Papers on the Soul

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The Soul - Neither Mortal, Nor to Sleep

It is a grave and humbling fact that the immortality and even existence of the human soul, distinct from the body, should be seriously questioned in Christendom; yea, that Scripture should be wrested against it by such as love to have it so. But so it is, with the sanction of some who have the reputation of piety. All things from the highest downwards are now put on their trial, as if man were judge, and not God. Nothing is sacred for enquiring spirits and unhallowed eyes. Because human tradition is stupidly false and blinding, men are indisposed to believe anything on God's word, as if He were altogether such an one as themselves. Gnosticism1 was an early plague — not less is Agnosticism in these days. Senses only they admit in evidence, and are proud of the deductions and inductions of reason, unconscious that they thus necessarily come short of the glory of God, and of all that is most enduring, momentous, and truly elevating for man. For their very principle is to ignore the everlasting future for weal or woe. It is to live for self, though it may claim the greatest happiness for the greatest number, in rebellion against God and His gracious testimony of Christ in person and redemption, whereby, through the Spirit, He delivers from sin and wrath into present, living, imperishable relationship with Himself.

Herein lies the transcendent value of Scripture. Senses cannot avail beyond what acts on them. Reason can give no more than conclusions or probabilities. Even to ascertain facts is beyond its province; still more, truth

moral or spiritual. How can reason furnish man with what most deeply concerns his being and state, present and future? How, above all, make God known and enjoyed, served and worshipped, now and evermore? Reason cannot, ought not, to be a groundwork for souls in view of eternity; and it is only perverted thus by such as will not bow to Scripture. What must be, is one thing; what is, reasoning, which deals with inference, cannot discover. Now, truth is the making known what is; and this in divine things can only be by revelation. Facts rest on sense or testimony; supernatural facts on a testimony above man, even if through him. To be made known with divine authority for man's blessing, they must be revealed by God, as they are in the Bible. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.

How else could we know with assurance whence we came, and whither we go? Conscience may whisper that we are guilty, yet responsible before God. The more active and thorough its exercise, the more we are forced to feel our unfitness for His presence. There is therefore no prospect before us, as we are, but a fearful expectation of judgment. For conscience can tell us no way of escape from our own evil, no means of righteous reconciliation with God. His word confirms, in plain, strong, and solemn terms, all that we cannot but judge of our own state. But His word adds far other and better things; it makes known Christ, the coming Judge of quick and dead who despise Him and the God that sent Him to die for sinners; to all who repent and believe the gospel, it makes known in and through Christ the victory of His grace. The believer is not only rescued from the wrath to come, but brought already into divine favour, and even the relationship of a son of God; and

henceforth, instead of dreading the Judge, he is entitled, while he serves a living and true God, to wait longingly for His Son from heaven. Such is the gospel Christ commands His servants to preach to every creature.

Scripture gives us sure and abundant light, not only as to God, but as to ourselves and all things as connected with Him. He who made us as well as the universe can alone inform us with certainty. Nor is any theory or tradition of men comparable with the clear, simple, and comprehensive dignity of the inspired record. “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” Matter did not exist eternally, as most philosophers conceived (some falling into the more evil folly of “no God”); nor was chaos “in the beginning,” as heathen poets sang, and many a theologian has taught. “In the beginning,” says St. John, “was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made.” It is impossible to affirm more definitely or to deny more exclusively. Angels preceded not man only, but the material creation (Job 38:7); but by the Son were all things created, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions, or principalities or powers, all things have been created through Him and unto Him; and He is before all things, and by (in virtue of) Him all things subsist together (Col. 1:16, 17).

But, in creating, God created not a confused and disorderly mass; He created the heavens and the earth in the beginning. The heavens, in fact, were never thrown into confusion — the earth was, as we see in Gen. 1:2; but this was after the beginning: how long is not said. Thousands or millions of years may have

elapsed. It answered no moral end to reveal what science would investigate or conjecture. Only it is revealed, as befitting the divine character, that He is not a God — not a creator — of confusion. The confusion of the earth was subsequent, the reason or cause being unexplained as the interval or the history. The fact is distinctly revealed; and nobody would have failed to discern it, if philosophers had not misled the divines who are vain of standing well with the men of science. Geologists differ fundamentally to this day: some insisting on catastrophes, followed by renewals; others contending for continuous action of forces gradually operating. If there be a measure of truth in both, scripture leaves room for all, without straining the six days, which are wholly distinct from the immense ages that preceded man.

Days and weeks and years have to do with the human race and God's moral dealings on earth, after God had created and destroyed — it may be, many times — within those vast periods differently characterised before man was made, though not without a beneficent design for him on God's part. The principle and the fact, first of creation, then of disruption, before the immediate preparation of the world for the race, is the revealed communication of Gen. 1:1, 2; the days, 1:3 - 2:3, are the commencement of time as we reckon it, not of creation, but of that later and special form when man was ushered into the earth. On the first, God said, "Light be;" and light was. It is not intimated that light was then first created. The previous ruin may have hindered its action till God uttered this fiat with a view to man's earth. On the second day, with the severing of land and sea, came the expanse as we have it (strangely rendered

by the Seventy, whence “firmament” came through the Vulgate into the English version); on the third, the vegetable kingdom, herbage and tree yielding fruit; on the fourth, the luminaries in the expanse, not first created but set to give light night and day on the earth; on the fifth, animal life begun in the waters and for the air.

On the sixth day the earth was commanded to bring forth the living creature; the beast of the earth after its kind, and the cattle after their kind, and the reptiles.

Last of all, man is created on the same sixth day; but how different the language! “And God said? Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and every living thing that creepeth on the earth.” Notice the striking change. It is no longer, Let there be this or that; no longer, Let the waters, or Let the earth, bring forth: so had it been for all other things earthly. God marks the introduction of man with words of unparalleled solemnity. He, as has been often remarked, holds counsel with Himself about it. “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.” Man, therefore, clearly stands, not only at the head of creation here below, with title to rule it, which no angel is said to possess, but with a place of peculiar nearness, and, in some respect, resemblance to God. “And let them have dominion, etc.” “And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.” (Gen. 1:26, 27) Of no other creature does God so speak. They were not only to replenish, but to subdue the earth, and have dominion over fish, fowl, beast, and every living thing that creeps on the earth (ver. 28). Who

can wonder? It is a superiority, not in degree only, but in kind: both a moral nature and a mind capable of indefinite progression, as compared with the mere instincts of the lower creation.

But this, and more than this, in chap. 1 only comprises the general ordering. In chap. 2 we have what is much more specific. Accordingly, not “God” only, but “The Lord God” is introduced; not the originating Creator only, Elohim in contrast with the creature, but the moral governor, Jehovah Elohim, with man in special relationship to Himself as well as to his sphere, his companion, and his subjects. Jehovah God is from Gen. 2:4, the first three verses being the true sequel of chap. 1. Here, therefore, we are told, ver. 7, that “the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground [as a potter might mould his vessel], and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” All animals were living souls; but they lived when made. Not so man: the outer vessel was formed of God for man, and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. Man alone had the wondrous privilege of God’s inbreathing. It was thus only that man, and man alone, became a living soul; therefore is man’s soul immortal. He derived his living soul from the inbreathing of God. This is the ground of his special relationship with God: man now responsible to do his will, as by-and-by he gives account to God.

In accordance with this presentation of relationships we hear of Eden in the next verse; not merely the earth in general, but that garden of delight which the Lord God planted eastward, where He put the man He had formed. Here also, in the same connection, we are told, not merely of every tree pleasant to the sight and good

for food that the Lord God made to grow, but of the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Thus we see the test of responsibility, and (entirely distinct from it) the means of life. To eat of the forbidden tree was disobedience and death; life depended on eating of the other tree, which was expressly distinct. Further, we find all the other creatures brought by the Lord God to man, who gave names to them as he would; and, last of all, the special building up of woman by the Lord God from a part of man's own body.

These, in short, were the relationships of man, not only to God, but to the sphere he enjoys, to the beings that were put under him, as well as to her who was made a help-meet for him. In every respect man has a place altogether peculiar and above all other mammalia on the earth; yet more, in virtue of God's breathing into his nostrils the breath of life, the inner man was derived directly from God. He was thus God's son (Luke 3:38), God's offspring (Acts 17:29); and this naturally, quite apart from becoming by grace a child of God by faith in Christ Jesus. He could not shirk the responsibility of his high estate and relationship to God, let him debase himself as he might, as they had done to whom the apostle then preached at Athens, as elsewhere.

Is it not, then, pitiable to find some who bear the Christian name labouring to reduce man as much as they can to the level of a brute? A living soul, or animal, they argue, is a phrase distinctly applied to the brutes as to the human race, for which they cite not only Gen. 2:7, but Gen. 9:10, Ps. 104:30, and Rev. 16:3, as well as 1 Cor. 15:44-47. In its measure and way, the argument is like that of Unitarians, who flatter themselves that they

exclude the Deity of Christ when they prove Him to be a man. So those who deny the soul's immortality assume that they have gained the end into which the enemy has seduced them, when they point out that Scripture speaks, as does everyone of common sense, of man as an animal. But the fact remains that, from the very first Scripture which so speaks, man alone of all creatures on earth is carefully shown to have got his inner being from the inbreathing of the Lord God. No intelligent Christian holds that the phrase "living soul" is chosen to distinguish him from the rest of the creation. But the statement of an immediately divine source in the sole instance of his natural life, as distinguished from all the animals set under his rule, was assuredly meant to convey, what no one ought to have doubted, that man, as man, apart from eternal life in the Son of God, essentially differs inwardly from all other animals. Ps. 104:30 is no more identical with Gen. 2:7 than God's hiding His face from the creatures in the preceding verse has the same import as His hiding it from Christ in Ps. 22. The ingenuity of error is deplorably pernicious. Outwardly, he is shown in the same passage to be of the meanest origin, "the dust of the ground;" inwardly, he is of the highest, and this constitutionally. God is the Father of spirits, speaking of man. It is not of Him, but of the enemy, to degrade man's distinctive nature.

It is not denied that a beast has a soul, and even a spirit: only the soul and the spirit, in this case, being simply animal, have an incomparably lower character. In man, personality, self-consciousness, will, is in the soul; capacity is by the spirit. Each has his own soul, and so is personally responsible. The spirit is faculty or power; and so John Baptist was to come in the spirit and power

of Elias, not in any other's soul but his own. So all animals have a soul, and show it by a will of their own, as they have a spirit shown in the capacity of their species. Man only has a soul and a spirit immediately derived from God, which may be distinguished, but are inseparable. Hence, man's body only is treated in Scripture as mortal (Rom. 6:12, Rom. 8:11) — never his soul or his spirit. So we read in 2 Cor. 4:11 of "our mortal flesh": flesh, not spirit in man's case, is mortal, whatever may be true of a beast. Again, in 2 Cor. 5:4, "mortality,'' or "what is mortal," applies only to the body which will be swallowed up of life at Christ's coming.

Therefore, the Lord says — "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Gehenna). This destruction is not annihilation, which, indeed, is unheard of in Scripture, and as contrary to fact as it is to Scripture. For, as no creature can annihilate another, so God is never said to annihilate, but to judge and punish His enemies. Destruction here is their ruin judicially; not their ceasing to exist, but their continuance in wretchedness, suffering the due reward of their deeds at His hand Whom they despised, hated, and rebelled against. It is, therefore, called "everlasting destruction from the face of the Lord and from the glory of His might," and "everlasting punishment," the lot opposed to "eternal life." Men could not possibly doubt the meaning of such language, save from the will to please themselves, and determination to doubt God's word when it opposes that will. The conscience of the sinner unforgiven might rightly tremble, but in no wise doubt. The meaning is as sure as it is plain; and it supposes the soul immortal, as

well as the body to be raised. Both shared in the sin; both join in sharing the punishment, when God judges, as He will, by our Lord Jesus.

Nor is it true that between death and the resurrection the soul sleeps. The Lord, in the Gospel of Luke, has made the truth no less certain for both the wicked and the righteous. In Luke 16 He shows us the beggar dying and carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom. This was certainly not the body but the soul; for the soul is the seat of personality. Whilst alive, soul and body are together. When death comes, the soul is the person till the resurrection, when they are together again for evermore; and therefore it is that only man rises from the grave; for he alone possesses a God-inbreathed soul — an immortal principle from God. As death is but an intermediate and incomplete state, resurrection (whether for just or unjust) will restore the full being, and in a condition for eternity. But, meanwhile, the beggar was, according to parabolic language, with the blessed beyond death. He was blessed with faithful Abraham, and not asleep. The rich man also died, and was buried. There was laid his body in the grave with whatever pomp. But in Hades he lifted up his eyes, being in torments. His soul, thus, was not asleep; he was in torments. It is perfectly certain that this is a picture, not of resurrection, but of the intermediate state; for he is represented as entreating for his five brethren, that some startling testimony might reach them, "lest they also come into this place of torment." When resurrection dawns, there will be no question of testimony to save. Besides, the Lord stands for the divine authority of Scripture. They had the inspired witnesses, and if these

were not heard, neither would they be persuaded if one rose from the dead.

Again, in Luke 20, in answer to unbelieving Sadducees (who said there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit), the Lord lays down that the God of the fathers is not God of dead but of living; “for all live unto Him” (Luke 20:38). It is not only that the saints rise for the first, holy, and blessed resurrection, but that meanwhile also they live for Him, if not for man; and that “all” so live, not the saints alone. With eternal life in Christ the believer is mortal; without that life the unbeliever’s soul lives, save spiritually, after he dies. And spiritually dead the natural man is while he is alive.

Most simple and instructive is the case of the converted robber in Luke 23:43. He asked to be remembered by the Lord when He comes in His kingdom, and receives the answer, “Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with Me in Paradise.” That very day, through faith in Jesus, by virtue of His precious blood, should his soul be with Him in Paradise. The paradise of man was lost and cannot be regained. The second man, the last Adam, opens a new and better Eden, the Paradise of God; and the first soul to enter there after Jesus was the converted robber. Oh ! what a testimony to the grace of God, and to the blood of Christ. The Lord will come surely in His kingdom by-and-by; but this newly converted soul has not to wait for that day. On the day he died he enjoyed the heavenly Paradise with his Lord and Saviour.

So Stephen when dying (Acts 7:59, 60) says, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” The Lord Himself when dying had said, “Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit.”

This, after suffering as He did, was His perfection; and He alone could properly use these words. Stephen fittingly, in his place, calls on Him and says, “Receive my spirit.” To be with Christ, then, is what departing from the body means; not sleeping, certainly, which would be far worse than the portion we now while alive enjoy in His love. “To depart and be with Christ,” as the apostle says (Phil. 1:23), “is very far better.” It is to be absent from the body, no doubt; not sleeping, still less non-existent, but “at home with the Lord.” And, therefore, we are “willing” rather to be absent from the body, as compared with living here. But it is not what we are “longing for;” for verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation, which is from heaven. Therefore, now we groan, being burdened, not for that we would be unclothed (that is, divested of our body), but that we would be clothed upon (that is, invested with our changed bodies), that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life.

What is this but proof upon proof that the soul is immortal for man even though lost, and that the saint’s soul, separate from the body, will have immensely increased enjoyment of and with Christ in heaven? The notion of sleep, still more of extinction, for the soul, is a baseless and wicked fable.

I am aware that some, who plead for the mortality of the soul, adduce 1 Tim. 6:16 to this end; but when it is said of God that “He only hath immortality,” the reference is to essential, not to conferred, being. Even the misusers of the text do not deny that the angels are immortal. Certainly our Lord has laid down that such is their condition, and that the risen saints shall resemble them in this respect. “Neither can they die any more, for they

are equal unto the angels" (Luke 20:36). Therefore, God's only having immortality is perfectly consistent with the immortality of angels; and, if so, with the immortality of the human soul. The soul is immortal as angels are; but it is through God's constituting both so. God only hath immortality. Again, the objectors urge that Christ abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel (2 Tim. 1:10). But this, as far as "immortality" is concerned, is notoriously a mistaken version, as known for many years to all scholars, and now corrected by the Revisers, who properly say "incorruption" for immortality. Christ has brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel; life in Himself alive again for evermore, and incorruption for the body. For the last, the soul is not in question here at all. Further, in 1 Cor. 15:53, 54, not only is it plain that this corruptible must put on incorruption, but that this mortal must put on immortality: — two clauses which refer only to the body when the resurrection comes.

Mortality is never said of man's soul. All Scriptures of Old Testament and New Testament alike treat the inner man as immortal, though in the Old Testament it may be somewhat obscure; through the gospel all is now brought to light, whether for soul or body. Hence, in the Book of the Revelation, no shadow overhangs the prophetic visions — "And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Master, the Holy and True, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (Rev. 6:9, 10). These are the souls of

saints, no doubt, but they are neither extinct nor yet slumbering; and as they cry with loud voice for the righteous judgment of God, there was given to each one of them meanwhile a white robe, and the answer of the Lord is assured in due time. No doubt there is symbol here as there was figure in the parable of the rich man and Lazarus; but the symbol here, like the figure there, supposes life and acceptance and communion with God's mind, not extinction of being nor stupor after death. They had died as to the body, not as to the soul. It was separate, not sleeping, but awaiting resurrection.

So again in the vision of Rev. 20:4, "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them; and (I saw) the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God; and such as worshipped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." The first class, consisting of the enthroned, were already in the resurrection state; but two other classes follow in the separate state, whose souls accordingly were seen by the prophet, as they are subsequently said to live in order to reign with Christ, no less than those who already sat on thrones. Here, again, the souls clearly existed, even before they "lived" in the sense of their bodies being re-united to their souls.

The doctrine of Scripture, therefore, is throughout plain, certain, and consistent; and this for all souls, wicked as well as righteous. Even while living, the wicked are by Scripture called "lost" or "destroyed" — the very same word which ignorance would force to mean annihilated. That this is false is therefore unquestionable; for whilst

they live now, they are said to be destroyed as positively as when judgment seizes them for ever. Then only will it be everlasting destruction. Annihilation is, therefore, out of the question. They are morally destroyed, certainly not annihilated, whilst they now live to reject the Saviour and the gospel. No honest man can deny it. The fact is, that God alone could annihilate what He has made, and that He never says that He will, but expressly — a wholly different thing — that He will raise the wicked, and judge them by the Lord Jesus. For resurrection will introduce into a state fixed and changeless for ever.

And now, my reader, be not turned away from the truth by empty speculation, or by vain jangling of words. If not born again, you cannot see the kingdom of God. You have spirit, soul, and body of incomparably higher character than that of natural animals without reason, made to be taken and destroyed. You have far greater advantages than the Jew of old, as he had much profit every-way over the heathen. You have God’s oracles in all their fulness; you hear not the law merely, but the gospel. But you are fallen; you are a sinner — yea, a rebel against God, not only in will, but by that spirit which is the highest part of your nature. In vain do men seek to allay your fears or their own by the false philosophy which denies immortality to that inextinguishable nature which belongs to the human race alone of all that breathe on earth. You are not a superior sort of brute; nor does the difference consist only in powers of mind, reflection, and language. You have the consciousness not only of self but of God in your soul, and about your spirit as well as your body. You, therefore, alone of animals are morally responsible,

alone must be raised from death, alone must give account to God.

But with all your endowments and privileges, especially under the gospel and the church, you are lost for ever if you flee not to Christ and His precious blood which cleanses from all sin. In Him only is eternal life, by Him only eternal redemption. They are God's free gift to every one that believes. Oh! then repent, and believe the gospel. If you turn from Him who now speaks from heaven, you prove that you judge yourself unworthy of eternal life, that you prefer the world to heaven with Christ before the Father. So living, so dying, what can be said to you by and by, but "Depart from Me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels?" Not Moses, but the Son of Man so warns. It was not for guilty man that God prepared this everlasting punishment. It was for the enemies of God and man; but if men now reject His grace in Christ to take part with the enemies, the doom of the enemies will be theirs. And what more just as against those who trample on mercy to the uttermost?

W. K.

1 Gnosticism is the ancient system, which dared to pry into God's nature by human speculation, affecting to soar above revelation. Agnosticism is the modern infidelity, which, abandoning revelation as unreal or impossible, professes that God, heaven, hell, and man's future state, if such there be, are unknowable. Of this apostate ignorance some, alas! are proud, as ancients were of impious Gnosticism.

Brief Notice of G. Cox's Thirty-six Reasons Against the Immortality of the Soul

(ex CBA/JRL/MU)

1. God’s word nowhere teaches nor hints that the soul of man is, as his body now, mortal through sin. We read of the ‘‘mortal body,’’ never of the mortal soul, though God only could be said to have immortality. Man’s soul is only immortal through God’s will, who was pleased to constitute Adam a living soul by breathing into his nostrils the breath of life. The lord Jesus is never said to confer on his people an immortal soul, but eternal life. This the believer has now in him, as he will have it for the body when Christ comes to change it into his glorious likeness.

2. It is neither his immortal soul nor original sin which involves man in endless misery and torment, but his own sins — above all, his unbelief and rejection of Christ.

3. The immortality of the soul is perfectly consistent with the death of man through sin.

4. Nothing can be more tremendous and humiliating than an endless duration of exclusion from God, with the accompanying punishment of self-reproach.

5. Scripture teaches not that death is the whole wages of sin, but that judgement must follow (Heb. 9:27), when the wicked are raised and cast into the lake of fire — the second death — where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

6. “By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin.” The creature thus falling was the author of sin, not the immortality of the soul, still less God, though He will justly condemn man’s guilt the more because of his privileges and His own mercy despised.

7. Lev. 17:11 does not refer to the human soul, but to the animals through the blood of which atonement was made in the ancient sacrificial system. Adam’s soul had a wholly different character and an infinitely higher source, according to Gen. 2:7. His death closes his present existence in this world, but is as consistent with the immortality of the soul as with the resurrection of the body.

8. If soul and body joined in sin, to think of the death of the body only is not the way to give full value to the cross of Christ, who “once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God.” It was the divine glory of his person that gave infinite efficacy to His blood, who, for us, knew what it was to be forsaken of God in bearing the intolerable burden of sin.

9. It is untrue that the immortality of the soul make’s only a human sacrifice of Christ’s death. The inward soul-sufferings of His atoning death were as much beyond His outward humiliation and agony as the soul is deeper and higher than the body; but the divine value of His sacrifice flows not from His soul (for He had a spirit, soul and body as man) but from His Deity, who was the eternal Word and only-begotten Son before He was pleased to be born of the Virgin. Is it really meant that in His death His soul died? May God preserve G. Cox and his readers from blasphemy!

10. Undoubtedly Christ has annulled death and brought life and incorruption to light by the Gospel, these blessings being but dimly seen before. But how is all this destroyed by the immortality of the soul, which adds to the horror and the doom of those who believe not? It is folly to say that the Gospel is a delusion if a soul exists for ever in misery for rejecting it.

11. The immortality of the soul is not responsible for all that its advocates say, but thoroughly consistent with every literal and figurative description which Scripture gives of lost souls in hell. But it is a mistake to apply Ps. 31:17, 1 Sam. 2:9, Ps. 63:11, Matt. 22:13, to souls in torment.

12. It is not the souls immortality which contradicts itself, but G. Cox, who seems to quarrel with the Scriptural employment of imagery drawn from the present life to convey a vivid impression of anguish or bliss in the future, and even the separate state, as in Luke 16:23-26.

13. The soul's immortality is in no way the cause or even occasion of the wicked notation of saving ordinances; for sound men holding it believe that by Christ's grace all infants will be saved through redemption. Catholic theology is the true culprit.

14. It is Christ who (before He commended His spirit to the Father's hands — so little did death touch it) teaches that the soul even of a converted robber was to be with Him in Paradise on that very day that the man died on a gibbet; so Stephen (Acts 7:59, 60), and Paul (2 Cor. 5:8, Phil. 1:23). Nor does this heavenly blessedness of the separate spirit do away entirely or in any measure with the necessity for the resurrection of life; for Christ, the

firstfruits, is a Saviour of the body as well as of the soul. This we have (1 Peter 1:9); that we wait for (Phil. 3:20, 21).

15. Our Lord Himself shows that the wicked not only wait for their resurrection to judgement, but are at once after death “tormented in this flame” (Luke 16:22-25). Doubtless their lot will be still more awful when the resurrection of the unjust arrives, and eternal judgement has consigned them, soul and body, to perdition. This is no question of argument, but of divine revelation.

16. Scripture teaches man’s pre-eminence over other animals, not in death (for all alike die), but, among other respects, in the nature of his soul and spirit. Even Ecclesiastes, which most assimilates them (Eccles. 3:19, 20), in the same passage points out their all-important distinctness (Eccles. 3:21). Man in virtue of his soul and spirit — man alone of animals — is responsible to God. His spirit goes upwards, not downwards to the Earth like a beast’s though man’s body was made of the dust of the ground, and so far, has nothing to boast over a beast or a bird. (Gen. 2:7, 19).

17. While ‘‘soul’’ and “spirit” then are used both of man and of beast, it is false that they are used ‘‘indiscriminately,’’ even as the origin has been shown to be distinct for only into Adam’s nostrils is Jehovah Elohim said to have breathed, not into the beast’s. Hence creatures can only kill the body; they are not able to kill the soul. God only is to be feared, who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell (Matt. 10:28). If this does not prove the immortality of the soul, it is hard to say what could, as every upright reader of the Bible will

soon learn that “destruction” there never means annihilation, but an existence of utter ruin and misery in separation from God. Mortality is never predicated of the soul, save as it means a living man in this world who dies. To argue thence to the separate soul after death is sophistry, and beneath an honest man. Thus “the soul that sinneth, it shall die,” means, according to the style so familiar in the Old and New Testaments, that the living man who sins shall die, it is “the soul (i.e. the person) that sinneth,” not the soul of him who sins, as it is assumed falsely by those who argue against the immortality of the soul. So, in our ordinary language, when people talk of “a kind soul,” or “the poor soul,” they speak of a living person, not of the question of an immaterial principle, however true this may be.

18. There is no doubt that God’s moral character is at stake; but whether those who affirm or deny the immortality of man’s soul compromise it is another matter. I am sure that His truth is everywhere harmonious and plain against those who debase man to the level of a beast, even as to his soul.

19. The immortality of the soul does not necessitate an antedating of the judgement-seat of Christ, as has been shown already; but G. Cox wrongly puts all off after death till that day.

20. The soul’s immortality flows from God’s constitution of it. Scripture nowhere attributes it to God’s gift of grace through faith in Christ. Eternal life, either now or at the end, is wholly distinct. The only passage which can be alleged is 2 Tim 1:10, where “immortality” should unquestionably be “incorruption,” and refers to the body raised or changed.

21. Scripture derives the soul of man, as man, from the inbreathing of God, apart from the dealings of His saving mercy in Christ. In this sense, as the apostle applied it (Acts 17:28), all men, even the heathen, are His offspring. In Him all live. He is the God and Father of all, though He be only in all His saints (Eph. 4:6).

22. Those who hold the soul's immortality equally insist on God's power to destroy soul and body in hell, not those who imagine the soul's dying with the body.

23. Man's spiritual nature makes him capable of eternal misery if he persist in refusing God revealed in Christ and His redemption, as it exposes him to the wiles of the devil in spiritualism, superstition, infidelity, and every other snare. This however, is not remedied by Sadduceanism, complete or partial, but by the truth of God and His grace.

24. Purgatory may be another perversion, but even that unbelieving fable is scarcely so disastrous as the debasing denial of the soul's immortality.

25. So with the unholy dream of Universalism. Slighting sin and loving it have more to do with it than even the abuse of the soul's immortality.

26. So with infidelity, or the more open profane form of scepticism. Refusal to believe God where his truth clashes, as it must, with man's thought's and will, is it's root, not the soul's immortality.

27. It is well to avoid terms not found in Scripture, but it is fatal to reject the truth — say of the Trinity, because it is not so expressed in the Bible. So with the soul's immortality. Everlasting punishment or fire seems to me

quite as strong as ‘‘endless torments’’ or ‘‘eternal pain.’’ What is gained by captiousness like this?

28. Not the doctrine of an immortal soul, but tradition, as such, tends to non-natural interpretation of scripture. This might be urged by any opponent of the world-church, and has no just application to the point in hand, though it may apply to some defenders of it.

29. The charge of paving the way for Secularism is only another form of reason 26; as, indeed, several of those statements are, at bottom, the same objection over and over again.

30. So the repetition of 14 and 19 re-appears substantially here. The answer is, that the believer’s spirit does depart to be with Christ immediately after death; while we also expect to appear with Christ when he appears in glory, and to reign with him. Both are true. Traditionalism abuses the former to lose sight of the latter; while G. Cox’s unbelief abuses the latter to deny and deride the former. Both are bad; but the denier of the soul’s immortality is, in my judgement, much the worst.

31. Does G. Cox mean to insinuate the extinction of the devil’s existence, or that of his children? All Christians hold that the Son of God is the destined destroyer of Satan’s works; but that this means the annihilation of the enemy, or his hosts, or his instruments, human or angelic, is an unscriptural figment, of which no proof is even attempted.

32. When the results of the redemptive work of Christ are complete, in the view which God’s word gives of the eternal state (Rev. 21:1-8), we see evil, not extinguished, but separate from good and punished for ever. Scripture

gives no prospect of and ulterior change. All the enemies are destroyed; but they exist, not rampant, but tormented in the lake of fire.

33. The soul's immortality involves no such consequence as men becoming angels, demons, or any other order of beings; on the contrary, it is the basis of personal identity, when the resurrection arrives, the soul lasting unchanged through the various stages of man's existence — living. dead, and risen — makes him to be the same being. If the soul perishes at death, it is not the same person, but two different men, even if the absolutely same materials were used. We have already seen that the passage cited from Eccles. 3:19-21, to prove a dissolution of man's whole being into dust, really teaches, in the spiritual part of his being, a contrast with the beasts; for man's spirit goes upward. The Gospel, too, brings life as well as incorruption to light. Dead saints do not lose life eternal any more than their spirits; they await the Lord's coming again to raise their bodies.

34. The soul's immortality is a truth common to Jews and Christians — a question for the moralists among pagans — a certainty for the believer in the divine oracles. The denial of it, far from being true or godly, puts all who take up so dismal a notion with the sensual and sceptical of all ages, including Papists and Protestants, priests and popes themselves, who had not the fear of God.

35. This, again, is scarce more than a rehearsal of the stale charge, unfounded and contrary to the evident facts, that the soul's immortality gives ground to doubt the authenticity of the revelation, etc. On the contrary,

the assumption of the soul's immortality directly tends to undermine the fear of Him who has far more that He can do beyond killing the body. "The soul that sinneth it shall die" does not so much as touch the question of the soul's separate and continued existence after death. No more does Rom. 6:23. The separate state is neither denied nor affirmed. But I have shown it certainly proved by Luke 16 and other Scriptures.

36. The longest objection requires but a few words. It is abuse of God for casting unbelievers into hell; the sting is in the tail. There will be differences of punishments as of reward. But most miserable will he be who has calumniated God's truth and weakened His fear, to the emboldening of sinners, already, without such help, careless enough about the Lord and their own souls.