

The Old Paths versus New Divinity

Exemplified by William Huntington and Andrew Fuller

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The work of the Banner of Truth Trust proved a great encouragement in my spiritual development and I became an enthusiastic reader of their magazine from its start. Throughout the following years, especially during the seventies and eighties, I was able to break away from my work in Sweden and Germany to attend those inspiring Leicester Conferences which blessed the soul of so many pastors and teachers and gave them a love for Reformed doctrines and personal holiness. In those early halcyon days of theological unity and brotherly love, we young men believed that we were on the verge of a great revival and a return to the Old Paths of evangelism and soul-care which had become overgrown with the weeds of Liberal theology. We were all prepared, under the leadership of such fine men as Sydney Houghton, Sidney Norton and Iain Murray, to clean up those paths and lead the way to worldwide revival.

At that time, the name of William Huntington was often on the lips of the conference delegates. This man of poor origins and little education was mightily used of God in the saving of souls and his numerous works were read avidly by all social classes both at home and abroad. From a preacher in the fields and dock-yards, Huntington became pastor of an ever growing church which became the greatest in London. Needless to say, Huntington's second-hand works were precious items for those who wished to have a Christian mentor they could understand and follow. Those who brought them to the Leicester Conference could be sure of a quick sale. It was thus there that I purchased my first collections of Huntington's letters. These were then supplemented quickly by Bensley's and Collingridge's editions of Huntington's further works. Books such as *Moses Unveiled in the Face of Christ*, *The Justification of a Sinner* and *On the Dimensions of Eternal Love*, to name but a few gems, thrilled my soul. Huntington's *Letters on Ministerial Qualifications* was just the kind of material the conference pastors needed.

This widespread love of Huntington was to change radically amongst Banner of Truth leaders, followed sadly by a vociferous minority of their most devoted fans who now began to hurl the charge of Antinomianism and Hyper-Calvinism at anyone who chose to remain on the Old Paths. The July 1988 issue of the Banner Magazine featured an anonymous and scathing, indeed scandalous, attack on Huntington's testimony. This groundless and base assault was presented under the misleading title of *An Appraisal of William Huntington*. The word 'appraisal', etymologically

speaking, has to do with 'praise' but the article, said falsely to be taken from a small, anonymous book named *The Voice of Years*, contained no praise but was full of mixed-up Fullerite, New Divinity theology not found in that book. However, much of the tone and content of the Banner article is to be found in a review of *The Voice of Years*, penned by Andrew Fuller who introduced New Divinity and Liberalism into English evangelical theology during Huntington's day.

In the 'appraisal', the nameless accuser claimed:

William Huntington (1745-1813) was an Antinomian who maintained the following doctrines:

(1) The elect are justified from all eternity, an act of which their justification in this world by faith is only a manifestation; (2) that God sees no sin in believers, and is never angry with them; (3) that the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of His righteousness to us, was actual, not judicial; (4) that faith, repentance, and holy obedience are covenant conditions on the part of Christ, not on our part; (5) that sanctification is no evidence of justification but rather renders it more obscure. These doctrines form the general creed of all theoretical Antinomians, more or less.

Such grave accusations needed to be backed by convincing examples from the condemned person's works. However, the anonymous accuser gave no primary evidence for his severe allegations thus making himself guilty of vicious gossip. Though the author mentioned some of Huntington's 'good points' such as his being plain and natural, scriptural, experimental, contemplative and laborious, he took this all back when listing the so-called 'bad points'. He did not go so far as Fuller who claimed that all Huntington's good points had nothing to do with a Christian's witness, nevertheless, he calls Huntington conceited, dogmatical, vindictive, infallible, inaccessible, political and anti-literal ending his harangue with the pious-sounding words, 'We should not follow him but the personal example of Christ.'

On reading this tasteless tirade, I sent a refutation of its moral, historical, and theological errors to the Banner of Truth for publication. I had hitherto been in good standing with the magazine who had published a number of essays from my pen on Huntington's contemporaries. This time, Mr Murray refused to publish my letter, claiming responsibility for the article and adding that he had nothing personally against Huntington but he wished to scare young Christians away from Antinomianism. This reminded me of the research I was doing on Arthur Miller's *Crucible*. Miller had claimed that the American Puritans were 'absolute evil' so that he could persuade play-goers to turn from them and adopt his radicalism. Here Miller the dramatist of fiction joins hands with Murray the maker of religious fiction. Happily the Bible League Quarterly confessed to a strong love for the works and teaching of Huntington and published my defence of Huntington.

Iain Murray sent me a gall-filled essay from Fuller's pen entitled *Portrait of an Antinomian* as 'proof' of Huntington's errors. It was now obvious to me that Huntington was out of fashion at the Banner of Truth and Fullerism now reigned. Since then Fuller has indeed become the House Tutor of the Banner of Truth and whenever men of God such as Huntington, Gill, Toplady, Romaine or Crisp are castigated by these purveyors of doctrinal fashion, Fuller is used as an antidote. Sadly, these Fullerites appear to know their mentor as little as they know Huntington. In Part Two of this essay, I shall put forward William Huntington's thoroughly Reformed views of the doctrines aired by the 1988 Banner article and place them alongside Fuller's contrary doctrines of 'right reason' which are in all cases Antinomian in relation to the law and anti-evangelistic in relation to the gospel.

1. Teaching on Justification

According to the Banner of Truth, William Huntington taught that "The elect are justified from all eternity, an act of which their justification in this world by faith is only a manifestation," so 'proving' that he was an Antinomian. Today's Banner of Truth denies that man's justification is settled eternally in heaven. For them justification is merely a forensic term and does not refer to a factitive, operative and causative transforming of sinners. Justification is not a Divine decree and has nothing to do with reconciliation and regeneration. Justification is merely a legal 'as if' pronouncement or formal recognition after the believer comes to faith. Thus the Banner of Truth ignores the fundamental and scriptural meaning of justification which goes far beyond being a mere declarative acknowledgement of the sinner's repentance. For them, justification is for the already just. It is a mere tautology. This contradicts the earlier teaching of the Banner of Truth.

Huntington summarises his numerous writings on the subject in his 'The Justification of a Sinner and Satan's Law-Suit With Him'. Like our Reformers, he viewed justification as the doctrine which includes all

doctrines, embracing all the blessings of salvation which Christ has gained for His elect. Justification is a transforming work of grace annexed with blessings (pp. 104-105) and consists of election (75, 157), union with Christ from eternity (73, 75, 157), the removal of condemnation (77, 105), effective calling (154), the purging of blood (102, 112) cleansing from unrighteousness (85), imputed righteousness (99, 101, 102), redemption (86, 157), regeneration (24, 65) the forgiveness of sins (59), repentance (24 ff., 61), a new creature (73, 94) 'holy workfolks (119), true holiness and sanctification (86, 157), ordination, adoption and sonship (97), being made righteous (86, 101), the granting of faith (101), Christ's obedience (101), the granting of an inheritance (110), and is for sinners as sinners (4, 101). Here Huntington follows God's Word as in, for instance, Acts 13:38-41; Romans 3:20-26; 5:1; 5:16; 5:19; 8:1-2; 8:33; 13:48; Galatians 2:16; 3:24-26; 4:5-6; 1 Timothy 3:16 and Titus 3:7.

Huntington begins in eternity with God's covenant with Christ to form a people of God and place them securely in union with the Son. Justification is not dependent on time but on God's decrees centred in the work of Christ as Covenant Keeper. Thus the elect sinner's justification is anchored in eternity for eternity and revealed in time to the justified sinner (730). Justification is not legal fiction but the sinner is made a new creation and fitted out for heaven.

Andrew Fuller disagrees completely. He isolates justification from the redemptive work of Christ. His ideas are principally based on Natural Law which he believed was obscured by revealed law, so he is the Antinomian, not Huntington. For Fuller, the sole rule of faith for Jews and Christians alike is the Moral Law which reflects Natural Law, true moral government and right reason. Fuller reduces justification to a formal acknowledgement following the repentance of the sinner. Justification is a judicial recognition of the sinner's mind in his fallen awareness of his duty to believe in Christ savingly. This is prior to his growth in sanctification through the exercising of his natural abilities in keeping the Moral Law. Even the work of the Spirit, which Fuller sees as a mere external influence through the example of others, does not equip the Christian with any abilities he did not have before his conversion (vol. 2, 546-547). Justification for Fuller comes through recognizing 'the nature, reason and fitness of things' but it comes solely to the already-godly. Such a person becomes godly by being aware of God by nature and the moral law which teaches him to accept any further revelation which God gives him (vols. 2, 349 ff., 3, 781) re-interpreted through the eyes of right reason. He is then moved by the gospel through a process in the mind to repent and then declared righteous by God. The atonement is thus objectively for all but subjectively and conditionally for those only who have a mind for it (vol. 2, 709). When this mind turns to Christ in repentance, the atonement becomes objective for him.

Huntington opens his essay on justification by declaring that justification comes when the sinner is still at enmity with God. It is a work entirely of

grace. Fuller disagrees. When expounding Romans 4:5 in his Remarks on God's Justifying the Ungodly (vol. 3, 714-719), Fuller rationalizes away the literal meaning of the text. He says that as this is such a unique, difficult passage, we must interpret it in line with other Scripture. When interpretations clash with the rest of Scripture, we must reject them. When Paul says he is the chief of sinners it obviously does not mean that he was 'one of the worst of characters' so when the word 'ungodly' is used, it does not mean that at the time of justification that the sinner was at enmity with God. Fuller thus asks, "Do the Scriptures, which form the statute-book of heaven, and fully express the mind of God, pronounce any man pardoned or justified in his sight, while his heart is in a state of enmity with God?" To this, he answers 'No'. However, Romans 4:5 is far from peculiar and unclear. Romans 5:10 tells us that our reconciliation with God came whilst we were His enemies and Romans 4:25 tells us that our Lord was delivered up because of our offences and was raised again for our justification. Romans 4:8 teaches that God does not impute sin to his elect. As Fuller scorns imputation, he cannot grasp the meaning of sin and righteousness and does not understand such arguments. This caused Abraham Booth to pronounce Fuller 'lost'.

In justification, God clearly deals with us whilst we are offensive to Him. No says Fuller. There is no justification without prior repentance and belief, thus Romans 4:5 cannot mean the actual state of the mind of the sinner before justification in relationship to God. Fuller thus reclassifies the meaning of 'ungodly' to mean that it does not describe the state of unsaved sinners but the character of believers who are, nevertheless still sinners. They are the ungodly godly. Huntington answers that our justification has nothing to do with our own righteousness which is non-existent but with God's electing love, rescuing us from our own fallen state. Faith is given us to accept and understand what God in Christ has done for us. Faith is thus the God-given awareness, receptor and appropriator of our justification but not the work which earns it.

2. The Sinfulness of the Elect

The Banner of Truth maintains that for Huntington "God sees no sin in believers, and is never angry with them". Of course, this shows a total ignorance of Huntington's works and my correspondence with the Banner editors on four of their anti-Huntington articles confirmed this. In doing research for their lengthy anti-Huntington articles (if they did any research at all), these editors and contributors had only to read Huntington's Contemplations on the God of Israel concerning the sinfulness of even the elect. Here, the author discusses the elects' communion with God with his dearest friend J. Jenkins, and outlines how the Lord rebukes and rebuffs the erring believer and how He chastises His dear ones. 'Whom the Lord loves, He chastens,' was a thought Huntington had with him daily. As Huntington says in his The Justification of a Sinner concerning the believer, "Every time he sins against his Father and Redeemer, having the law of God and the rule of judgment written on his heart, he arraigns himself" If he neglects

to do this, God will surely do so because "If we would judge ourselves we should not be judged; but when we are chastened, we are judged of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world. (1 Cor. 11:31-32)" Indeed, the Banner editors must know that this was a regular topic of scorn with Fuller who complained that the Huntingtonians were always complaining about their sinfulness before God. For Fuller, even this was a mark of Antinomianism!

However, the Banner of Truth's criticism of Huntington's view of sin and the status of a believer, throws much light on their own deviation from Scriptural paths in these doctrines. Their views of sin and belief are obviously radically different from Huntington's as one would expect from those who put forward Fuller's New Divinity teaching as an antidote against Biblical theology and piety. Huntington, for instance, believed that man is totally dead in trespasses and sins. He is dead to the overtures of the gospel, buried by his own transgressions. He knows nothing about a natural ability to commune with God. A corpse has only the ability to stink. So Huntington can safely say, "A free-willer can no more raise himself up, and go to the Saviour by his own power than a dead corpse can raise itself out of the grave, and go to the judgment seat."

Fuller denies that fallen man is totally depraved, claiming that this is figurative language which must be relativised and he denies that fallen man is dead to the gospel. There are no impossibilities for natural man to communicate as such with God as he has the same powers to believe as not to believe. If man were dead in trespasses and sins, Fuller argues, he would have no sense of his duty to exercise faith savingly and would have no ears for God's call. Huntington retorts, "It requires more power to quicken and raise up a dead soul to spiritual life, than it does to raise up a dead body. The mouldered dust will make no more resistance than the passive earth did while God formed Adam; but the rebellious soul will resist to the last; like a desperate criminal under sentence, it will kill or be killed." Not so, says Fuller, "If the inability of sinners to believe in Christ were of the same nature as that of a dead body in a grave to rise up and walk, it were absurd to suppose that that they would on this account fall under the divine censure." Fuller can say this as he does not accept the Biblical doctrine of the fall and does not accept that the divine censure has already fallen on all men and pronounced them dead in trespasses and sins. For Fuller, the fall is the result of not following the inner duty to believe in Christ savingly and the rejection of Christ. This is the doctrine of New Divinity which teaches that man is on probation until he accepts or rejects Christ. That probation ended according to Scripture with the fall of Adam. Man is not on probation. He broke his probation in Eden. Now men are imprisoned in their sins and need a ransom to be bailed out which only Christ can pay. But the Biblical doctrine of ransom does not fit into Fuller's system, either.

The idea that all men have the natural ability to respond to God permeates all Fuller's teaching on the atonement. In his essay Substitution which is a denial of the Biblical doctrine of the vicarious work of Christ, Fuller

maintains that the atonement must be sufficient for all because if it were not, inviting men to Christ would be to ask sinners to do what is naturally impossible (Fuller's emphasis). For Fuller, God would never offer Christ freely to all sinners unless it were possible for them to respond. A universal atonement combined with natural abilities allows the sinner to make his compliance (Fuller's word) necessary when the 'free offer' comes. Fuller says he admits of the 'difficulties' in his theory but "it belongs to the general subject of reconciling the purposes of God and the agency of man." If one has theological difficulties, it appears, one must always preserve the 'agency of man' in salvation as any emphasis on God's grace and the demerits of man is 'Antinomian'. For Huntington, any theological system which speaks in paradoxical riddles and of a God dependent on man's agency is 'Antinomianism unmasked' as it belittles sin and leaves the believer to believe in himself. Personally, I hold the repeated Banner of Truth statement that salvation ensues when God is prepared to work his all and fallen man is prepared to do his all to be sheer blasphemy. Of the self-righteous, Antinomian Christian who belittled his own depravity Huntington said in *Contemplations*:

"Even under this calm of peace and tranquility, there is no godly sorrow flowing out to God; no condemning, hating, and abhorring self; nor any real tears of pious grief, mourning over a suffering Saviour; no repentance towards the Lord, nor heartfelt gratitude to him, nor real thanks and praises for his long-suffering, undeserved, and unexpected clemency."

Contrary to this picture, Fuller, who explains away personal holiness, condemns those who believe in total depravity as showing the first sign of Antinomianism, complaining that such wear "a cunning smile in their countenances, profess to be as bad as Satan himself; manifestly with the design of being thought deep Christians, thoroughly acquainted with the plague of their own heart." Fuller did not appear to know his own heart half so well.

3. The Imputation of Sin and Righteousness

The Banner of Truth claims that in William Huntington's theology, 'the imputation of our sins to Christ, and of His righteousness to us, was actual, not judicial,' without explaining what they mean. Such an explanation is called for given the Banner of Truth's own dodgy, figurative interpretations. When attacking Huntington, they soft-pedal on this issue, excuse Fuller's explaining away of the Biblical doctrine and attack defenders of Huntington's doctrine with misrepresentations. Thus Robert Oliver covers 13 pages in far-fetched criticism of this kind in a 'review' of my Huntington biography and presents Fuller as 'the greatest theologian in the world'. Oliver refers to Booth's disagreement with Fuller on imputation but does not mention that Booth pronounced Fuller 'lost'. Oliver explains "The present reviewer is happier with Booth's presentation of his case than Fuller's but it is important to see that Fuller was guarding against the ideas of imputed holiness." Oliver presents no evidence for this excusing hunch

but rather accuses me of confusing imputation with the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This merely highlights Oliver's own difficulty in coming to terms with the Biblical doctrine of imputation other than regarding it in some vague and undefined metaphorical way. I maintain with Huntington that the faith which justifies is the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:16) and the justification which Christ gives us is His very own which is 'in the Spirit' (1 Timothy 3:16). Moreover, I believe that the blessing of Abraham comes upon believers through Jesus Christ that we might receive the promises of the Spirit through faith. (Galatians 3:14). I agree with Huntington and the Scriptures concerning the Lord's people of whom it is said, "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (Corinthians 6:12). The Holy Spirit plays no important role in Fuller's theology. Indeed in his treatise named *The Inward witness of the Spirit*, Fuller mentions the Spirit only once in the whole book and that is merely as an external influence. So, too, contrary to the Scriptures, the Banner appears from the above to deny the accompanying work of the Spirit in justification and imputation. The Banner of Truth claim to represent Calvinism but Calvin made it plain followed by Huntington that the faith which justifies through the imputed righteousness of Christ is the principle work of the Holy Spirit.

Oliver says that he is not happy with Fuller's figurative interpretation, yet rejects any actual and concrete benefits the elect receive in having their sins imputed to Christ and Christ's righteousness to them in justification. Oliver, needs to explain what a 'figurative imputation' is and why Huntington's belief in a 'real imputation' is wrong. He must also explain why he believes that a man who takes Scripture literally is an Antinomian and give his reasons for isolating righteousness from imputation, sanctification and holiness. Our pioneer Reformers knew of no such separation.

For Huntington, imputed righteousness was the wedding garment given to the elect in preparation for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. Christ clothes His own with righteousness (Isaiah 61:10) in the same way as the loving father clothed the Prodigal son on his return. Such a garment and such a righteousness is not the product or the deserts of the receiver, but it is truly his as a gift. In his beautiful, inspiring work *Dimensions of Eternal Love*, Huntington speaks of 'the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe' (Romans 3:22), emphasizing that this righteousness is not our own but is freely given to those who do not deserve it. He adds:

Christ wrought out this righteousness for us; God the Father accepts it, and places it to our account, and imputes it freely. The gospel reveals it, the Holy Spirit applies it to the hand of an appropriating faith, and makes it manifest to the sinner's conscience; conscience enjoys it, and finds peace to be the effect of it. Thus we, 'are justified freely from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses (Acts 13:39).

When Huntington speaks like this the Banner of Truth accuse him of 'spiritualising'. However, when they themselves 'spiritualise' or rather 'rationalise away' justification and imputation, they call their critics who interpret Scripture by Scripture 'Antinomians'. When Fuller describes the coming to himself of the Prodigal, there is no imputed righteousness for him in the story. Fuller merely claims that the son came to his senses, realised what material benefits he had forfeited at his father's and 'what was right and fit' and returned home. Huntington tells us that the Prodigal saw that he had sinned against Heaven and in his father's sight and was unworthy to be called his son. For Fuller, the Prodigal's salvation was solely in his realizing where he was better off. Certainly Huntington's interpretation is the more Scriptural.

Huntington argues like this because he believes that Christ put Himself under the Law and obeyed every jot and tittle on our behalf. Fuller cannot think like this as he believes that Christ had no need to place Himself under the law.

Fuller admitted that he had changed his mind several times on imputation, as he did on justification. However, as Fuller's moral government theory grew more complex and his simple trust in the words of Scripture diminished, he fell more and more into the rationalism of the Latitudinarians and New Divinity. Thus Fuller cannot be recommended as a shepherd of souls. The Banner point out tirelessly how Fuller revived the churches and missionary thinking and give him the praise due to William Carey. They refuse to face the facts that Fuller was no great evangelist, had a church far smaller than his so-called Antinomian fellow pastors and lived to see his Association churches shrink under his theology whilst churches such as Huntington's grew to bursting point. This was also true of the work of the following generation of 'Antinomian' ministers such as Robert Hawker, whereas Fuller's Northampton Association officially denounced the Scriptures as the infallible Word of God.

It must be said in fairness that in one doctrine, Fuller is even more Biblical than the Banner. In his metaphorical, 'as if' interpretations of imputation and justification, he, nevertheless refers constantly to the old man in Adam and the new man in Christ. According to the Banner, however, the old man has been done away with and Christians are new men only. It is thus no wonder that the Banner of Truth are now courting Arminian Wesley, famed for his doctrine of Christian perfection!

4. The Covenant Obligations of Christ

Huntington, according to the Banner of Truth, held that "faith, repentance, and holy obedience are covenant conditions on the part of Christ, not on our part." This, they claim, is Antinomianism. Such criticism reveals the Banner of Truth's own Antinomianism in altering the nature of the Mosaic law, the covenant of grace and the rule of faith. They demand the impossible, i.e. that the sinner must overcome certain obstacles before

winning God's justification. Huntington, believed that the covenant of grace is established in eternity where believers are placed in union with Christ. Fuller claims that this union is not from eternity but is created when the sinner meets the conditions of faith. Huntington argues that all covenant conditions are met by Christ, the originator, keeper and fulfiller of the covenant, according to God's eternal decrees regarding His elect. Christ is the Author and Finisher of every believer's faith. By means of Christ's work in eternity for His Bride, culminating in His vicarious work in the fulness of time, Christ graciously grants her repentance, faith and a fulfilled law, without which no man can be saved. As no man is able to exercise the repentance, faith and obedience required by both law and gospel, Christ steps in as the vicarious representative and substitute for those in union with Him. In following Fuller in denying this, the Banner of Truth is challenging both orthodox Christianity and the completeness of Christ's atoning, penal, vicarious work both in time and eternity.

Huntington argues in his *Dimensions of Eternal Love* that as the elect are condemned by the law, faith, repentance and obedience to that law is impossible for even them in their natural state. But Christ fulfilled the law on their behalf, "He shall make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness (Daniel 9:24). Such a reconciliation and bringing in of everlasting righteousness is solely Christ's doing because, "By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous (Romans 5:19)." Fuller denies that Christ made Himself obedient to the law vicariously for His Bride, the elect Church. He claims that Christ neither placed himself against nor under the law "but rather above the law, deviating from the letter, but more than preserving the spirit of it." Christ is thus not the believer's substitution but his super-human guide. Huntington, of course, believed that Christ as God is above the law and more than its teaching, but argues that He came as a man under men to fulfill the conditions men could not. It would have been enough for man to have kept the law to attain an Edenic state but this no man after the fall could do. So Christ had to do it for him, granting him above and over that a greater inheritance in Heaven. Christ redeemed His Bride through his obedience as a man, our human substitute, who truly kept both the letter and spirit of the law for our sakes. It was the law that slew man, not something above it or more than it, so it was through obedience to the law, under the law only that man could be given life. Thus Huntington emphasises that Christ was 'made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law.'

Fuller sees man's repentance as the way to justification. The Banner views repentance as being a condition placed on man. In his *Contemplations on the God of Israel*, Huntington teaches that repentance is the work of the Spirit and is thus a gift of grace. That Huntington's stance is scriptural is testified by the Word. Acts 5:31 tells us "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." This is obviously a reference to Christ acting on an unbeliever in giving him repentance and faith before any previous belief is shown. Fuller might claim that this is a one off text which demands special

interpretation, but in vain. Acts 11:18, Romans 2:4, and 2 Timothy 2:25 all stress that it is God who leads to repentance; God who grants repentance and God who 'peradventure' i.e. according to His will, gives repentance.

Thus, Huntington did not regard faith, obedience and repentance as conditions to be met by natural, fallen man. He explains in his Dimensions that the righteousness of God comes by the faith of Christ, not man's faith (Romans 3:21-22), and that the gift of righteousness reigns in us through Jesus Christ (Romans 5:17). This faith and righteousness of Christ is claimed by the Banner of Truth to be a condition based on man's agency as if a fallen sinner or even an elect saint could give himself Christ's faith and righteousness, grant himself repentance and give himself the power to be obedient to the law. This they call 'duty-faith' but one can only exercise a duty to faith once it has been given. Faith is never given as a reward for duties obeyed. Unfulfilled law-duties merely doom sinners. Christ's faith given to man reprieves him and gives him a saving faith which no law-keeping could ever procure for him. This is made clear in Acts 13:39 and Romans 4:16. Fuller, following Bellamy, taught that keeping the law perfectly would eventually lead to faith in Christ. Huntington taught that even if we kept the law perfectly, this might restore an Adam to Eden but certainly not a sinner to Christ because the believer's status in Christ is greater than that of Adam in Eden. Fuller set himself the impossible and unnecessary task of making Adams of us all. This is the gospel he calls Worthy of All Acceptation. The Bible tells us, that the salvation which might have been found in the first Adam was merely of an earthly, natural kind whereas that found in the last Adam (Christ) fits us out with a spiritual, heavenly body (1 Corinthians 15:45-49).

Banner of Truth writer, Robert Oliver, attacks Huntington for not holding that the moral law is the complete rule for right faith. In his essay Faith in Christ Being a Requirement of the Moral Law, Fuller argues that one can approach God in Christ through following one's law duties and that "If love to God include faith in Christ wherever he is revealed by the gospel, then the moral law, which expressly requires the former, must also require the latter." In his The Law Established in a Life of Faith, Huntington reveals the weakness of such a position, arguing that the work of the Law is to discover sin and condemn man. It furnishes the unjustified sinner with an accuser before God and thus the Law separates the sinner completely from his Maker. The Law, however, cannot subdue sin; it cannot give the sinner dominion over it; it cannot give man a second chance nor lift the sentence of death from him. The Law knows no pardon and can neither give life to the sinner nor quicken him spiritually. The Law cannot justify a man nor even bring a man to the Saviour of itself without God's effectual call. Huntington concludes that it is scandalous to argue that the Law contains all the injunctions and powers of the gospel. It has its own work to do as also the Rule of Faith and the Rule of Christ. Those who confuse them, as he believed Fuller did, confuse Law with gospel and thus have no true Law and no true gospel.

5. Sanctification and Justification

Huntington, according to the Banner of Truth, taught "that sanctification is no evidence of justification but rather renders it more obscure." In understanding the Banner's misconception of Huntington's theology, we must note four things. Firstly, according to Robert Oliver, the Banner's standard of sanctification is supplied solely by the Moral Law which they see, following Fuller, as comprehending all duty, binding on all men, believers and unbelievers alike. When Huntington, argues that if everything necessary to faith was in the Old Testament, we would have no need for a New, Oliver and Murray, following Fuller calls this an evasion of the issue. Clearly they are the ones who are evading the gospel issue in their preference for a legal religion. Secondly, the Banner, unlike our Reformers and Huntington, separate justification radically from sanctification and teach that sanctification follows justification but is not part of the justifying process. However, as they claim that justification is merely 'as if' and does not transform the unbeliever in any way, they apparently expect sanctification and holiness to derive from the 'holy disposition' (Fuller's term) which arises from practising duty faith. Thirdly, the Banner confuse the doctrine of sanctification with the doctrine of good works. For them, the performance of good works is the sanctifying process. Huntington believed that in justification, the sinner was sanctified and set apart in order to live a godly life which entailed being led by the Spirit and indwelt by Christ, so that holiness might ensue. Sanctification thus did not render justification obscure but clearly accompanied justification and was one of its blessings. Indeed, when our Reformers wrote of sanctification in the Latin language common to them, they used the word *beatificationem* linking it with Romans 4:6-8 referring to the justification of Abraham. This is exactly the position of Huntington who writes of 'the sentence of justification and the blessings annexed to it', showing that for him, as for our Reformers, justification was both a legal release from condemnation and a causal and sanctifying work in the believer. This is good Pauline theology. However, the Banner's New Divinity stand on justification and sanctification obscures the plain teaching of Paul. Sanctification does for the Banner what justification does for Huntington, the difference being that Huntington looks to God directly for his sanctification whereas the Banner look to God indirectly through the good works and law-keeping of the believer. This hazardous Banner of Truth view puts them under the charge of Neonomianism (a form of Antinomianism) as they appear to believe that justification does not secure the sinner's salvation and sanctification and they must be supplemented by post-conversion sincere obedience to the law but without its curse. This is in keeping with their view that no salvation is possible without the sinner's compliance and agency. Fourthly, it is well known that those who originally called Huntington an Antinomian were 'evangelical' followers of Martin Madan who condemned those who would not support bigamy as acting contrary to Old Testament principles. Obviously, they were Antinomian themselves. Such Antinomian hypocrisy exists in Huntington's modern critics who are quick to cry 'Antinomian' of others when bending the law to suit their own taste. In 1993 Iain Murray

promoted Sunday trading of Banner books in the Banner of Truth magazine, so I wrote to him, asking how he could call Huntington an Antinomian, a breaker of the Ten Commandments, when he refused to work on the Sabbath, yet Murray promoted trade on the Sabbath. Murray replied that he was aware of the case against Sunday trading but did not share this view, the main thing being that we honour the Sabbath Lord! Huntington believed he could not honour the Lord and work or trade on the Sabbath. Murray thought that he could. Thus who is the Antinomian? Murray ought to have at least borne Luke 6:42 in mind before criticizing others.

Happily, Huntington wrote much on sanctification, holiness and the moral law, teaching that first one must seek the King and His Kingdom of Heaven and then all else will be added. He proclaimed "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe, (Romans 3:21-22). "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death," (Romans 8:2). The believer's standard of sanctification is thus Christ and all that Christ teaches. "He is made of God sanctification and redemption," (1 Corinthians 1:30). The entire Trinity, however, were concerned in this work "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ," (1 Peter 1:2). Huntington pointed out that his critics were the real Antinomians as they belittled the work of Christ and the Spirit in salvation. This is clear when we examine the Banner's emphasis on law and the contrary wills of the Trinity in salvation.

Huntington maintains that to neglect seeking Christ first and obtaining faith in Him and confusing the law with faith is to use the law unlawfully. That the law has a most important place in Christian teaching is, nevertheless, emphasized by Huntington who says:

But some may reply, 'Do you make void the law through faith?' No; Paul says that preaching faith establishes the law, and that nothing else will or can do it. It establishes the righteousness of the law, which is fulfilled in every believer, though not by him. It establishes the law in the hand of the Father to his own elect, as a rod of correction and a schoolmaster; and, in the hand of justice, to all the wicked; and as a killing commandment to all the reprobate and bond children.

Faced with the clear evidence that Huntington preaches the whole law and the whole gospel, the Banner critics evade the issues by claiming that Huntington's piety was empty of Christian virtue, and accuse him of teaching a passive doctrine of sanctification, void of Christian conduct enforced by an anti-literal understanding of the Bible. It is here that the Banner of Truth are at their meanest. In an effort to force their readers to believe that Huntington was not a practising Christian, they claim that he ignored the poor, spiritualizing away texts referring to them. Yet

Huntington preached constantly on the social responsibility of his people and the various sermons he preached on Matthew 25:36 and the application of this text in private letters were most literal and to the point. He argued that it was no using preaching to men with an empty stomach. This included all men everywhere and not merely those of the flock. He denounced those who separated conduct from doctrine as the worst of Antinomians and Pharisees, preaching time and time again that they should not be weary in well-doing. Oliver takes Huntington to task here for what he calls 'Huntington's abusive language' in calling Antinomians and Pharisees such, but he and other Banner writers use really abusive language against Huntington simply for taking a more literal path than themselves. Oliver, for instance, calls Huntington 'abusive' for referring objectively to the 'killing' nature of the law, though Paul testifies to this literal truth in Romans 7:9-11. On the other hand, as we have seen, Banner criticism is mostly against Huntington's literal rendering of texts relating to imputation, justification, sanctification, the indwelling of Christ and the Spirit which Banner writers interpret clean away from their basic and clearest meanings.

When Maurice Roberts took over the Banner of Truth magazine editorship from Iain Murray, I wrote to him questioning his condemnation of Huntington and praise of Fuller, asking him for his textual proof. In his reply he re-affirmed that he held Fuller to be one of the great theologians of his age and confessed that after thinking ill of Huntington he decided to check his opinions and read the Rule and the Riddle which confirmed them. He gave no textual evidence regarding either Fuller or Huntington. However, in the Rule and the Riddle, Huntington refers to one who called him an Antinomian for denying that following the Mosaic Law was the only rule of life for a Christian. Huntington points out that this is misusing the law and asks, "If I am an Antinomian, only because I cannot find any text in God's book that calls the law of Moses the believer's only rule of life, what must this man be?" The answer is clear: 'An Antinomian without a mask'.

Another magazine under Roberts' influence, The Free Church Witness attacks New Focus on grounds of what they call doctrinal antinomianism. They have the audacity to maintain that we reject the commandments of God, in promoting sanctification and holiness of life as the work of the Holy Spirit. The Banner supported this slander by re-publishing the article on their website then publishing that I refuse to appeal to sinners to trust Christ. Roberts formed a Separatist organization after breaking away from the Wee Frees, looking to the civil magistrate for his view of law and not the Scriptures. Now these law-bound rebels are challenging gospel preaching at its very roots.

We believe that the Ten Commandments reveal the character of God and that walking in the Spirit, and living a life in Christ is the only way for a sinner to be able to keep close to that character in a life of grace. This is not rejecting the law but using the law as God intended it to be used. The

Banner of Truth and the Free Church Witness stress the keeping of the commandments as the only way to live a godly life. We say that the commandments can only curse us if we do not live in Christ by the Spirit and that striving to keep them by some inborn ability or duty is bound to fail.

Huntington taught that the law was eternal and on the day of judgment, the law books would be opened and those who have not kept the law will reap their just reward. However, those who have fulfilled the law through faith given by Christ, our Law-keeper, will be saved. The Banner of Truth and their co-agitators are sowing the wind through their blusters against spiritual holiness and sanctification and insistence on works-righteousness. May they turn from their wicked ways before they begin to reap the whirlwind!

Works, Vol. III, p. 762 ff..

Op. cit., Jan.-March, 1990, pp. 305-312.

It appears, judging by recent Banner of Truth publications, that John Wesley has become the Banner's new tutor.

See Collected Writings of John Murray, Vol. II, Justification.

See Berkof's Systematic Theology, Banner of Truth 1959.

Colleridge, 1856 edit., Vol. II. Comments are from this version as it has been recently reprinted.

The Sprinkle Publications, three volumed edition is used throughout as it is still in print.

Collingridge, vol. 2, p. 105.

Ibid, p. 69.

Works, Vol. II, p. 357, III, p. 768.

Ibid, p. 69.

Sprinkle edition, Vol. II, p. 355.

Bellamy, True Religion Delineated, pp. 7-9.

Ibid, p. 709.

See, for instance, Spurgeon versus Hyper-Calvinism, p. 84.

Vol. II, p. 307.

Works, Vol. II, p. 745.

Oliver says this on authority of another writer who attributes it to Spurgeon.

See Fuller's Works, Vol. III, Defence of the Doctrine of Imputed Righteousness. Whenever Fuller entitles a work as a defence or vindication, one can expect the opposite.

Works, Vol I, p. 624 ff..

Institutes, III.2.34; chapter 17.

See Collingridge, vol. 2, p. 86.

Collingridge, vol. 2. pp. 395-396.

Works, Vol. II, p. 485.

Luke 15:18-19.

See Issue 92, Paul's Use of the Term 'The Old Man' by Donald MacLeod.

Op. Cit. pp. 394-395.

Works, Vol. II, p. 689.

Collingridge, vol. 2, p. 203.

Ibid, vol. 2, p. 395.

Works, Vol. II, p. 323 ff..

Banner of Truth mag., Issue 376, p. 12 ff..

This Huntington held in common with the Marrow Men whom Fuller also condemned.

Op. Cit. p. 12.

Banner of Truth mag., Issues 376, p. 12; 373, p. 12.

See Bullinger's Decade Sermon, Vol. I, Sermon vi, Justification by Faith.

Collingridge, vol. 2, p. 104.

Ibid, p. 395.

Ibid, p. 179.

Ibid, p. 157.

Moses Unveiled in the Face of Christ, *ibid*, vol. 5, p. 545.

Banner of Truth mag., Issue 376, p. 14.

Issues 298, p. 11.

See, for instance, *Contemplations on the God of Israel*, Collingridge vol. 2, pp. 312-320.

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