

# Thrasher-Garrett Debate

*Unconditional Salvation  
& Apostasy*

Thomas N. Thrasher

&

Eddie K. Garrett

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## **DEDICATION**

In recognition of and appreciation to  
John Lankford  
for his encouragement and support  
of the work of defending  
God's Eternal Truth.

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## INTRODUCTION

In 1971 Thomas N. Thrasher, a gospel preacher working with the Old Moulton Road church of Christ in Decatur, Alabama contacted Eddie K. Garrett of Middletown, Ohio, a Primitive Baptist preacher and frequent debater, concerning the possibility of their participating in an oral debate. They agreed upon a four-night, oral debate to be held August 1972, in the building of the Danville Road church of Christ in Decatur, Alabama.

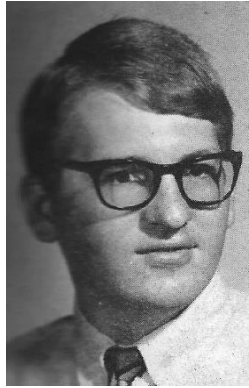
In anticipation of that oral debate, both men agreed to conduct a written debate on two propositions. The first proposition was: "The Scriptures teach that everyone for whom Christ died will be unconditionally saved—eternally." Garrett affirmed and Thrasher denied. The second proposition was: "The Scriptures teach that a born again child of God may so sin as to be finally lost in hell." Thrasher affirmed and Garrett denied. The written debate was completed within a few months and originally published, as mutually agreed, in 1972 in *The Christian Baptist*, a periodical edited by S. T. Tolley and widely circulated among Primitive Baptists. Eddie K. Garrett was a regular contributor to this paper.

Prior to the oral debate in August 1972 and subsequent to publication in *The Christian Baptist*, the written debate was published in book form by the Gospel Defender Publishing Company, Decatur, Alabama. Because the first edition was soon sold out, a second edition soon followed. That edition has been out-of-print for many years.

This current volume is the third edition of the *Thrasher-Garrett Debate on Unconditional Salvation and Apostasy* in book form. Despite the improved quality over the first two editions, the content remains as the material was originally written by Mr. Garrett and Mr. Thrasher more than 50 years ago. Because Mr. Garrett had the final speech of the debate, several points were made to which I would have liked to respond. However, the rules of the debate prohibited my doing so. That includes my misunderstanding of Mr. Garrett's view on infants being lost. Viewing the debate from my current perspective, although I think

Mr. Garrett's position is inconsistent, I acknowledge that his position was that all infants who die in infancy are elect and, therefore, will not be lost.

The publisher of this new edition encourages its reading and circulation among all sincere truth seekers in an effort to increase our understanding of God's truth that makes us free (John 8:32) and travel that narrow way that leads to eternal life with God (Matthew 7:13-14).



Thomas N. Thrasher



Eddie K. Garrett

## GARRETT'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE

Brother T. N. Thrasher: Dear Sir—

I engage with you an acknowledged representative of the church called the “the Church of Christ” to discuss the extremely important subjects involved in the propositions we have signed.

I approach this first proposition affirmatively, recalling the sacredness of the proposition which I affirm as treasured in the hearts of my people the Primitive Baptists.

As one of our beloved ministers once wrote: “The absorbing question pertaining to the divine arrangement of God for the salvation of depraved sinners to enjoy eternal life, has engaged the penetrating minds of the noblest of earth, who, with profound solicitude, have searched the holy oracles of God for light and knowledge. These may be classed, as to belief, into two general divisions: those who believe that salvation from alienation to eternal life is wholly the work of Christ, as the one mediator between God and man, and those who believe that the salvation of the alien sinner is conditional upon voluntary obedience to the requirements of God, by the alien sinner.”

This difference of opinion of children of God I attribute to bias of mind, as a result of false teaching. In view of this, I engage in this religious discussion hoping that those children of God whose minds are blinded to the truth may see the truth and be comforted by it. To all who are interested: Brother Thrasher and I have mutually agreed that we will discuss the pending propositions in a courteous, Christian manner. We submit to your judgment as you study the following pages, as to whether each has complied with the solemn pledge, or has violated it.

The first proposition: “The scriptures teach that everyone for whom Christ died will be unconditionally saved—eternally.”

I shall begin by defining my proposition. By “unconditional” I mean unconditional on the sinner’s part. Certainly Christ met certain conditions FOR the sinner to be eternally saved. Also it is ETERNAL salvation that we are discussing and not one of the many TIMELY deliverances that come



to the children of God.

To further define my proposition I will give the reader an illustration. In my study of the Bible I have noticed the many commercial terms that are used in describing our Lord's death upon the cross. Let me cite a few examples.

“For ye are bought with a price.” (1 Corinthians 6:20)

“To feed the church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood.” (Acts 20:28)

“Even as the son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20:28).

“In whom we have redemption through his blood.” (Ephesians 1:7).

Notice the words bought, price, purchased, ransom and redemption. Surely these terms set forth the thought of a commercial transaction. The allusion in these passages is sometimes to the payment of a debt, and sometimes to the liberation of a captive. In either case it is God who holds a claim against us. The debt that requires cancelling is our sin against God. The ransom that must be paid is for the purpose of delivering the sinner from the demands of justice. Those who would belittle the so-called commercial view of the atonement must take their attack to the word of God. For it is the Bible that uses these terms. Now for the illustration. Suppose I owe \$100 debt down at the grocery store. I have no money to pay. I am burdened down with the thoughts of the dead. I have no peace because of my obligation to this debt that I rightfully owe.

Then one day, a man whom I regard as an enemy, goes down to the store and pays my debt for me. Now there are two things that it will take to cancel my debt. First, the man who is to pay the debt must have \$100. Ninety-nine dollars will not pay the debt. Also, the grocery store owner must accept the payment.

Now, this all being done, the debt is cancelled. Also, this is all done without me, the debtor, knowing anything about it. Several days later I happen to be down at the store and the store owner says to me: “Mr. Garrett, your debt has been paid.” Now this would be equivalent to the preaching of the gospel. The man is telling me some “good news.”

At this point, I will do one of two things. I will either accept or reject

the message as being the truth. If I feel that the man is simply jesting with me and not telling me the truth, then I will continue to carry the burden of that debt. But if I believe the message to be the truth, then I will be delivered (saved) from the burden of the debt. Let me ask at this time: **“When** was the debt legally cancelled?” Surely no one would reject the fact that it was cancelled when the man laid down the \$100 and the store owner marked the debt paid! My coming to hear about the transaction and believing it did not have anything to do with the debt being legally removed. So it is so it is with eternal salvation.

But my friends, isn't it the position of my opponent's church that the debt against the sinner is not removed until the sinner possesses an intellectual belief of the gospel?

I want you to notice in the illustration that I have used that there are two salvations. One: I was saved legally when the debt was actually paid. Two: I was saved (delivered) when I believe the preached message. In the latter deliverance it is from the burden of the debt. But if I never believed what the store owner told me it would not change the fact that my debt was gone, never to be collected at my hands. Since when do we have to believe a thing to establish a fact. It is a fact whether we believe it or not. But in this case it does us a lot of good if we believe the thing.

Also my attitude towards my enemy will change when I find out that he has paid my debt. So it is with the pardoned sinner towards Christ when he comes to have this knowledge of Christ and his atoning work.

When Noah sent out the dove from the ark to see if the rains had stopped and the waters had subsided, serves to illustrate this same point. When the dove returned to the ark with the olive branch in its mouth and was witnessed by Noah: he could either believe the evidence or reject it. Suppose Noah rejected the evidence of the olive branch. Would that change the fact that the rain had stopped and the waters were going down? Absolutely not! This is a fact whether Noah believed it or not. But it will do Noah a lot of good to believe. What good will it do him? It will make his remaining days in the ark happy days. For he will have a great hope that in a while he will be delivered from the ark.

His happiness in those remaining days in the ark were conditioned upon his belief, but his belief had nothing to do with stopping the rain. The conditions laid down in the Bible do the same thing. There are no conditions on the sinners part for eternal life, but there are conditions for his enjoying his salvation here in this life.

My first argument in support of my proposition is founded on the fact that the dead alien sinner is not able to perform conditions. In proof of this I quote a part of Romans 3:10-18, "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.... There is no fear of God before their eyes."

The above verses surely represents the sinner as being in rather a bad condition to perform conditions in order to his eternal salvation. The passage actually says that the alien sinner does not "seek God." My opponent's position is that the alien sinner DOES seek God. Therefore my opponent is in disagreement with the Bible. It also says that the alien sinner does not quote fear God" if a man does not fear God how is it that he will ever perform any conditions? No amount of reasoning by my opponent can do away with the clear teachings of Romans chapter 3.

The Bible also says: "But the natural (unsaved) man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14). Also, "the carnal mind is enmity against God; it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7). Now Brother Thrasher, why is it that the carnal mind is "enmity against God," and the natural mind "receiveth not the things of the spirit?" Paul says, because they are "spiritually discerned"; and the sinner has no spiritual mind with which to discern them. Now Mr. Thrasher, I do not assert this. I am not preaching my doctrine. What is the good of my doctrine, or any other man's doctrine? God says it. It is here in the book. Now, Mr. Thrasher, you must square to it. So according to 1 Corinthians 2:14, if a man "receives" anything in the realm of the spiritual, he is not a natural (unsaved) man. So, it is the children of God who receive

the things of the Spirit and not the dead alien sinner. One could just as easily get Niagara Falls to fulfill conditions to flow uphill as to get the dead alien sinner to fulfill conditions. Only God can do this. Man cannot do it.

The Bible also says, “And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). The voice of the preacher will never be heard by the one dead in sins, in a spiritual sense. The voice of Jesus by the Divine Spirit must give life before such can hear the preaching of the gospel. Even the voice of Jesus himself, in preaching his gospel, was not heard by those who were dead. Jesus said to this class, “Why do ye not understand my speech: even because ye cannot hear my words” (John 8:43). It was necessary that he speak to them in regeneration in order that they might be able to hear his voice in preaching. Why? It is not in the regeneration of sinners that the gospel is employed as a means.

The sinner is dead in the spiritual realm. He cannot do anything in that realm; just as the man who is physically dead cannot do anything physically. Now Brother Thrasher, we will be waiting for you to deal with this without evasiveness.

I will summarize a bit by giving my opponent a couple of syllogisms. The third chapter of Romans fully describes the unregenerate man. Mr. Thrasher (and his people) says that the sinner must “understand” in order to be saved by the gospel. Paul says: “There is none that understandeth.” Then by the theory of Mr. Thrasher and his brethren, none can be saved. Talk about a hard doctrine, that does not only rob a few of what they call a chance, but absolutely makes salvation impossible for anyone. The syllogisms:

1. Sinners must understand in order to be saved. —Thrasher
  2. “There are none that understandeth.”—Bible
  3. Therefore none can be saved.
- 
1. Sinners must seek God in order to be eternally saved.—Thrasher
  2. “There is none that seeketh after God.”—Bible
  3. Therefore there will be none saved.

Our "Church of Christ" friends also say that sinners must do good in order to be saved. Paul says: "There is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Romans 3:12). Then, none will be saved according to their claims.

Again let me quote Romans 8:8, "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." If we must please God in order to be saved, then none will be saved. To say otherwise is to deny that the alien sinner is in the flesh. Mr. Thrasher, will you please tell us who then is in the flesh?

Those in whom the Spirit does not dwell are in the flesh (Romans 8:9). The Spirit does not dwell in the sinner (Romans 8: 9-14). Therefore the sinner is in the flesh. If the sinner is in the flesh he cannot please God, and cannot therefore be saved conditionally, unless God saves them for displeasing him. Mr. Thrasher, would you say that those in the flesh are saved for what they do? Paul says what they do is displeasing to God. They are, therefore, saved for displeasing God. This is the foolishness of my opponent's doctrine.

Paul says: "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," (Romans 9:16). This verse clearly teaches that salvation is not from the will of man, nor from his efforts in striving for it, but it is entirely of God's mercy vouchsafed to whom he pleases. What basis, then, can be discovered in the word of God for those schemes of doctrine, which, in a greater or less degree, make salvation depend on man's own exertions?

The reason that salvation is not of him that "willeth" is because the sinner has no righteous will. "There is none that seeketh after God." "There is no fear of God before their eyes" (Romans 3).

Man can no more turn to God then the dead can sit up in their coffins. The sinner can no more originate a right desire than he can create a universe. It is God and God alone who creates life in the sinner; thus making it possible to act in the realm of the spiritual. Dead Lazarus was raised to life by the power of God. After he had life, he then could see and perform physical conditions.

My second argument in proof of my proposition is: That

salvation is unconditional because it is by grace. I offer the following Scriptures as proof. “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). Also, “Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work” (Romans 11:5-6). This latter verse gives us a definition of grace. It tells us in no uncertain words that grace and works cannot be mixed. It is either all of grace or it isn't grace at all. The passage in Ephesians 2 also tells us that grace rules out works. Even the faith of the text is NOT OF OURSELVES. This is what my proposition says. (Eternal salvation is unconditional on the sinner's part.) Titus 3:5 says, “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us....” Now if my opponent reads into this text just CERTAIN KINDS of works, then he is adding to the word of God. If a man is saved eternally by believing the gospel, repenting, confessing and being baptized in water, then that is WORKS; and he is against the Bible.

My friend's doctrine is that the Lord only has power to give eternal life to those who hear and obey their teaching. Jesus says: “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me.”

I declare unto you that God is going to save all his elect. To say that he cannot is blasphemy.

## THRASHER'S FIRST NEGATIVE

It affords me great joy to enter into this discussion with Mr. Garrett, and to defend the truth of God as it is revealed in the Bible. In the very beginning, we should recognize the seriousness of the subjects under consideration, and the importance of our understanding God's plan for the salvation of our souls. The apostle Paul said, "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is" (Ephesians 5:17). I hope that all will understand God's will better as a result of this study, and that it may be done to His glory (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Let us notice the proposition that my opponent is affirming: "The Scriptures teach that everyone for whom Christ dies will be unconditionally saved—eternally." Please observe that we are interested in what "THE SCRIPTURES TEACH," and not what Mr. Garrett or I might think is, or is not, so. The word of God should be the basis for our decision about what is the truth and what is error. With this in mind, we will now investigate my opponent's first affirmative speech in order to determine if he has proved that "everyone for whom Christ died will be UNCONDITIONALLY saved—ETERNALLY."

In defining his proposition, Mr. Garrett says, "By 'unconditional' I mean unconditional on the sinner's part. Certainly Christ met certain conditions FOR the sinner to be eternally saved." I agree that Jesus met certain conditions in order that the sinner might be saved. For example, He shed His blood: "For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS" (Matthew 26:28). Here is a condition that must have been satisfied BEFORE one's sins were remitted: Jesus had to die and shed His blood upon the cross. However, the Scriptures also teach that salvation is conditioned upon one's obedience to the gospel: "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS" (Acts 2:38). Please notice that "the remission of sins" is CONDITIONAL: one must "REPENT and be BAPTIZED"! Here are two plainly stated

conditions for one’s sins being forgiven. Please observe the parallel between Matthew 26:28 and Acts 2:38.

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CONDITION</b>	<b>RESULT</b>	<b>SCRIPTURE</b>
Jesus Christ	Shed His Blood	Remission of Sins	Matthew 26:28
Alien Sinner	Repent and Be Baptized	Remission of Sins	Acts 2:38
<b><i>“The Remission of Sins” is CONDITIONAL on God’s Part and Man’s Part!</i></b>			

If my opponent denies that man’s salvation is conditioned upon his repentance and baptism, then he ought also to deny that man’s salvation is conditioned upon the shedding of Jesus’ blood. Both conditions are necessary for men to receive forgiveness of their sins, according to the Bible.

The “Commercial” Terms in the New Testament

Our friend points out that the New Testament writers employed such terms as “bought, price, purchased, ransom and redemption” when referring to “our Lord’s death upon the cross.” I readily accept the verses which he quoted, as well as others that refer to the benefits of the death of Christ. However, while recognizing such passages dealing with God’s part in man’s salvation, he overlooks many others that specify conditions on man’s part. For example, I will cite one verse from the first book of the New Testament and one from the last book: “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven” (Matthew 7:21); “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22:14). Literally hundreds of verses between these two could be produced to prove that man must fulfill certain conditions in order to be saved. However, these two should suffice to disprove my opponent’s affirmation that



salvation is unconditional. I want to emphasize that I do not deny the essentiality of God's grace, love, mercy, or anything else He has done for man. But I do deny that He saves man from sin unconditionally, as I have already shown.

#### Mr. Garrett's Illustration

My friend offers an illustration of a man who owes a debt of \$100 which he cannot pay. Another person comes along and pays it for him, thus cancelling the debt. Mr. Garrett says that this is what Jesus did when He died upon the cross. He redeemed us from the debt of sin, and man has no part in his redemption.

Now, I fully realize that Jesus "bought, purchased, and redeemed" us; however, the Scriptures do not teach what my opponent thinks his illustration shows. Notice his argument that Jesus paid our debt of sin would also prove that Jesus paid the debt for EVERY MAN! The Bible says, "That he [Jesus] by the grace of God should taste death FOR EVERY MAN" (Hebrews 2:9). According to my honorable opponent's illustration, Jesus paid the debt for every man unconditionally; therefore, by his logic and reasoning based upon his illustration, ALL MEN WILL BE SAVED ETERNALLY! His argument proves UNIVERSAL SALVATION as surely as it proves his contention. This point is further demonstrated by 1 John 2:2, "And he [Jesus Christ] is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." The benefits of the Lord's sacrifice are available to "the whole world," that is, provision is made in God's plan for every person to receive the remission of sins through the blood of Christ. God extends His grace to us; however, we must be willing to accept it. "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men" (Titus 2:11); "For by grace are ye saved through faith" (Ephesians 2:8; cf. Romans 5:1-2). This shows that the salvation which God offers through His grace is CONDITIONED upon one's FAITH. Jesus said, "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins" (John 8:24). Belief or faith is plainly shown to be a condition which man must satisfy in order to be saved by the grace of God. SALVATION IS CONDITIONAL, according to the Bible.

My friend Garrett asks, "Isn't it the position of my opponent's

church that the debt against the sinner is not removed until the sinner possesses an intellectual belief of the gospel?” Mr. Garrett, the church of which I am a member is the Lord’s, not mine. He built it; He purchased it; He is its Head; and He adds the saved to it (Matthew 16:17-18; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25; Acts 2:47). I am very sure that Mr. Garrett did not intend to use the expression “my opponent’s church” in a discourteous way; however, I mention these things in order to clarify this point so that no one will misunderstand.

Yes, I believe that one must BELIEVE before his debt of sin is removed, because the Scriptures so teach. Let me cite several passages to emphasize the necessity of faith.

**“THE SCRIPTURES TEACH” THAT FAITH IS  
A CONDITION FOR MAN’S SALVATION!**

Mark 16:16	“He that <b>believeth</b> and is baptized shall be saved; but he that <b>believeth not</b> shall be damned.”
Luke 8:12	“... then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should <b>believe</b> and be saved.”
John 3:16	“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever <b>believeth</b> in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”
John 3:18	“He that <b>believeth</b> on him is not condemned: but he that <b>believeth not</b> is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”
John 3:36	“He that <b>believeth</b> on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that <b>believeth not</b> the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.”
Acts 10:43	“To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever <b>believeth</b> in him shall receive remission of sins.”
Acts 16:31	“... <b>Believe</b> on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.”

[CHART CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE]

Romans 1:16 “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that **believeth**; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”

Romans 3:25 Whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through **faith** in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.”

Romans 5:1 “Therefore being justified by **faith** we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Romans 10:9 “... if thou shalt **confess** with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt **believe** in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

Galatians 3:24 “Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by **faith**.”

Galatians 3:26 “For ye are all the children of God by **faith** in Christ Jesus.”

2 Thessalonians 2:12 “That they all might be damned who **believed not** the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

Hebrews 11:6 “But without **faith** it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must **believe** that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

MANY OTHER VERSES COULD BE GIVEN TO PROVE  
 THAT **FAITH** IS ONE OF THE CONDITIONS  
 NECESSARY TO MAN’S SALVATION!

There should be no doubt in our minds that “faith” is a condition which stands squarely between the sinner and his salvation. Just open your eyes and read these plain and simple verses from God's word! Unless we believe, we “shall be damned”; we do not have God's word in our hearts; we do not “have everlasting life”; we are “condemned”; we “shall not see life”; we have not received the “remission of sins”; we are not “saved”; we are not “justified” and do not have “peace with God”; we are not “children of God”; and we cannot “please” God! And yet my honorable opponent comes along and says that salvation is unconditional. Strange indeed!

Mr. Garrett sites the case of Noah and he says that, when the dove returned with the olive branch, Noah could have either believed or rejected this evidence that the rains had stopped, and it would not have “changed the fact that the rain had stopped and the waters were going down.” Certainly not! And we today can examine the evidence that Jesus Christ died upon the cross for our sins, and our belief or disbelief will not change that fact that Jesus actually did that. However, this certainly does not make salvation UNCONDITIONAL on MAN’S PART, and Mr. Garrett’s reference to Noah is unfortunate for his “unconditional salvation” doctrine. The writer of Hebrews said, “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; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith” (Hebrews 11:7). Please notice that Noah’s faith caused him to obey God by building the ark (Genesis 6:13-14, 22; 7:5, 7). My opponent may argue that Noah would have been saved even though he had not built the ark as God commanded him; however, the Bible teaches that eternal salvation comes only to those who obey God: “He became the author of eternal salvation unto all of them that obey him” (Hebrews 5:8-9). Will Mr. Garrett contend that Noah would have been saved if he had refused to build the ark??? Let him tell us in his second affirmative.

The apostle Peter also refers to the example of Noah by saying, “... the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us ... by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 3:20-21). Peter tells us that baptism is essential to one’s salvation, in that it is a command of God that we must obey in order to receive the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16). It should be emphasized that the water does not save us; it does not wash away our sins. God forgives us of sin. But He does not remit our sins until we believe and our baptized in obedience to His commands (Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-4, 17-18).

Opponent's Argument: "Alien Sinner Is Not Able To Perform Conditions."

My worthy opponent argues that the "alien sinner is not able to perform conditions" in order to obey God, and thus salvation must be unconditional. His basis for this argument is Romans 3: 10-18. However, it should be noted from the entire context that the apostle Paul is showing that all men, both Jews and Gentiles, have sinned and, therefore, need the salvation that is in Christ (Romans 3:9, 23-26; 5:8-9; 6:23). I ask: Does Paul say in his letter that salvation is unconditional? Definitely not! He gives the following conditions as essential on man's part: First: **Hearing the gospel** (10:13-14, 17); Second: **Faith** (5:1-2); Third: **Repentance** (2:4-5); Fourth: **Confession** of faith in Christ (10:9-10); Fifth: **Baptism** (6:3-4); Sixth: **Faithful service** to God (12:1-2).

The whole idea may be summarized in these words: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16). The gospel is God's power to save, for it pricks the heart of those who desire to hear and understand (Hebrews 4:12; Ephesians 6:17; Acts 2:37), producing faith in their hearts (Romans 10:17), which causes them to respond in obedience to His commands (Galatians 5:6; James 2:24, 26; 1 Peter 1:22-23).

Mr. Garrett apparently thinks that 1 Corinthians 2:14 and Romans 8:7 help him out, and he tries to show that the alien sinner cannot hear, understand, or obey God's will, and thus if he is saved, he is saved unconditionally. I believe that my fellow disputant misunderstands these two verses because he does not know who the **natural man** is, or what it means for a person to be **carnally minded**. These terms refer to one who depends upon human wisdom rather than God's revelation (1 Corinthians 2:4-7, 10, 12-14), or who allows fleshly appetites or desires to control his life (Romans 6:12; 8:6-7, 13; 1 Corinthians 3:1, 3). Such a person as this will not receive God's word into his heart. However, the person who has the desire to please God, and who is willing to accept the salvation which God offers "by grace through faith" will

understand, believe, and obey the gospel when it is preached. Let us notice these two reactions to the preaching of the gospel with examples from the scriptures.

### **TWO REACTIONS TO THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST**

Stephen's Sermon (Acts 7:1-53)

REACTION: "they were cut to the heart, and gnashed on him with their teeth.... Then they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, and ran upon him with one accord, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him" (verses 54, 57-58).

Peter's Sermon (Acts 2:14-36, 38-40)

REACTION: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? ... Then they that gladly received his word were baptized" (verses 37, 41).

*What was the difference??? One group was willing to accept the truth; the other was not. Their salvation was conditioned on their **reaction** to the preaching of the gospel!*

Opponent's Argument: "Salvation Is Unconditional Because It Is By Grace."

My friend introduces Ephesians 2:8-9 in support of his argument. In examining this passage, I want to point out that "faith" is given as an essential condition in order that man might be saved by grace. The chart emphasizes this idea.

### **"GRACE" (God's Part) — "FAITH" (Man's Part)**

Ephesians 2:8 "For by **grace** are ye saved through **faith** ..."

Romans 3:22-24 "Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that **believe** ... being justified freely by his **grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Romans 4:16 "Therefore it is of **faith**, that it might be by **grace** ..."

[CHART CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE]

Romans 4:16 “Therefore it is of **faith**, that it might be by **grace** ...”

Romans 5:1-2 “Therefore being justified by **faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom also we have access by **faith** into this **grace** wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”

Acts 18:27 “ ... The brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had **believed** through **grace**.”

*We are Saved by Grace THROUGH Faith.  
Therefore, Salvation is Conditioned on Faith!*

Recognizing that “faith” in Ephesians 2:8 imposes a condition for man’s salvation, Mr. Garrett comments, “Even the faith of the text is NOT OF OURSELVES.” Not so, my friend! When Paul says, “And that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God,” he is speaking of SALVATION, not FAITH. Salvation is a gift which God gives; however, He grants that gift on the basis of one’s obeying His will (Hebrews 5:9; Romans 6: 17-18; 1 Peter 1:22).

#### Illustration

Mr. Smith has fallen into a well and cannot escape by himself. Mr. Jones comes along and desires to help Mr. Smith, so he throws him a rope. Mr. Smith has done nothing to deserve Mr. Jones' favor; however, if he really believes that Mr. Jones can and will pull him out with the rope, he will grab hold of the rope, and he must not let go until Mr. Jones has pulled him out of the well.

Notice the parallel when we are discussing our salvation from sin. Man has fallen into sin by transgression of God's law (1 John 3:4; Romans 3:23). He cannot escape sin by himself; God must extend his grace to man (Romans 3:24; Titus 2:11). Man has done nothing to deserve God's grace; however, if he really believes that God will save him from sin, he will do whatever is required in order to be saved (Hebrews 5:9; Mark 16:16). If he does not believe and obey, he will remain in his sins (John 8:24; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9).

Once he does believe and obey, he must remain faithful to God (1 John 2:24-25, 28-29; Hebrews 2:1, 3), otherwise he will fall back into sin and be lost (Galatians 5:7, 19-21; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13).

Questions For Mr. Garrett

- 1) For whom did Christ die?
- 2) If salvation is unconditional on man's part, as you claim, then by what means does God decide who will be saved?
- 3) Do the Scriptures teach that all of mankind are born into the world as sinners? If so, please give us the scripture.



## GARRETT'S SECOND AFFIRMATIVE

Respected opponent, interested readers:

I pursue with interest and pleasure the investigation of the Scriptures upon the important subject that I am affirming.

The proofs and arguments which I have presented have not been dealt with by my opponent. He takes a very common approach of those in error: to pit one verse against another; rather than explain the verses given. Brother Thrasher, I do not intend to let you get away with this. So you might as well begin to explain the proof verses given rather than to try and pit one verse against another. When you get into the affirmative of this discussion, I fully intend to explain your proof texts.

My respected opponent did, however, admit the truth of my proposition in one statement that he made. Commenting upon my statement that Ephesians 2: 8 taught that "the faith of the text was not of ourselves"; Mr. Thrasher said: "Not so, my friend! When Paul said, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, he is speaking of SALVATION, not FAITH." Now this is exactly what I am affirming: that eternal salvation is not of ourselves.

I shall begin this address by answering certain texts given by my friend Mr. Thrasher, and then proceed to give further arguments in proof of my proposition.

My friend says that Acts 2: 38 disproves my proposition. Let us see if it does. The text reads, "... Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins..." The whole controversy of this text revolves around the little word "for." This word comes from the Greek word "*eis*." Greek authorities tell us that this word can be translated into English: "for, to, unto, into, with reference to, etc." But let us take the little English word "for" and consider it for a moment. This preposition can have the meaning of "in order to obtain" or "because of." Mr. Thrasher takes the position that it is used in the sense of "in order to obtain" in Acts 2: 38. I do not agree. Let me cite some passages where the

Greek word “*eis*” is used in the sense of “because of.”

“I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance....” (Matthew 3:11). The word translated “unto” in this passage comes from the same word as is found in Acts 2:38. It is “baptized unto repentance”—*eis* repentance. I ask, therefore, were they baptized in order to obtain repentance? Certainly not; but because they had repented and with reference to or because of their repentance. Also the little word “at” in Matthew 12:41 comes from this same Greek word “*eis*.” “The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas....” Surely all can see that the meaning of the word “at” is “because of” rather than “in order to obtain.”

Suppose I said, “John was arrested for speeding.” What would be the meaning of the word “for”? Surely all unbiased minds can see this. So Acts 2: 38 simply means to, “repent, and be baptized (because of) the remission of sins.”

Mr. Thrasher, and his people, argue that they do not teach water salvation, but that is just what they do teach. Look at it this way:

When a man repents and believes and confesses he is not saved (according to them). What does he lack?

Baptism. Is that all he lacks? Yes, baptize him and he is saved. That is water salvation, and that is all you can make out of it. He isn't saved until he is baptized, but he is saved after he is baptized.

Mr. Thrasher cites two verses of Scripture which he says should be enough to refute my proposition. Let us see. His two verses are Matthew 7: 21 and Revelation 22: 14. The kingdom of heaven of which Matthew 7 speaks is the “visible gospel church” here on earth, and not “eternal heaven.” There are conditions for a child of God to perform to get into the “local church,” but not so with that upper and better kingdom. Matthew 23: 13 says, “But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites; for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.” Now here is a kingdom where one man can keep another from entering. My opponent has a doctrine that says that one man can keep another from being

saved. I don't believe a word of it. Talk about bad doctrine—this takes it all. The kingdom under consideration is the local visible church. I have seen wives keep their husbands from joining the church, and husbands wives etc. I have seen people threatened with persecution and, therefore, kept from outwardly uniting with the church. That is what this passage is teaching.

The same holds true of Revelation 22: 14. The “city” under consideration is the local church and not the third heaven. This is proved for several reasons. First, it is called a “walled” city. What need is there for walls in heaven? Walls are for protection. Also this city could be measured (Revelation 21: 15) which proves it belongs to “time” and not to eternity. How can heaven and immortal glory be measured? It cannot. Also Revelation 22: 2 says that the leaves that grow on the trees in this city are for the “healing” of the nations. Can this be a picture of heaven where healing is needed and medicine provided? I think not. The sacred writer “spiritualizes” this chapter and this is speaking of the church.

I had a “Church of Christ” preacher say to me in debate once: “Mr. Garrett's doctrine makes it harder to get into a Primitive Baptist Church than it is to go to heaven.” I answered by citing him the case of Moses. It was “easier” for Moses to go to heaven than it was for him to get into Canaan’s land. I never did hear any more out of him about that.

My opponent makes much about the case of Noah, but I am sure that this backfires on him. Mr. Thrasher, is it your position that only eight souls of that populated earth went to heaven? Now come right out and give us a simple yes or no. Shame on you if you believe that only eight souls went to heaven. Talk about more bad doctrine! My friend asks the question of me, “Will Mr. Garrett contend that Noah would have been saved if he had refused to build the ark?” My reply is: He would not have been saved from “drowning.” His getting into the ark had absolutely nothing to do with his “eternal salvation”; but only with his salvation here in “time” or from drowning. In my first article I made it perfectly clear that there is an “eternal salvation,” and that there are salvations here in time. My opponent ought to read my speeches more

carefully to see that he understands them.

My opponent asked me to tell what makes the difference between one man accepting gospel preaching and another man rejecting it. The Bible gives us the answer. “But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep (elect)” (John 10: 26). Also, “He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear them not, because you are not of God” (John 8: 47). And again, “We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us” ( 1 John 4: 6).

These verses teach us that until God gives us spiritual “life” we cannot “hear.” Now I will put this very same question back to my opponent and let him answer his own question if he can.

My next argument to prove my proposition is: Salvation is unconditional because the saints and not the ungodly sinner are required to perform the conditions of the Bible. In proof of this please read Colossians 3: 1-4. “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.”

This passage answers all those conditional verses that my opponent used. Every conditional passage in the entire Bible is addressed to the children of God—to those who already have “life.” The conditions that are set before THEM are for their joy and happiness here in this time world. They have absolutely nothing to do with eternal life. Now, Brother Thrasher, suppose that we should teach that poor ungodly sinners must seek those things which are above in order that they may arise with Christ. Can you not see that we have contradicted Paul? Surely the blind could almost see that. All you conditionalists teach this. So you contradict the Bible.

False teachers and science have been trying from time immemorial to refute the doctrine of biogenesis, that is, that LIFE PRECEDES ACTION. But the failure is as manifest today as when first begun. The primitive Baptist contention that spiritual or eternal life is a sovereign gift of God is a safe one. While it robs men and societies of any praise and boast in the work and thereby (because of the greed of men) has rendered its advocates largely in the

minority, yet there has always been and always will be faithful God-fearing and God-loving men who love the praise of God more than the praise of men and will therefore preach the doctrine of regeneration that ascribes greatness unto our God.

The Bible says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is (has been) born of God" (1 John 5: 1). This word *born* is in the perfect tense and denotes a work that has already been done. In other words his believing is the result of being born again; just as a baby cries because it has life.

My fourth argument in proof of my proposition is, that Salvation is unconditional because Jesus finished the work his Father gave him to do, which was to save sinners, in proof of which please read John 12: 1-4, "These words spake Jesus and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast giving him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

Now what was that work that the Father gave him to do? Again let us get our answer from the Bible. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19: 10). Christ came to save HIS people (elect) (Matthew 1: 21) and the above passage tells us he FINISHED that work. This proves my proposition.

Christ is said to have been a ransom for his people—"The Son of man came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20: 28). Let me point out that this verse states that Christ died for MANY. He did not die for a FEW nor did he die for ALL of Adam's race. The nature of a ransom is such that when paid it automatically frees the persons for whom it was intended. Otherwise it would not be a true ransom. Justice demands that those for whom it is paid shall be freed from any further obligation. My friend Mr. Thrasher says he believes in the atonement. But does he really? He says it is a conditional atonement, of efficacy only to those who comply with certain

conditions. It is evident, however, that a conditional atonement is no atonement at all: for an atonement **MUST** expiate the sins atoned for, just as a payment cancels a debt. Where, then, there has been an actual atonement made, the sins atoned for never can be punished again, any more than a debt once paid can be charged a second time.

Our “Church of Christ” friends constantly state that Christ died for “all,” “all men,” “the world” and “the whole world.” Let it clearly be understood that the term “all” is a term of general usage, restricted to its context for its true meaning. For example, “For the love of money is the root of all evil” (1 Timothy 6: 10). Who will insist that the word “all” in this verse is used in an unrestricted sense? Surely there have been instances of evil where the love of money was not the cause of it. But this verse simply means that the love of money is the root of all “kinds” of evil. Also in 1 Corinthians 13: 7 we read, “Charity... Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.” Surely the word “all” in this passage has a restricted usage. Does love believe all things unrestricted? Does it believe evil? Does it believe lies? The evident meaning is that love believeth “all good things.” So Christ died for “all” men. That is, he died for all “kinds” of men, for all “classes” of men.

My opponent mentions specifically 1 John 2: 2, “And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, But for the sins of the whole world.” In the first place, who are meant when John says, “He is the propitiation for our sins”? I answer, THE APOSTLES (who were Jews). If Mr. Thrasher will read carefully this whole chapter this will be evident.

In the second place, when John added, “And not for ours only, but also for THE WHOLE WORLD,” he was saying that Christ died for the sins of GENTILES as well as JEWS. He was not saying that he died for EVERY Jew or for EVERY Gentile; but that he died for some of ALL nations and peoples.

I have a syllogism for my friend upon this passage. (Using my opponent’s views). 1. Christ is the propitiation for the sins of all the race. 2. But the infant is not a sinner. 3. Therefore the infant is not

a part of the race. How is that for theology?

My sincere opponent gives me an illustration of a man down in a well who cannot escape by himself. Another man comes along and throws him a rope, and between the one man holding on and the other man pulling him up he is saved. This shows how little my friend understands about the Bible. The scripture has the alien sinner "dead." Now how could a dead man grab hold of a rope? Also he is mixing grace and works, and the Bible says that this then would not be grace at all. See Romans 11: 5-6.

Now to answer three questions that Mr. Thrasher asked me. 1. For whom did Christ die? Answer: the sheep (John 10: 11), the church (Acts 20: 28), the elect (Romans 8: 33-34), many (Matthew 20: 28). 2. If salvation is unconditional on man's part, as you claim, then by what means does God decide who will be saved? Answer: By his own sovereignty (Romans 9: 13-24; Ephesians 1: 5). 3. Do the Scriptures teach that all mankind are born into the world as sinners? If so, please give us the Scripture. Answer: Yes (Ephesians 2: 3; Psalms 51: 5; Psalms 58: 3; Job 11: 12).

I trust that my opponent will not get off on some of these points that do not have a direct bearing upon our proposition. I call my friend's attention to the fact that there are many texts that he did not deal with in my first speech, and I trust that he will get to them as well as those used in this address.

## THRASHER'S SECOND NEGATIVE

I will now continue the denial of the proposition that Mr. Garrett is affirming: "The Scriptures teach that everyone for whom Christ died will be unconditionally saved—eternally." I ask that every person seriously consider whether or not my opponent has proved his proposition by the Bible. Remember that the Scriptures do not contain a single contradiction, and any doctrine that contradicts plain and simple verses of scripture **must be a false doctrine**. In this speech I will continue to show (as I did in my first negative) that the evidence offered by him not only **fails to prove** his proposition, but it also **contradicts** other verses of Scripture. Follow closely as we review his second affirmative.

Mr. Garrett thinks that I agreed with his proposition when I said that the salvation of Ephesians 2: 8 is "not of ourselves." No, Mr. Garrett, I stated that "salvation is a gift which God gives; however, he grants that gift on the basis of one's obeying His will (Hebrews 5: 9; Romans 6: 17-18; 1 Peter 1: 22)." One does not "EARN" salvation when he acts in obedience to God's commands. Salvation remains an act of God's unmerited favor, even though an individual must perform conditions in order to receive the "free gift" of salvation. To illustrate this idea I gave an example of Mr. Smith falling into a well. Mr. Jones comes along and throws him a rope so that he might pull Mr. Smith out. MR. SMITH HAS NOT DONE ONE SINGLE THING TO DESERVE OR MERIT THE FAVOR OF MR. JONES. When Mr. Smith grabs hold of the rope and Mr. Jones pulls him out of the well, Mr. Smith would not have any right whatsoever to "boast" that he had "EARNED" his salvation from the well, even though he had PERFORMED CONDITIONS in grabbing hold of the rope and holding on until he was pulled out, his rescue was still an act of Mr. Jones' grace.

Acts 2:38 Contradicts My Opponent's Doctrine

My opponent replies to my mention of Acts 2: 38, where the apostle Peter says, "**Repent**, and **be baptized** every one of you in



the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” He says that the word “FOR” and this verse means “because of,” and he gives several instances in which he says the word means that. However, it should be stressed that it is not a question as to whether or not “FOR” may mean “because of”; the question under consideration is: does “FOR” in Acts 2: 38 mean “because of”? I contend that it does not. As evidence to this fact, I cite Thayer’s *Greek- English Lexicon of the New Testament*, page 94: “to obtain the forgiveness of sins, Acts 2:38.” Mr. Thayer’s Lexicon, which is probably the foremost authority that we have concerning the usage of New Testament Greek words, states that “FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS” in Acts 2: 38 means “TO OBTAIN THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.” Here is a clear and simple indication of what the word means in the verse we are discussing.

Did you notice, however, that my friend “forgot” to notice the argument that I made with reference to Matthew 26: 28 and Acts 2: 38? Mr. Garrett has said that “Christ met certain conditions FOR the sinner to be eternally saved,” and I pointed out that one of the conditions was that He “shed his blood” (Matthew 26: 28). I introduced a chart illustrating the argument.

<b><i>SUBJECT</i></b>	<b><i>CONDITION</i></b>	<b><i>RESULT</i></b>	<b><i>SCRIPTURE</i></b>
Jesus Christ	Shed His Blood	Remission of Sins	Matthew 26:28
Alien Sinner	Repent and Be Baptized	Remission of Sins	Acts 2:38
<b><i>“The Remission of Sins” is CONDITIONAL on God’s Part and Man’s Part!</i></b>			

Jesus shed his blood “FOR the remission of sins” (Matthew 26: 28). Thus, eternal salvation is **CONDITIONAL** on God's part. Alien sinners must “repent and be baptized ... FOR the remission of sins” (Acts 2: 38). Thus, eternal salvation is **CONDITIONAL** on man's part. The phrase “FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS” (Greek: *eis aphesin hamartion*) is **IDENTICAL** in both GREEK and ENGLISH in both

verses! If “for” in Acts 2:38 means “because of,” then “for” in Matthew 26: 28 means “because of.” Therefore, Jesus shed his blood **because of** the remission of sins; that is, because alien sins had already been remitted. This is the logical consequence of my opponent’s doctrine. Of course, the truth is that Jesus’ blood was shed in order that our sins might be forgiven, and alien sinners must repent and be baptized in order that their sins might be forgiven.

My honorable opponent accuses me and my brethren of teaching “water salvation.” Now, I do not question his integrity in making such a charge; however, I do challenge his knowledge on the subject. I DO NOT TEACH THAT WATER WILL SAVE ANYBODY FROM THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN! However, the Bible teaches that alien sinners must HEAR the gospel (Romans 10: 17), BELIEVE (John 8: 24), REPENT of sin (Luke 13: 3, 5), CONFESS their faith (Matthew 10: 32- 33; Romans 10: 10), and BE BAPTIZED (Acts 2: 38; Romans 6: 3-4; Mark 16: 16; Acts 22: 16) in order to receive the forgiveness of sins and be saved. Each of these conditions is specifically stated in the word of God, and neither Mr. Garrett nor anyone else has the right to add to them or subtract from them (Galatians 1: 8-9; Revelation 22: 18-19). However, when a person willingly submits to the will of God in obedience to these simple commands of the gospel, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from sin (Ephesians 1: 7; 1 John 1: 7; Romans 6: 17-18). No, I do not believe in “water salvation,” but in salvation by the blood of Christ, which comes as a result of obedience to the gospel.

#### Matthew 7:21 And Revelation 22:14 Disprove Mr. Garrett’s Proposition

In my first negative speech, I gave two verses of scripture which disproved my opponent’s affirmation. In replying to Matthew 7: 21 he says, “The kingdom of heaven of which Matthew 7 speaks is the ‘visible gospel church’ here on earth, and not ‘eternal heaven.’” I recognize that the “kingdom of heaven” sometimes refers to the “church” on earth; however, in this verse it refers to “eternal heaven.” Notice the similarity between

Matthew 7: 21-23 and Matthew 25: 41-46—

Matthew 7: 21-23, “Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven: but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.”

Matthew 25:41-46, “Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.... Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungred .... And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal.”

Both of these passages refer to the kingdom of heaven, and both refer to “ETERNAL SALVATION” being conditioned on “doing the will of the Father.” Notice that Jesus said, “Many will say to me IN THAT DAY, Lord, Lord ...” (Matthew 7: 22). This refers to the day of Judgment, when Jesus will say, “Depart from me” (Matthew 7:23; 25:41). Depart to where??? “Into EVERLASTING FIRE... EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT” (Matthew 25: 41, 46). This is an obvious reference to the eternal hell. However, those who do the will of the father will “enter into (inherit) the kingdom of heaven (life eternal)” (Matthew 7: 21; 25: 34, 46). Despite my friend Garrett's objection, his theory of “unconditional salvation” contradicts Jesus' words in Matthew 7: 21.

Mr. Garrett is also mistaken about Revelation 22: 14. “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” This verse has reference to “heaven,” not to the church on earth. Certainly, the language used in describing it is symbolic; however, there is no doubt that John is speaking of heaven, if one will simply observe the context. Revelation 20: 11-13 refers to the Judgment: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God ... and they were judged every man according to their works.” Those individuals who were not found written in the book of life were

“cast into the lake of fire,” or eternal hell (Revelation 20: 15). Beginning in chapter 21, heaven is described as the abode of those whose works were righteous (Revelation 21: 1 - 22: 5). In view of these events which were yet future at the time John wrote, the Lord encourages obedience to the commands of God by saying, “And, behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.... Blessed are they that DO HIS COMMANDMENTS, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city” (Revelation 22: 12-14). The city he is referring to is “HEAVEN,” which he has just described. Yes, Mr. Garrett, these verses (and hundreds of others) teach that salvation is **CONDITIONAL**.

My fellow disputant thinks that I should say more about Romans 3: 10-18. His argument is that these verses prove that salvation is unconditional on the sinner’s part. I pointed out that this is not so. The apostle is simply emphasizing that “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God” (verse 23). Neither Jew nor Gentile should boast, “for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin” (verse 9). Verses 10-18 are given to point this out. There is nothing in this passage which proves “unconditional salvation.” As a matter of fact, the exact opposite of my opponent’s contention is presented in verses 24-26: “Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God has set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood ... that he might be just, and the justifier of him which **believeth** in Jesus.” “Faith” is specifically stated as a **CONDITION** necessary to justification.

Mr. Garrett also asks me to explain how a spiritually “dead” person can perform conditions. I am persuaded that my friend is very much confused about what “spiritual death” is. It is “**SEPARATION FROM GOD AS A RESULT OF SIN.**” In his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*, W. E. Vine states that “death” is “the separation of man from God.... Death is the opposite of life; it never denotes nonexistence. As spiritual life is conscious existence in communion with God, so spiritual death is conscious existence in separation from God.” When the Scriptures speak of

one's being "dead in sin," the reference is to the separation that exists between that person and God due to man's sin. "But your **iniquities** have separated between you and your God, and your **sins** have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59: 2). Through the grace of God; however, Jesus Christ became the propitiation for our sins (1 John 2: 1-2), and "the author of **eternal salvation** unto all them that **obey** him" (Hebrews 5: 9). One who is spiritually "dead" (separated from God) is raised to "walk in newness of life" through **obedience to the gospel** (Romans 6: 3-4, 17- 18).

### Noah's Salvation

In my first speech I pointed out that Noah was saved when he **acted by faith to obey** God (Hebrews 11: 7; Genesis 6: 13-14, 22; 7: 5, 7; 1 Peter 3: 20-21). Mr. Garrett asks, "Is it your position that only eight souls of that populated earth went to heaven?" My friend, the Bible says that "eight souls were saved" out of all those accountable to God for their sins (1 Peter 3: 20). All other accountable persons were wicked and disobedient to God: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually" (Genesis 6: 5, 11). This is the reason that all except eight people were lost. God gives ETERNAL SALVATION only to those who OBEY him (Hebrews 5: 9). All of those wicked people in Noah's day committed their evil acts by their own choice, and in choosing wickedness they forfeited eternal salvation.

### Opponents Argument: Saints, Not Sinners, Are Required To Perform Conditions

Mr. Garrett reasons that Colossians 3: 1-4 "answers all those conditional verses that my opponent used. Every conditional passage in the entire Bible is addressed to the children of God—to those who already have 'life.'" My friend Garrett is wrong in saying that every conditional passage is addressed to children of God. He simply asserted this without any scriptural proof whatsoever. Where is the scriptural proof of your statement, Mr. Garrett?

I would like to thank my friend, though, for admitting that “saints ... are required to perform the conditions of the Bible.” The word “require” means “to place under an obligation or necessity; make necessary or indispensable; to call on authoritatively, order, or enjoin to do something; to make demand.” Thus, Mr. Garrett agrees with me that saints (children of God) **must** perform conditions in order to be saved. Now, what salvation is this? “The Scriptures teach” that it is **eternal salvation!** Note the following verses from God's word:

Hebrews 5:9, “... He became the author of **eternal salvation** unto all them that **obey** him.”

2 Thessalonians 1: 7-9, “... the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that **obey not** the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.”

These verses unquestionably refer to **eternal salvation** which is **conditioned** on **obedience** to God's commands. Since my opponent says that every conditional verse in the Bible is addressed to children of God, we have two verses (and many more that we could give) that teach a child of god must obey God's commands in order to receive eternal salvation. Mr. Garrett's affirmation is disproved by his admission that children of God are **required to perform the conditions of the Bible.**

John 20:30-31

In his account of the life of Christ, the apostle John stated: “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” John said that the things he wrote were for the purpose of producing faith in the hearts of men, and that this faith would result in their having life. The apostle Paul suggests the same idea in Romans 10: 17, “So then **faith** cometh by **hearing**, and **hearing** by the **word of God.**” The word of God is that which will cause honest people to believe in

Jesus Christ. Please notice, however, that the purpose of a person's BELIEVING is that he MIGHT HAVE LIFE (John 20: 31). This verse shows Clearly that FAITH on the part of the individual PRECEDES spiritual LIFE. Jesus himself expressed in these words: "whosoever **believeth** in him should not perish, but have ETERNAL LIFE" (John 3: 15).

Despite such passages as these which show that FAITH in Jesus Christ PRECEDES SPIRITUAL LIFE, my opponent contends that one has spiritual life BEFORE he believes. If this were so, then John did not know what he was talking about. According to Mr. Garrett, JOHN SHOULD HAVE SAID: "... But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God shame a colon BECAUSE YOU ALREADY HAVE LIFE through his name." But the apostle did not say that at all. He understood, as my friend Garrett ought to understand, that FAITH PRECEDES SPIRITUAL LIFE!

Opponent's Argument: Jesus Finished The Work His Father Gave Him To Do.

Mr. Garrett says that Jesus finished the work that his father gave him to do, which was to save the lost, and this salvation is, therefore, unconditional. His texts do not prove his conclusion at all. The Bible teaches that Jesus FINISHED the work of redemption, and, in so doing, he became "the propitiation for our sins: and not for hours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2: 2). The benefits of Jesus' sacrifice are available to ALL MEN (John 1: 29; 3: 17; 4: 42; 12: 32, 47). The universal availability of the sacrifice of Jesus completely harmonizes with every verse of the Bible. My opponent's theory of a limited atonement contradicts many passages which indicate that Jesus died for ALL MEN and THE WHOLE WORLD.

With reference to 1 John 2: 2, Mr. Garrett asserts that "Christ died for the sins of GENTILES as well as JEWS," but "not for EVERY Jew or for EVERY Gentile." Mr. Garrett, I realized that words are sometimes restricted by the context of a passage to those of the certain class; However, there is nothing in this passage that

restricts “the whole world” to exclude any sinner: Jesus is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, and every sinner may receive the forgiveness of his sins through obedience to the gospel of Jesus Christ: “But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, Ye became the servants of righteousness” (Romans 6: 17-18).

The syllogism offered by my opponent is defective in its logic. The conclusion ought to have been: Christ is not a propitiation for infants (since they have not sinned). His syllogism does, however, bring me to notice his answers to my questions.

#### Mr. Garrett’s Answers To My Questions

In response to my second question, Mr. Garrett says that God decided who would be saved “by his own sovereignty”; in other words, by his own supreme authority or power, or in accordance with his own will. In view of this, we ought to read Paul's words: “For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our savior; who will have ALL MEN to be saved...” (1 Timothy 2: 3-4). It is God's will that ALL MEN be saved. If, as my opponent believes, God saved those whom He wanted to save, then he would save EVERYONE. Does my opponent accept this? Not only so, but those who are lost in hell will be able to charge God with being a respecter of persons, if God chooses to save men UNCONDITIONALLY (Acts 10: 34-35).

In answering questions one and three, Mr. Garrett states that Christ died for “the sheep, the church, the elect, many.” It is interesting to note that he said nothing about Christ dying for ALL INFANTS. Yet, he admitted that infants are sinners (question 3). Therefore, he must logically believe that SOME INFANTS ARE LOST ETERNALLY, since ALL ARE BORN IN SIN and CHRIST DIED ONLY FOR THOSE THAT HE MENTIONED. I am not saying that my opponent actually believes that some infants will be in hell, but I am saying that this logically follows from his doctrine. However, the Bible teaches that “the soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18: 20). Since infants have not committed sin, they will not suffer the punishment of hell.



Mr. Garrett has not proved that “everyone for whom Christ died will be UNCONDITIONALLY saved—eternally.” Let us see if he does it in his next affirmative.

## GARRETT'S THIRD AFFIRMATIVE

Respected Opponent, Friendly Readers: I suspect disappointment for the careful, thoughtful investigator who will expect Brother Thrasher to examine my proof texts and arguments. His articles, thus far, have been full of evasion and more in the affirmative than in the negative. I had hoped for a close engagement, but am not getting it from Mr. Thrasher.

Mr. Thrasher implied in his last speech that the Greek word "*eis*" (translated FOR in Acts 2:38) can mean "because of." We are making progress for it is difficult to get people of his faith to admit this much. So he has told us that it is in the realm of the possible for Acts 2:38 to be translated as we stated in our last article.

He brings up Mr. Thayer and his Greek on the meaning of this word. At the bottom of page 184, Thayer says the Greek translation of the word "*eis*," is translated "for" when it expresses the idea of relation, and means *with reference to, or as regards*. It means "into" when it is used with reference to a place, as going into a house or a city, or into heaven, into hell, or into water or into any as a location. But when it expresses the idea of relation, it means in reference to, or as regards. When one is saved, it does not change his location, but it merely changes his relationship, hence "baptized *eis* remission," means "baptized with reference to the remission of sins," and not into or in order to obtain. Now Mr. Thrasher says that "FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS" in Acts 2:38 means "TO OBTAIN THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS." Now, something is going to have to give. You've got to either take Thayer's comment that I quote to you or go back on his comment that you quoted. Thayer was a great man—a great lexicographer—a great definer of words—but being an Episcopalian, he believes in baptismal regeneration and when he went to putting his opinion into the meaning of the passage, he turned himself into a commentator and I do not say that he is a great commentator, but he is a great lexicographer. As a lexicographer Thayer does not say that *eis* means to obtain. But in commenting on Acts 2: 38, he says *eis*

means *to obtain*; and on the very same page, in the same column, of the very same book, he comments on 1 Corinthians 15: 29, “baptized for the dead”—*eis*, the dead, and he says that means *in order to obtain the salvation of those who are already dead*. Now, you take one or the other, or both, it's up to you. If you take him as a commentator, I'll run you into baptizing somebody who is already dead, for his salvation. If you won't take his comment there, then go back on the other. I take him as a lexicographer, but not as a commentator. Do you not know that the man you are quoting as a commentator, believed infants went to hell without baptism—if you take his opinion about doctrine. His opinion as a commentator is not worth any more than anybody's else.

In view of the fact that Mr. Thrasher has not dealt adequately with my four arguments—I will not give him any new ones, but will simply re-affirm them. Let us hope that in his third and final speech he will perform his role of being in the negative and give us some explaining.

Under my first argument: That the dead alien sinner was unable to perform conditions—, I re-affirm the following, that we have had no explanation of. Romans 3: 11 says, “... There is none that seeketh after God.” No human being has ever sought God. In the matter of eternal salvation, God himself is the seeker, convicter, persuader, giver, and final perfecter. His sovereign grace goes ahead of, and brings into being, all human response to God. You have no doubt noticed that Brother Thrasher did not explain this verse. He simply jumped way before and after it and made an attempt to explain verses that I had not even used. Brother Thrasher, explain only the verses that I use. Please!

Also, under this same general argument, I quoted Romans 9:16, “So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.” Certainly the “it” of this verse is eternal salvation. Cannot my opponent see that this verse teaches that salvation is not of the “will of man” or the efforts of man? Oh, that this great verse might sink down into our ears, into our very hearts! Perhaps no verse in all the Bible so completely brings man to an utter end. Mr. Thrasher thinks he can “will” and “decide,”

Godward, and that after he has so “decided” and “willed,” he has the ability to “run,” or, as he would also say, to “hold out.” But these two things, deciding and holding out, are in this verse utterly rejected as the source of salvation,—which is declared to be GOD THAT SHEWETH MERCY.

Job 11:12 says, “For vain men would be wise though man be born like a wild ass’s colt.” The wild ass’s colt is an ungovernable creature. He is stubborn, reckless etc. He wouldn’t know an ear of corn if he were to see it. A stable or a stall would be prison to him. He wouldn’t know a man from a polecat. The wilderness is his home and he delights in it. So sin is the home of all born in the world, and they love their home until God works a work of grace in their hearts that they might see the things of the Kingdom of God. They are just as blind to the blessings and joys of the Kingdom as the wild ass’s colt is of the food, shelter and comfort of the barn-yard. As it is unreasonable to think of the wild ass’s colt of his own volition coming to the barn-yard and taking his place there; even more unreasonable is it to think of the totally depraved sinner, of his own volition, taking a place quietly and humbly in the assembly of our God. The colt must be tamed and domesticated before he will love his Master and his Kingdom. And like the maniac of Gadara, “whom no man could tame” the poor sinner, who is like the Gadarene, must have a visitation of the power of God, to clothe him and put him in his right mind, to love and serve the Lord. Then you will find him so tame that he falls at the feet of his Master, full of praise and adoration—then you find the wolf dwelling with the lamb, and the calf with the lion.

This brings me to reaffirm another argument—, that the sinner must be RISEN with Christ before he can do spiritual works (Colossians 3: 1-3, Ephesians 2: 10). As Matthew 3: 8 says, “Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.” John refused to baptize anyone until they complied with this statement. What does this show? It shows that one must be “in the VINE” before he can bring forth fruits—that one must in fact be a child of God before baptism. Jesus said in John 15: 5, “I am the vine, Ye are the branches: he that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth

forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.” Jesus says that you cannot bear fruit unless you're in the vine. John demanded fruit bearing children of God before he would dip them in water. Jesus himself was not baptized in order to become the Son of God; but to manifest himself to be the Son of God. So it is with the child of God.

Also John 17: 3 says, “And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God...” This verse teaches that one must first have eternal life before one can know God. Surely an unbiased mind can see this.

Brother Thrasher thinks that John 20: 30-31 refutes my position. Let us see if it does. The passage reads, “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” Dead, unregenerate sinners are not under consideration in this passage, sinners whose hearts are enmity toward God, who are not subject to his will and cannot be. The natural (unsaved) man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God (1 Corinthians 2: 14). They receive not the things published in the Gospel, because they are foolishness to them, and they cannot know those things because they are spiritually discerned. An offer to change their hearts by the gift of eternal life if they will only believe, made to them while they were in a state of enmity, while their hearts are unchanged and unprepared to bring forth the good fruit of faith, is too absurd to be believed by anyone. Again, if these things had to be written and believed in order that eternal life might be given and received, then no one had eternal life till they were written and believed. 1 John 5: 13 explains this passage very clearly. “These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.” The believing of the scriptures lets us KNOW about that which we ALREADY HAVE. Paul said, “And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee WISE UNTO SALVATION.... ” (2 Timothy 3: 15). Notice the scriptures make us

WISE to something we already have. You will recall in my first article that I gave an illustration about a man who had his debt paid and sometime later was told that it had been paid. His being told about the debt having been paid made him WISE UNTO (with reference to) salvation. It gave him knowledge of something that had happened.

We do not have to guess what the gospel does, for 2 Timothy 1: 10 tells us exactly. "... Who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." This verse teaches that the preaching of the gospel does not GIVE LIFE but simply brings it to LIGHT.

Brother Thrasher had much to say about Revelation 21, but he did not answer any of my arguments proving that the "city" of that chapter was NOT eternal heaven. Perhaps he will go back and reread my last speech and pick up those arguments. If he does not the readers of these pages will surely recognize it.

I, now, want to say some more concerning the argument in proof of my proposition concerning the atonement of Jesus Christ. Hebrews 9: 12 reads, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, HAVING OBTAINED eternal redemption for us." This verse says that Christ had (past tense) obtained eternal redemption when he ascended back into heaven. Mr. Thrasher, can a man that has been redeemed end up in hell? Tell us this. If he does—would not God be punishing two men for the same sins? Christ suffered for them and then the Sinner. Perish such a thought!

Again, Hebrews 1: 3 says, "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high." Mr. Thrasher, can't you see that this verse teaches that when Christ sat down at the right hand of the Father that he had already purged our sins? Is it possible for a man to go to hell that has his sins purged? Certainly not. None of you conditionalists can explain this argument away. Perhaps Mr. Thrasher does not understand the meaning of redemption. If we concentrate on the thought of redemption, we

shall be able perhaps to sense more readily the impossibility of universalizing the atonement as my opponent does. Redemption does not mean redeemability, that we are placed in a redeemable position. It means that Christ purchased and procured redemption. Christ redeemed us to God by his blood (Revelation 5: 9). He obtained eternal redemption (Hebrews 9: 12). It is to beggar the concept of redemption as an effective securing of release by price and by power to construe it as anything less than the effectual accomplishment which secures the salvation of those who are its objects. Christ did not come to put man in a redeemable position but to redeem to himself a people. The doctrine of the atonement must be radically revised if, as atonement, it applies to those who finally perish as well as to those who are the heirs of eternal life. In that event we should have to water down the grand categories in terms of which these scriptures define the atonement and deprive them of their most precious import and glory. This we cannot do.

Mr. Thrasher brought up Romans 10: 17 as though it disproves my proposition. Let us see. The verse reads, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." My opponent does not understand what kind of faith comes by hearing the word of God. It is a CREED (doctrinal) faith that comes through the scriptures. The context makes this clear.

Also my opponent brings up Hebrews 5: 9 in order to try and disprove my proposition. Let us take a look at that verse. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him." There are two kinds of obedience set forth in the Bible—a passive obedience and an active obedience. When Christ stood over the grave of dead Lazarus and uttered the words: "Lazarus come forth"—there was obedience. But it was a passive obedience—that is, Lazarus was not active in it. Mr. Thrasher, could Lazarus have disobeyed that command? Certainly not!

Ephesians 1: 19-20 reads, "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the

heavenly places.”

Now the purpose of the Apostle Paul in these verses is to show the irresistibility of God's power in working what he means to work in the elect. He says that it was the same power towards these that he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. Now Mr. Thrasher, I appeal to your power of reasoning, what power was it that was put forth when God raised Christ from the dead? Was it not a power that could not be resisted? It was absolutely impossible for it to have been otherwise. I will give you scriptural proof. “Whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it” (Acts 2: 24). Now, the power that worked in Christ in raising him from the dead, is the same power that works in the elect to believe. Keep in mind that the “belief” (faith) in this passage is the belief that is worked in us in regeneration and not that “gospel faith” which comes later (Romans 1: 17).

This passage in Ephesians proves that the greatness of God's power works faith in the elect. Notice it reads: “who believe according to the working of his mighty power.”

John said, “He that believeth on the Son hath life.” That is, he already has it. Just as the baby that cries hath life. It does not cry in order to get life, but cries because it already has life. We quoted several verses in our last article to prove this, but Mr. Thrasher has ignored them all. I will list them again. John 8: 47, 1 John 4: 6, 1 John 5: 1.

I trust that all who have read these three articles upon this important proposition will have gained some insight into the truth.



## THRASHER'S THIRD NEGATIVE

The proposition that we are discussing is a very important one, for it concerns the eternal destiny of every man, woman, and child who has ever been born into this world. In his three addresses, Mr. Garrett has endeavored to prove that “the Scriptures teach that everyone for whom Christ died will be unconditionally saved—eternally.” In reviewing his efforts to prove the truthfulness of this proposition, I have shown that his arguments do not prove “unconditional salvation” at all. As a matter of fact, the doctrine he is affirming flatly contradicts many plain and easily understood passages in the Bible. Since the Scriptures do not contain any type of contradiction, it must follow that my opponent’s affirmation is untrue, and that it is based upon his misunderstandings of what “the Scriptures teach.” Please give your careful consideration to this review of Mr. Garrett's third speech.

Acts 2: 38 Proves That Salvation Is Conditional.

My opponent had much to say about the Greek word (*eis*) in Acts 2: 38, and what Mr. Thayer believes about some things. However, despite Mr. Garrett's attempt to free himself of his difficulties with Acts 2: 38, he has not touched top, side, or bottom of my argument on this verse. He fully realizes that it presents a glaring contradiction to his “unconditional salvation” theory, and so he tries to evade my argument by citing Mr. Thayer’s “comments” on several verses. I ask that you notice what I said about Acts 2: 38.

I presented a chart that demonstrates a parallel between Acts 2: 38 and Matthew 26: 28.

<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>CONDITION</b>	<b>RESULT</b>	<b>SCRIPTURE</b>
Jesus Christ	Shed His Blood	Remission of Sins	Matthew 26:28
Alien Sinner	Repent and Be Baptized	Remission of Sins	Acts 2:38

***“The Remission of Sins” is CONDITIONAL  
on God’s Part and Man’s Part!***

In Acts 2:38 Peter said, “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.” In Matthew 26: 28 Jesus said, “For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.” I have repeatedly pointed out that the identical phrase “for the remission of sins” (Greek: *eis aphesin hamartion*) occurs in both of these verses. The alien sinner must “repent and be baptized” (and these are CONDITIONS) for the for the same reason that Jesus “shed his blood.” If people are too “repent and be baptized” because their sins are already forgiven, then Jesus “shed his blood” because men’s sins were already forgiven! My opponent’s logic would mean that Jesus’ sacrifice had nothing whatsoever to do with our salvation from sin. His “unconditional salvation” theory thus denies redemption and pardon through the blood of Christ (Ephesians 1: 7; 1 John 1: 7).

On the other hand, if we take exactly what the Bible says, without trying to substantiate some unscriptural doctrine, it is very easy to harmonize Acts 2: 38 and Matthew 26: 28. Jesus shed his blood in order that our sins might be remitted, and he commands the alien sinner to repent and be baptized in order that he may receive the forgiveness of those sins.

Although my worthy opponent referred to Acts 2: 38 in his last two speeches, he never did answer the parallel I presented on these two verses. As a matter of fact, he did not even make the slightest reference to my argument on this point. I wonder why he devoted so much space to Acts 2: 38, but ignored the major argument that I made on it! Each person will have to decide for himself.

**Opponent’s Argument: Alien Sinner Unable To Perform Conditions.**

My friend is certain that he has scripture to support his affirmation; however, let us notice his argument again. He cites Romans 3: 11, “There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.” As I have shown previously, Paul is simply stating the universality of sin. In verse nine he said, “we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin.”

Then, in verses 10-18 he illustrates the idea by reference to Old Testament writings. Mr. Garrett thinks that these verses teach unconditional salvation, but verse 12 is in direct opposition to his argument: "They are all GONE OUT OF THE WAY, they are together BECOME unprofitable." This verse teaches that those under consideration had GONE OUT of the way and BECOME unprofitable. If this verse has reference to "unconditional salvation" (as it must if it relates to his proposition), then it teaches that one who is walking in the way of eternal salvation may go out of it (and thus become lost), thus disproving his doctrine that they are saved "eternally." So this passage does not suit my opponent's doctrine.

He goes next to Romans 9: 16, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Let me remind my opponent that he is supposed to be proving that eternal salvation is unconditional. However, this verse is not speaking of eternal salvation at all, but of God's purpose in carrying out his will through the descendants of Abraham. Since the Christ was to come through the seed of Abraham, God made choice of certain individuals (Isaac instead of Ishmael, and Jacob instead of Esau, etc.) as the ones through whom Jesus would be born. This had nothing whatsoever to do with the eternal state of Isaac, Ishmael, Jacob, or Esau, but only to the selection of Jesus' ancestors. Obviously, he could not have come from both Isaac and Ishmael (or Jacob and Esau); therefore, a choice had to be made. God made this choice. However, the choice did not relate to the eternal destiny of those persons. It has already been shown that eternal salvation is conditional on man's part (Acts 2: 38; Hebrews 5: 8-9; John 8: 24; Luke 13: 3; Romans 10: 9-10; 2 Thessalonians 1: 6-9; etc.).

My good friend calls Job 11: 12 to witness for his "unconditional" doctrine. The verse says, "For vain man would be wise, though man be born like a wild ass's colt." In response I would like to point out the utter failure of my opponent to observe the context of that statement. It does not teach his false doctrine. In fact, the very next verses state: "If thou PREPARE THINE HEART and

STRETCH OUT THINE HANDS TOWARD HIM; if iniquity be in thine hand, PUT IT FAR AWAY, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; Yea, thou shalt BE STEADFAST, and shalt not fear.” These statements are clearly conditional, my opponent’s assertions notwithstanding.

Opponent’s Argument: The Sinner Must Be Risen With Christ Before He Can Do Spiritual Works.

Mr. Garrett cites Colossians 3: 1-3 to prove that sinner cannot do the will of God until he is unconditionally saved by God. Where does this passage say anything about unconditional salvation, Mr. Garrett? Notice these verses: “If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Is anything said about “unconditional salvation”? No! Paul is simply giving instruction about how a Christian ought to live if he is to be rewarded with eternal life (Colossians 3: 23-25; Matthew 25: 31, 34, 41, 46; 2 Thessalonians 1: 7-10; Revelation 21: 1-7). Please observe verse 5: “Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth: fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry.” Children of God are told to mortify (put to death) these things. What if they fail to do what this command says? The Book informs us that “they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5: 19-21). Since Christians can commit these sins, it necessarily follows that it is possible for them to forfeit their reward and be lost. Thus, eternal salvation is conditioned on the Christian’s “putting to death” these deeds.

Let us note also the third verse of Colossians 3, to which my opponent made reference: “For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Since Mr. Garrett stated that this applies to children of God, he teaches that children of God are dead. However, in his first affirmative my friend stated: “the sinner is dead in the spiritual realm. He cannot do anything in that realm; just as the man who is physically dead cannot do anything

physically.” Since Colossians 3: 3 shows that the child of God is dead, according to Mr. Garrett's reasoning, the child of God could not perform conditions if he wanted to, and thus it would be impossible for him to do what Paul tells him to do. Once again we see the inconsistency and falsity of my opponent's arguments offered as proof of his proposition. When we recognize that “death” indicates a separation, we should be able to understand that the apostle is teaching Christians to separate themselves from their sins and former manner of life, and begin to walk in newness of life” (Romans 6:4, 17-18, 22). There is not one single verse in all the Bible that supports my opponent's teaching.

Mr. Garrett also introduced Ephesians 2: 10 to show that the alien sinner cannot do spiritual works. That verse says, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Certainly the Christian ought to be faithful in his service to God. However, this does not exclude the necessity of obedience in becoming a child of God. We have already presented many scriptures to prove this point. As a matter of fact, verse eight of this same chapter proves the conditional nature of salvation: “For by grace are ye saved THROUGH FAITH.” There can be no doubt that the alien sinner is saved by the grace of God. But the reception of that salvation is conditioned on FAITH in the heart of the individual, this faith being produced as a result of hearing the word of God (Romans 10: 17). There is no contradiction in one's being saved by “grace” and “faith,” as illustrated by the case of Mr. Smith and Mr. Jones in my first negative speech.

My sincere opponent refers to Matthew 3: 8 and he comments, “It shows that one must be ‘in the VINE’ before he can bring forth fruits.” I would agree that one must be a child of God (“in the vine”) in order to bring forth the proper fruits of the Christian life, but this still does not help my friend's position. Verse 10 states: “And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.” This shows that one who is IN THE VINE (a child of God), but who does not BRING FORTH GOOD FRUIT

(remain faithful to God's commands), will be CAST INTO THE FIRE (lost eternally in hell). My opponent's proposition directly contradicts the teaching of this passage of Scripture.

Mr. Garrett also gives John 15: 5 in connection with the same idea that he presented on Matthew 3: 8. Once more his argument backfires on him, for verse six says, "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." One who fails to ABIDE IN THE VINE (remain faithful to God) is in danger of being lost in hell. My opponent's doctrine says that such is not possible. Another contradiction!

In attempting to reply to John 20: 30-31, Mr. Garrett says that one has salvation before he believes, and that "the believing of the scriptures lets us KNOW about that which we ALREADY HAVE. However, these verses tell us: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: but THESE ARE WRITTEN, that YE MIGHT BELIEVE that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that BELIEVING ye MIGHT HAVE LIFE through his name." Thus, the word produces faith, and the faith precedes life. According to my fellow disputant, John was mistaken when he wrote these words. He should have said, "These are written that ye might believe, because you ALREADY HAVE LIFE: otherwise you could not believe anyway." I personally am confident that the apostle John knew that what he was writing was the truth.

Concerning the purpose of the gospel, Mr. Garrett says, "The preaching of the gospel does not GIVE LIFE but simply brings it to LIGHT." In this connection he quotes 2 Timothy 1: 10, "... Jesus Christ, who has abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." Of course, the gospel makes known God's plan relating to "life and immortality," and it should enlighten us on these matters. However, although my friend says that "the preaching of the gospel does not GIVE LIFE," the Bible says that it does. Paul says that we are CALLED unto ETERNAL LIFE (1 Timothy 6: 12). How are we called? The apostle answers the question: "Whereunto he CALLED you BY OUR GOSPEL, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." Therefore, the preaching of the gospel is the means which God employs to bring

us into eternal life.

In their efforts to establish the “unconditional salvation” doctrine, my friend and his brethren completely ignore the importance of preaching the gospel that men might be saved. Perhaps they ought to give heed to the following verses: “For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Romans 1: 16); “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God” (1 Corinthians 1: 18).

Opponent’s Argument Concerning the Atonement of Jesus Christ.

Hebrews 9: 12 states: “Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.” Mr. Garrett comments on this by saying, “This verse says that Christ had (past tense) obtained eternal redemption when he ascended back into heaven.” Certainly, Jesus’ death upon the cross made it possible for every person to receive the forgiveness of sins. However, does this mean that the blood of Jesus had actually been applied to wash away the sins of men by the time he ascended back to heaven? Of course not! It was not actually applied to take away sins that had not yet been committed. But the benefits of that sacrifice were available to take away the sins as they were committed in fact. Thus, when people sin today, the blood of Jesus can cleanse that sin, if we are willing to comply with the conditions of pardon. Hebrews 5: 9 teaches that Jesus “became the author of ETERNAL SALVATION unto ALL THEM that OBEY him.” 1 John 1: 7, “But IF we WALK IN THE LIGHT, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his son CLEANSETH US FROM ALL SIN.” These verses should be sufficient to convince any honest and sincere person that salvation is CONDITIONAL.

Mr. Garrett asks, “Can a man that has been redeemed end up in hell?” Yes, just as a man whose former debt has been cancelled can end up in debt. He might have gone out and made other debts after the original one had been paid. The alien sinner who receives

the forgiveness of his past sins is no longer liable for punishment for those sins. It is as if he had not committed them as far as God is concerned. However, if that person then goes out and sins, but he never gets forgiveness for those acts, then the unforgiven sins will result in his being punished. The apostle Peter spoke of this possibility when he wrote: "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, the dog is turned to his own vomit again: and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."

My opponent responds to Hebrews 5: 9 by stating that "there are two kinds of obedience set forth in the Bible—a passive obedience and an active obedience." He apparently realizes the plain and simple truth of these verses: ETERNAL SALVATION IS CONDITIONED UPON OBEDIENCE TO GOD'S COMMANDS. So he tries to "get around" the teaching of the verse by implying that the obedience referred to is wholly passive on the part of the individual. Notice what he is really saying. God does not give man any choice about what he may do. The alien sinner (according to Mr. Garrett) cannot do anything good if he wanted to, and the child of God cannot do anything to cause him to be lost, even if he wanted to. Everything relating to man's eternal destiny has already been unchangeably fixed, entirely without man's having a part in it. One person may be a murderer, thief, adulterer, liar, or anything else, but receive the blessings of God in heaven. Another person may be morally good in many ways, a good citizen, respectable, honest, and desire to do the will of God, but be punished forever and ever in a burning hell because he was not one of the "unconditionally" chosen. This doctrine is as utterly and completely false as any that the Devil has ever devised to cause good men and women to err. I ask that each person carefully examine the Scriptures to see what is the truth, and then accept it. Jesus Christ



our Lord said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11: 28).

## THRASHER'S FIRST AFFIRMATIVE

I appreciate the opportunity to address those who are sincerely interested in truth, and to affirm the proposition that is before us. The subject that we are discussing is an important one, for it relates to our eternal salvation. This being the case, our desire should be to more perfectly understand God's will so that we can serve Him faithfully in this life.

The proposition for discussion is: "The Scriptures teach that a born again child of God may so sin as to be finally lost in hell." Before introducing my affirmative arguments, I would like to define the terms of the proposition. "The Scriptures" are the 66 books of the Bible, both Old and New Testaments. "Teach" means to instruct or impart knowledge by express command, approved example, or necessary implication. "A born again child of God" is a Christian: one who is in covenant relationship with God. "May so sin" indicates that it is possible for him to transgress God's law. "As to be finally lost in hell" refers to the consequence or result of such transgression—one's eternal existence will be in a state of punishment, separated from God in Hell. In other words, I am affirming that it is possible for a Christian to conduct himself in violation of God's law, and that such violation, if not repented of and forgiven by God, will result in that person's being eternally punished in Hell. Please study the passages that are given in proof of this proposition.

In 2 Peter 1: 5-7 the apostle Peter instructs Christians concerning how they should grow: "and beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." Each child of God has the choice of doing what Peter says or not doing it. What is the condition of one who is characterized by these things? Verse 8 says, "For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

But what if one does not possess these attributes? Hear Peter's words: "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (verse 9). My opponent may say that these verses only teach that a child of God ought to have faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love, but that he will not fall if he does not have them. However, these Scriptures teach that "IF YE DO THESE THINGS, YE SHALL NEVER FALL" (verse 10). This is clearly a conditional statement showing that a child of God SHALL FALL if he FAILS to do these things. Thus, a child of God may fall and be lost.

Jesus said of some in Revelation 2: 4-5, "Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent." There were children of God in the church at Ephesus who had "LEFT THEIR FIRST LOVE" and who were thus "FALLEN." According to Mr. Garrett, a child of God cannot do that! However, Jesus said that some of these had fallen, and needed to "repent, and do the first works." If they did not repent, Jesus said that He would REMOVE the candlestick. In other words, Jesus would no longer recognize them (the church at Ephesus) as his faithful children.

Matthew 13: 41-42, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity: and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Jesus says that there would be some in his kingdom who would so sin (do iniquity) that they would be "cast ... into a furnace of fire" (punished in hell). This is exactly what my proposition states. A child of God may (by his own choice) so sin (commit acts of iniquity in violation of God's law) as to be lost in hell.

Paul wrote to the Galatians, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5: 4). The context concerns those Christians who were seeking justification through keeping certain points of the law

of Moses, particularly the matter of circumcision. Paul exhorts them to “stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free,” and not become “entangled again with the yoke of bondage” (the Mosaic law). He then tells the result of trying to be saved or justified by the law—“YE ARE FALLEN FROM GRACE”! My honorable opponent teaches that the apostle was wrong. His doctrine is that they could not have fallen even if they wanted to be lost. We can either accept what my opponent says, or what the apostle Paul says in Galatians 5: 4. You cannot take both.

From Philippians 4: 3 we learn that the Lord’s people have their names written in the book of life. However, the Scriptures teach that one’s name may be blotted out: “... Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book” (Exodus 32: 33); “He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life” (Revelation 3: 5). What is the consequence of one’s name being blotted out? Listen to the Scriptures: “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20: 15). This refers to eternal punishment in Hell, and is descriptive of the final state of all unfaithful children of God.

The writer of the letter to the Hebrews says, “For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despises Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? ... It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10: 26-29, 31).

Notice that “SORER PUNISHMENT” would be brought upon those who did the things mentioned in verse 29 than the physical death of those who “despised Moses’ law.” What is that “sorer punishment”? Revelation 21: 8 refers to it as the “second death” in “the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone” (eternal Hell). But

some of those who received this punishment had been SANCTIFIED by the blood of the covenant (verse 29). This obviously refers to children of God. Therefore, some children of God were to receive punishment in Hell, because of the sins they committed in violation of God's law.

Genesis 25: 24-34 is the record of God's giving the birthright to Esau by virtue of natural birth. The birthright was his, and no one could take it from him. However, he could (and did) by his own free choice sell it. Similarly, God gives us a birthright (eternal life) at the new birth (Cf. John 3: 3, 5). The Bible refers to this idea in Hebrews 12: 15-17, "Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright. For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." Please observe that the child of God may "fail of the grace of God," and thereby forfeit his birthright (eternal life). No one could take it from him, but he may "sell" it for fleshly gratification (such as fornication, verse 16).

1 Corinthians 8: 11, "And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died." This verse speaks of one "for whom Christ died," that is, a "brother." Mr. Garrett will admit that this refers to a child of God. However, Paul says that this person may "PERISH." This is the same word as in John 3: 16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him SHOULD NOT PERISH, but have everlasting life." Notice that he SHOULD NOT PERISH, indicating that it is POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO PERISH, but that he may choose to remain faithful and not perish.

2 Peter 2: 1, "But there were FALSE PROPHETS also among the people, even as there shall be FALSE TEACHERS among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that BOUGHT THEM, and bring upon themselves SWIFT DESTRUCTION." These false teachers were BOUGHT by the Lord; in other words, they were children of God. But Peter says that they DENIED the

Lord, and in so doing they brought upon themselves DESTRUCTION. This refers to their being punished by God. In 2 Thessalonians 1: 9, Paul says of some: "Who shall be PUNISHED with EVERLASTING DESTRUCTION from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Thus, Peter is simply saying in 2 Peter 2:1 that some children of God would later deny the Lord and bring in false doctrine, and consequently cause themselves to be punished eternally for their sin.

Hebrews 6: 4-6, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, IF THEY SHALL FALL AWAY, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame." The inspired writer says that it is POSSIBLE for the person described in verses 4-5 (clearly referring to a child of God) to FALL AWAY FROM GOD. Other translations say "FELL AWAY" (ASV), "HAVE FALLEN AWAY" (NASB), "COMMIT APOSTASY" (RSV). Could this be any plainer in teaching that one who is a child of God MAY SO SIN as to be FINALLY LOST IN HELL?

2 Peter 2: 20-22, "For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." These individuals had "escaped the pollutions of the world through the KNOWLEDGE...." My opponent has said that one cannot understand (have a knowledge of the truth) unless he is a child of God. Therefore, according to his logic these must have been children of God under consideration in these verses. I agree that they were. But they had become entangled again in the world and overcome, and had turned from the holy commandment. What is the result of one's

doing what they had done, according to the word of God? “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, WHETHER IT BE GOOD OR BAD” (2 Corinthians 5: 10). “For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward EVERY MAN according to his WORKS” (Matthew 16: 27). “And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give EVERY MAN according as his WORK shall be” (Revelation 22: 12). These verses prove that every person without exception will give account for his actions and conduct upon the earth. If his works are good, he will be rewarded; if his works are evil, he will be punished. Those in 2 Peter 2: 20-22 would be in the latter classification, for they had become entangled again in the world, been overcome, their last state was worse than the first, it was better if they had not known the way of righteousness, and they turn from the commandments of God. The condition of these children of God was such that they had so sinned as to be finally lost in hell.

Romans 11: 22, “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which FELL, severity; but toward thee, goodness, IF THOU CONTINUE in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be CUT OFF.” The apostle Paul says that some did FALL! Thus, he warns us to CONTINUE, “otherwise thou shalt be CUT OFF.” The figure he uses is that of a branch being cut off from a tree. What happens to the branch? It dies because it is separated from the tree, which is its source of life. Even so, a child of God dies spiritually when he is CUT OFF from God.

2 Peter 3: 17, “Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness.” Is error as good as truth? May a person follow either one and still be saved? Jesus answers, “And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free” (John 8: 32). TRUTH makes one free from sin! Error cannot. But Peter says the children of God must beware so that they might not be “led away with the ERROR of the wicked” and FALL! Therefore, those who were thus led away could not be made free

from their sins, and hence could not enter heaven. The children of God spoken of in this verse were in danger of the punishment of Hell.

James wrote, "Brethren, IF ANY OF YOU DO ERR FROM THE TRUTH, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins" (James 5: 19-20). Please notice that James is addressing "brethren" and he says, "If any of you do err from the truth"! This shows that it is possible for a child of God to err. What would happen to him in that condition? The Scriptures teach that he is in his sins, and his soul is in danger of being lost eternally. If he returns to the truth through the encouragement of his brethren, then his soul shall have been saved from death (spiritual). What if he were not converted???

Paul wrote to Timothy, "For some are already turned aside after Satan" (1 Timothy 5: 15). According to this verse, it is possible for a child of God to turn from the way of righteousness unto the way of Satan. Of course, my friend Mr. Garrett teaches that one may follow Satan and be saved anyway. However, the Bible teaches: "In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God" (1 John 3: 10). In order to be saved, we must DO RIGHTEOUSNESS! One who has turned aside after Satan is not DOING RIGHTEOUSNESS, and, therefore, he is not of God! Mr. Garrett, will a person be saved if he is not of God?

2 Peter 2: 14-15, "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; cursed children: which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness." These were CHILDREN who FORSOOK the right way; therefore, they must have been in the right way before they forsook it. But the Bible says that they "ARE GONE ASTRAY"! Because of their turning from God, they are called "CURSED CHILDREN." Here are children of God who so sinned as to be finally lost in hell.



Up to this point, I have presented many passages showing that a child of God may so sin as to be finally lost in Hell; however, I would like to notice where this doctrine of the “impossibility of apostasy” or “once saved, always saved” originated. When God created the first man and woman, He placed them in the garden. There they enjoyed everything that they needed in life. However, the Lord God gave one restriction upon the man and the woman in the garden: “Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die” (Genesis 2: 16-17). God gave them this command, and He meant what he told them. It was necessary that they keep his command, or they would “surely die.” But the serpent appeared to Eve and said, “Ye shall not surely die” (Genesis 3: 4). Because she believed the serpent, she took up the fruit and ate, and she gave it to Adam, and he also ate. What happened? Did God carry out his promise for their disobedience? The Scriptures recorded for all to read that they were cast from the garden, and death came into their world as a result of that sin.

What is the point of this? God had given a command, and He punished them for violating it. However, Satan taught that it really did not make any difference what God said, they would “not surely die.” In actuality Satan was saying that men could not fall from the grace of God and be lost. However, the Bible shows again and again that sin brings forth spiritual death, if you fail to turn from it and obtain the forgiveness offered through the blood of Jesus Christ. This is the one way for one to remain faithful and righteous as a child of God, and receive the reward promised to those who “have their names written in the Lamb’s book of life.”

## GARRETT'S FIRST NEGATIVE

Brother T. N. Thrasher: Dear Sir—I truly believe that you and your people do not understand our doctrine as well as you should. It is not our position that a child of God cannot fall, perish, err from the truth, fall from grace, get entangled with the world etc.; for they certainly can.

Mr. Thrasher has spent too much time proving what he did not need to prove. What he needs to prove—and he surely did not—is that the one that falls etc., falls so as to be lost eternally in hell. Mr. Thrasher, you have not even come close to doing this. I have never seen such a poor example of an affirmative speech in my life. Perhaps he will do better in his next speech.

The Scriptures plainly set forth the doctrine of the “eternal preservation of the saints.” I trust, through help from above, all the objections that are laid against this doctrine shall, by one hand or other, prove to its further confirmation.

Mr. Thrasher brings up 2 Peter 1: 5-7 in an attempt to prove his proposition. “Look to yourselves, that we lose not the things we have wrought.” It is one thing to lose for a time the sense and comfort of our state or salvation, as David and others did, but quite another thing to lose the salvation itself, which a believer shall never do, as is shown all through the Bible. In 2 Peter 1: 5-7 we are exhorted to “give all diligence to add one grace to another,” and to help them in their work he tells them (1) what advantages they shall have by their so doing. They “shall not be unfruitful in the knowledge of Jesus Christ,” that is, it shall evidence to them that the knowledge they have is a real knowledge, and this cannot be shown from that which is sham only, but by such an effect: that also by this means it shall be increased, the using of things well and to their proper end being the most effective means for their improvement, according to John 7: 17, “If any man will to do his will, he shall know of the doctrine.” (2) He then sets before them the loss they shall have in case of neglect. They will become blind,

unable to see a far off, and forget that they were purged from their old sins. Slothfulness will bring obscurity, and that which was clear before will now become clouded and be as if it were not. It may seem to them that they are short of that rest which yet is sure to them, and so they will be put to begin their work anew, whereas, "if they do these things, they shall never fall." That is, they shall not fall from their steadfastness nor lose that clear sight and assurance which they now are experiencing, namely, as being partakers of the divine nature and purged from their old sins, which those neglects might put out of their sight; and so lose them the sense and comfort of their salvation. So brother Thrasher, this passage in no way teaches what you say it does.

The very idea that a child of God may so apostatize or fall away so as to end up in eternal torment is absurd. No act of a child of God can possibly cause that child to cease to be a child of its parents and to become the child of someone else. God's children may be rebellious and sin, which they often are, but that does not sever the relationship. I full well realize that the Bible says, "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5: 4). If this text teaches that a child of God may perish in eternal torment, then it contradicts the words of Christ in John 10: 28, "And I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Brother Thrasher, I would point out to you that "never" is a long time. But does Paul contradict the words of the Savior? Did the Son of God make such a statement and then turn right around and inspire the Apostle Paul to write such a statement? Perish the thought! Paul is not teaching what brother Thrasher says he is.

Then what is the teaching of Galatians 5: 4? In the chapters leading up to this he is treating of the difference between the law service and gospel service. He calls attention to the bond woman and the free woman (Galatians 4: 21-26). The old covenant, or law service, with all its ceremonies, has been done away. The law service served its purpose, but when Christ came it was all fulfilled in him, and was done away. "Nevertheless what saith the

scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son: for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman”—verse 30.

Some Judaizing teacher had been among the Galatian churches and had taught them that they must be circumcised and keep the law in order to be saved—that they could not reach heaven without this. This was a false doctrine that they had embraced. By believing that doctrine they had departed from the doctrine of grace. The doctrine of grace, as taught by the Lord and his inspired apostles, is that sinners are saved in heaven, prepared for the service of God here, and prepared and qualified to live with the Lord in heaven, alone by his grace, without works of any kind. “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (2 Timothy 1: 9). These brethren had departed from the doctrine of grace; and in that way and in no other they had fallen from grace. They had not ceased to be children of God. In fact Paul treats them as still being children of God; and this he could not have done if in fact they were no longer children of God. In Galatians 3: 15 he refers to them as “brethren.” He does the same in Galatians 5: 13 and 6: 1. Brother Thrasher, answer this for us if you can.

Brother Thrasher has given us very little to answer in his first speech, having spent most of his time proving that a child of God can fall, err from the truth, etc., and that a church may have its candlestick removed—leaves me little to answer. He did not have to prove these things as I most surely believe this. The promise of security to the child of God is not made on condition that they will not fall, but in reference to the favor of God, namely, the work of Christ upon the cross.

The question of the preservation of the saints is the question of a genuine atonement. There are many cautions laid out in the Bible to the children of God; but these cautions do not disprove this doctrine in the least. If the children of God do not obey these commands of the Lord then judgment will be brought down upon them. They will be CHASTISED. But it is an impossibility for him to

lose his eternal salvation because Christ has shed his blood to prevent that.

Romans 8: 28-30 says, “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.” Here we have what I like to think of as a great golden chain that forms a great circle. This chain or circle cannot be broken. Notice that all that were foreknown (foreloved) were predestinated: and all that were predestinated were called (regenerated) and so on down the line until ALL were glorified. NOT ONE WAS LOST. The number did not keep getting smaller as time went along—which would have been the case if my opponent’s doctrine were true.

Also in Romans 8: 38-39 is additional proof that Mr. Thrasher’s doctrine is wrong. It reads, “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

There is perhaps no chapter in the Bible that sets forth such argumentation to console the child of God. The Apostle informs us that there is absolutely nothing that can separate us from the love of God. I want to make Brother Thrasher a proposition right now. If he can produce one thing that will separate a child of God from the love of Christ, that the Apostle Paul has not covered, I will quit the debate and declare him the winner and join his church just as soon as I can. Now let him produce the ONE thing.

Our eternal security is on the basis of the blood of Christ. The question might be asked, “Is a soul saved by the continuance of his righteous living or by the death of Christ on the cross?” What is the ground of acceptance? A man is accepted into heaven because God finds in the death of his dear Son all that the divine law requires. A sinner is accepted by God as righteous because the precious blood

of Christ supplies all that is necessary for the redemption of his guilty soul. As long as God remains satisfied with Christ's finished work—and he always will) the cross remains the ground of security.

Brother Thrasher brought up 1 Corinthians 8: 11, “And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died.” My opponent thinks that this verse teaches both that Christ died for such as perish in hell, and the true believers may totally and finally fall away and be lost in hell. This verse does not teach any such thing: neither does any other verse. The “perishing” of this weak brother, is to be understood of, and is explained by, a DEFILING of his conscience, verse 7; a WOUNDING of it, verse 12; and making him to OFFEND, verse 13, by the abuse of Christian liberty in those who had stronger faith, and greater knowledge, and by a participation in things offered to idols, in an idol's temple, verses 7, 10; and not of his eternal damnation in hell, which could never enter into the apostle's thoughts; since he says, verse 8, “meat commendeth us to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.”

This text proves that Christ died for weak brethren, whose conscience is may be defiled, wounded, and offended, through the liberty others might take, and in this sense, perish; but does not prove that Christ died for any besides his sheep, his church, or those who are eventually born again. The apostle has said, “Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died.” God would be unjust to punish twice.

My opponent brings up Romans 11: 22, “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.”

This chapter has reference to the Jews being cut off, from the “gospel tree” and the Gentiles being grafted in. Now we know when the Gentiles were grafted in. It was when the Jews were cut off. That was in the days of Christ's earthly ministry. See Matthew 23: 37-38. This chapter teaches too much for my opponent, if he thinks that the cutting off and the grafting in has reference to

eternal life. This would mean that no Gentile was saved until Christ's earthly ministry and that no Jew has been saved since. But notice Romans 11: 28, "As concerning the gospel, they (the Jews) are enemies for your sakes: (the Gentiles) but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes." This passage teaches that God's elect among the gospel rejecting nation of Israel are still beloved in an eternal sense. So the falling and the cutting off is from the privileges of the "gospel kingdom." There are many torments, here in this time world, as a result of being cut off from the church.

My opponent cites Hebrew 6: 4-6 and Hebrews 10: 26-31. Brother Thrasher has not shown us where these verses teach that a child of God can go to eternal torment. These passages only show that a child of God may be rebellious and suffer here in time for it. I feel that these two passages are teaching much the same thing so I will simply deal with one of them at this time. Hebrews 10 reads as follows: "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins. But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who have trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?"

To my thinking, this passage teaches that the child of God may sin against light and knowledge. If one has to come to know the truth, and has come to know the identity of the church, and does not do his duty, he is sinning willfully; he is sinning against light and knowledge. A man under this condition has no excuse for his sin and rebellion. "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." There is "a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation." The judgment of the text is in the man's conscience. He has a guilty conscience and this can be an awful thing. David described the awful worry and trouble that a child of God can get into here in the world. "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which

thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities... Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit” (Psalms 51: 8-12). David again said, “I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels” (Psalms 22: 14).

These verses prove that a child of God can lose his joy and gladness. That he also may lose the “felt” presence of the Lord—that he can lose the “felt” presence of the Spirit. He will probably spend many sleepless nights. There will be a constant dread on his mind. It was a fact that under the law dispensation, the transgressor was killed under the testimony of two or three witnesses. There was no excuse or mercy under the law. That being true, “Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who has trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” To sin against light and knowledge, to sin against the commandments of God, is to tread the Son of God under foot etc. One who does this is worthy of punishment worse than death. There are some things worse than death; and the Lord sometimes visits his children with punishment that is worse than death for their disobedience. I would like to ask Brother Thrasher if those that despise Moses law went to heaven or hell? If they went to heaven, then tell us how this was so in view of the fact that they despised Moses’ law. If they went to hell, then please tell us what the “sorer” punishment was.

Any passages that we did not get to in this speech we hope to get to in our next speech. But we hope that Brother Thrasher gives us more to answer in his second speech than he did in his first.



## THRASHER'S SECOND AFFIRMATIVE

In recognition of the complete harmony and consistency of truth, and with the earnest desire to increase our understanding of God's saving message, I continue my affirmation of the proposition that "the Scriptures teach that a born again child of God may so sin as to be finally lost in hell." I am persuaded that the "once-saved-always-saved" doctrine espoused by Mr. Garrett and others is as dangerous and destructive to the cause of righteousness as any idea that the Devil has ever conceived. I plead with each person to accept the truth on this important question, as it is taught in the word of God.

In his first negative speech, Mr. Garrett states that I gave him "very little to answer." this is very interesting in view of the fact that I presented SEVENTEEN arguments in proof of my proposition, and he attempted to answer only FIVE of them. If he did not have much to answer, it was not because I did not present affirmative arguments to prove what my proposition says. It was due to his either overlooking or ignoring the other TWELVE arguments that I made!

Mr. Garrett also says, "It is not our position that a child of God cannot fall, perish, err from the truth, fall from grace, get entangled with the world, etc.; for they certainly can." I appreciate his admission on this point; however, it was not really necessary for him to say that a child of God may do these things, since I have already given positive scriptural proof that he can. However, the point is that many passages which state that a child of God may fall, perish, err from the truth, etc., also state that the penalty for so doing is being punished in the everlasting Hell. Mr. Garrett chose to ignore these verses that I gave in my first speech. Let us notice some of these matters as we review my opponent's comments.

2 Peter 1: 5-10 teaches that a child of God may fall, unless he does the things mentioned in these verses. Mr. Garrett says this refers only to a fall from the comfort of their salvation, and not from the salvation itself. However, the context shows that Peter is

speaking of things relating to their entrance into heaven: “Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about his calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you” (2 Peter 1: 10-11, NASB). Therefore, the “falling” related to their eternal salvation in heaven, just as my proposition states.

With reference to Galatians 5: 4 Mr. Garrett says, “The very idea that a child of God may so apostatize or fall away so as to end up in eternal torment is absurd. No act of a child of God can possibly cause that child to cease to be a child of its parents and to become the child of someone else.” My opponent fails to recognize that a child of God has the promise of an eternal inheritance as long as he remains faithful to the commands of God; however, if he chooses to rebel against God in disobedience, then he may be disinherited. In addressing children of God, Paul said, “Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God” (1 Corinthians 6: 9-10). These verses show plainly that children of God who commit these sins, and who do not repent and obtain forgiveness, will be disinherited. As a matter of fact, in the very chapter under discussion Paul list several sins and concludes that “they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God” (Galatians 5: 19-21). Therefore, a child of God who commits sins such as those enumerated has so sinned as to be finally lost in hell!

In an effort to set aside the force of Galatians 5: 4, Mr. Garrett quotes John 10: 28, “And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.” Does this verse teach that a child of God will not be lost no matter what he does? Certainly not! If Mr. Garrett had only read the previous verse, he would have seen that Jesus is speaking of those who HEAR HIS VOICE and FOLLOW HIM! As long as the child

of God will HEAR and FOLLOW Jesus, he will not be lost. However, if he does not hear and follow Jesus, he will be lost. Every Christian has the choice of obeying God's will or disobeying it. Nobody can force him to disobey, but he may willingly disobey. Thus, he may so sin as to be finally lost in hell.

My friend introduces Romans 8: 28-30, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that LOVE GOD, to them who are the called according to his purpose..." Please notice that the passage speaks of those who LOVE GOD. Jesus said: "If you love me, keep my commandments" (John 14: 15); "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me..." (John 14: 21); "If a man love me, he will keep my words..." (John 14: 23). Jesus states that the person who truly loves him will obey his will. Thus, those who are mentioned in Romans 8: 28-30 are those who obey God, and who will not be lost as long as they continue to do His will. However, the person who does not obey may fall and be lost, as the Bible teaches.

Mr. Garrett thinks that Romans 8: 38-39 teaches the impossibility of apostasy. No, but it demonstrates the great love that God has for mankind (see John 3: 16). His love extends to all men of all nations, and nothing can separate the child of God from God's love. However, there is a difference in one's being separated from the love of God and being separated from God Himself. The Bible teaches that sin separates us from God: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59: 2). Thus, the sins that a child of God commits may separate him from God, and, if he fails to obtain remission of those sins, cause him to be finally lost in hell.

In reply to 1 Corinthians 8: 11 my opponent says that this only refers to a weak brother's conscience being "defiled, wounded, and offended," and not to his salvation. However, while speaking of the same idea in Romans 14: 15 Paul said, "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." What do you mean, Paul? He explains in verse 23: "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The apostle

says that the brother who goes ahead and eats when he is not convinced that it is right to do so commits SIN, and that the sin will result in his being damned (see Mark 16: 16). Yes, when a child of God SINS it will damn his soul, unless he repents and God forgives the sin.

Relative to Hebrews 10: 26-31, my opponent says, "these verses prove that a child of God can lose his joy and gladness" in this life, And that the JUDGMENT of verse 27 is "in the man's conscience." In other words, the passage deals with the events of this life only, according to my opponent. However, the "judgment" spoken of in Hebrews 10: 27 is the same as that referred to in Hebrews 9: 27, "And as it is appointed unto man wants to die, but after this the judgment." This is a JUDGMENT AFTER DEATH, and not simply a judgment in the conscience of man, as Mr. Garrett has asserted. Hebrews 10: 26-31 teaches that a child of God may willfully sin, and by his action be in danger of the punishment in hell after the day of Judgment.

With regard to Hebrews 10: 28-29 Mr. Garrett asks if those who despised Moses' law went to heaven or hell? Those who did not repent would be lost in hell for disobeying God, Mr. Garrett. He then asked what the "sorer punishment" was? This "sorer punishment" to be given to those who had "trodden under foot the Son of God," etc. was mentioned in contrast to the physical death of those who despised Moses' law. That "sorer punishment" which was worse than death refers to PUNISHMENT IN HELL FOR THE DISOBEDIENT CHILD OF GOD. Please remember that the contrast is between PHYSICAL DEATH for despising Moses' law and SPIRITUAL DEATH in hell for children of God who committed the sins mentioned in verse 29.

Since I have taken up the points in Mr. Garrett's speech, I want to emphasize that he has not made any attempt to reply to most of the passages that I introduced. It will not suffice to say that they did not prove my proposition, for I've shown that they teach the possibility of a child of God so sinning as to be finally lost in hell. If you will notice each of the verses carefully, you will see that they refer to salvation from sin and to punishment in hell. I will list some

of the verses to which he made no reply: Revelation 2: 4-5; Matthew 13: 41-42; Philippians 4: 3; Hebrews 12: 15-17; 2 Peter 2: 1; 2 Peter 2: 20-22; 2 Peter 3: 17; James 5: 19-20; 1 Timothy 5: 15; 2 Peter 2: 14-15; Genesis 2: 16-17 and 3: 4. He mentioned Hebrews 6: 4-6, but he did not offer any reply to it. Mr. Garrett, do not say that I gave you “very little to answer,” for you have not even attempted to answer these arguments. As long as one single verse goes unanswered, the possibility that a child of God may so sin as to be lost in hell remains. You're the one who needs to do better in your next speech, not me. Every honest person can see that you have not answered my arguments.

I will now continue the affirmation of my proposition by presenting several additional arguments from the word of God. Please follow along in your Bible to see that I am presenting what the Scriptures teach.

In Acts 5: 1-11 we learned that Ananias and Sapphira sold a piece of land and gave part of the price for the needs of the saints, while saying that they contributed all of the money. As a result of their deception, Peter asked, “Ananias, why hast Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost ... Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost” (Acts 5: 3-5). The verses that follow record a similar fate for Sapphira. Thus, we have an example of two Christians who committed the sin of LYING, and who died impenitently. What is the condition of such a person? Let the Bible speak: “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and ALL LIARS, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Revelation 21: 8). This verse plainly teaches that those who commit these sins (including the sin of lying of which Ananias and Sapphira were guilty) and who do not repent and obtain God's forgiveness will be finally lost in hell. This is what my proposition says.

Hebrews 3: 12-14, “Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called today; lest any of you

be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end.” If children of God cannot have an EVIL HEART and DEPART FROM GOD, as Mr. Garrett's doctrine would demand, then why were these brethren warned to TAKE HEED? The solution is obvious. The heart of a child of God may become EVIL. But will his EVIL HEART cause him to be finally lost in hell? Listen to the inspired writer: “But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; who will render to every man according to his deeds: to those who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life: but into them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil” (Romans 2: 5-9). Paul says that those who do good will be rewarded with eternal life, but those who do evil will suffer tribulation and anguish in hell. Since a child of God may choose to do evil, then he may so sin as to be finally lost.

In speaking of some of God's children in the Old Testament, Paul wrote, “But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were OVERTHROWN in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent that we should not lust after EVIL things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them.... Neither let us commit FORNICATION, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.... Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth TAKE HEED LEST HE FALL” (1 Corinthians 10: 5-8, 12). Paul tells Christians that they should take heed lest they fall by lusting after evil things, like many had done previously. For example, some had committed the sins of IDOLATRY and FORNICATION. What happened when they did? They fell! Mr. Garrett would say, “Oh yes, they fell, but not so as to be lost in hell.” However, the word of God says differently. In Galatians 5: 19-21 the apostle Paul lists several sins, including IDOLATRY and FORNICATION, and he said that “they which do such things SHALL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD.” Thus, Paul says

that a child of God who commits idolatry or fornication is in danger of being lost in hell. My opponent says, "Do not worry about idolatry, fornication, or any other sin, for your soul will not be in any danger of being lost even if you commit them." Whom will you believe, the apostle Paul or Mr. Garrett? You cannot believe both.

I certainly hope that my friend Mr. Garrett will make an effort to reply to the arguments that I have made in proof of my proposition. I am certain that every honest person will study this important subject in view of the teachings of the Scriptures: "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God" (1 Peter 4: 11).

## GARRETT'S SECOND NEGATIVE

Respected Opponent, Dear Readers: Brother Thrasher says that I failed to notice all of his arguments in proof of his proposition. I answer: `For the obvious reason that I failed to comprehend an argument in many of his quotations. He says that he gave me seventeen arguments. If anyone can find seventeen REAL arguments in his first speech, then I will give up this debate. But I have no fear of anyone being able to do this. Simply to quote a bunch of Scriptures does not necessarily make an argument.

My opponent says, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." The Bible idea of speaking only where the Bible speaks, etc. is beyond dispute; but Brother Thrasher and his people say and do not. Mr. Thrasher and his people have never been able to give effect to this Bible expression by making out just what the oracles of God do say.

Whether Mr. thrasher knows it or not, the principle that he advocates is identical with the principle of all Roman Catholic doctrine: salvation by sacraments and ritual, and fear as the motivation for service.

My opponent makes a very serious mistake in answering my argument on John 10: 28. He says: "Does this verse teach that a child of God will not be lost no matter what he does? Certainly not! If Mr. Garrett had only read the previous verse he would have seen that Jesus is speaking of those who HEAR HIS VOICE and FOLLOW HIM"!

My dear Mr. Thrasher, when will you learn to read the Scriptures correctly? In John 10 we read, "And a stranger will they not follow" (verse 5), "and other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they SHALL hear my voice" (verse 16). My opponent's position is that they may NOT follow the Lord, and that they MAY or MAY NOT hear his voice. My opponent is against the Bible. There are no *and's*, *if's* nor *but's* in this chapter. They absolutely DO hear and FOLLOW. The hearing and the following of this chapter is in the sense of REGENERATION—for we



know that many of the little children of God do not always follow all of the commandments of God in their everyday post-generation life. To say otherwise is to say that a child of God can do no wrong. My opponent does not believe that.

In this chapter the security of the child of God is not based upon their faithfulness, but is based upon the faithfulness of God. In verse 11 we read: "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Also in verses 12-14 we read: "But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is in hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know (love) my sheep, and am known of mine." In verse 29: "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

In all these verses the eternal safety of the children of God depends upon God's work; namely, his giving his life for them, his caring for them, and his great power to be able to keep them. Every sheep-herder in the country knows that it is the responsibility of the shepherd to protect the sheep rather than the sheep to protect itself. So Mr. Thrasher, you have not answered our argument from John chapter 10. Neither have you really answered any of our arguments from the beginning of this debate.

Brother Thrasher scoffs add my reply to 2 Peter 1: 5-10. I stated then and I repeat that these verses are teaching that a child of God may fall from his own STEADFASTNESS (2 Peter 3: 17). These verses in no wise teach that a child of God can end up in eternal torment. The blood of Jesus will not permit this. My opponent brings up the eleventh verse to try to prove that one must perform works in order to enter heaven. Verse eleven reads, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." The significance of the words "for so" is, FOR, DOING THESE THINGS. There is no question but there is a condition in verse eleven; but this condition is not in order to get into heaven as my opponent thinks. The entrance of this passage does not refer to the fact of this entrance

taking place, but the fact of its being abundantly ministered. This verse is simply teaching that the pilgrimage journey (entrance) of the child of God will be joyful and happy if he is faithful to maintain good works. If the “entrance” refers to the fact of our actually entering heaven—then what is the significance of the word “abundantly”? Mr. Thrasher, please tell us this if you can.

My opponent says that 1 Corinthians 6: 9-10 and Galatians 5: 19-21 disproves my position and proves his. Nothing could be further from the truth. I have stated throughout this discussion that there are conditions for living in the local church kingdom but not for eternal life. Primitive Baptists preach much from these passages of Scripture.

I have never seen a weaker argument given than my opponent gave upon Romans 8: 38-39. Here is what he said, “Mr. Garrett thinks that Romans 8: 38-39 teaches the impossibility of apostasy. No, but it demonstrates the great love that God has for mankind (see John 3: 16). His love extends to all men of all nations, and nothing can separate the child of God from God's love. However, there is a difference in one's being separated from the love of God and being separated from God himself. The Bible teaches that sin separates us from God: “But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, so that he will not hear” (Isaiah 59: 2). Thus, the sins that a child of God commits may separate him from God, and, if he fails to obtain remission of those sins, cause him to be finally lost in hell.”

In reply to this it is both sad and humorous to see my opponent speak of the great love of God. His doctrine knows not the first thing about the great love of God. His idea of the great love of God is that God cannot save all that he wants to. His doctrine is that most of those once saved God cannot keep. His doctrine is that most of those whom Christ died for end up in hell. How is that for believing in the great love of God? It is sad indeed.

Mr. Thrasher, there is absolutely no difference in being separated from the love of God and from God himself. Friendly readers, how is that for an argument? Where is his proof of such a

ridiculous statement? This is where the rejection of such passages as Romans 8: 38-39 leads people. Isaiah 59: 2 says nothing about an “eternal” separation, and Romans 8 says nothing about a “timely” separation. As I have stated previously, I believe that a child of God can be separated from God as to “HIS FELT PRESENCE.” The doctrine that I believe, is not that a child of God may NOT FALL or lose his joy and happiness here in this time world. Mr. Thrasher, it will do you no good to harp on this. Please get to the “gut” issues.

We need to appreciate what is at stake in this controversy. If saints may fall away and be finally lost, then the called and the justified may fall away and be lost. But this is what the inspired apostle Paul says will not happen and cannot happen—whom God calls and justifies he also glorifies (Romans 8: 28-30). The denial of the preservation of the saints devastates the explicit import of the apostle’s teaching.

My opponent brings up Romans 14: 15 and Mark 16: 16 where the word “damned” is used. My opponent has not PROVED anything from these verses. He is in the affirmative in this part of this debate and it is up to him to prove his statements. He did not prove that the word “damned” of Romans 14: 15 is an “eternal” damnation. He did not prove this with Mark 16: 16 either. Neither did he prove that the “damns” of both passages are the same. I am not saying that they are not, but I am simply saying that my opponent has proven nothing concerning his proposition. I cannot reply to an argument that is not anywhere close to proving my opponent’s point.

Mr. Thrasher lists several passages that he says I made no reply to in my first speech. This is not entirely true. But let me state some things about some of these passages. He lists Revelation 2: 4-5. This passage simply teaches that a church may so live as to lose their identity as a true church. A child of God also may so live as to lose his “MANIFEST” identity as a child of God, but he can never cease to be a child of the King. Brother Thrasher speaks of a child of God being disinherited. I have been told that in the laws of our country that an “adopted” child cannot be disinherited. But whether they can or not I know that a child of God (adopted into the family of

God) cannot. We can lose our place in the “gospel church” but not in that eternal kingdom. Moses lost his place to enter into Canaan's land, but that did not keep him out of immortal glory.”

Brother Thrasher's doctrine is like the person who has inherited a fortune of, say, \$200,000. He knows that many others who have inherited such fortunes have lost them through poor judgment, fraud, calamity, etc., but he has enough confidence in his own ability to handle money wisely that he does not doubt that he will keep his. His assurance is based largely on self-confidence. Others have failed, but he is confident that he will not fail. But what a delusion is this when applied to the spiritual realm! What a pity that any one who is at all acquainted with his own proneness to sin should base his assurance of salvation upon such grounds! His system places the cause of his preservation, not in the hands of an all-powerful, never-changing God, but in the hands of weak sinful man.

Brother Thrasher lists 1 Timothy 5: 15, “For some are already turned aside after Satan.” Again I want to say that my opponent has proven nothing from this passage that I don't already believe. He did not prove that a child of God who might turn after Satan goes to hell. What he needs to show is how this is possible in view of the fact that the child of God's sin debt has been paid. Brother Thrasher, you do not believe in a GENUINE atonement. The issue is the basis of our difference. Hymenaeus made shipwreck of the faith (1 Timothy 1: 19-20), but this does not say that he went to eternal torment. The Lord committed him unto Satan to learn not to blaspheme, and this was surely torment, but it was a torment here in this time world.

The argument that Brother Thrasher makes from Hebrews 3: 12-14 and Romans 2: 5-9 proves nothing. For the man who goes to heaven it can truly be said that it is “justice WITHOUT mercy.” The justified stand cleansed. They go to heaven in the IMPUTED righteousness of Christ and not their own ( 1 Corinthians 1: 30). All LIARS etc. will have their part in the lake of fire, that is, those that have not been washed in the blood.

It is not simply BELIEVING in the blood that does justify a man;

but it is that blood itself that does the justifying and our believing in it is the gift of God consequent upon that justification. The blood will never suffer loss. Brother Thrasher has not adequately told us how one that Christ has shed his blood for, may end up paying for his own sins in hell. This, Mr. Thrasher, is what you need to be answering.

Brother Thrasher has spent much time showing that a child of God can fall. Let us show from the Bible just what will happen to that child of God that falls. "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips" (Psalms 89: 30-34).

In this passage we are told that there will be wrongs committed by the children of God. His children may forsake God's law (verse 30) by sins of omissions, and break his statutes (verse 31) by sins commission. Then, we are here told, that the children of God must account for what they have done, or as one man said, "They must smart for it" (verse 32). "I will visit their transgression with the rod. Amos said, "You only have I known, of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (3: 2). Their being related to Christ shall not excuse them from being called to an account. But observe what that account is. It is but a rod, not an axe, not a sword; it is for correction, not for eternal destruction. Though God's children be chastened, it does not follow that they are eternally disinherited; they may be cast down, but they are not destroyed. Christ is a surety for us (Hebrews 7: 22) and this proves my opponent's proposition to be in error.

Also Psalms 37: 23-24 says, "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." Here we are told what happens when a child of God falls. Does it teach what my opponent's proposition states? Certainly not. I believe just exactly what these verses teach. Notice that it is

God's hand that keeps him.

Sometimes the little children of God are guilty of acting a part which is offensive to their dear Savior, and therefore he withdraws from them. Darkness spreads itself over them; thick clouds come between him and their souls, and they see not his smiling face. This was the case with the church when she was inclined unto carnal ease rather than to arise and give her Beloved entrance. He quickened her desires after the enjoyment of his company by an effectual touch upon her heart; but he withdrew, departed, and left her to bewail her folly in her sinful neglect. Upon this she was troubled; she arose and sought him but she found him not. It is just with him to hide himself from us if we are indifferent about the enjoyment of his delightful presence, and give us occasion to confess our ingratitude to him, but the loss we sustain in consequence of it. His love in itself passes under no change—it is always the same; that is our security, but the manifestation of it to our souls, from which our peace, comfort and joy spring, may be interrupted through our negligence, sloth and sin. A sense of it, when it is so, may well break our hearts, for there is no ingratitude in the world like it.

Dear friends, if a saved soul can be lost then God's CHARACTER can be lost! And God would lose more than any saved soul could possibly lose. If they should end up in eternal misery and perish, every office, and work, and attribute of Christ would be stained in the mire. If any one child of grace should perish, where were Christ's covenant engagements? What is he worth as a mediator of the covenant and the surety of it, if he hath not made the promises sure to all the seed?

## THRASHER'S THIRD AFFIRMATIVE

With reverence for God and respect for his word, I address all those who are sincerely concerned about their salvation from sin. The proposition that I am affirming, and which is denied by Mr. Garrett, is "The Scriptures teach that a born again child of God may so sin as to be finally lost in hell." I invite your careful attention to the teaching of God's book on this important subject.

In my first affirmative speech I gave seventeen scriptural arguments in proof of my proposition. Mr. Garrett chose to ignore the large majority of the Bible references presented; however, he stated that I gave him "very little to answer." I then pointed out that he would have had plenty to answer if he had simply taken up these passages of Scripture one-by-one and attempted to show wherein they fail to teach what my proposition says. His assertions that those verses do not prove that a "child of God may so sin as to be finally lost in hell" are not sufficient. My opponent needs to reply to what I have presented and tell us why they do not support my position on this question. His making mention of some of the Bible references that are offered does not ANSWER the arguments. Let him reply to what I said about those verses of Scripture. Please remember that if even ONE SINGLE VERSE in the entire Bible teaches what my proposition says, then it is proven to be true. Therefore, if my good friend Garrett fails to answer any one passage that I have introduced from God's word, then that passage is evidence of the truthfulness of my affirmation.

My opponent admitted previously that I proved in my first speech that a child of God can "fall, perish, err from the truth, fall from grace, get entangled with the world, etc." Since he has made this admission, all I need to show is that even one verse that I have given deals with **eternal salvation**. When this is done, my proposition that a "child of God may so sin as to be finally lost in hell" is proved.

Contrary to the protests of my worthy opponent, 2 Peter 1: 5-11 speaks of the possibility that a child of God may fall away and be

lost. Notice that Peter tells us to add certain things to our faith; for example, virtue, knowledge, temperance, godliness, etc. God's word says that children of God ought to do this. But what if he fails to add these things to his faith? Does it really make any difference as far as his salvation is concerned? Not according to Mr. Garrett. However, the apostle says that it does make a difference. "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins" (verse 9). Does this sound like a description of a person who will be in heaven to worship God forever and ever? My opponent evidently thinks so. But Peter warns us about such a condition by saying, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: FOR IF YOU DO THESE THINGS, YE SHALL NEVER FALL" (verse 10). The inspired writer tells us that a person must add these different things to his faith in order to keep from falling. Question: From what did the apostle say children of God could fall? By even a half-way reading of these verses one should be able to see that it is from their CALLING and ELECTION. Notice verse 10 again: "Give diligence to make your CALLING and ELECTION SURE"! This verse very clearly proves that man's being "called" and "elected" by God is CONDITIONAL, and that man may decide to forfeit or reject salvation by failing to obey God. One way in which a child of God may do that is by not adding the things mentioned and 2 Peter 1: 5-7 to his faith. If he does not add them to his faith, he is in danger of FALLING and making his calling and election UNSURE. On the other hand, by adding these to his faith he is guarding against falling from God's grace and, as verse 11 states, "So there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the ETERNAL KINGDOM of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (RSV). IF one does what Peter says do, then God will provide him with an entrance into heaven. However, IF one does not do what Peter says do, then he will have FALLEN from that reward promised to the faithful (Matthew 25: 21; Revelation 2: 10). Can any honest person deny that the apostle Peter is discussing that which pertains to the eternal salvation of God's children? Remember that our Lord said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine" (John 7:



17).

Although I have already produced a plain and simple scriptural argument from 2 Peter 1: 5-11 to prove my affirmation that it is possible for a Christian to fall away into sin and be lost. I want to call your attention to several other arguments that I have made to prove the same point. One passage that I introduced in my first speech was Matthew 13: 41-42, "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather OUT OF HIS KINGDOM all things that offend, and them which DO INIQUITY: and shall CAST THEM INTO a furnace of FIRE: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Please observe that the Lord himself is speaking of some who were in HIS KINGDOM, that is, children of God. However, He also said that one must be born again in order to enter into the kingdom of God (John 3: 3, 5). Therefore, Matthew 13: 41-42 is undoubtedly referring to "born again children of God" such as those under consideration in our proposition. But what will happen to some of these "born again" children of God? The Savior reveals that those who "DO INIQUITY" will be lost in a burning hell where "there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth"! Many other Bible verses could be cited relative to this point (for example, Revelation 19: 20; 20: 10; 21: 8; Matthew 8: 12).

If a person really wants to know the truth on the subject that Mr. Garrett and I are discussing, let him turn to Matthew 13: 41-42 and read it with an open mind, with the eagerness of an inquisitive child. What does our Lord say in those verses? Simply this: Children of God who fall away into sin and do not return and obtain forgiveness will be lost eternally. Remember that "born again children of God" are under consideration in these verses, since those who are in the kingdom are those who have been "born again" (John 3: 3, 5). Anyone who would deny the truthfulness of this argument is simply denying that Jesus Christ told the truth. Who dares to call the Son of God a liar? Any person who teaches that a child of God cannot possibly commit an act of sin which would cause him to be lost in hell!

Mr. Garrett, you have not attempted a reply to my argument based upon Matthew 13: 41-42, although you have had two

speeches since I introduced it. Why have you not offered any refutation of it? Perhaps my friend “overlooked” it or “forgot” to mention it, even though I called it to his attention in my second affirmative, too. In any case, I hope that he will examine it carefully and tell us wherein it fails to prove my proposition. Of course, I will not have an opportunity to reply to his comments, but that will be all right as long as he deals with it fairly and forthrightly in his last speech.

Another scriptural argument that I made was based upon Philippians 4: 3, where we learn that children of God have their names written “in the book of life.” In Luke 10: 20 Jesus told the disciples to “rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.” Now, according to my honorable opponent, this would have been all that was necessary for one to be assured of a heavenly abode in the hereafter, since a child of God could not possibly do anything to cause him to be lost. However, the word of God says differently. The Scriptures teach that a child of God MAY have his name BLOTTED OUT OF THE BOOK OF LIFE: “... Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book” (Exodus 32: 33). Since one's name may be blotted out of the book of life, what will happen to the person whose name IS blotted out? Listen to the Bible answer: “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the BOOK OF LIFE: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS ... And whosoever was NOT FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE was cast into the LAKE OF FIRE” (Revelation 20: 12, 15). The person who faces God in the great day of Judgment with his name not found in the book of life will be lost in a burning hell. Included in this number will be those children of God who through unfaithfulness had their names “blotted out” of that book.

But one might ask, “what will happen to those whose names are written in that book?” In speaking of this very thought, the Scripture describes those who will enter into heaven: “And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: BUT THEY

WHICH ARE WRITTEN IN THE LAMB'S BOOK OF LIFE" (Revelation 21: 27). Those who will enter heaven are those whose names are written in the book of life; those who enter hell are those whose names are not written in the book of life. According to the Bible, it is as simple as that. Therefore, those children of God who have their names blotted out of that book will be lost in hell. To deny this fact is to deny that the Bible is true.

Mr. Garrett, you did not make any attempt to answer this argument either, even though I also introduced it in my first affirmative speech. You have made two speeches already, but no reply. Perhaps my friend "overlooked" or "forgot" this one also. He ought to deal with it in his last speech. Again, I will not have opportunity to reply to what he says about it; however, in the interest of truth I know that he should tell us why it fails to prove my proposition. Friends, these verses very plainly teach that a child of God may have his name blotted out of the book of life and, when the day of Judgment comes, be condemned to the burning fires of hell for eternity. The Bible is clear on this point. To deny it is to say that Jesus lied, for He proclaimed in His prayer to the Father: "Thy word is truth" (John 17: 17).

Still another passage that I introduced in my first affirmative speech, and to which Mr. Garrett has not replied, is 2 Peter 2: 14-15, "Having eyes full of adultery, and that cannot cease from sin; beguiling unstable souls: an heart they have exercised with covetous practices; CURSED CHILDREN: which have FORSAKEN the right way, and are GONE ASTRAY, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness." This passage speaks of CHILDREN who had "FORSAKEN THE RIGHT WAY" and "GONE ASTRAY"! Of course, my fellow disputant contends that such is not possible for a person to do what these did and then be lost in hell. Nevertheless, when we understand what sins these were guilty of through violating God's law, there is no other scriptural conclusion but that these individuals would be lost in hell. Verse 14 lists ADULTERY and COVETOUSNESS among the sins they committed. Since they had committed these unrighteous acts, what does the Bible teach is the penalty for so doing? Here

the apostle Paul's words: "Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor ADULTERERS, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor COVETOUS, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6: 9-10). The Holy Spirit revealed through Paul that people who were guilty of such sins as ADULTERY and COVETOUSNESS would not be in heaven. Therefore, any child of God who did either of these things and who did not repent would not enter heaven. This is the teaching of the oracles of God. To deny it is to charge the Holy Spirit with revealing a lie. To accept it is to admit that my proposition is true.

Mr. Garrett, why did you not answer this argument? This point was given in my first speech, and your attention was called to it again in my second speech when I listed it among those verses that you had not answered. But you probably just "overlooked" or "forgot" it. My friend, we will expect you to answer this in your last speech.

In his second negative speech, Mr. Garrett said concerning me: "His idea of the great love of God is that God cannot save all that he wants to." That is positively not true, my good friend! The question under consideration in this debate is not what God CAN or CANNOT do. I do not doubt God's power. I firmly believe that God WILL save all of those whom He has said He would save. However, God has plainly said that He will not save those who FALL AWAY into sin and do not repent (Revelation 2: 4-5; Matthew 13: 41-42; Hebrews 10: 26-29, 31; 2 Peter 2: 1; Hebrews 6: 4-6; 2 Peter 2: 20-22; Romans 11: 22; James 5: 19-20; 2 Peter 2: 14-15; *et al.*).

As a matter of fact, the Scriptures teach that God DESIRES that ALL MEN BE SAVED! Paul wrote to Timothy: "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved" (1 Timothy 2: 3-4, NASB). If we were discussing what God DESIRES to do, then I would say that God WANTS TO SAVE ALL MEN. However, the Bible teaches that God DOES NOT save all men, because ALL MEN are not WILLING to obey God's commands. Some would rather live in sin than serve God. What does the Bible say about those who will be saved? The writer of the Hebrew letter

said, "He [Jesus] became the author of ETERNAL SALVATION unto ALL THEM THAT OBEY HIM" (Hebrews 5: 9). This should forever settle the matter. One who does not obey God, whether alien Sinner or child of God, will not be saved in heaven that is Bible doctrine, and it is the Truth!

My opponent's position in this debate is that God COULD save all people, but that He chooses to save only some of them, and that through an arbitrary process without regard to man's love for God, or his faith in God, or his obedience to God's commandments, or anything else on man's part. This false doctrine makes God a respecter of persons of the worst sort, for this does not only affect man for a few years upon the earth, but it places upon him an unending sentence of misery, anguish, and torment, while at the same time granting other men of the same character an eternal life of bliss, peace, and comfort in the glorious presence of God. Not only so, but it has God in the position of giving many murderers, thieves, fornicators, idolaters, liars, and infidels that eternal rest, while many innocent children (who were not among those individuals unconditionally chosen by God) suffer the everlasting fires of hell. What doctrine!!! This may be the teaching and practice of my opponent's God, but it is not the practice of the God of heaven. Although my opponent speaks of God's JUSTICE and MERCY, he does not have the least concept of it as revealed in the word of God. What justice is there in an impenitent murderer's being granted entrance into heaven, while an infant receives punishment in hell? This is not justice, but it is my opponent's doctrine.

I ask in all kindness that each individual study these things that I have presented. Open your Bible and read these scriptural references again, and see if they teach what I have said. If so, please accept the teaching of that word which will judge us in the last great day (John 12: 48).

## GARRETT'S THIRD NEGATIVE

Respected Opponent, Friendly Readers: Brother Thrasher in his last speech has charged many consequences upon my doctrine. I'm sure that the honest readers of these papers can readily see that my doctrine implies nothing of the sort that Brother Thrasher says.

He says that I put infants in hell. Neither I, nor any Primitive Baptist that I know of, believes any such thing. I am appalled that Mr. Thrasher would boldly come out and say that I teach such. All those dying in infancy are of the elect of God, and Job 21: 7 proves it. My opponent does not say that my doctrine merely implies that infants go to hell (which it certainly does not) but that I actually teach it. I challenge anyone to find one word in these past speeches of mine that teaches such as my opponent charges me with. My opponent's attempt to overthrow the truth is so futile that he feels that he must make these wild charges to try to save some face.

Brother Thrasher in his closing remarks brings up the question of God's SOVEREIGNTY. He says that I make God a respecter of persons. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, it is my opponent's doctrine that does that. God does not choose to save anyone because of who or what he is—so therefore, he is no respecter of persons. He saves us according to the "good pleasure of his will" (Ephesians 1: 5-11).

The same Bible that teaches election and salvation by grace also states that God is just (Isaiah 45: 21). When God chooses some unworthy sinners to salvation, he does no injustice to the rest of unworthy sinners. They have merited hell by their sins, and they deserve to go there. God's election and predestination does not send them there, but their sins send them there. God's election simply blesses with salvation a great number which no man can number (Revelation 7: 9-10).

It cannot be said that God acts unjustly toward those who are not included in this plan of salvation. People who make this objection neglect to take into consideration the fact that God is

dealing not merely with creatures but with sinful creatures who have forfeited every claim upon his mercy. Augustine well said: “Damnation is rendered to the wicked as a matter of debt, justice and dessert, whereas the grace given to those who are delivered is free and unmerited, so that the condemned sinner cannot allege that he is unworthy of his punishment, nor the saint vaunt or boast as if he were worthy of his reward. Thus, in the whole course of this procedure, there is no respect of persons. They who are condemned and they who are set at liberty constituted originally one and the same lump, equally infected with sin and liable to vengeance. Hence the justified may learn from the condemnation of the rest that that would have been their own punishment had not God’s grace stepped in to their rescue.” The Lord, therefore, may give grace to whom he will, because he is merciful, and yet not give it all to all because he is a just Judge; may manifest his free grace by giving to some what they never deserve, while by not giving to all he declares the demerit of all.

“Partiality,” in the sense that Brother Thrasher uses the idea, is impossible in the sphere of grace. It can exist only in the sphere of justice, where the persons concerned have certain CLAIMS and RIGHTS. We may give to one beggar and not to another for we do not OWE anything to either. Let me illustrate. Suppose a man goes to an orphan’s home to adopt a child. He adopts one child and leaves the rest, even though he had the means to adopt others. Will Brother Thrasher tell me that this man is unjust? Will he tell me that the man has acted unrighteously, because in the exercise of his undisputed right he chose out that one child to enjoy the comforts of his home, and become the heir of his possessions, and left the others, possibly to perish in want, or sink into the wretched condition of poor children? If this was done in our society do you think that anyone would charge this good man with injustice? Do not men rather hold such action up to praise? Do they not speak of such a one as having great pity and compassion? Now why do they do this? Why do they not condemn the taking of the one, and the leaving of the rest? The reason is this—because we know—as we all know—that all those children were in exactly the same plight

and that not one of them had a single claim, or the least vestige of a claim, upon the person whose will and pleasure it was to adopt one as his own. Can anyone see the least difference in this act of God's from that of the man in this illustration? Fallen man has no claim upon God. Mr. Thrasher evidently thinks that he has.

The Bible says, "Hath not the Potter power (a right) over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another and another unto dishonour?" (Romans 9: 21). The word "power" in this verse signifies authority, license, liberty, right; but in its application to God there can be no question that it denotes POWER JUSTLY EXERCISED. The mere power or ability of doing what God pleases, cannot be the meaning, for this is not the thing questioned in Romans 9. It is the justice of the procedure that is disputed, and it is consequently the justice of this exercise of power that must be accepted.

That we are all in the hand of God, as the clay in the potter's hand, is humbling to the pride of man, yet nothing can be more self-evidently true. If so, God has the same right over us that a potter has over the clay of which he forms his vessels for his own purposes and interest.

It is evident that the clay is used to represent humanity—fallen humanity. Out of the same lump or mass he forms, in his own holy sovereignty, one man unto honour, and another unto dishonour, without in any respect violating justice. The whole lump is in a sinful fallen condition and God might in justice have left the whole to perish.

My opponent again cites 2 Peter 1: 10, "Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your CALLING and ELECTION sure: FOR IF YE DO THESE THINGS, YE SHALL NEVER FALL." Brother Thrasher thinks that they must do certain works to make calling and election a fact. This is absurd. The word *sure*, means firm, steadfast, secure. Here the reference must be to themselves; that is, they were so to act as to make it certain to THEMSELVES that they had been chosen, and were truly called into life. It cannot refer to God, for no act of theirs could make it more certain on his part, if they had been actually chosen to eternal life.



Brother Thrasher says that I made no answer to Revelation 21: 12-27. This is not entirely true. I have stated before that Revelation 21 is not speaking about eternal heaven, and even gave my opponent several negative arguments to prove such. My opponent found it very convenient to neglect those arguments. The Holy city of Revelation 21 and 22 is the local church, and men can lose their place in it (Revelation 22: 19).

The “blotting out of the book” of Exodus 32: 33 has absolutely no reference to losing our eternal life. The book under consideration in this passage has reference to a registry book that contained all the names of the children of Israel. When one would die a spiritual death his name would be erased out of the registry.

Mr. Thrasher brings up 2 Peter 2: 14-15 and 1 Corinthians 6: 9-10. When the Bible speaks of adulterers and liars etc. not entering the kingdom of God, it has reference to the church kingdom. This passage was answered in one of my speeches. Evidently Brother Thrasher did not read my speeches closely enough. I'm sure he did not for he did not answer even one of my negative arguments of my last speech. But might I go farther and reply that no UNFORGIVEN liar etc. will enter heaven and immortal glory. In Christ's death upon the cross the elect were forgiven and justified (Romans 5: 9).

Mr. Thrasher and his people have the idea that REPENTANCE can satisfy the law of God. This is not true. It takes the blood (Hebrews 9: 22) to remit sins. Repentance may stop chastisement and restore peace to our souls, but only the blood cancels out our sins as far as God's law is concerned.

Mr. Thrasher continually brings up Matthew 13: 41-42 and we want to give some time to this passage. To begin with, Brother Thrasher has not proved that one can be taken out of the realm of eternal life. This is the interpretation that Brother Thrasher gives verse 41.

The problem of interpretation here is to reconcile the phrase “they shall gather out of his kingdom” with the clear statement of verse 38, “the field is the world.” If we understand “his kingdom” in this case we mean “the local visible church,” then we must either

understand “the world” in some strained, unnatural sense, or we must utterly confound the local church with the world; and upon any such interpretation the only result will be that the passage prohibits exclusion from a church, which Scripture elsewhere distinctly enjoins. In some way, then, the phrase “gather out of his kingdom” must be interpreted as not meaning “the visible church,” or else we bring Scripture into contradiction. It might be enough to say that IN ONE SENSE all the world is under the Lord's dominion, but not in the sense that all men are really his subjects (verse 38). I think that this statement “gather out of his kingdom” must be compared in meaning with the kindred parable (verse 49), “the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the righteous.”

God promises eternal life or everlasting life to the elect. We know the promises of God are true and faithful. He has never broken any promise spoken. God never made a promise he could not keep. You may rest assured when he promised us eternal life he is able to deliver this promise, whatever that may require. If you get IT today and lose IT tomorrow, IT wasn't everlasting when you got IT. If this is hard to believe, then the Bible is hard to believe. “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ” (Philippians 1: 6).

The child of God is securely and eternally saved, and shall never be lost, because the Bible says so.

John 5: 24—“Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me hath everlasting life, and SHALL NOT come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life.” Brother Thrasher says that he may come into condemnation and is, therefore, against the Bible.

Brother Thrasher has very conveniently ignored my arguments based upon Romans 8: 28-30. There are no broken links in this golden chain. The predestinated are the called, the justified and the glorified; and all this, as the passage plainly infers, is in the mind of God, as an accomplished fact. Those predestinated in eternity past are viewed in God's covenant purposes as already glorified. It is

impossible to understand these words as possessing any other meaning or as teaching any other doctrine. There are no “ifs” or “buts,” no “peradventures” or “maybes.” What God hath begun he will perfect and that too, “until” or “up to and within” that day of Jesus Christ.

It is almost incredible that any should question or doubt this doctrine of the preservation of the saints in the face of such clear and explicit testimony as that which we have given, and which, were it necessary, might be supplemented by a number of other definite quotations in the Bible. But, incredible though it may seem, this doctrine has not only been questioned and doubted but it has been absolutely denied by a host of Armenian orders. Setting aside all the clear testimony of Scripture, Mr. Thrasher teaches that it is not only possible for one who has been saved to fall—a fact which no primitive Baptist would deny and which the Bible itself does not deny—but that such an one may fall finally and be eternally lost.

In my speeches up to this point I have shown that eternal salvation is solely the work of God, independent of the performance of any stipulated conditions, and I feel sure that I have proved beyond successful contradiction that this is a work that God does for us. I now propose, in a brief space, to consider that work that God requires of us, and what we gain by obeying the Lord's commands. I feel that this is necessary in view of some of the consequences that Brother Thrasher has charged me with. That God requires certain duties of his children after they are regenerated, or born again, the Bible clearly teaches. That God has promised certain blessings, on condition of their obedience to his commands, is equally clear; but we should be very careful not to confuse the work of God and the work of Christians. The term *salvation* is often used in the Bible without any reference to eternal salvation. For instance, in Acts 27: 31, “Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be **SAVED.**”

What Paul had reference to here was not how to be saved in heaven, but how to be saved from **DROWNING**. The context must always tell us the meaning of the word *saved*.

Moses is a good example of what I am talking about. Although Moses was a good man—he did commit sin. As a result of his striking the rock when he should have only spoken to it—he was not permitted to enter the land of Canaan and enjoy the timely salvation promised to the children of Israel. The transfiguration of Christ proves that Moses went to heaven however. There is no part of God's word that sanctions disobedience in the very smallest of his requirements. God has promised to judge his people for their disobedience (as he did Moses).

Only the obedient enjoy the blessings of time salvation. Hence John said, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have a right to the tree of life, and enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22: 14). The tree of life we understand here to represent the blessings that are to be enjoyed by the obedient children of God, and none have a right to these blessings except those that do his commandments. Then, beloved, how needful for us that we do those things that our Lord and master has given in his word. In view of this grand truth James says, "BE doers of the word, and not hearers only, for the doers of the word are justified."

In closing—the question might be asked: HOW CAN WE ATTAIN A SENSE OF SECURITY? As the Scriptures teach that whom God predestinates, them he calls, the only evidence of election is vocation, and the only evidence of vocation is holiness. Everything else is a delusion and fanaticism. It can only be by keeping ourselves in the love of God, that we can have a present sense of his favor, and the assurance of salvation.

Peter did not tell those that he wrote to to elect themselves or call themselves, neither to act in a way to get the Lord to elect them or call them. Neither are they to make their calling and election sure to the Lord, for he knows all about it already, but make it sure to yourselves and to your brethren by adding to your faith all the named Christian graces, and if they do these things "they shall never fall." He is not talking about falling so as to lose their eternal life, but that they may escape the dark and thorny deserts. And not only so, but Peter says, "For so an entrance shall be ministered unto

you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.”

**END OF THE DEBATE**

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