

Quotations From the Writings of John Gill
Concerning the Subject: Was John Gill a Hyper-Calvinist?

John Gill did hold to the doctrine of gospel regeneration -- that God regenerates His elect through the means or instrumentality of the preached word.

Page 534 of Gill's *Body of Divinity*:

"Though after all it seems plain, that the ministry of the word is the vehicle in which the Spirit of God conveys himself and his grace into the hearts of men; which is done when the Word comes not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost; and works effectually, and is the power of God unto salvation; then faith comes by hearing, and ministers are instruments by whom, at least, men are encouraged to believe: 'received ye the Spirit', says the apostle, 'by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith': Gal. 3:2 that is, by the preaching of the law, or by the preaching of the gospel? by the latter, no doubt."

Commenting on John 1:41-42 "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. {the Anointed} And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone."

Gill: "...after he and the other disciple departed from Christ, being affected with the grace bestowed upon him, and his heart warm with the conversation he had had with him, and transported with joy at finding the Messiah, goes in all haste in search of his relations, friends, and acquaintance, to communicate what he had seen and heard, in order to bring them to the knowledge of the same; for such is the nature of grace, it is very communicative, and those that have it, are very desirous that all others should be partakers of it..."

Commenting on Matthew 11:28 "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Gill: "Christ having signified, that the knowledge of God, and the mysteries of grace, are only to be come at through him; and that he has all things relating to the peace, comfort, happiness, and salvation of men in his hands, kindly invites and encourages souls to come unto him for the same: ... it is to be understood of believing in Christ, the going of the soul to him, in the exercise of grace on him, of desire after him, love to him, faith and hope in him: believing in Christ, and coming to him, are terms synonymous. Those who come to Christ aright, come as sinners, to a full, suitable, able, and willing Saviour; venture their souls upon him, and trust in him for righteousness, life, and salvation, which they are encouraged to do, by this kind invitation; which shows his willingness to save, and his readiness to give relief to distressed minds."

Commenting on Matthew 25:30 “And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

Gill: “This man was unprofitable with respect to himself, having not improved the gift and talent bestowed on him; and with respect to men, being of no use for the conversion of sinners, or the comfort of saints, or the edifying of the body of Christ; and brought no honour to his master, and was of no service for the spreading of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his kingdom and interest; and therefore, as one good for nothing, the ministering angels are bid to take him, and cast him...”

Commenting on Mark 16:15 “And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.”

Gill: “...that is, to every man: and particularly the Gentiles, as distinguished from the Jews, are often intended by this phrase...”

“Now to these, Christ would have the Gospel preached, as well as to the Jews; even to all, without any distinction of people, Jews and Gentiles, Barbarians, Scythians, bond and free, male and female, rich and poor, greater or lesser sinners, even to all mankind...”

Commenting on 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.”

Gill: “It (the Gospel) is the power of God organically or instrumentally; as it is a means made use of by God in quickening dead sinners, enlightening blind eyes, unstopping deaf ears, softening hard hearts, and making of enemies friends...”

Commenting on Romans 10:14 “How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?”

On this passage, Gill says that “it was absolutely necessary, that the Gospel should be preached to the Gentiles, as well as to the Jews.” He goes on to say, “There is no hearing of Christ, and salvation by him, without the preaching of the Gospel; the usual and ordinary way of hearing from God, and of Christ, is by the ministry of the word: this shows not only the necessity and usefulness of the Gospel ministry, but also points out the subject matter of it, which is Christ, and him crucified.”

Commenting on Proverbs 11: 30 “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; and he that winneth souls is wise.”

Gill: “Again, Christ’s ministers are called “fishers” of men, and are said to “catch” men, (Matthew 4:19, Luke 5:10); which they do by casting and spreading the net of the Gospel; the Gospel is the net; the world is the sea into which it is cast; where natural men are in their element, as fishes in the sea: the casting of the net is the preaching of the Gospel; and by means of this souls are caught and gathered in to Christ and his churches, (Matthew 13:47,48).”

Commenting on Romans 10:17 “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Gill: “That is, by preaching; for the word hearing is used in the same sense as in the preceding verse; and designs the report of the Gospel, or the preaching of the word, which is the means God makes use of, to convey faith into the hearts of his people; for preachers are ministers, or instruments, by whom others believe...”

Commenting on 1 Corinthians 1:18 “For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.”

“it is the power of God”

Gill: “...organically or instrumentally; it being the means of quickening them when dead in sin, of enlightening their dark minds, of unstopping their deaf ears, of softening their hard hearts, and of enemies making them friends to God, Christ, and his people: and it is likewise so declaratively, there being a wonderful display of the power of God in the ministration of it; as may be seen when observed who were the first preachers of it, men of no figure in life, of no education, illiterate mechanics, very mean and abject; into these earthen vessels were put the treasure of the Gospel, that the excellency of the power might appear to be of God, and not man...”

Commenting on 1 Corinthians 1:21 “For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”

Gill: “This (preaching), through efficacious grace, becomes the means of regenerating and quickening men, showing them their need of salvation, and where it is, and of working faith in them to look to Christ for it.”

Commenting on 1 Corinthians 4:20 “For the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.”

Gill says that the “power” spoken of in this verse has reference to “the powerful efficacy of the Spirit, attending the preaching of the Gospel to the quickening of dead sinners, the enlightening of blind eyes, and unstopping of deaf ears; the softening of hard hearts, the delivering of persons from the slavery of sin and Satan, the transforming and renewing of them both inwardly and outwardly.”

Commenting on 1 Corinthians 9:22 “To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.”

Gill: “That is, that he might be the means of saving some of Jews and Gentiles, and of all sorts of men; by preaching the Gospel of salvation to them, and by directing them to Christ, the only Saviour of lost sinners; thus he explains what he means by so often saying that he might gain them.”

Commenting on 1 Corinthians 15:1-2 “Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved...”

Gill: "It (the Gospel) was the means of their salvation, and had been made the power of God unto salvation to them. Salvation is inseparably connected with true faith in Christ as a Saviour..."

Commenting on 2 Corinthians 3:6 "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

Gill: "It (the Gospel) is a means in the hand of the Spirit of God, of quickening dead sinners, of healing the deadly wounds of sin, of showing the way of life by Christ, and of working faith in the soul, to look to him, and live upon him."

Commenting on Galatians 4:13 "Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first."

Gill: "Not the law, but the Gospel; and this he did at his first entrance among them, and was the first that preached it to them, and was the means of their conversion; and therefore, being their spiritual Father, they ought to be as he was, and follow him as they had him for an example."

Commenting on James 1:18 "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures."

Gill says that the "Word of Truth" in this passage means "the Gospel, which is the word of truth, and truth itself, and contains nothing but truth; and by this souls are begotten and born again; see (Ephesians 1:13) (1 Peter 1:23) and hence ministers of it are accounted spiritual fathers. Faith, and every other grace in regeneration, and even the Spirit himself, the Regenerator, come this way..."

Commenting on 1 Peter 1:23 "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever."

Gill says that "the Word of God" of this verse is "the Gospel, the word of truth, which is made use of as a means of begetting souls again."

Commenting on 2 Peter 3:9 "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

Gill shows the Word needs to be preached and calls for repentance of sinners: "which all God's elect stand in need of, as well as others, being equally sinners; and which they cannot come to of themselves, and therefore he not only calls them to it, in his word, and by his spirit and grace, but bestows it upon them; he has exalted Christ at his own right hand, to give it to them; and repentance is a grant from him, a free gift of his grace; and the Spirit is sent down into their hearts to work it in them, to take away the stony heart, and give an heart of flesh..."

Commenting on John 8:24 “I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.”

Gill: “The everlasting and unchangeable I Am, the true God, God over all, blessed for ever; the eternal Son of God, God manifest in the flesh, really made flesh, and become incarnate; the true Messiah, the only Saviour of sinners; the one and only Mediator between God and man; the Head of the church, prophet, priest, and King, and the Judge of quick and dead; as also the light of the world he had declared himself to be: these are things that are necessary to be believed concerning Christ;... true faith in Christ deals not with him in a general way, but in a special regard to a man’s self; it is a seeing of Christ for a man’s self; it is not an implicit faith, or a believing him to be what he is, merely upon report, but upon sight; it is a going out of the soul to Christ, a renouncing its own righteousness, and a trusting in him alone for life and salvation; it is with the heart, and from it, and is unfeigned; it works by love to Christ, and his people, and is attended with the fruits of righteousness, and a cheerful obedience to the commands and ordinances of Christ.”

Commenting on Mark 5:19 “Howbeit Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee.”

Gill: “...He chose he should stay behind, because he had work for him to do in those parts, which would be for the glory of God, the spread of the knowledge of himself, and his Gospel, among his friends, relations, and countrymen: wherefore it follows, but saith unto him, go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee: he bids him go to his “own house”, as it is in Luke, to the place of his former abode; to the town, or city, where he before dwelt, and where his father and mother, brethren and sisters, wife and children might live; and there relate to them what great things the Lord, or God had done for him; by casting out a legion of devils from him, and had restored him to his perfect senses and health, and had had compassion on him, both as of his soul and body, and had wrought a great salvation for him. So such as are called by grace, and are turned from darkness to light; and from the power of Satan unto God, ought to go, to their Christian friends, and to the church of God, and declare in Zion the great things which God has done for their souls; in enlightening, quickening, converting, and comforting them, to the glory of his rich mercy, and abundant grace.”

“...and now these great things, which spring from great love and mercy, should be told to others, especially to them that fear the Lord, to the churches of Christ: this is the will of God, and has been the practice of the saints in former ages; it rejoices the hearts of God’s: people to hear of these things, and enhances the glory of the grace of God: and what may serve to encourage souls, to such a work is, that it is to their “friends” they are to declare these things; who are well disposed to: them, rejoice at their conversion, sympathize with them in their troubles, know what the things they speak of mean, and gladly receive them into their affections and fellowship.”

Commenting on 1 Corinthians 4:15b "...in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel."

Gill: "Which is to be understood of regeneration, a being born again, and from above; of being quickened when dead in trespasses and sins; of having Christ formed in the soul; of being made a partaker of the divine nature, and a new creature; which the apostle ascribes to himself, not as the efficient cause thereof, for regeneration is not of men but of God; not of the will of the flesh, of a man's own free will and power, nor of the will of any other man, or minister; but of the sovereign will, grace, and mercy of God, Father, Son, and Spirit. The Father of Christ beget us again according to his abundant mercy; and the Son quickens whom he will; and we are born again of water and of the Spirit, of the grace of the Spirit; hence the washing of regeneration, and renewing work are ascribed to him: but the apostle speaks this of himself, only as the instrument or means, which God made use of in doing this work upon the hearts of his people; and which the other phrases show: for he is said to do it "in Christ"; he preached Christ unto them, and salvation by him, and the necessity of faith in him; he directed them to him to believe in him, and was the means of bringing of them to the faith of Christ; and it was the power and grace of Christ accompanying his ministry, which made it an effectual means of their regeneration and conversion: and which were brought about "through the Gospel"...but through the preaching of the Gospel; in and through which, as a vehicle, the Spirit of God conveys himself into the heart, as a spirit of regeneration and faith; and God of his own will and rich mercy, by the word of truth, by the Gospel of grace and truth, which came by Christ, so called in distinction from the law which came by Moses, begets us again as his new creatures; which shows the usefulness of the Gospel ministry, and in what account Gospel ministers are to be had, who are spiritual fathers, or the instruments of the conversion of men."

Commenting on 2 Corinthians 10:16 "To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you..."

Gill: "Here the apostle clearly expresses what he hoped for, and explains what he meant by being enlarged according to rule; namely, that he should be at liberty to preach the Gospel elsewhere; and hoped he should be directed by the providence of God, to carry it into the more remote and distant parts of the world, where as yet Christ had not been named."

Commenting on Titus 1:1 "Paul, a servant of God, and an apostle of Jesus Christ, according to the faith of God's elect, and the acknowledging of the truth which is after godliness;"

Gill shows he was not a hyper-Calvinist in this section, or a fatalist, or an antinomian. The elect must believe to be saved. Faith makes election manifest.

"He (Paul) was appointed an apostle, to preach the doctrine of faith, which once he destroyed...and is common to all the elect, and what is commonly received, and embraced by the elect of God, in all ages; or to be a means and instrument of bringing the elect of God to that faith in Christ, which is peculiar to them... this faith is peculiar to the elect of God; all men have it not, and those that have it, have it through the free gift of God..."

"And the acknowledging of the truth"

"By which is meant the Gospel, often called the truth, and the word of truth... it being from the God of truth, concerning Christ, who is the truth; and containing nothing but truth, and what is led into by the Spirit of truth. Now to preach, spread, and defend this, was the apostle constituted in his office as

such; and which he did preach with all clearness and faithfulness, to bring souls to a spiritual and experimental knowledge of it, and so to an acknowledgment, a public owning and professing of it.”

“which is after godliness”

“The Gospel is a doctrine according to godliness; the truths of it have an influence, both on internal and external godliness; they direct to, and promote the worship and fear of God, and a religious, righteous, sober, and godly life and conversation.

From other Works

I.

On page 374 of Gill’s *Body of Divinity*, in his writing of the Gospel, the third point of his outline is: “The effects of the gospel when attended with the power and Spirit of God.”

A. The regeneration of men, who are said to be born again by the word of God, and to be begotten again with the word of truth, (1 Peter 1:23, James 1:18) hence ministers of the gospel are represented as spiritual fathers, 1 Corinthians 4:15.

B. As in regeneration, souls are quickened by the Spirit and grace of God, this is ascribed to the gospel as an instrument, hence it is called the Spirit which giveth life, and said to be the saviour of life unto life. (2 Corinthians 2:16; 3:6)

C. The gospel is frequently spoken of as a light, a great light, a glorious light; and so is in the hands of the Spirit a means of enlightening the dark minds of men into the mysteries of grace, and the method of salvation; “the entrance of thy word giveth light, it giveth understanding unto the simple”, Psalm 119:130. The Spirit of God gives the gospel an entrance into the heart, being opened by him to attend unto it; and when it has an entrance, it gives light into a man’s self, his state and condition, and into the way of life by Christ; it is a glass in which the glory of Christ, and of the riches of his grace, may be seen.

II.

In writing of the effectual calling (*Body of Divinity*, pg. 539), Gill states that the ministry of the Word and the call by it “have to do with unregenerate sinners.” He explains:

“They may, and should be called upon to attend the outward means of grace, and to make use of them; to read the Holy Scriptures, which have been the means of the conversion of some; to hear the word, and wait on the ministry of it, which may be blessed unto them, for the effectual calling of them. And it is a part of the ministry of the word to lay before men their fallen, miserable, lost, and undone estate by nature; to open to them the nature of sin, its pollution and guilt, and the sad consequences of it; to inform them of their incapacity to make atonement for it; and of their impotence and inability to do what is spiritually good; and of the insufficiency of their own righteousness to justify them in the sight of God: and they are to be made acquainted, that salvation is alone by Christ, and not other

ways; and the fullness, freeness, and suitableness of this salvation, are to be preached before them; and the whole to be left to the Spirit of God, to make application of it as he shall think fit.”

III.

In his *Body of Divinity* (pg. 926) on the subject of the public ministry, Gill states:

“This is not a device of men for sinister ends, and with selfish and lucrative views; but is by the appointment of Christ, who ordered his disciples, that what they heard in the ear they should “preach upon the house tops”; that is, in the most public manner; and therefore sent them into all the world, to preach the gospel to every creature under heaven; and accordingly the apostle Paul, that eminent minister of the word, preached it publicly, as well as from house to house, and even from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum.”

IV.

Again, in the same article, on page 931, Gill makes this strong statement:

“The ministry of the word is for the conversion of sinners; without which churches would not be increased nor supported, and must in course fail, and come to nothing; but the hand of the Lord being with his ministers, many in every age believe and turn to the Lord, and are added to the churches; by which means they are kept up and preserved: and hence it is necessary in the ministers of the word, to set forth the lost and miserable estate and condition of men by nature, the danger they are in, the necessity of regeneration and repentance, and of a better righteousness than their own, and of faith in Christ; which things are blessed for the turning of men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God.”

V.

On pages 533 and 534 of his *Body of Divinity*, dealing with the subject of regeneration, Gill says: “The instrumental cause of regeneration, if it may be so called, are the word of God, and the ministers of it; hence regenerate persons are said to be “born again by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever”, 1 Peter 1:23 and again, “of his own will begat he us with the word of truth”, James 1:18 ...ministers of the gospel are not only represented as ministers and instruments by whom others believe, but as spiritual fathers; “though you have ten thousand instructors in Christ”, says the apostle to the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 4:15 “yet have ye not many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.”

This refutes the Hardshell distinction between “regeneration” and “conversion”. Gill’s view makes both terms apply to the “new birth”.

VI.

Under the section, “Of Faith in God and Christ”, Gill, referring to faith in God the Father as the one who chose His people to salvation, he says this (pg. 733):

“This election of God is to be known by the gospel coming not in word only but in power, by being effectually called, for “whom he did predestinate, them he also called”; and by their having the faith of God’s elect, for “as many as were ordained to eternal life believed”, Romans 8:30, Acts 13:48.

VII.

On page 741 of the same chapter, Gill makes the following remark:

“The “belief of the truth”, of Christ, who is the truth, and of the gospel of truth, that comes by him, is the means through which God has chosen men to salvation.”

VIII.

And again in the same chapter (pg. 743):

“The word and ministers of it are the usual means and instruments of faith in the hand of God, and are used by him; the end of the word being written is, that men “might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God”, John 20:31 and the word preached is, the word of faith; and so called, with other reasons, because faith comes by it, Romans 10:8,17 this has often been the effect and consequence of hearing the word preached, Acts 17:4 and 18:8 and the ministers of it are the instruments by whom and through whose word, doctrine, and ministry, others believe, John 1:17,20; 1 Corinthians 3:5 but this is only when it is attended with the power and Spirit of God, 1 Corinthians 2:4,5.

IX.

On page 871, Gill refers to the ministry of the Word or preaching:

“By the ministry of the word, or by the preaching of the gospel; which is the means appointed of God for the gathering in his elect ones, for the perfecting the number of them in conversion.”

X.

In his answer to the Arminian Whitby (*Cause of God and Truth* pg. 87), Gill wrote this:

“Which observations are very just; but are so far from militating against the doctrine of absolute election, that they establish it; since, according to them, not only the end but the means, the death of Christ, the preaching of the gospel, and calling men by it, are appointed and fixed, which infallibly succeed to bring about the end, eternal salvation.”

XI.

Gill does indicate that one must believe IN ORDER TO BE justified. In his book, *The Cause of God and Truth*, Book 1 Section 57, part II:

“Who, in their unconverted state, believe not, but, through the power of divine grace, are brought to believe in Christ for life and salvation; and so it points out the way in which they are secured from perishing, and have everlasting life.”

Commenting on 1 Peter 2:12 “Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation.”

Gill: “To have the conversation honest, is to provide things honest in the sight of men; to live and walk honestly before all; to do those things which are right and honest in the sight of God, and among men; to order the conversation aright, according to the law of God, which is a rule of walk and conversation, and as becomes the Gospel of Christ; and which was the more, and rather to be attended to, because these converted Jews were “among the Gentiles”, that knew not God.”

Commenting on Titus 2:12 “Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;”

Gill: “Not all men, to whom the Gospel appears in its outward ministry; for there are many who externally receive the Gospel, and profess it, who are never influentially taught by it to deny sin, or love holiness of life; they profess in words to know it, but in works deny it; they have a form of godliness, but deny its power: but the persons effectually taught by the Gospel are the “us”, to whom it was come, not in word only, but in power; and so taught them, not only doctrinally, but with efficacy, both negative and positive holiness, as follows: ***that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts....***”

Commenting on Hebrews 8:10 “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:”

Gill not an antinomian: He says the law is a rule of conversation to the saints: “by the laws of God are meant ...either the moral law, and its commands; which is a transcript of the divine nature, was inscribed on Adam's heart in innocence...in regeneration it is reinscribed by the Spirit of God; and great respect is had to it by regenerate persons, in which lies one part of their conformity to Christ: or else, since the word “law” signifies sometimes no other than a doctrine, an instruction, the doctrines of grace, of repentance towards God, of faith in Christ, and love to him, and every other doctrine may be intended;...and is a rule of conversation to the saints; and of all other laws, ordinances, and doctrines of Christ: and the “writing” them in, or on the heart, intends a filling the soul with love and affection to them, so that it regards them singly and heartily; and a powerful inclination of the heart to be subject to them, through the efficacious grace of God; and which is done not with the ink of nature's power, but with the Spirit of the living God...”

Commenting on Jude verse 1 “Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called”

He connects election to holiness: “***them that are sanctified by God the Father***, which is to be understood ...of the act of eternal election, which is peculiar to God the Father; in which sense Christ is said to be sanctified by the Father, and men ordained and appointed to an office, and vessels are set apart the owner's use...”

He goes on to say: “and so the elect of God are by God the Father sanctified and set apart in the act

of election, which is expressed by this word; partly because of its separating nature, men being by it separated from the rest of the world, to the use and service of God, and for his glory, so that they are a distinct and peculiar people; and partly because such are chosen through sanctification of the Spirit, and unto holiness both in this world and that which is to come; so that the doctrine of election is no licentious doctrine; for though holiness is not the cause of it, yet is a means fixed in it, and is certain by it, and an evidence of it.”

Commenting on Romans 12:2 “And be not conformed to this world...”

Gill: “By this world is meant, either the Mosaic dispensation, and Jewish church state, so called in opposition to “the world to come” the Gospel dispensation; in which there were a worldly sanctuary, and the rites and ceremonies of which are styled the rudiments and elements of the world; to which believers in the present state are by no means to conform, there being sacrifices and ordinances of another nature, it is the will of God they should observe and attend unto: or else the men of the world are designed, carnal and unregenerate men, among whom they formerly had their conversation, from among whom they were chosen, called, and separated, and who lie and live in wickedness, and therefore should not be conformed unto them: which is to be understood, not in a civil sense of conformity to them in garb and apparel, provided that pride and luxury are guarded against, and decency and sobriety observed, and the different abilities of persons and stations in life are attended to; or to any other civil usages and customs which are not contrary to natural and revealed religion; but of a conformity in a moral sense to the evil manners of men, to walk vainly, as other Gentiles do, to go into the same excess of riot with them; for this is contrary both to the principle and doctrine of grace, which teach men to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts: and of a compliance with the men of the world in a religious sense, by joining with them in acts of idolatry, superstition, and will worship, and in anything that is contrary to the order, ordinances, and truths of the Gospel.”

“*But be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind*”

“Which regards not the first work of conversion and renovation; for in this sense these persons were transformed, metamorphosed, changed, and renewed already; but the after progress and carrying on the work of renovation, the renewing of them day by day in the spirit of their minds; see (Ephesians 4:23) (2 Corinthians 4:16); which believers should be desirous of, and pray for, and make use of those means which the Spirit of God owns for this purpose, attending to the spiritual exercises of religion, as reading, meditation, prayer, conference, the ministration of the word and ordinances, which is the reverse of conformity to the world: and the end to be attained hereby is,

“that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God”

by which is meant not the secret will of God, which cannot be searched into, proved, and known, till time and facts discover it: but the revealed will of God, both in the law, as in the hands of Christ, which contains nothing but what is good; and which when done in faith, from a principle of love, and to the glory of God, is acceptable through Christ; and is perfect as a law of liberty, and rule of walk and conversation; and which is to be proved and approved of by all the saints, who delight in it after the inward man: and also that which is contained in the Gospel; as that all that the Father had given to Christ should be redeemed by him, that these should be sanctified, and persevere to the end, and be glorified; all which is the good will of God, an acceptable saying to sensible sinners, and such a

scheme of salvation as is perfect and complete, and needs nothing to be added to it; and is, by such who are daily renewed in the spirit of their minds, more and more proved, tried, discerned, and approved of, even by all such who have their spiritual senses exercised to discern things that differ.”

Commenting on John 3:7 “Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”

Gill: “There is a necessity of the regeneration of those, who are the chosen of God, and the redeemed of the Lamb; and of them only can the words be understood; for as for others, they neither can, nor will, nor must be born again: but the people of God “must”; partly because it is the will of God; it is his purpose and resolution, that they shall be regenerated; he has chosen them, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto salvation by Christ...”

Commenting on John 5:40 “And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”

“And ye will not come to me”

Gill: “Which is to be understood, not of a corporeal coming to him; for many of the Jews did come to him in this sense; some for one thing, and some for another; some for the loaves, that they might eat and be filled; some to see his miracles, and others to partake of the benefit of them; some to hear him preach, and others to catch and cavil at what they could: nor is bare coming to hear Christ preached, or an outward attendance on, and submission to his ordinances, such a coming to him as is here designed; for with these eternal life is not connected: bodily exercise profiteth not in this way; but a spiritual coming to Christ, or a coming to him by faith is here meant; in which sense the phrase is frequently used in this Gospel, especially in the next chapter; see (John 6:35; John 6:37; John 6:44; John 6:45; John 6:65); and those who come aright to Christ, come to him as the alone, able, suitable, and sufficient Saviour; and in themselves as sinners, and ready to perish; and as such they are received by him with a welcome: but these men did not see themselves as such; nor did they see any need they had of coming to Christ; for they thought they had eternal life elsewhere: and such were their ignorance of themselves and Christ; and such their prejudices against him; and such the depravity, perverseness, and stubbornness of their wills, that they had no inclination, desire, and will to come to Christ, any more than power; which is an argument against, and not for the free will of man, unless it be to that which is evil: and this perverseness of their wills to come to Christ, when revealed in the external ministry of the word, was blameworthy in them, since this was not owing to any decree of God, but to the corruption and vitiosity of nature; which being blameworthy in them, that which follows upon it must be so too; and it was the greater aggravation of their sin, that they had the Scriptures which testified of Christ, and pointed at him as the way of life, and yet would not come to him for it...”