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(Continued from page 13)

it. It is not polluted by preaching it to the vilest sinners out of Hell. The gospel is like the sunlight. Even though it shines in the pig pen it is still white, bright, clean and clear.

We are not of those who are afraid to preach the gospel. We believe the Commission is clear, current, and to be celebrated by the tongues of God-called men in every nation and clime. Preach the gospel on mountain. Preach it in valley. Preach it on continents. Preach it to the Isles. Preach it to moral. Preach it to immoral. Preach it to Jews. Preach it to Gentiles. Preach it here. Preach it to regions beyond. Let the gospel go. Lay the reins on the neck of the gospel. Let the world hear the true, pure gospel of all grace. The alternative is unthinkable! ♦



The Grace Proclamator and Promulgator

To testify the gospel of the grace of God.. Acts 20:24

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ABRAHAM BOOTH— LEARNING DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY

Abraham Booth was one of the great Baptist men of God in history. His name is surely worthy of being mentioned with men like Benjamin Keach, William Carey, John Leadley Dagg and A.W. Pink. But this man is being progressively forgotten in this day of historical and doctrinal ignorance in our churches. In this paper I want to bring this wonderful man of God before today's Baptists in hopes of renewing our appreciation of his godly life, his important writings and his courageous stand for the truth of God's holy word. In this paper I shall present five different aspects of the life and work of Abraham Booth.

AN OVERVIEW OF HIS LIFE

Abraham Booth was born May 20, 1734 in Blackwell, England, the oldest child of a large farm family. From his youth to his older years he was muscular in build but never overweight and enjoyed a lifetime of

good health. At age 24 he married Elizabeth Bowman, the daughter of a neighboring farmer. This proved to be a long and happy marriage. He left farming and became a stocking weaver which trade he set out to learn. To feed his growing family he opened a school in which his wife taught needlework to girls and He worked at his loom.

Booth was brought up in the Church of England but when he was about ten years old some General Baptist preachers visited his neighborhood. At that time he came under conviction of sin and came to have a serious concern for the salvation of his soul. In 1755 he was baptized at age 21 in a General Baptist church that was Arminian in doctrine and joined that church.

by Laurence A. Justice



The General Baptists encouraged Booth to preach among them and he soon became the unofficial pastor of the General Baptist Church at Kirby-Woodhouse where he preached for seven years but never officially became their pastor. For awhile he was an itinerant preacher in the region of his home. Then Booth was called to pastor the Little Prescott Street Particular Baptist Church in London. This church ordained him to the gospel ministry in 1769 when he was 35 years old and he remained their pastor for thirty-seven years. Little Prescott Street Church soon became one of the most recognized and influential churches among the Particular Baptists.

Joseph Ivimey in his "A History of English Baptists" includes a memoir of Booth that describes his preaching. He says, "Booth's sermons were plain and textual. His favorite themes were the glory, the government and the grace of Christ. He sought to counteract with equal care self-righteous legality on the one hand and on the other antinomian licentiousness. He had great regard for the moral law of God and it's relation to holiness of life." Booth despised the emphasis on tolerance and love in the preaching of his day. To counter this he preached clearly and honestly. It is important to note

that Booth was a man who spent much time in secret prayer. He was very active in a fellowship of ministers who met monthly for preaching, prayer and fellowship.

Booth held great influence over the Particular Baptists of his day. He was instrumental in the founding of Stepney Baptist College that for generations was a blessing to the Baptist churches of Britain. Stepney was later renamed Regents Park College.

His own father taught him to read and he had to say his lessons every day after dinner. When he was sixteen he had never spent six months in school. Until becoming pastor of Little Prescott Street, Booth's education consisted mostly of English grammar. But upon becoming pastor here he realized the need for and developed a thirst for knowledge and set out to learn Latin and Greek.

His only formal training was his studies in Latin. Interestingly he studied Latin under a Catholic priest who was a recognized Classical scholar. Each morning Booth and the priest would eat breakfast together and then adjourn to Booth's study to work on the Latin language. Learning Latin gave him access to scholars like Witsius, Turretin and Vitringa whom

God as only works of iniquity.

I spoke with Bro. Paul Brown and he informed me the mission work in Thailand was doing well. He keeps a busy schedule as he conducts "preacher training" classes with pastors and various faithful men, not only from the Hilltribe villages of Thailand, but also from Burma and Laos. We cannot, nor do we wish to, call these classes a "school", for then we would come under certain guidelines and regulations of the Thai government. Our desire in these classes is to systematically teach the pastors and others from the villages of these countries, which will enable them to better teach and preach the Word of God to their own people. I would ask that you make these classes a matter of prayer, especially for Bro. Brown as he studies and teaches God's Word.

Another matter of prayer concerns those faithful brethren from Laos as they come into Thailand for these classes. Bro. Brown has told me these men seem to have a special hunger and desire to know more and more of God's Word. One thing we can be sure of is wherever God works, Satan will also be at work. Lately these men from Laos have been having great difficulty as they cross the border between Laos and Thailand. At times they are for-

bidden by the government of Laos from making this crossing. We have always insisted that all border crossings be done in a legal manner. We refuse to have anyone attend these classes who are not there legally. These pastors from Laos have their legal documents, they have paid the required fees necessary for border crossings, but yet at times they are not allowed to leave Laos and enter into Thailand. Please join with us in prayer that the God who opens and no man can shut, will overcome the hindrances of Satan and allow these men to have free access to these classes.

While Bro. Brown is busy with these classes, he is also busy visiting the villages in the mountains and jungles of northern Thailand. Each Lord's day, as well as on other occasions, he is with at least one of the village churches. These visits not only give him opportunity to preach in the services, but also time to sit down and visit with the people and pastors. During these times he is able to answer any questions they might have, and also give advice and counsel when needed. We know we do not have authority over any of the churches which have been established, but we do seek to give them guidance in gospel order. ♦

Bill Lee

THAILAND MISSION REPORT

The Lord's blessings continue to rest upon, encourage, and strengthen the mission work in Thailand. It is amazing what God will do when the Lord's churches seek to do God's work God's way! The Lord blesses faithfulness and obedience as His churches follow the command to go into the world and preach the gospel. It is not only important that we go, but the greater importance is that we go with the right gospel and we only employ scriptural means and methods in our going.

Once, years ago, I was sharing with some businessmen some things concerning the Lord's work in Thailand. I told them about our going into the villages and preaching the gospel and about the churches which have been established in the various villages of northern Thailand. I shared with them many of the details of our medical work, care for the children and preacher training. The first question from this group was "What organization is backing you in this?" I explained to them that we are an independent Baptist church without any affiliation with any association nor convention. I told them the Thailand mission work was done through Central Baptist Church and we had no organization

of any sort sponsoring or supporting us in this work. I told them other churches and individuals cooperated with us in the support of this work, but nothing was done through any organization. The response to my statement was; "There is no possible way you can do all you are doing without some organization's backing".

My reply to this was that I thought this was one of the strangest statements I have ever heard. I explained to them we were already doing what they said was impossible to be done. For eighteen years now we have been about the Lord's work in Thailand and we continue to do this work without any human organization's sanction or financial backing. We are doing what the carnal mind and reasoning says cannot be done. God's work done God's way is always a "work of faith and labour of love," and therefore God is the only One to receive glory for whatever might be accomplished. God always blesses faithfulness, but being a just and holy God, He does not bless unfaithfulness. And what men and religious organizations view as great successes just might be viewed by



Paul & Susan Brown

he read voraciously. With this one exception Booth was virtually a self-taught scholar.

Booth read voluminously. What a shame our preachers don't read today! Like most true Baptists, church history was one of his favorite subjects. His excellent writing skills and advanced knowledge of math were almost entirely self-taught. Yet, he had a reputation as one of the greatest scholars of his day.

In later life he was afflicted with severe asthma, especially in wintertime. This asthma came on him at about age sixty-six. His beloved wife Elizabeth died suddenly four years before he did.

HIS COMING TO THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE

In the early years of his ministry while a General Baptist Booth was a *bitter enemy* of the doctrines of election and particular redemption. At this point in his thinking he held the doctrine of universal redemption.

He published a poem attacking the doctrines of election and particular redemption. The name of his poem was "Poem on Absolute Predestination." He was 26 when he wrote this poem. In this poem he attacked the doctrines of grace so

severely that it stirred up doubts in his own mind until he made a fuller investigation of these doctrines. He gave great study and much prayer to reviewing his stand on these issues. In doing so he found these great doctrines of election and particular redemption in God's word and was fully convinced they were biblical and thus true.

Booth did not hide his change of beliefs but soon began to preach them until he finally had to leave his General Baptist church. Booth was not like some Southern Baptist preachers I have known who told me they believed in the doctrines of grace but did not preach them because they were too controversial and would cause trouble in their churches. I heard one such preacher say in a message to preachers that they should never spend more than five minutes on the doctrine of election in their sermons because doing so would get them in trouble.

Soon Booth became ashamed of the Arminian poem he had published and was led to say this about it: "As a poem, if considered in a critical light, it is despicable; if in a theological view, detestable; as it is an impotent attack on the honor of divine grace, in respect to its glorious freeness, and bold opposition to the

sovereignty of God, and as such *I renounce it.*”

Soon after God had opened his eyes to see the truth of His sovereign grace, Booth began to plan a book that would recommend and promote the doctrines of God’s grace. The name of this book would be *The Reign of Grace*. He published it when he was thirty-three years old. I will have more to say about this book later in this paper

THE CONTROVERSY IN WHICH ABRAHAM BOOTH WAS INVOLVED

Andrew Fuller’s book, *The Gospel Worthy of All Acceptation*, stirred up great and bitter controversy among the Particular Baptists. This controversy lasted for some twenty years, Booth taking the differing view from that of Fuller. The Baptists soon polarized with one group following John Gill and the other, Andrew Fuller.

Fuller was friends with men in America that came to be known as the New England men. These New England men included Jonathan Edwards Jr., Joseph Bellamy, Samuel Hopkins and Stephen West. The New England men had abandoned belief in particular redemption and they clearly influenced Fuller’s thinking in this and other matters. Fuller

followed increasingly the views of the leaders of the New England theology.

The New England men followed the so-called governmental theory of the atonement. The governmental theory sees God, not as an offended Judge to whom satisfaction must be made, but as the moral Governor of the universe who must do something to show his hatred of sin. They saw the sufferings of Christ as demonstrating God’s hatred of sin and that they must not be thought of as a strictly substitutionary penalty. The man who developed this governmental theory of the atonement was Hugo Grotius, a Dutch theologian.

Fuller seemed to lean toward this governmental theory. He suggested that “the principle design of our Lord’s atonement was the manifestation of God’s hatred to sin.” Fuller’s views of the atonement were innovations to the English Particular Baptists of that day. His views had moved away from the views of Particular Baptists among whom was Abraham Booth. Some of Fuller’s statements caused alarm for Booth and others.

The doctrines of imputation and substitution were also involved in this controversy. Fuller taught that imputation was *not a real imputation* of sin to Christ and of righteousness to

They know it is true, for the prophets have told them it is so, as they told Ahab he would be victorious over the Syrians, [I Kings 22:6]. But when someone is saved, you don’t have to tell him the news he will tell you! Remember John Jasper’s conversion! [*Jn. Jasper*, by Hatcher, chapter 23, which I have never been able to read without tears.]

There is not one line of good news in the polluted gospel. It is no good now, no good in death, and it will be no good when you stand before the Lord. Its converts are of the same cloth of those made by the Pharisees—two fold more the child of Hell. Those who receive the polluted gospel are like the man who had an evil spirit. That spirit departed on his own. Later when he returned he found his house empty, swept and decorated. He did not move back in alone, but went and got seven other spirits more wicked than himself and they all entered and dwelt there. The last state of that man was worse than the first. So it is with those who receive a polluted gospel, it may reform but it cannot renew! [Mt. 23:7, 5; 12:43-45].

The polluted gospel lets people down now —“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law...” [Gal. 5:4]. It lets them down in the judg-

ment, “Depart from me ye workers of iniquity.” It delights now, damns then. It is temporarily sweet, eternally bitter; easy now, damnably hard then. It salves conscience here. Then it will maggot-like, gnaw, gnaw and gnaw! [Gal. 5:4; Mt. 7:23; Lk. 16:].

The polluted gospel is a perverted gospel and is under the double curse of God. [Gal. 1:7, 8]. It is to be destroyed like Babylon and Tyre, never to rise more. Thanks be unto God there is a time coming when the pure gospel of all grace will invade this world like a mighty army. Then, the earth shall be full of the knowledge and glory of the Lord as waters that cover the sea. There will not be one false syllable of this polluted gospel found in the whole earth!

This gospel revealed in Holy Scripture shall be preached in time and eternity. It shall run forevermore. Because this gospel tells of the power, glory, and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ it will endure for all ages. Let us preach it as faithfully as we can.

We are not ashamed of this gospel of God. It is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes, to the Jew first and also to the Gentile. The gospel is not worn out. It is not weakened by preaching

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Christian, you do not live as one.” “You need to re-dedicate your life.” “You need to let God be God.” “You need to put God on the throne.” “You can be sure you are saved, right now just by praying after me.” “Just pray the sinner’s prayer.” “Just take my hand and by that means say you are taking Christ as your Savior.” “God sent His Son to die for you, the Holy Spirit is convicting you; God has done all He can do. Now, it is up to you!” “Make your decision to follow Christ tonight.” “Come to the altar and get this settled tonight.” “Just follow these four spiritual laws.” “The new birth is something God does for man when man is willing.” “God always reacts to man as man reacts to God.”

Now most of these statements are bald, bold, and blatant heresies. However, we all realize that some of them may be used in a scriptural sense.

Likewise the polluted gospel has excuses by the barrel to prescribe to their patients who never get better. One pitiful mother said to me about her son, who had for years lived in gross sin, and had never lived a holy life, “Well, he prayed the prayer and I believe he is saved.” It is the polluted gospel which teaches men to pamper a delusion, rather than to pray for deliverance for those

who are evidently the captives of Satan. (II Tim. 2:26).

The polluted gospel is flashy, fleshy, and frothy. It does all kinds of cute things to attract the flesh. It lacks substance, hates doctrine and anything and everything which does not generate numbers. The polluted gospel is pragmatic. If anything will produce outward results, it will be used. If it doesn’t produce outward success, then it is trashed. Many precious Bible doctrines can be found in the dumpsters behind these churches which preach a polluted gospel. The polluted gospel will do anything to be able to give a glowing report of apparent success. It refuses to wait for the moving of the Spirit and knows nothing of the power of God. [II Tim. 4:3, 4; Rom. 15:19].

The polluted gospel perverts the order of God. It claims the *sinner elects God* and then God elects the sinner! But the pure Gospel order tells us by that more sure word of prophecy that God’s choice was made before the foundation of the world. Because God chose, we come, we receive, we believe. The pure gospel is grace all the way, [II Pet. 1:19; II Tim. 1:9; Eph. 1:4].

The polluted gospel is a deceptive thing. Thousands have sucked up this slop. They are saved!

men. Rather, he said, it was a *figurative thing*. Booth believed it was a real and actual imputation. Here is a statement of what Booth believed about imputation: “If therefore Jesus was made a curse, he was punished – in a real and proper sense PUNISHED: for scarcely any words can convey the idea of punishment more forcibly than those which are here used by the Apostle. It is not merely for the sake of Christ, or of what he has done, that believers are accepted of God, and treated as completely righteous; but it is IN him as their Head, Representative and Substitute: and by the imputation of that very obedience, which as such, he performed to the divine law, that they are justified. Hence they are said to be made, not barely righteous but righteousness; not even that only, but the righteousness of God.”

Other issues involved in this controversy included:

The ordo salutis or order of salvation.

Booth and Fuller disagreed on whether regeneration comes before or simultaneously with faith.

The warrant of faith. Booth believed that the gospel itself warrants any sinner to believe in Christ and not the inward work of the Holy Spirit.

Here is Booth’s statement on the warrant of faith: “Yes, disconsolate sinner, you have no reason to hesitate, whether you have a right to receive [salvation], and to call it your own. Believing the testimony, which God has given of his Son, you receive it, and enjoy the comfort arising from it. Heaven proclaims your welcome to Christ, and eternal faithfulness insures acceptance to all that believe in him.” Booth insisted on the free offer of the gospel. This idea worried Fuller.

Another issue in this controversy was what came to be called *duty faith*. Are sinners duty bound to believe in Christ? Booth, of course answered, Yes!

Throughout this controversy Fuller was very unkind in that he credited Booth’s criticisms of Fuller’s theology to Booth’s old age. “Mr. Booth gets old and I think jealous and peevish. His memory also fails him,” Fuller said on one occasion.

BOOTH’S WRITINGS

Abraham Booth was a prolific writer, authoring about 15 books plus several published sermons. Some of these works have passed through several editions.

His *Magnum Opus* is *The Reign of Grace*, published in 1768. The book was published because Henry Venn, a Church of England clergyman, read the manuscript and was so impressed that he traveled to see Booth who was working at his stocking loom. I have a rare copy of Venn's own book published in 1838, *The Complete Duty of Man*, and which I have read with much profit. Venn persuaded Booth to publish this book and purchased enough copies to pay for the printing.

The Reign of Grace presents God's grace as reigning in our election, effectual calling, the pardon of sin, justification, adoption, sanctification, perseverance and glorification. This book passed through many editions during Booth's lifetime and made him a famous man. The publication of this book led to his being called to pastor the Little Prescott Street Particular Baptist Church in London.

The Death of Legal Hope, an Essay on Galatians 2:19 was published in 1770. It was written to prove that true grace has no tendency to relax a Christian's obligations to holiness but on the contrary is a doctrine according to godliness. Booth wrote here against the antinomianism that was prevalent in England in his day.

The Deity of Christ was the center of much controversy in England during Booth's time. In 1777 Booth translated from the French, edited and published *The Deity of Jesus Christ* by Dr. James Abaddie.

Originally published as *An Apology for the Baptists* in 1778, *A Defense for the Baptists* is still in print. This work defended the scripturalness of our stand on baptism. It opposed the practice of open communion that was coming into some of the Baptist churches in those days. This book was derived from a series of letters from Booth to a preacher who had been led into the practice of open communion in his church.

Paedobaptism Examined was published in 1784. It was a scriptural plea against infant sprinkling. Thomas Armitage said that Booth's *Paedobaptism Examined* was "characterized by great research and has never been fairly answered." *Glad Tidings to Perishing Sinners or the Genuine Gospel* was produced in 1786. *A Defense of Paedobaptism Examined* came in 1787. His *Essay on The Kingdom of Christ* was published in 1788.

The Amen to Social Prayer came in 1790. This was a sermon delivered to the monthly ministerial fellowship meeting. Other preachers had dealt with all the phrases in the

creation. But no matter what is done to the head, the man is sadly the same.

The faith of the polluted gospel is like fool's gold. It looks like gold but it will not weigh out. This head-faith cannot bring Christ down to the sinner nor the sinner up to Christ. It has not the mint-mark of Heaven. It is just blanked iron and the Bank of Heaven will reject it out of hand, slug that it is, [Mt. 7:21 -23]. But heart-faith is the gift of God, heaven-minted gold and it cannot be destroyed, whether in the furnace of iron, fiery tortures, earthly trials, Satan's sieve or Heaven's tests. Faith is the victory! [De 4:20; Heb. 11:27-38; Lk. 22:31-32; Jn. 4:5]. But this faith is a Christ-bought faith, a Christ-given faith, a Christ-directed faith, and a Christ-centered faith. Therefore this faith is saving faith! [Rom. 8:31, 32; Eph. 2:8; Acts 16:31; Gal. 2:20; Lk. 7:50].

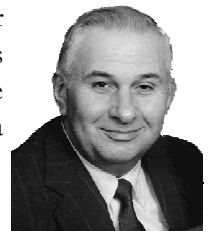
The polluted gospel is a panderer between Truth and error which loves lies and lives in the land of the Cretians, [Tit. 1:12]. This false gospel brings happiness before heartache, confession before conviction, relief before repentance, deliverance before danger, and salvation before sorrow, [II Cor. 7:10].

The true gospel is polluted

when men put anything in the place of Christ. The polluted gospel teaches men to *faith* faith, to *faith* their decision, to *faith* their commitment, to *faith* their act of faith, to *faith* their prayer, to *faith* their confirmation, to *faith* their baptism. The pure gospel calls on sinners to *faith* Christ. Christ is the beginning and the end of the true gospel, [Ac 16:31; Heb. 12:2].

The world applauds, approves, and praises the polluted gospel on the one hand, but bitterly opposes, suppresses and denounces the pure gospel on the other. The world also likes to take the hammer and chisel of satanic reasoning and make ashlar for God's altar, but the heavenly oracle gives no ground for such botching: "If thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou halt polluted it," (Ex 20:26).

The polluted gospel attempts to make dead birds fly and dead horses pull. In support of these impossible tasks they have generated a whole pantheon of gods by which they seek, Sceva-like, to perform these marvels. "You took Christ as your Savior, but not as Lord, therefore while you are a



by J.C. Settlemoir

THE POLLUTED GOSPEL

“If thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou halt polluted it,” Ex. 20:26. This refers to the altar of God. The stones for God’s altar were to be made with natural stones. No human tool was to be used on these stones. If such was used the altar was polluted.

In the same manner the gospel also may be polluted. Whenever the gospel is not used as it is revealed, it is polluted. It was not the use of the altar which polluted it but it was the misuse of it. They were to follow the directions of the Lord in the construction and use of the altar. Only natural stones without human alteration were permitted in God’s altar. In a similar manner the gospel is to be used without human alteration. When the gospel is changed in any way it is polluted!

It is not the use but abuse which pollutes the gospel. The gospel is polluted by substitutions, alterations, editing, deletions, cropping, additions and mixtures. The gospel is fouled by ignoring God’s clear directions, “See that thou makest all things according to the pattern shown thee in the mount.” Beware of those who alter the gospel

of Christ with soul deluding, grace denuding, and Heaven excluding consequences, [1 Pet. 2:14; 3:16].

The polluted gospel ejects repentance and injects regret. This Dagon deliverance teaches that men do not need to repent of their sins! The polluted gospel stashes repentance in the fruit cellar but the true gospel hangs repentance over the front gate—and you can’t enter into God’s fellowship, His kingdom or His church without going through it [Mt 4:2, 17; Acts 17:30]. Woe be to those gospel polluting preachers, who are crying “Peace, Peace,” without that heart-stabbing, heart breaking, and heart-changing repentance of God so essential to eternal happiness! [Jer. 6:14; Acts 2:37, Gk.; Ps 34:17; Acts 9:6].

The fragrant gospel has power and penetrates the heart, whereas the putrid gospel only penetrates the head. The pure gospel operates within. The polluted gospel *seeks* to work without. The polluted gospel asks only for *assent*, but God’s gospel demands *worship* from the heart, [Pro. 23:36; Rom. 10:8 10; Jn 4:23]. When the Lord gives a new heart to a man that man is a new

Model Prayer and Booth was assigned the last word of the prayer, “Amen.” He preached this great sermon on a single word. I wish I could have heard it!

Divine Justice Essential to The Divine Character was next in 1803. This work dealt with Fuller’s teachings on particular redemption. It was another sermon delivered at the monthly ministers’ meeting.

Pastoral Cautions was brought forth in 1805. This was a sermon that drew on his mature years and valuable experience. At this time Booth had been in the ministry for 50 years, 35 of them at the Little Prescott Street Church. It was originally an ordination sermon for Thomas Hopkins of Eagle Street Baptist Church in London. He published it to caution pastors in how they should conduct themselves in the churches, in their families and in the world.

Two days before he died he finished *Thoughts on Dr. Edward Williams’ Hypothesis Relative to the Origin of Moral Evil*. He concluded this work with this statement: “Were my opinion asked respecting the origin of moral evil, the answer would be, I have no opinion upon the subject; nor dare I form conjectures about it. Having long been fully persuaded that a satisfactory solution of the

question lies far beyond the reach of human intellect, I consider it as more becoming my feeble reason, and much more respectful to Divine Providence, to exclaim with Paul. ‘O the depth!’ than to indulge speculation on a subject so mysterious; lest I should fall under the righteous reproof of Jehovah’s interrogatory to Job, ‘Who is this that darkeneth counsel by works without knowledge?’ Of this, however, I have no doubt, that the existence and prevalence of moral evil in the rational creation, are completely consistent with all the perfections of God, and with all his eternal decrees; and that under the management of Supreme Wisdom, when the great system of Providence respecting both angels and men is finished, the conduct of God in reference to evil, both moral and natural, will be to the praise of his glory, in the eyes of all holy creatures.”

An Essay on The Love of God to His Chosen People and *On A Conduct And Character Formed Under the Influence of Evangelical Truth*, and several other sermons and manuscripts were published posthumously.

His favorite English writer was John Owen whom he quoted in his works more often than any other. William Cathcart in his *Encyclopedia of Baptists* says that “all Booth’s works

will continue to instruct and delight the Christian world till the end of time.”

HIS DYING

Booth's life was one of self-denial, contempt for the world and walking humbly with his God. His pure Christian life was a striking commentary on the doctrines he believed and preached. In the last couple of years of his life his asthma grew worse until he had to quit preaching a short time before his death. During this time he is reported to have said, “I now live upon what I have been teaching others.” As he was dying his fellow preachers would visit him and they noted that the doctrines of grace he had preached were now the support of his mind.

Here is a selection from his last will and testament: “I, Abraham Booth...reflecting on the uncertainty of life, do make this last will and testament in manner following: Being firmly persuaded that the doctrines which have constituted my public ministry for a long course of years, are divine truths; being deeply sensible that all I have, and all I am, are the Lord's, and entirely at his disposal; and being completely satisfied that his dominion is perfectly wise and righteous; I, in the anticipation of my departing moment, cheerfully

commend my departing spirit into his hands, in expectation of everlasting life, as the gift of sovereign grace, through the mediation of Jesus Christ; and my body I resign to the care of Providence in the silent grave, with the pleasing hope of its being raised again at the last day, in a state of perpetual vigor, beauty, and glory.”

A marble tablet was placed over a door of the church house in whose yard Booth was buried. It reads as follows: “This tablet was erected by the church in grateful remembrance of their beloved and venerable pastor ABRAHAM BOOTH: who, with unremitted fidelity, discharged his ministerial labors in this place, thirty-seven years. As a man, and as a Christian, he was highly and deservedly esteemed: As a minister he was solemn and devout: His addresses were perspicuous, energetic, and impressive: they were directed to the understanding, the conscience, and the heart. Profound knowledge, sound wisdom, and unaffected Piety were strikingly exemplified in the conduct of this excellent man. In him, ...this church...[has lost] a... faithful pastor: nor will his name or writings be forgotten while evangelical truth shall be revered, genius admired or integrity respected. He departed this life on the 27th January, 1806, in the 73rd year of his age.” ♦

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Heaven

What are you looking for and hoping for in heaven?... Do you ever look forward to being in heaven?... I like the way in which Matthew Henry put it: ‘We are never told in the Scriptures that we should look forward to death; but we are told very frequently that we should look forward to heaven.’ The man who looks forward to death simply wants to get out of life because of his troubles. That is not Christian; that is pagan. The Christian has a positive desire for heaven...But, more than this, what do we look forward to when we get to heaven?...Is it the rest of heaven? Is it to be free from trouble and tribulations? Is it the peace of heaven? Is it the joy of Heaven? All these things are to be found there, thank God; but that is not the thing to look forward to in heaven. It is the face of God. ‘Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.’ The Vision Splendid, the *Summum Bonum*, to stand in the very presence of God— ‘To gaze and gaze on Thee’. Do we long for that? Is that heaven to us? Is that the thing we want above everything else? It is the thing to covet and to long for. The Apostle Paul tells us that to die is ‘to be with Christ’. There is no need to add anything to that. That is why, I believe, we are told so little in a detailed sense about the life in heaven and in glory. People often ask why we are not told more about it. I think there are two answers to that. One is that because of our sinful state any description we might be given would be misunderstood by us... The second reason is more important; it is that it is often idle curiosity that desires to know more. I will tell you what heaven is. It is ‘to be with Christ’ and if that does not satisfy you, then you do not know Christ at all... I do not want anything else. ‘Where Thou art is heaven. Just to look at Thee is sufficient.’ D.M. Jones, *Faith on Trial*, p.111