

"THIS GREAT SALVATION"

*"So we must listen very carefully then, to the truth that we have heard, or we may drift away from it. The message God delivered through angels has always proved true, and the people were punished for every violation of the law, and for every act of disobedience. What makes us think that we can escape, if we are indifferent to **this great salvation**, which was announced by the Lord Jesus, himself. It was passed on to us by those who heard him speak. And God verified the message through signs, wonders, various miracles, and by giving gifts of the holy spirit whenever He chose to do so." Hebrews 2:1-4*

What if we do not go back? What will God do if America does not wake up? How long will God wait for us to repent and return? Remember the words of Thomas Jefferson, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever."

The testimony of three great revivalists on "this great salvation," Jonathan Edwards, Charles Finney, and the Prophet Ezekiel.

Excerpts from Jonathan Edwards "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God."

The Scriptural foundation for "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God" is found in Deuteronomy 32:35 *"Their foot shall slip in due time."* In this verse, God is warning His own chosen people that His punishment will come if they do not turn back to Him. While these people had been chosen by God to be his people, they remained void of counsel, having no understanding in them. Edward's refers to them as "wicked" Israelites. They had drifted away from God and their fate was destruction.

To assist us, Noah Webster, in his 1828 American Dictionary, defines the term "wicked" as *"a person who lives in sin, transgressors of divine Law..."* A man who sins, is a wicked man, not a righteous man! If I sin, if I disobey the commands of God, the direction of God, if I fail to obey God's moral law, I am a wicked man. It would appear to me, that Edwards sees no difference between a "wicked Israelite" and a "wicked Christian."

And Edwards says, *"There is nothing that keeps wicked men at any one moment out of hell, but the mere pleasure of God. God is restrained by no obligation to preserve wicked men for one moment. God does not lack the power to cast wicked men into hell at any moment." "God can not only cast wicked men into hell, He can do it easily. There is no fortress or any defense against the power of God. The earth trembles at God's rebuke. **Who are we to think we will stand before Him in our wickedness.**"*

"Wicked men deserve to be cast into hell; so that divine justice never stands in the way, it makes no objection against God's using his power at any moment to destroy them. On the contrary, justice calls aloud for an infinite punishment of their sins. Divine justice says of the tree that brings forth such grapes of Sodom, "Cut it down, why should it use up the soil?" (These are the words of Jesus)

*"They (wicked men) are already under a sentence of condemnation to hell... **the sentence of the law of God, that eternal and immutable rule of righteousness that God has fixed between him and mankind**,... stands against them; so that they are bound over already to hell. (John 3:18) "So that every*

unconverted man properly belongs to hell; that is his place; from thence he is... it is the place that justice, and God's word, and the **sentence of his unchangeable law** assign to him."

"Wicked men are now the objects of that very same anger and wrath of God, that is expressed in the torments of hell. Yes, God is a great deal more angry with great numbers that are now on earth; with many that are now in this congregation, who it may be are at ease, than he is with many of those who are now in the flames of hell."

"The wrath of God burns against them, their damnation does not slumber; the pit is prepared, the fire is made ready, the furnace is now hot, ready to receive them; the flames do now rage and glow. The glittering sword is whet, and held over them, and the pit hath opened its mouth under them."

"The devil stands ready to fall upon them ... They belong to him; he has their souls in his possession, and under his dominion. The Scripture represents them as his goods (Luke 11:12) The devils watch them; they are ... like greedy hungry lions that see their prey, and expect to have it, but are for the present kept back. If God should withdraw his hand, by which they are restrained, they would in one moment fly upon their poor souls."

"Sin is the ruin and misery of the soul; it is destructive in its nature; and if God should leave it without restraint, there would need nothing else to make the soul perfectly miserable. If sin was not restrained, it would immediately turn the soul into a fiery oven, or a furnace of fire and brimstone."

"Almost every natural man that hears of hell, flatters himself that he shall escape it; ... and that his schemes will not fail. They hear indeed that there are but few saved, and that the greater part of men that have died heretofore are gone to hell; but each one imagines that he lays out matters better for his own escape than others have done."

"If we could speak with them (those that have died and gone to hell) and inquire of them, one by one, whether they expected, when alive, and when they used to hear about hell, ever to be the subjects of that misery; we doubtless, should here one and another reply, "No, I never intended to come here; I had laid out matters otherwise in my mind; I thought I should contrive well for myself: I thought my scheme good. " "But death came upon me unexpectedly. "God's wrath was too quick for me."

"The use of this awful subject may be for awakening unconverted persons **in this congregation.**" This which has been said is true of all who are unconverted. This is true whether you are aware of it or not. The only thing that keeps you from hell at this very moment is the "mere pleasure of God." If God should withdraw his hand, nothing will keep you from falling into this pit. The unconverted man is a burden upon creation. "...the creation groans with you; the creation is made subject to the bondage of your corruption, not willingly; the sun does not willingly shine upon you to give you light to serve sin and Satan; the earth does not willingly yield her increase to satisfy your lusts; nor is it willingly a stage for your wickedness to be acted upon; the air does not willingly serve you for breath to maintain the flame of life in your vitals, while you spend your life in the service of God's enemies."

"The bow of God's wrath is bent, and the arrow made ready on the string, and justice bends the arrow at your heart, and strains the bow, and it is nothing but the mere pleasure of God, and that of an angry God, without any promise or obligation at all, that keeps the arrow one moment from being made drunk with your blood. Thus all you that never passed under a great change of heart, by the mighty power of the Spirit of God upon your souls; all you that were never born again, and made new creatures, and raised from being dead in sin, to a state of new, and before altogether unexperienced light and life, are in the hands of an angry God." "However unconvinced you may now be of the truth of what you hear, by and by you will be fully convinced of it."

Consider "whose wrath it is: it is the wrath of the infinite God." Jesus understood this wrath when he said, "And I say unto you, my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that, have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom you shall fear; fear him, which after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, fear him." (Luke 12:4-5)

"Consider this, you that are here present, that yet remain in an unregenerate state. That God will execute the fierceness of his anger, implies, that he will inflict wrath without any pity. When God sees your torment to be so vastly disproportioned to your strength, and sees how your poor soul is crushed, and sinks down, as it were, into an infinite gloom: he will have no compassion upon you, he will not... in the least lighten his hand; there shall be no moderation or mercy, ... he will have no regard to your welfare, nor be at all careful lest you should suffer too much in any other sense, than only that you shall not suffer beyond what strict justice requires." As God spoke through the Prophet Ezekiel, "Therefore will I also deal in fury; mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity; and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet I will not hear them."(Ezek. 8:18)

"How awful are those words which are the words of the great God." As spoken through the Prophet Isaiah, "I will tread them in mine anger, and will trample them in my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." (Isaiah 63:3) "God will not only hate you, but he will hold you, in the utmost contempt; no place shall be thought fit for you, but under his feet to be trodden down as the mire of the streets."

"God hath had it on his heart to show to angels and men, both how excellent his love is, and also how terrible his wrath is." Consider Romans 9:22 which says, "What if God, willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" God will one day "call upon the whole universe to behold that awful majesty and mighty power that is to be seen in it. "And the people shall be as the burnings of lime, as thorns cut up shall they be burnt in the fire. Hear ye that are far off, what I have done; and acknowledge my might. The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites..." (Isaiah 33:12-14)

"You (those who are wicked) shall be tormented in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and when you shall be in this state of suffering, the glorious inhabitants of heaven shall go forth and look on the awful spectacle, that they may see what the wrath and fierceness of the Almighty is; and when they have seen it, they will fall down and adore that great power and majesty. "And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come

to worship before me, saith the Lord. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me; for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched, and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh." (Isaiah 66:23-24)

"It would be dreadful to suffer this fierceness and wrath of Almighty God one moment; but you must suffer it to all eternity." "Your punishment will indeed be infinite." "There is reason to think, that there are many in this congregation now hearing this discourse, that will actually be the subjects of this very misery to all eternity. We know not who they are, or in what seats they sit, or what thoughts they now have. It may be they are now at ease, and hear all these things without much disturbance, and are now flattering themselves that they are not the persons, promising themselves that they shall escape. If we knew that there was one person, and but one, in the whole congregation, that was to be subject to this misery, what an awful thing would it be to think of! But, alas! Instead of one, how many is it likely will remember this discourse in hell?"

But for each one of us here today, there is still time. "And now you have an extraordinary opportunity, a day wherein Christ has thrown the door of mercy wide open, and stands in calling and crying with a loud voice to poor sinners; a day wherein many are flocking to him, and pressing into the kingdom of God."

Edwards ends this message, "Therefore, let everyone that is out of Christ, now awake and fly from the wrath to come. The wrath of Almighty God is now undoubtedly hanging over a great part of this congregation: Let every one fly out of Sodom: "Haste and escape for your lives, look not behind you, escape to the mountain, lest you be consumed."

Excerpts from "The Manner in which the Salvation of the Soul is to be Sought."

The foundational verse for this second sermon is from the account of Noah and the Great Flood. From Genesis Chapter 6:5-8 "The Lord saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. The Lord was grieved that he had made man on the earth, and his heart was filled with pain. So the Lord said, "I will wipe mankind, and the creatures that move along the ground, and the birds of the air – for I am grieved that I have made them. **But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord. This is the account of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of this time, and he walked with God.**" Then in Genesis 6:22, we are told, "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he."

Edwards begins his message on salvation. "We may observe Noah's obedience. He obeyed God: thus did Noah. And his obedience was thorough and universal: according to all that God commanded him, so did he. He not only began, but he went through his work, which God had commanded him to undertake for his salvation from the flood. To this obedience the apostle refers in Hebrews 11:7, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." Therefore, we too should be willing to engage in and go through great undertakings, in order to our own salvation."

The building of this ark, to the great specifications of God's direction, was a great undertaking. Noah persisted in this undertaking for 120 years! Noah must have been very rich, yet likely spent all of his

wealth on this one obedient undertaking. Noah must have received great ridicule from the world over the long duration of this undertaking. Yet Noah persisted, and it was unto his salvation.

Based upon the account of Noah, Edwards then puts forth his three premise conclusion: 1) There is a work, or business which man must undertake if he is to be saved; 2) This work, or business, is a great undertaking; and 3) Men should be willing to enter upon and go through this undertaking, even though it is great, because it is not impossible.

Edwards states, *"If we would be saved, we must seek salvation. For although men do not obtain heaven of themselves: they do not go thither (there) accidentally, or without any intention or endeavors of their own."*

Edwards continues *"The work we have to do is not an obedience only to some, but to all the commands of God; a compliance with every institution of worship; a diligent use of all the appointed means of grace; a doing of all duty towards God and towards man. This must be the one thing they do. They must be ready to part with pleasures and honor, estate and life, and to sell all, that they may successfully accomplish this business. This is the import of taking up the cross, of taking Christ's yoke upon us, and of denying ourselves to follow Christ." "Men must not only be diligent in the use of the means of grace, and be anxiously engaged to escape eternal ruin, til they obtain hope and comfort; but afterwards they must persevere in the duties of religion, til the flood comes, the flood of death."*

"Men are not saved on account of any work of theirs, and yet they are not saved without works." "Though it be not needful that we do anything to merit salvation, which Christ hath fully merited for all who believe in him; yet God, for wise and holy ends, hath appointed, that we should come to final salvation in no other way, but that of good works done by us." "So God hath appointed that man should not be saved without this undertaking and doing this work of which I have been speaking; and therefore we are commanded to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling."(Phil. 2:12)

"Man was made for business and not idleness and the main business for which he was made, was that of religion. Man's business brings glory to God! God gave man mental and physical ability to do things, not to be idle. Why would God's plan of salvation reward idleness? God's plan of salvation thus promotes the end of stirring up in man to use his facilities and talents for God's purpose. This is the wisdom of God!"

"It becomes the wisdom of God so to order it, that things of great value and importance should not be obtained without great labor and diligence. ... If great things were in common easily obtained, it would have a tendency to cause men to slight and undervalue them. Men commonly despise those things which are cheap, and which are obtained without difficulty."

Edwards then begins his second proposition, that because this work or business, which must be done in order to the salvation of men, is such a **great** undertaking, many men will dare not undertake it. To them it appears to be giving themselves up to perpetual bondage. *"The greater part of men therefore choose to put it off, and keep it at as great a distance as they can. They cannot bear to think of entering immediately on such a hard service, and rather than do it, they will run the risk of eternal damnation by*

putting it off to an uncertain future opportunity." The devil will make "This Great Salvation" appear either terrible and dark, or easy and trivial. Either deception will work.

"It is a business of great labor and care. There are many commands to be obeyed, many duties to be done, duties to God, duties to our neighbor, and duties, to ourselves. There is much opposition in the way of these duties from without." We must battle against the things of this world which tempt and hinder us. "There is a great opposition from within..." "We must battle our own emotions, will and deceitful heart."

"It is a constant business." "This is a business which must be followed every day." (Luke 9:23) We must deny ourselves and pick up our cross daily. There is no "relaxation" or "vacation" from this business. If we relax from time to time we lose everything."

It is an undertaking of great expense. "We must, therein sell all; we must follow this business at the expense of our substance, of our credit amount men, the good will of our neighbors, at the expense of all our earthly friends, and even at the expense of life itself."

"Sometimes we must wait a long time before we obtain comfort in this business. God may actually "hide His face" from us for a time. It may seem at times that we actually are moving backward rather than forward in the business of overcoming sin. And we may have to pass through times of despair before we obtain some saving comfort."

"Because this business is so great, it "requires much instruction, consideration, and counsel." "There is no business wherein men stand in need of counsel more than in this." " There are many more wrong ways to do this work, than there are right ways." (Consider Matthew 7:13-14) Salvation is a narrow gate and a narrow road.

"Finally, "This business never ends till life ends." We cannot rest on the past accomplishments. "Past attainments and past success will not excuse us from what remains for the future, nor will they make future constant labor and care unnecessary to our salvation."

Edwards then moves to his third premise, that men should be willing to engage in and go through this business, however great and difficult it may seem to be, seeing it is for their own salvation. The consequences of not engaging in this business are death and destruction! This is the fear of the Lord! A second day of judgment is coming and none will escape this coming wrath of God, except those who are in right relationship with a Holy God. *"So it will doubtless be at the end of the world, when Christ shall come to judge the world in righteousness."*

"Men who neglect this great work, will when they are drawing near to death, may cry out and confess their past sins, and they may promise future reformation, but it will prove in vain for them." "God hath numbered their days and finished them; and as they have sinned away the day of grace, they must even bear the consequences, and forever lie down in sorrow." "The destruction, when it shall come, will be infinitely terrible." And when it comes, the time of repentance will have run out.

Edwards states that *"Though the work which is necessary in order to man's salvation is a great work, **yet it is not impossible.**" "However difficult it be, yet multitudes (like Noah) have gone through it, and have obtained salvation by the means. It is not a work beyond the faculties of our nature, nor beyond the opportunities which God giveth us. If men will but take warning, and hearken to counsel, if they will but be sincere and in good earnest, be seasonable in their work, take their opportunities, use their advantages be steadfast, and not wavering; they shall not fail."*

Edwards then makes a bold statement that few preachers today would dare make, *"I would have you sit down and count the cost; and if you cannot find it in your hearts to engage in a great, hard, laborious and expensive undertaking and to persevere in it to the end of life, pretend not to be religious. Indulge yourselves in your ease; follow your pleasures; eat, drink, and be merry; even conclude to go to hell in that way, and never make any more pretenses of seeking your salvation."*

Edwards then concludes his message with this warning, *"You have been once more warned today, while the door of the ark yet stands open. You have, as it were, once again heard the knocks of the hammer and axe in the building of the ark, to put you in mind that a flood is approaching. Take heed therefore that you do not still stop your ears, treat these warnings with a regardless heart, and still neglect the great work which you have to do lest the flood of wrath suddenly come upon you, sweep you away, and there be no remedy."*

Excerpts from Charles Finney's "Holiness Essential to Salvation."

The Finney sermon we will first consider is "Holiness Essential to Salvation." In this sermon Finney addresses the drift that had been occurring in the Church. They had changed the "This Great Salvation" message from "God's plan to save His people from their sins" to "God's plan to save His people from the punishment of their sins." Finney found this error to be fatal.

The foundational verse for this sermon is Matthew 1:21 *"And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shall call his name Jesus; **for he shall save his people from their sins.**"* As I studied this sermon, I came to realize that this is "the message delivered by angels" that the writer of Hebrews was referring to in Hebrews 2:1-4, which has been foundational to our study today. *"The message God delivered through angels has always proven true, and the people were punished for every violation of the law, and for every act of disobedience. What makes us think that we can escape, if we are indifferent to this great salvation...."*

The three points of this message are: 1) That salvation from sin is the great necessity of man; 2) That Jesus has undertaken this work; and 3) Many fail of this salvation.

Finney begins, *"Salvation consists in being saved from sin; and the reason why many persons are not saved is, that they are unwilling to accept salvation on such a condition, they are unwilling to give up their sins; but if they will not be persuaded to be saved from their sins, and become sanctified, if they will not relinquish and renounce their sin, they never can be saved."* *"Many persons will even pray to God that he will save them, but they really do not desire that for which they ask, they do not mean what they say; to get men to consent to relinquish their sins, is the great difficulty."* *"God cannot consent to this for*

man. Jesus cannot do it for man. Man must submit his will by consenting to the relinquishment of his sin. Man must choose this, and **this choice must be continuous and complete.**"

"Man must voluntarily consent to be saved, or Jesus himself cannot possibly save him. Man is a moral agent, and he is addressed by God as such, and therefore, in order to his salvation, he must voluntarily consent to relinquish sin, and have his mind brought into obedience with the law of God." Many are not saved "because they seek forgiveness while they do not forsake their sins." "Again, many persons fail of this salvation because they are waiting for God to fulfill conditions which it is naturally impossible for him to fulfill, and which they themselves must fulfill, and which God is endeavoring to persuade and influence them to fulfill." Finney says, God cannot repent for us, and God cannot believe for us, yet these are requirements of salvation. To make this point clear he says, "God never requires of us to perform an impossibility, nor does he accomplish that for us which we can do ourselves. Don't be shocked at this, for it is truth."

Finney was a man who firmly believed in the power of the Holy Spirit. In this regard he concludes that many are not saved because "they profess to be waiting for the Holy Spirit, while in fact they are resisting the Holy Spirit." "They pretend that they are waiting for the Holy Spirit to save them and convert them; now, mark, every moment they wait they are grieving and resisting the Holy Spirit." Finney saw the work of the Holy Spirit to be as a teacher, showing and empowering us how to obey God, which is to be righteous, not wicked.

In the early Church, at the time of the Apostles, the antinomian spirit, or anti-law perspective, had crept into the Church, and the doctrine of justification by faith, as opposed to justification by work, was sadly abused by many. "While some of the Apostles were still living, many persons came to regard the gospel as a system of indulgence, --that men were to be justified in sin rather than be saved from sin: thus they too had an entirely false view of the gospel of Christ." Finney goes on, "Now, no man who lives in sin can be justified, because no man can be pardoned who lives in any form of iniquity. The Apostle tells you plainly that those who commit sin are the children of the devil, and while they are living in sin they cannot enjoy the privileges of the gospel." "Men cannot be Christians unless they are holy."

Finney understood the relationship between righteousness and the Law. "The moral law is as much binding upon Christians as it was upon those to whom it was first given. Faith without love will never save man; but let me say, that true faith is always true love. Every man who breaks the law systematically and designedly, living in violation of its precepts, is a child of the devil, and not of God. **Let this be thundered in the ears of the Church and the world.**"

Finney then addresses the issue of whether Christians are any longer under the Law. "Now, it very common for men to overlook this great truth, and fall into the worldly-mindedness and sinful practices of those around them. Again: multitudes are not saved because they regard the gospel as an abrogation of the moral law—a virtual repeal of it. Now, the gospel does not repeal the moral law. What saith the Apostle? "Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid! Yea, we establish the law." Now, it is true that the gospel was designed to set aside the penalty of the law, upon all who should be persuaded to come back to its precepts, and yield that love and confidence which the law requires. Now, it is

frequently the case, if ministers begin to say anything about obedience to the law, the people call out against it as legal preaching! If they are roused up and urged to do that which the law of God requires of them, they tell you they want the gospel. Now, such people know nothing at all of the gospel! They make Christ the minister of sin! They seem to think that Christ came to justify them in their sin, instead of saving them from it."

Finney then says, "Justification in sin is a thing impossible! Now, how can a man be pardoned and justified, before he repents and believes! It is impossible! He must be in a state of obedience to the law of God before he can be justified! The fact is, there is a very great mistake amount many people on this subject. They think that they must persuade themselves that they are justified, but they are not and never can be, till they forsake sin, and do their duty."

Finney says that "multitudes make this mistake... they seek hope, rather than holiness: instead of working out their own salvation, they seek to cherish a hope that they shall be saved. Again, they seek to persuade themselves that they are safe, while they are in a state of condemnation." "If they have certain feelings, which lead them to hope that all will be well with them at last, they are perfectly satisfied, and have no desire to be saved from sin."

Finney then questions people who believe that the "good news" is not that we can be saved from sin, but that we can be saved from the punishment of our sins, without being saved from our sins. He says, "Why is it (this) good news?" "How is it that the good news of the gospel as it strikes them is the good news that will justify rather than sanctify?" "Does it not show, when persons lay more stress upon justification than upon sanctification, that they are more afraid of punishment than of sin? ... If they can but get rid of the penalty, the governmental consequence of sin, they are satisfied."

"Now, who does not know that the true Christian is more afraid of sin than of punishment? Yes, a great deal more! They abhor sin; and when they ever fall into sin, they are ready to curse themselves; and all the more because Christ is so willing to forgive them. The man in this condition of mind will never look upon the gospel as mere justification. Again: whenever the doctrine of justification comes to be more prominent in the church than sanctification, there is something wrong, there is a radical error crept into the church; there is a danger of that church losing all true idea of what the gospel is."

Finney closes this powerful message "And let me say to everyone in this house, don't you expect to be forgiven, don't you expect to be pardoned, unless you will consent to be separated from your sins, and have the name of the Lord Jesus Christ written upon your hearts; unless your prayer is, "O Lord, write thy law upon my heart and make me holy." "Receive his name in your forehead and his law in your heart, give yourself up to him, body and soul, and rely upon it, as the Lord liveth, as Jesus liveth, you shall understand what is the salvation of God. Will you do it tonight?"

Excerpts from "Way to be Holy"

In this message Finney addresses the unchanging nature and power of God's Law, and he confronts the false understanding of "imputed righteousness." The foundational verse for this message is "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." (Romans 10:4 KJV) Finney begins by

stating that this verse does not say that God has abolished the law in respect to believers. He calls people who hold this belief, "antinomians" a term that applies to those who reject the law. He says, *"The moral law is not founded in the arbitrary will of God, for if it were He would have no rule of conduct, nothing with which to compare his own actions. But every moral agent must have some rule by which to act. Again, He must have no character at all, for character implies moral obligation, and moral obligation implies moral law. Again, unless the law is obligatory on Him, benevolence in Him is not virtue, for virtue must be compliance with obligation."*

"The moral law is founded in God's self-existent nature. He never made his own nature, and consequently never made the law, and it must therefore be obligatory upon Him, by virtue of his own nature which imposes it. It is as really obligatory on Him as on us." Wow! Did we here this? Is God really obligated to obey the Law? The answer is "Yes! God is limited by His own Word, which is the Law. Because the Law reflects the nature of God, who is unchangeable, therefore the Law is also unchangeable. God cannot act in opposition to His own Law!

"If He could and should abolish the moral law, then we could have no moral character. We could neither be sinful nor holy ... Christ cannot be the end of the law in the sense that He abolishes it." The most clear and trustworthy statement in this regard was made by Jesus, himself, when he declared, *"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. I tell you the truth, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished."* (Matthew 5:17-18)

Finney adds that God has not abolished the penalty for violation of the Law as it applies to believers, so that they can sin without punishment. He says, *"If the penalty is set aside, the law is repealed, for law consists of precept and penalty."* In other words, without punishment for disobedience, there is no law! Finney wholeheartedly rejects the concept that we are saved through "imputed righteousness. *"The law never aimed at imputation. This was no part of its object."* He goes on, *"The doctrine of imputed righteousness is founded on the absurd assumption that Christ owed no obedience to the law. But how can this be? Was He under no obligation to be benevolent? If not, then his benevolence was not virtue. He certainly was just as much bound to love God with all his heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, and his neighbor as Himself, as you are."*

Excerpts from "Jesus, A Savior from Sinning"

"It would seem that the great mass of professed Christians are looking to Christ to forgive their sins and secure their pardon; but this is all. They look for no sanctifying influence or agency from Jesus Christ. In place of this they resort to a notion of Christ's imputed righteousness. It is remarkable that so many Christians have settled down in this notion of an imputed rather than imparted righteousness; on the notion that Christ, instead of imparting, imputes righteousness to his people; instead of begetting in them personal holiness, makes over to them the credit of his own holiness, while they are yet unsanctified; instead of making them holy in fact, only accounts them holy in law, while they are really sinful. This is a most strange and singular doctrine indeed. I am well aware it is not singular in the sense

of being uncommon or out of fashion; but it surely is most strange in view of either Bible teachings, or the essential nature of things."

Finney concludes this issue by saying, *"Imputation is not, and never was, the end or object of the law. The end which it seeks is righteousness or true obedience."* In other words, Jesus did not live a righteous life of obedience, and then die on the cross, so that men would no longer be required to obey God's Law. Why would God create such a plan? Why would God settle for theoretical righteousness (imputed righteousness) rather than actual righteousness (true obedience to the Law)? Again, Finney concludes that *"Righteousness is obedience to the Law."*

In his sermon, "How Christ becomes the end of the law for righteousness or obedience." Finney says, *"Confidence or faith is essential to all hearty obedience to any law. **An outward conformity to its requirements may be secured by fear, but not love.**"*