

The Apostle Paul Was Not A Universalist

Universalism: *The theological doctrine that all souls will eventually find salvation in the grace of God. A system of religious beliefs maintaining that all people are predestined for salvation.* (Collins Dictionary)

In order now to determine whether we have correctly understood the apostle's view of this subject, we ask him this definite question: Who are to participate in the *blessing* promised to Abraham? He answers: "They which be *of faith*, are *blessed* with faithful Abraham," [verse 9.] In verse 29th he adds; "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed and *heirs* according to the *promise*." Who are Christ's? Ans. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." [Gal. 5.24.] Heirship *according to the promise* we discover from this to be conditional. None are heirs, except those who are children; for Paul says: "If *children*, then *heirs*." [Rom. 8.17.] Let us now inquire if becoming *children of God*, and *children of Abraham*, is conditional; for, [mark it!] upon this is suspended *heirship* "according to the *promise*."

If we become children of God, and children of Abraham *conditionally*; then we become *heirs* according to the *promise*, *conditionally*: and consequently the *blessing* included in the *promise* to Abraham is not *absolute*, or *unconditional*, as Universalists so dogmatically assert. Let us see. "We are all the *children, of God, by faith* in Christ Jesus." [Gal. 3.26.] " Know ye therefore , that they which are *of faith*, the same are the *children of Abraham*." [Gal. 3.7.] The whole matter now stands thus: (Paul's view of the subject being correct.) 1. We cannot be heirs, according to the promise made to Abraham, unless we belong to Christ the seed of Abraham; and we cannot be Christ's unless we crucify the flesh with the affections and lusts. 2. We cannot be heirs of the *blessing promised* to Abraham—the *unsearchable riches* of Christ, unless we are *children*; and none can be children, only those who "*are of faith*;" and hence the argument in favor of the *conditionality* of the *promise* to Abraham, is put beyond the reach of controversy. Peter's explanation, as we have seen, left Universalism dead; but Paul's leaves the doctrine *twice* dead, and plucked up by the roots!

(Universalism Against Itself or An Examination or Refutation of the Principle Arguments... by Alexander Hall, St. Clairsville, Ohio: Printed by E. Shepard, 1846, 14-15, e-book; Text and paragraph structure modified)