The COMPLETE WORKS of JOHN OWEN

40-VOLUME SET



THE COMPLETE WORKS OF JOHN OWEN

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ABOUT THE SERIES EDITORS

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AVAILABLE NOW

The Holy Spirit: The Helper (Volume 7) will be available November 2022. It features Owen's treatises "Reason of Faith"; "The Causes, Ways, and Means of Understanding the Mind of God as Revealed in His Word"; and "A Discourse of the Work of the Holy Spirit in Prayer." Exploring the topics of illumination, biblical interpretation, and extemporaneous prayer, volume 7 also features 50 pages of helpful introductions by editor Andrew Ballitch.

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- 5. The Holy Spirit: His Person and Work: Part 1
- 6. The Holy Spirit: His Person and Work: Part 2
- 7. The Holy Spirit: The Helper
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- 9. The Death of Christ
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- 31. An Exposition of Hebrews: Volume 3: Jesus the Messiah
- 32. An Exposition of Hebrews: Volume 4: Hebrews 1–2
- 33. An Exposition of Hebrews: Volume 5: Hebrews 3–4
- 34. An Exposition of Hebrews: Volume 6: Hebrews 5–6
- 35. An Exposition of Hebrews: Volume 7: Hebrews 7–8
- 36. An Exposition of Hebrews: Volume 8: Hebrews 9–10
- 37. An Exposition of Hebrews: Volume 9: Hebrews 11–13

Latin Works

38. The Study of True Theology

Shorter Works

39. The Shorter Works of John Owen

40. Series Index

Q&A WITH SERIES EDITOR LEE GATISS

1. What makes the Complete Works of John Owen unique?

The current standard edition of Owen is twenty-four volumes and it was produced in the nineteenth century. Our new edition in forty volumes will look much better inside and out, be far more user-friendly, and contain even more Owen than ever before—things missed, not included, or untranslated in previous editions. It will also have extensive introductions, explanatory notes, and fresh translations of Owen's Latin, Greek, and Hebrew from established scholars in the field today.

2. Why is it important for you to release this treatment of John Owen's work now?

In the last few decades, there has been a great flowering of interest in seventeenth-century Puritanism and Reformed theology. The recent profusion of scholarship in this area has resulted in a huge increase of attention given to Owen and his contribution to these movements. The time has therefore come to attempt another presentation of Owen's body of work for a new century, taking advantage of the growing number of resources and greater expertise that is now available.

3. What can readers expect with each volume?

Readers can expect to encounter afresh the vibrant and spiritually penetrating mind of one of the greatest theologians the English-speaking world has ever produced—in a usable and accessible format.

60 PART 1 • THE REASON OF FAITH

nature does consist. All the world was never able to give an answer tolerably satisfactory unto any one of these inquiries, and yet, unless they are all infalliby determined, we are not capable of the least rost or happines above the beasts that perish. But now all these things are so clearly declared and stated in the scripture that it comes with an eridence like al light from heaven on the minds and consciences of unprejudiced persons. What was the condition of our nature in its first creation and constitution, with the blessedness and advantage of that condition; how we fell from it, and what was the cause, what is the nature, and what the consequences and effects of our present depravation and apostasy prof. God, how help and relief is provided for us herein by infinite visioon, grace, and bounty; what is that system of duites, or course of obselince unit God, which is required of us, and wherein our eternal fieldity does consist—are all of them so plainly and clearly revealed in the Scripture, as in general to leave mainkind ng round for doubt, inquiry, or conjecticous of them, and the light of the Scripture in these things is like that of the sun at nonday, which shuts up the world of us and wherein duity, so that of the sun at nonday, which shuts up the way unto all further liquity, and efficientos of men, and the light of the Scripture in these things is like that of the sun at nonday. Which that reveard which they expect from under its prohibition. Thoos, therefore, whose desire or interest it is that the bounds and differences of good and evit should be unfixed and confounded, who are fraided therein, nor darphting which is contrary unto it that falls not under its prohibition. Thoos, herefore, whose desire or interest it is that the bounds and differences of good and evit should be unfixed and confounded, who are fraid to know what they were, whose desire or interest it is that the bounds and differences of good and evit should be unfixed and confounded, who are fraid to know

g [Inveterate: firmly established by long persistence.]

While this does not appear to be a direct quotation, it is a central therme of Lactantius' Divine Institutes that the Christian faith reveals a truth that cannot be found in philosophy or other religions, see, e.g., Div inst. 1, paeef, MPE 6(11-11), ANP 79, Statius, Thehadu, 3.661, I.CL. 2071/98-199, Publius Papinius Statius (c. 45-c. 96 A.D.) was a CHAPTER 3 • KNOWLEDGE EXTINGUISHED OR CORRUPTED 61

nor themselves, their duty nor their reward, may despise this book, and deny its divine origin. Others will retain a sacred veneration of it, as of the offspring of God.

The Testimony of the Church

4. The testimony of the church may in like manner be pleaded unto the same purpose. And I shall also insist upon it, party to manifest wherein its true nature and efficacy do consist, and partly to evince the vanity of the old pretense, that even we also, who are departed from the Clurch O Rome, do receive the Scripture upon the authority thereof, whence it is further pretended that, on the same ground and reason, we ought to receive whatever less it proposes unto us. (1) The church is said to be the pillar and ground of truth (1 Tim. 3.15).

which is the only text pleaded with any sobriety to give countenance unto the assertion of the authority of the Scripture with respect unto us to depend on the authority of the church. But the weakness of a plate to that purpose from hence has been so fully manifested by many already that it needs no more to be insisted on. In short, it cannot be so the gound and pillar of truth that the truth should be, as it were, built and rest upon it as its foundation; for this is directly contrary to the same apostle, who teaches us that the church itself is "built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himseff being the chief corner-soft (Eph. 2ao). The church cannot be the ground of truth, and truth the ground of the church, in the same sense or kind. Wherefore, the church is the ground and pillar of truth, in that it holds up and declares the Scriptures and the things contained therein so to be.

Scriptures and the things contained therein so to be: (2) In receiving anything from a church, we may consider the authority of it, or its ministry. By the authority of the church in this matter, we intend no more but the weight and importance that is in its testimony, as testimonies do vary according to the worth, gravity, honesty, honor, and reputation of them by whom they are given. For to suppose an authority, properly so called, in any church, or all the churches of the world, whereon our reception of the Scripture should depend, as that which gives it authority toward us, and a sufficient warrany to our faith, is a nice imagination. For the authority and truth

5 On Calvin's frequent use of the bridle and related images, see Blacketer, The School of God, 57-77

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