

John Bunyan: Antinomian? *An Introduction*

These are just the outline notes to accompany the audio version (with the same title) of a paper I delivered in Norwich, Norfolk, April 2018.

1628-1688.

Humpty Dumpty.

Sketch the times. Westminster Assembly. 1649 Act. Tobias Crisp 1600-1643 (works published). William Dell (c1607-1669) *The Crucified and Quickened Christian*. John Eaton (1574/5-1630/1) *The Honeycombe of Free Justification*. John Saltmarsh (died 1647) *Free Grace*.

Richard Baxter *The Scripture Gospel Defended* (1690) listed Paul Hobson, John Saltmarsh, John Bunyan. Northill Edward Fowler *Design of Christianity* (1671). Bunyan described Fowler's work as 'a mixture of Popery, Socinianism and Quakerism'. Fowler replied with his defamatory pamphlet *Dirt Wip'd Off*.

Luther *Galatians*. Richard L. Greaves. Roger Pooley. *Christian Behaviour*.

Practical Antinomian

Agnes Beaumont 1674. Mr Lane.

Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners Whores, two wives, bastards.

Doctrinal Antinomian

Covenants. Two covenants distinct. Not CT. Not mainline Puritan. But covenant of works.

A Few Sighs from Hell. The Doctrine of the Law and Grace Unfolded; or, A discourse touching the law and grace; the nature of the one, and the nature of the other; showing what they are, as they are the two covenants; and likewise, who they

be, and what their conditions are, that be under either of these two covenants: wherein, for the better understanding of the reader, there are several questions answered touching the law and grace, very easy to be read, and as easy to be understood, by those that are the sons of wisdom, the children of the second covenant. Questions about the Nature and Perpetuity of the Seventh-day Sabbath and Proof that the First Day of the Week is the True Christian Sabbath. Of the Law and a Christian.

Bunyan:

If one should ask you what time you spend, what pains you take, to the end you may understand the nature and difference of these two covenants [old and new], would you not say, if you should speak the truth, that you did not so much as regard whether there were two or more? Would you not say: 'I did not think of covenants, or study the nature of them'?

Spurgeon:

I am persuaded that most of the mistakes which men make concerning the doctrines of Scripture are based upon fundamental errors with regard to the covenants of law and of grace.

Preparationism

Some Gospel Truths Opened. A Defence of the Doctrine of Justification. Pilgrim's Progress (Slough, Interpreter's House, Faithful). Doctrine of Grace... The Saints' Knowledge of Christ's Love. A Treatise of the Fear of God. The Holy War.

Progressive Sanctification

Pilgrim's Progress (Interpreter's House). Justification by an Imputed Righteousness. Doctrine of Law... 2 covenants but one law A Vindication of Gospel Truths good on assurance Idiosyncratic on two givings of the law. A Confession of my Faith. Israel's Hope Encouraged. The Holy War. A Defence of the Doctrine of Justification by Faith. A Holy Life the Beauty of a Christian. If only.

Sabbath

Questions... Sabbath Ex. 16. But ‘the law of nature’ includes the sabbath. Two covenants but essence of the law the same. Did he contradict himself not in my view. *Grace and Law...* (1659); *Questions... Sabbath...* (1685). But essence of the law the same consistent. Idiosyncratic.

Eternal Justification

A Defence of the Doctrine of Justification (1672) biblical. *Saved by Grace* (1676) elect saved before called, played with fire. *The Pharisee and the Publican* (1685). *The Desire of the Righteous* (posthumous) gets to it – but does not get as far as limiting invitation to sensible. If he had, he would have had to rewrite a whole mass of material.

Not a verdict, but I say ‘No’ to all except Eternal Justification, and then not full-blown. But hope I have stimulated you to read for yourself – above all, Scripture.