

CHAPTER XII

Justification and Sanctification

1. *Justification*. Personal justification implies that the person justified has been guilty before God; and, in consideration of the atonement of Christ, accepted by faith, the sinner is pardoned and absolved from the guilt of sin, and restored to the divine favor.¹²⁴ Christ's atonement is the foundation of the sinner's redemption, yet, without repentance and faith, it can never give him justification and peace with God.¹²⁵

2. *Sanctification* is the continuing of God's grace by which the Christian may constantly grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.¹²⁶

CHAPTER XIII

Perseverance of the Saints

There are strong grounds to hope that the truly regenerate will persevere unto the end, and be saved, through the power of divine grace which is pledged for their support;¹²⁷ but their future obedience *and final salvation are neither determined nor certain*, since through infirmity and manifold temptations they are in *danger of falling*;¹²⁸ and they ought, therefore, to watch and pray lest they make *shipwreck* of their faith and be lost.¹²⁹

CHAPTER XIV

The Lord's Day

This is one day in seven, which from the creation of the world God has set apart for sacred rest and holy service.¹³⁰ Under the former dispensation, the seventh day of the week, as commemorative of the work of creation, was set apart for the Lord's Day.¹³¹ Under the Gospel, the first day of the week, in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ, and by authority of Christ and the apostles, is observed as the Christian Sabbath.¹³² On this day all men are required to refrain from secular labor and devote themselves to the worship and service of God.¹³³

CHAPTER XV

The Church

A *Christian Church* is an organized body of believers in Christ who stately assemble to worship God, and who sustain the ordinances of the Gospel according to the Scriptures.¹³⁴ Believers in Christ are admitted to this church on giving evidence of faith in Christ, obtaining consent of the body, being baptized, and receiving the right hand of fellowship.¹³⁵ The Church of God, or members of the body of Christ, is the whole body of Christians throughout the whole world, and none but the regenerate are its members.¹³⁶

CHAPTER XVI

Tithing

Both the Old¹³⁷ and New Scriptures¹³⁸ teach tithing as God's financial plan for the support of His work.

CHAPTER XVII

The Gospel Ministry

1. *Qualification of Ministers.* They must possess good, natural and acquired abilities,¹³⁹ deep and ardent piety,¹⁴⁰ be especially called of God to the work,¹⁴¹ and ordained by prayer and the laying on of hands.¹⁴²

2. *Duties of Ministers.* These are to preach the Word,¹⁴³ administer the ordinances of the Gospel,¹⁴⁴ visit their people, and otherwise perform the work of faithful ministers.¹⁴⁵

CHAPTER XVIII

Ordinances of the Gospel

1. *Christian Baptism.* This is the immersion of believers in water, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,¹⁴⁶ in which are represented the burial and resurrection of Christ, the death of Christians to the world, the washing of their souls from the pollution of sin, their rising to newness of life, their engagement to serve God, and their resurrection at the last day.¹⁴⁷

2. *The Lord's Supper.* This is a commemoration of the death of Christ for our sins in the use of *bread* which He made the emblem of His broken body, and the *cup*, the emblem of His shed blood,¹⁴⁸ and by it the believer expresses his love for Christ, his faith and hope in Him, and pledges to Him perpetual fidelity.¹⁴⁹ It is the privilege and duty of all who have spiritual union with Christ to commemorate His death, and no man has a right to forbid these tokens to the least of His disciples.¹⁵⁰

3. *Washing the Saints' Feet.* This is a sacred ordinance, which teaches humility and reminds the believer of the necessity of a daily cleansing from all sin. It was called an "example" on the night of His betrayal, and in connection with the institution of the Lord's Supper. It is the duty and happy prerogative of every believer to observe this sacred ordinance.¹⁵¹

CHAPTER XIX

Death

As a result of sin, all mankind is subject to the death of the body.¹⁵² The soul does not die with the body, but immediately after death enters into a conscious state of happiness or misery, according to the character here possessed.¹⁵³

CHAPTER XX

Second Coming of Christ

The Lord Jesus, who ascended on high and sits at the right hand of God, will come again to close the Gospel dispensation, glorify His saints, and judge the world.¹⁵⁴

CHAPTER XXI

The Resurrection

The Scriptures teach the resurrection of the bodies of all men, each in its own order; they that have done good will come forth to the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil to the resurrection of damnation.¹⁵⁵

CHAPTER XXII

The Judgment and Retribution

1. *The Judgment.* There will be a judgment, when time and man's probation will close forever.¹⁵⁶ Then all men will be judged according to their works.¹⁵⁷

2. *Retribution.* Immediately after the judgment, the righteous will enter into eternal life, and the wicked will go into a state of endless punishment.¹⁵⁸