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O F
J U S T I F I C A T I O N
B Y
F A I T H,
THROUGH THE
I M P U T A T I O N

O F
The Righteousness of Christ,
EXPLAINED, CONFIRMED, AND VINDICATED.

By JOHN OWEN, D. D.

ABRIDGED

BY
GEORGE BURDER.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES. JOHN V. 39.

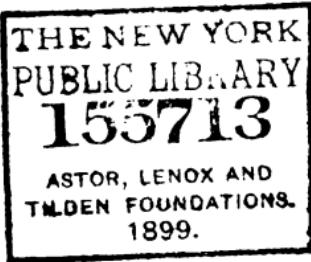
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H.C.P.



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ADVERTISEMENT.

ENCOURAGED by the favourable reception the Public gave to the Abridgment of Dr. *Owen* on the Spirit, the Editor ventures to bring forward another work of the same excellent author, in a similar form. The subject is of equal importance, as it relates to the acceptance of a sinner before God; and both these taken in connection, comprise the sum of all christian knowledge —“the Son of God, given for us; and the Spirit of God bestowed upon us.”

The doctrine of Justification by Faith, through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, has generally been considered by Protestants, as the corner stone of the Church: and it has been observed, that the belief of other fundamental principles of the Gospel, together with the power of godliness on the heart and life, have usually been proportionate to the clear knowledge and open avowal of this truth, by the professors of religion.

This

This great doctrine, was, for many centuries, awfully obscured in the Roman church, by the introduction of human merit; but it was gloriously revived and displayed at the Reformation. It was then stated in all its primitive purity: defended with all the powers of learning: illustrated and recommended by the most eminent piety: preached in all the pulpits of Britain: interwoven with the formularies of the establishment: maintained at the hazard of life: and, in many instances, sealed by the blood of the Martyrs.

By the introduction of Arminianism, under the patronage of Archbishop *Laud*, and afterwards of Socinianism, it was again opposed and rejected. Then it was, that many able champions for the truth arose, who nobly vindicated the ancient faith. Among the chief of these, we may justly rank the author of this work; which was written towards the close of a long life, diligently employed in the most useful studies and labours; and is evidently the result of much reading, deep experience, and extensive observation. What may we not expect from the pen of so profound a scholar, so judicious a divine, so eminent

nent a christian ; and on a subject so peculiarly interesting ? The serious reader will not, we trust, be disappointed in these expectations ; but will find this discourse more agreeable, than, he might probably suppose, from the subject being controversial : for the author, discarding the vain speculations of men, who were never convinced of sin ; has aimed, chiefly, at the conscience ; and has constantly kept in view, that only relief, revealed in the Gospel, whereby a sinner, seeking deliverance, may obtain peace with God, and settled rest of mind.

Valuable as the original work is, it has been shut up, more than most of Dr. Owen's writings, from the generality of readers : for, the great number of quotations from the Fathers, in Greek and Latin ; the intermixture of large and learned criticisms ; the long digressions which frequently occur ; and the harshness of the style, which is, in some places, unusually perplexed and difficult ; have concurred to render it less popular than many of this author's admirable performances.

The Editor has studied to divest the book of these incumbrances : the style is rendered

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more

more easy and familiar: long sentences are contracted: numerous parentheses omitted: the quotations from ancient writers, together with the most valuable criticisms, are placed at the foot of the page, where they occupy less room, and may be passed over, if the reader please. The original method is preserved; but some of the longer chapters are divided: A table of texts, more or less illustrated, and a copious index, are added to this edition. In short, the substance of this judicious and masterly work is retained, but reduced to a more modern and useful form; "portable," as good Mr. HERVEY wished, "both for the pocket and the memory."

May the divine blessing attend it!

COVENTRY,
April 18, 1797.

G. B.

THE

THE AUTHOR's PREFACE.

I Shall not need to detain the Reader, with an account of the nature and importance of that doctrine, which is the subject of the following discourse; for though various ideas of it are entertained among us, yet, that the knowledge of the truth therein is of great importance to the souls of men, is universally admitted. Indeed, it is impossible, that any one, who knows himself to be a sinner, and therefore obnoxious to the judgment of God, should not desire some acquaintance with it, in order to his deliverance. There are, I confess, multitudes in the world, who, though they cannot avoid some general convictions of sin and the effects of it, yet fortify their minds against the practical admission of such conclusions, as, in a just consideration of things, unavoidably follow: Wilfully deluding themselves with vain hopes and imaginations, they never seriously inquire how they may obtain peace with God, which, compared with the pleasures of sin, they value not. And it is in vain to recommend the doc-

doctrine of Justification to persons who neither desire nor endeavour to be justified. But those who are really sensible of their apostasy from God, of the evil of their nature and lives, with the dreadful consequences of sin, in the wrath of God and eternal punishment, cannot but feel themselves deeply concerned to know that divine way in which they may be delivered from their present dangerous condition; nor will they require arguments to convince them of the importance of this doctrine; their own concern in it being sufficient for that purpose. And I shall assure them, that in the management of this subject, from first to last, my grand design has been to inquire into the divine revelation of that way, in which the conscience of a distressed sinner may attain assured peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ. I lay more weight upon the steady direction of one soul in this inquiry, than upon the confutation of twenty wrangling disputants. The question therefore, to this purpose being stated, as the reader will find in the Introduction, though it was thought necessary to spend some time in the explication of the doctrine, and the terms wherein it is usually taught, yet the main weight of the whole is placed in the interpretation of Scripture Testimonies, with their application to the experience of believers, and the state of those who are seeking salvation by Jesus Christ. There are, therefore, a few things, which I desire the reader to notice, that he may receive benefit by the ensuing discourse.

i. Though

1. Though there are, at present, various contests about the doctrine of Justification, and many controversial writings published concerning it ; yet this discourse was not composed with a design to contend with, or contradict, any of them. A few passages, indeed, which have that tendency, are occasionally inserted ; but they are such as every candid reader will judge to have been necessary. I have ascribed no opinion to any particular person, much less wrested the words of any, reflected on their persons, censured their abilities, taken advantage of presumed prejudices against them, or represented their sentiments in the deformed reflections of strained consequences. To declare and vindicate the truth, for the instruction and edification of such as love it in sincerity ; to extricate their minds from those difficulties in this particular instance, which some endeavour to cast on all gospel mysteries ; to direct the consciences of those who are seeking peace with God ; and to establish the hearts of those who believe, are the objects at which I have aimed. And an endeavour to this end, considering all circumstances, and that station which God hath been pleased to give me in the Church, appeared necessary to me.

2. I have written nothing but what I believe to be true, and adapted to the promotion of gospel obedience. The reader must not expect an extract of other men's notions, nor a collection and

improvement of their arguments ; but a simple inquiry into the nature of the things treated of, as revealed in the Scripture, and as evidencing themselves in their power and efficacy on the minds of believers. The practical direction of the consciences of men in their application to God by Jesus Christ, for deliverance from the curse of the law and peace with him, together with the influence of the truth in universal evangelical obedience, is the single object to be aimed at in handling this doctrine : and therefore, whoever would treat of it in a proper manner, should weigh whatever he asserts, in his own mind and experience ; and not dare to propose that to others, which he doth not himself abide by, in the most intimate recesses of his mind ; in his nearest approaches to God ; in his surprisals with danger ; in deep afflictions ; in his preparations for death ; and most humble contemplations of the infinite distance between God and himself. Other notions and disputations about the doctrine of Justification, not seasoned with these ingredients, however suited to the palates of some, by skill and language, are insipid, and useless, immediately degenerating into an unprofitable strife of words.

3. I am aware that the doctrine for which we plead, is charged, by many, with an unfriendly aspect towards the necessity of holiness and good works ; yea, utterly destructive of it. So it was, at the first clear revelation of it, by the Apostle Paul, as he frequently

ly declares. But it is sufficiently evinced by him, to be the chief principle of, and motive to, all acceptable obedience. It is admitted, that the objective grace of the Gospel, in the doctrine of it, is liable to abuse, where there is nothing of the subjective grace of it in the heart. So it was charged by the Papists, at the Reformation: Yet, as it gave occasion to the Reformation itself, so was it that by which the souls of men being liberated from innumerable superstitious fears and observances, and directed into the way of peace with God, were made fruitful in real holiness, abounding in all those blessed effects of the life of God, which were never found among their adversaries.

The same charge was afterwards renewed by the Socinians, who still continue to make it. But I suppose that wise and impartial men will not lay much stress on their accusations, until they have manifested the efficacy of their contrary persuasion by better effects than they have hitherto produced *.

Whereas, therefore, the whole Gospel is “the truth which is after godliness,” declaring and exhibiting that “grace of God, which teacheth us to deny all ungodliness and wordly lusts, and to live soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this world;”

we

* The comparative tendency of Calvinistic and Socinian sentiments, has lately been considered in a masterly manner, by the Rev. Andrew Fuller, in a series of Letters addressed to the Friends of vital and practical Religion, entitled, *The Calvinistic and Socinian Systems examined and compared.* — Sold by Button and Mathews, London. (Edit.)

we being fallen into those times, wherein, under great contests about opinions and practices in religion, there is a horrible decay of true gospel purity, and holiness of life, I shall readily grant that, retaining a due regard to the only standard of truth, a secondary trial of doctrines may, and ought to be made, by the walk and conversation of those who receive and profess them. And though we admit, that the doctrine we maintain is liable to abuse, as is the whole doctrine of the grace of God ; and though the way and means of its influence into universal obedience, be not discernible without some beams of spiritual light ; yet, if it cannot preserve its station in the Church by this rule, of its useful tendency to the promotion of godliness, I shall be content that it be exploded. Every thing else, which I conceive to be necessary to the right understanding and due improvement of the truth pleaded for, will be comprised in the following General Considerations.

MAY 30, 1677.

J. O.

C O N-

C O N T E N T S.

I N T R O D U C T I O N ,

O R ,

GENERAL considerations, previously necessary to
the explanation of the doctrine of Justification
page 1—28.

1. What is the proper relief of the conscience of a sinner, burdened with the guilt of sin 1.
2. A due consideration of HIM, with whom we have to do, in this matter 2—6.
3. A clear apprehension, and due sense, of the greatness of our apostasy from God; the depravity of our nature; the power and guilt of sin, &c. 6.
4. The opposition which the Scripture makes between grace and works 8—14.
5. The commutation between Christ and believers, as to sin and righteousness, as represented in the Scripture 14—16.
6. The introduction of grace, by Jesus Christ, into the whole of our relation to God 17—21.
7. General prejudices, against the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, noticed 21—25.
8. The weight that was laid on this doctrine, at the Reformation, and the influence which it had on the whole of that great work 25—28.

C H A P .

C H A P. I.

- Justifying faith ; the causes, object, and nature of it** 29—42.

C H A P. II.

- The nature of justifying faith, more particularly considered** 42—49.

C H A P. III.

- The use of faith in Justification ; in what sense it is the instrument of it** 49—53.

C H A P. IV.

- The signification of the words, Justification, and, to justify, in the original languages** 53—58.

C H A P. V.

- The distinction of a first and second Justification, examined—The continuation of Justification ; on what it depends** 58—67.

C H A P. VI.

- Evangelical, personal righteousness, considered—Sens-tential Justification, or final judgment, and its respect to Justification** 67—72.

C H A P. VII.

- Imputation, the nature of it ; with the imputation of the righteousness of Christ in particular** 72—80.

C H A P. VIII.

- Imputation of the sins of the church unto Christ. The grounds of it. The nature of his suretiship. Causes of the new covenant. Christ and the church one mystical person. Consequences thereof** 81—90.

C H A P. IX.

- The formal cause of Justification. Various objections answered** 91—99.

CONTENTS.

xx

C H A P. X.

- Arguments for Justification, by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. The first, taken from the nature and use of our own personal righteousness
100—107.

C H A P. XI.

- Argument the second, from the nature of that obedience which God requires of us. The eternal obligation of the law thereto
107—113.

C H A P. XII.

- The same argument continued; and the necessity of Christ's obedience to the preceptive part of the law, as our surety, proved. Socinian objections refuted
114—127.

C H A P. XIII.

- The third argument, taken from the difference between the two covenants
127.

C H A P. XIV.

- The fourth argument, from the express exclusion of all works whatever from our Justification. What is intended by the Law, and the works of it, in the Epistles of St. Paul
129—136.

C H A P. XV.

- The righteousness of Christ, imputed to us, is received by *faith alone*
136—139.

C H A P. XVI.

- The doctrine further confirmed by testimonies of Scripture. Jeremiah xxiii. 6. explained and vindicated
139—143.

C H A P. XVII.

- Testimonies from the Evangelists considered. Matt. v.
Luke

Luke xviii. 9—14.	John i. 12.	iii. 14—18.
		143—150.

C H A P. XVIII.

The nature of Justification, as declared in the Epistles of St. Paul. Romans iii. and iv.	150—158.
--	----------

C H A P. XIX.

Testimonies from the Epistle to the Romans continued, chap. v.	159—165.
Chap. x. 3, 4.	166—170.

C H A P. XX.

Testimonies from the Epistle to the Corinthians.	
--	--

Chap. i. 1, 30.	170.
ii. 5, 21.	172.
Galatians ii. 16.	175.

C H A P. XXI.

Testimonies from the Epistle to the Ephesians, &c.	
--	--

Chap. ii. 2, 8, 9, 10.	177—182.
Philippians iii. 8, 9.	182—185.

C H A P. XXII.

Objections against the doctrine, considered. Personal holiness and obedience, not obstructed, but furthered by it	
	186.

C H A P. XXIII.

The doctrine of the Apostle James concerning faith and works, and its agreement with that of St. Paul	
	194—205.

INTRODUCTION.

General Considerations previously necessary to the Explanation of the Doctrine of Justification.

THAT we may treat of the Doctrine of Justification, so as to promote the glory of God in Christ, together with the peace and holiness of believers, the following general considerations are previously necessary.

I. The first inquiry in this matter is, *What is the proper relief of the conscience of a sinner, burdened with the guilt of sin?* For Justification is the way in which such a person obtains acceptance before God; and nothing can be pleaded in this cause, but that which may properly be spoken to the conscience in that state. The person under consideration, or, who is to be justified, is one who is in himself—“ungodly”^{*}—“guilty before God †,” that is, obnoxious to the judgment of God—“worthy of death:” one who finds himself “under the curse, ‡” and “the wrath of God abiding on him §.” In this condition “his mouth is stopped ¶”—he is “without excuse;” without plea; shut up “under sin ¶” and all its fearful consequences, and constrained to cry, “What must I do to be saved **?”

The inquiry then, with respect to such a person is, On what account will God pardon all his sins, receive him into his favour, pronounce him righteous, and give him a title to everlasting life? Will he do this on ac-

B account

* Rom. iv. 5. † Rom. iii. 19. i. 32. ‡ Gal. iii. 10. ¶ John iii. 18, 36. § Rom. iii. 19. ¶ Gal. iii. 22. ** Acts xvi.

count of any thing in the sinner, as his faith, his repentance, the renovation of his nature, inherent habits of grace, or actual works of righteousness? or, will he do it on account of the obedience, righteousness, satisfaction and merit of the Son of God, imputed to him? On one of these accounts it must be done; for they are not capable of mixture or composition *. Which of these it is the duty and wisdom of a convinced sinner to rely upon, is the sum of our present inquiry.

It is necessary that we should keep this always in view in treating on the subject of evangelical Justification, or else we shall soon wander into curious disquisitions, in which the conscience is not at all concerned. I shall therefore avoid, as much as possible, all those philosophical terms and distinctions, which have rather perplexed than illustrated this doctrine: for more weight is to be put on the steady guidance of one convinced conscience, really exercised about acceptance with God, than on the confutation of ten wrangling disputants.

II. A due consideration of HIM with whom we have to do in this matter, is necessary to a right stating of our thoughts about it. “ It is God that justifieth †.” He assumes it as his sole prerogative. “ I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions ‡.” It is “ in his sight”—before his tribunal that men are justified or condemned; therefore David prays—“ Enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight shall no man living be justified ||.”

It is necessary for any one who is to be tried for his life, seriously to consider the JUDGE before whom he is to appear, and by whom his cause is to be determined. And if we manage our disputes about Justification without a continual regard to HIM, by whom we must be acquitted or condemned, we shall not know what plea to make. Wherefore, the greatness, the majesty, and the holiness of God, must always be present with us in this matter.

The

* Rom. xi. 6. † Rom. viii. 33. ‡ Isa. xliii. 25. || Psal. cxliii. 2.

The Scripture represents to us what thoughts of him and of themselves, not only sinners, but saints also, have had upon peculiar discoveries of God and his greatness. Thus a sense of guilt filled our first parents with fear and shame, and put them on that foolish attempt of hiding themselves from him. Nor is the wisdom of their posterity, under their convictions, at all superior, without the discovery of the promise. That alone makes sinners wise, which tenders them relief. In general, men are secure, and expect, on their trial, to come off easily; hence they care not what doctrine concerning Justification is taught and received; generally they incline to that which is most adapted to their self-conceit and corrupt affections: the sum of which is—that what they cannot do themselves, Christ will, somehow or other, make up: the use or abuse of which persuasion is the greatest fountain of sin in the world, next to the depravity of our nature. But when God is pleased to manifest his glory to sinners, all their poor contrivances issue in horror and distress. “The sinners in Sion are afraid; fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites: Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings * ?”

Nor is it thus only with profligate sinners, but the best of men, upon near and efficacious discoveries of the greatness, holiness, and glory of God, have sunk into the deepest self-abasement, and the most serious renunciation of all self-confidence. Thus the prophet *Isaiah*, on his vision of the glory of Christ, cried out, “Woe is me, I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips †.” So holy *Job*, in all his contests with his friends, who charged him with hypocrisy, with assured confidence justified his sincerity, refers to his conduct, and appeals to God himself for the truth of his plea. But being, at length, called into the immediate presence of God, to plead his own cause; not now, as

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stated

* Isa. xxxiii. 14. † Isa. vi. 5.

stated between him and his friends, but between God and him : the question was reduced to this—On what grounds he could be justified before God. To prepare his mind for a right judgment in this case, God displays his glory, and shews him the greatness of his majesty and power. Here the holy man quickly acknowledged that the state of the case was totally altered. All his former pleas are abandoned. He cannot plead them at the divine tribunal ; and therefore, with the deepest humiliation, he resorts to sovereign grace and mercy.—

“ Job answered the Lord, and said, Behold, I am vile ; what shall I answer thee ? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken ; but I will not answer ; yea, twice ; but I will proceed no farther. I have heard of thee, by the hearing of the ear ; but now mine eye feeth thee ; wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes *.” Let the best of men place themselves in his condition, as in the immediate presence of God, and attend to what he speaks to them in his word, and they will find it will not be safe for them to adventure further upon God than he did †.

But

* Job xl. 3—5. and xlvi. 4—6.

† The following direction for the visitation of the sick, is said to have been composed by *Anjelm* ;—“ Dost thou believe that thou canst not be saved but by the death of Christ ? The sick man answereth, Yes. “ Then let it be said to him, Go to then ; and whilst thy soul abideth in thee, put all thy confidence in this death alone ; place thy trust in no other thing ; commit thyself wholly to this death ; cover thyself with this alone ; cast thyself wholly on this death ; wrap thyself wholly in this death. And if God would judge thee, say, “ Lord, I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and thy judgment ; and otherwise I will not contend, or enter into judgment with thee. And if he shall say unto thee, that thou art a sinner, say, I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and my sins. If he shall say unto thee, that thou hast deserved damnation ; say, Lord, I put the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between thee and all my sins ; and I offer his merits for my own, which I should have, and have not. If he say that he his angry with thee, say, Lord, I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and thy anger.”

Jerom,

But if men will disregard the greatness, holiness and majesty of God, and the reverential consideration of what will become of them when they stand at his tribunal, they may, in the heat of disputation, adopt such notions, as they dare not abide by in their personal trial. Hence it has been observed that the School-

B 3

men

Jerom, long before *Anselm*, spake to the same purpose,—“ When the day of judgment, or of death, shall come, all hands will fall down, because no works shall be found, which can answer the righteousness of God; for no flesh shall be justified in his sight. Wherefore the Prophet says in the Psalms, If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquity, who shall stand?” — And *Ambrose* to the same effect: “ Let no man arrogate any thing unto himself; let no man glory in his own merits or good deeds; let no man boast of his power; let us all hope to find mercy by our Lord Jesus, for we shall all stand before his judgment-seat. Of him will I beg pardon; of him will I desire indulgence: what other hope is there for sinners?” Those who gave these directions, seem to have been sensible of what it is to appear before the tribunal of God, and how unsafe it will be for us there to insist on any thing in ourselves.

Far different, indeed, from these directions is the advice more lately given by some of the Roman Church: for instance; the prayer suggested to a sick man by *Johan. Polandus. lib. Method. in adjuv. mortentibus*. “ Lord Jesu, join, I beseech thee, my righteousness with all that thou hast done and suffered out of thy great love and obedience.” — Few, I trust, will be satisfied to use that prayer which *Pedagius* taught the widow, as it was objected to him in the Diaspolitan synod. “ Thou knowest, O Lord, how holy, how innocent, how pure from all deceit and rapine are the hands which I stretch forth unto thee; how just, how unspotted with evil, how free from lying are those lips, wherewith I pour forth prayers unto thee, that thou wouldest have mercy on me.”

[The Editor begs leave to add a more modern prayer; the prayer of a French Philosopher; the prayer of a dying Deist. Mr. *Rousseau*, in his last moments, thus addressed his Maker: “ Eternal Being! the soul that I am now going to give thee back, is as pure, at this moment, as it was when it proceeded from thee:—render it partaker of thy felicity.” And yet this very man, in some of his writings, speaks of his vices and his unworthiness; and admits, that, in some instances, he was guilty and vile: nevertheless, he says, “ how happy a thing it is to die, when one has no reason for remorse and self-reproach!” These gross inconsistencies were reserved for the *Age of reason*, as some call the present æra.]

men themselves, in their devotional writings, adopt a language entirely different from what they use in their controversies : and I had rather learn what men really think about their own Justification from their *prayers*, than from their *writings* : Nor do I remember that ever I heard a good man in his prayers, use any expression about Justification, wherein any plea of a self-righteous nature was introduced. The prayer of Daniel was the substance of their supplications : “ O Lord ! righteousness belongeth unto thee ; but unto us confusion of faces : we do not present our supplications before thee for our own righteousness, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear ; O Lord, forgive ; for thine own sake, O my God *.” Nor have I observed that any public Liturgies (the Mass-book excepted) guide men to plead any thing in their prayers, for acceptance with God, but grace, mercy, the blood and righteousness of Christ alone.

Wherefore I judge it best (let others think as they please) for those who would learn this doctrine aright, to place their consciences in the presence of God, and their persons before his tribunal ; and then, upon a due consideration of his greatness, righteousness and holiness, to inquire what the Scripture directs them to as their refuge, and what plea it becomes them to make. Secret thoughts of God and themselves ; retired meditations ; death-bed preparations for an immediate appearance before the throne, speak other things than many contend for.

III. A clear apprehension, and due sense, of the greatness of our apostasy from God ; of the depravity of our nature thereby ; of the power and guilt of sin, and of the holiness and severity of the law, are necessary to a right understanding of the doctrine of Justification.

Hence the Apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Romans, intending largely to discourse on this doctrine,

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¹⁸ Dan. ix. 7, 18, 19. So Psalm cxliii. 2. and cxxx 2—4.

first labours to convince all who would be justified, that they are in a state of sin and danger. Chap. i. 2, 3. Ignorance of this is the foundation of the Pelagian heresy, and of all other mistakes concerning the grace of God : for not conceiving aright of our dreadful apostasy from God, nor of its effects, in the universal depravity of our nature, persons deny the necessity both of the satisfaction of Christ, and the efficacy of divine grace in our recovery. Hence the principal ends of the mission, both of Christ and the Holy Spirit, are renounced ; which issues in the denial of the divinity of the one, and the personality of the other. The fall not being great, and the disease thereby contracted easily healed ; and there being little or no harm in things now unavoidable to our nature ; it is no great matter to be relieved from the whole, by a mere act of favour, on the use of our own endeavours : nor is the efficacious grace of God essential to our sanctification and obedience—as these men suppose. Hence, Justification may be treated with pleasantry and subtlety as they see occasion, and from hence arise the present differences about it. Hence, some are so far from desiring a perfect righteousness to be imputed to them, that they boast of a perfection in themselves. Thus the Pelagians of old gloried in their sinless perfection in the sight of God, even when they were convinced of sinful miscarriages in the sight of men. While men have no sense of the spiritual disorder of their souls ; of the secret actings of sin within them, obstructing all that is good, promoting all that is evil, and defiling all they do ; while they are not engaged in a constant conflict with the first motions of sin, esteeming them the greatest burdens of their lives ; but despise those who confess them to God, we are not to wonder that with an assured confidence, they reject the righteousness of Christ ; for no man will be solicitous for the righteousness of another, who hath one at home, that will serve his turn.

Where-

Wherefore, if we would either teach or learn the doctrine of Justification in a due manner, a clear apprehension of the greatness of our apostasy from God, a due sense of the guilt of sin, a deep experience of its power, are absolutely necessary. We have nothing to do with men, who, through the fever of pride, have lost the understanding of their miserable condition. "The whole need not the physician, but the sick." Those who are pierced to the heart for sin, and cry out, "What shall we do to be saved?" will understand what we have to say. Against others we must defend the truth as God shall enable. And it is a certain fact, that, as men rise in their notions about the extenuation of sin, so they fall in their regard to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is equally true, on the other hand, that as unbelief produces in men a disesteem of the person and righteousness of Christ, they are inevitably led to seek for countenance to their consciences, in the extenuation of sin; so insensibly are the minds of men diverted from Christ, and seduced to place confidence in themselves *.

IV. The opposition which the Scripture makes between grace and works, with the exclusion of the one, and the assertion of the other in our Justification, deserves a previous consideration.

The principal seat of this doctrine is, confessedly, in the Epistles of Paul to the Romans, Galatians, and Hebrews: in the first especially. Wherein he lays it down as a fundamental maxim, that, in the Gospel, "The righte-

* So they are instructed to do by the best of the Philosophers:—
" Unum bonum est, quod beatæ vitæ causa et firmamentum est, tibi fidere." Senec. Epist. 31.—The sum of their faith is given by Tully. *De Nat. Deor.* " Virtutem nemo unquam Deo retulit; nimisrum recte " propter virtutem enim jure laudamur, et in virtute recte gloriamur, " quod non contingerebat, si donum a Deo, non a nobis haberemus."— " No man ever thanked God for being virtuous; for virtue we are " justly praised; in virtue we rightly glory, which we could not do " if it were from God, and not from ourselves."

righteousness of God is revealed *." All men who have any knowledge of God and themselves cannot but inquire after righteousness, for it is the only mean of an advantageous relation to God. Now the only notion of it that the generality of men have is, that this righteousness must be their own ; inherent in them, and performed by them † : this is the uniform language of natural conscience, of the law, and of the philosophers ‡ ; this therefore is the only righteousness which they seek after. But the Apostle declares, that in the Gospel another righteousness is revealed—the righteousness of another ; the righteousness of God, and that is revealed to faith : for not only is the righteousness itself different from the principles just mentioned, but also the way in which we partake of it. Righteousness, it should seem, should rather be from works to works—from the work of grace in us, to the work of obedience done by us, as the Papists affirm : No, saith the Apostle, it is from *faith to faith*.

This is his general Thesis ; in the confirmation of which he excludes from Justification every thing but the righteousness of God, and the faith of believers. For this purpose he considers all persons who seek after righte-

* Rom. i. 17. † Rom. x. 3.

‡ Mr. Polhill, in his *Speculum Theologiae*, page 415, gives us the sentiments of some of the most celebrated Pagans on this head. "The Philosopher, saith Epictetus, expects all from himself. Deorum immortalium munus est, quod vivimus ; Philosophiae, quod bene vivimus. Our life is from the gods ; but, which is greater than life, our virtue, is from philosophy." Thus Seneca, their virtuoso, could vie perfection with God himself : "Hoc est quod philosophia mihi promittit, ut me parem Deo faciat, saith Seneca :—Philosophy was to make him equal to God" Nay, there is a strain higher : "Est aliquid, quo sapiens antecedet Deum, ille naturae beneficio, non suo, sapiens est," saith he. "There is something where-in a wise man hath the precedence of God : God is God by nature, but the wise man is so by his reason and will." Some Pagans, as we are assured by Austin, would not be Christians, quia sufficient sibi de bona vita sua—because they could live well of themselves. (Edit.)

righteousness, and the means whereby they hoped to attain it, declaring the failure of all such persons, and the insufficiency of all their efforts.

1. He considers the *Gentiles*, with all their notions of God ; their religious worship, and their conversation : and from all that could be observed among them, he concludes, that they neither were, nor could be justified before God, but that they were all, and that most deservedly, obnoxious to the sentence of death *.

2. He considers the *Jews*, who enjoyed the written Law and its privileges ; and on many considerations he excludes them also from the possibility of attaining Justification by them ; for they had sinned openly against their allowed rule of righteousness, as the Gentiles had against the law of nature †.

3. He proves the same against all sorts of persons, whether Jews or Gentiles, because of the universal depravity of their nature, and the horrible effects of it in their hearts and lives : proving that thus they were “ shut up under sin,” and “ came short of righteousness.”

4. Because the Law was given of God, as the rule of obedience, and the works of the Law might with some pretence be pleaded as a justifying righteousness, he considers the nature, use, and end of the Law, manifesting its utter insufficiency to justify us before God ‡.

5. On these principles he peremptorily concludes, That all the sons of men are guilty before God ; obnoxious to death, and are deprived of all excuse.

Hence he proceeds with his inquiry, How men may be delivered from this condition ? In the resolution of which, he makes mention of nothing in themselves, except that *faith* which receives the atonement. That whereby we are justified, saith he, is, *The righteousness of God*, which is by *faith* of Jesus Christ § ; and he positively excludes every thing in and of ourselves, that might

* Rom. i. 19, &c. † Rom. ii. ‡ Rom. iii. 19, 20. § Rom. iii.

might pretend to an interest herein, as inconsistent with the righteousness of God.

The whole Scripture speaks the same language: *The Grace of God*; *the Promise of Mercy*; *the free Pardon of Sin*; *the Blood of Christ*; *his Obedience*, and *the Righteousness of God* in him, received and rested on by faith, are every where asserted to be the causes and means of our Justification, in opposition to every thing in ourselves. Some places to this purpose may be recited.

The foundation of the whole is laid in the first promise, wherein the destruction of the work of the devil, by the suffering of the Seed of the woman, is proposed as the only relief for sinners:—"It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," Gen. iii. 15.—"Abraham believed in the Lord, and he counted it unto him for righteousness," Gen. xv. 6.—"And Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, putting them on the head of the goat," Lev. xvi. 21, 22.—"I will go in the strength of the Lord God, I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only," Psa. lxxi. 16.—"Surely shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness and strength; in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory," Isa. xlvi. 24, 25:—"All we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all," Isa. liii. 6.—"For this is his name whereby he shall be called, the Lord our righteousness," Jer. xxiii. 6.—"He shall finish the transgression, and make an end of sin, and make reconciliation for iniquity, and bring in everlasting righteousness," Dan. ix. 24.—"Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses," Acts xiii. 38, 39.—"Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption

demption that is in Jesus Christ ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God : to declare at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then ? It is excluded. By what law ? of works ? Nay, but by the law of faith.. Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law," Rom. iii. 24—28. — " Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered ; blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin," Rom. iv. 2—8. — " For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous," chap. v. 15—19. — " There is therefore no condemnation unto them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death," chap. viii. 1, 2. — " For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believeth," chap. x. iv.— " And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace ; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace, otherwise work is no more work," chap. xi. 6. — " For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin ; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him," 2 Cor. v. 21.— " Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ : even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law : for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified," Gal. ii. 16.— " For by grace ye are saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves ; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man

man should boast," Eph. ii. 8—10. ——" Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him; not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith," Phil. iii. 8, 9.

These are some of the places in which the Scripture represents to us the grounds of our acceptance with God, and in which every thing of our own is excluded; faith alone excepted, whereby we receive the atonement. And on the other hand, the whole is assigned to grace, mercy, the obedience and blood of Christ.

The inquiry then, upon the consideration of the State of the person to be justified, as before described, and the proposals of relief as now expressed, is simply this—Whether it be the wisest and safest course for such a person, seeking to be justified before God, to take himself absolutely to *sovereign Grace* and the *Meditation of Christ*; or to place some confidence in his own graces, duties, works, and obedience? And I cannot but suppose that a convinced sinner, will readily determine which to do. In putting this great difference to *umpirage*, that we may not be thought to fix on a partial arbitrator, we shall refer to *Cardinal Bellarmine*, one of our greatest and most learned adversaries in this cause. And he positively gives us his determination in these well-known words: "By reason of the uncertainty of our own righteousness, and the danger of vain-glory, it is the safest course to repose our whole trust in the mercy and kindness of God alone *." This determination he confirms by two scriptures: — The first is, Dan. ix. 18. "We do not present our supplications before thee for

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our

* Propter incertitudinem proprie*t* justitiae, et periculum inanis gloriæ, *tutissimum* est fiduciam totam in sola misericordia Dei et benignitate reponere.—*Bellar.* de *Ju*stificat.** lib. 5. cap. 7. prop. 3.

our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies." And the other is, Luke xvii. 10. " When you have done all these things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants." And after confirming his resolution with several testimonies of the Fathers, he concludes with this dilemma—" Either a man hath true merits, or he hath not. If he hath not, he is perniciously deceived, and seduceth himself, trusting in false merits ; if he hath them, he loseth nothing while he looks not to them, but trusts in God alone." So that, whether a man have any good works or not, as to his Justification before God, it is best and safest for him not to place any dependence upon them. And if this be true, he might have spared his pains in writing his sophistical books to seduce men into a contrary opinion : For to what purpose do we labour and strive with endless disputations, to prefer our obedience to some office in Justification, if, after all, we find it the safest course, with *Job*, to abhor ourselves in the presence of God ; and, with the *Publican*, to fly to grace and mercy ; placing all our confidence in them, through the obedience and blood of Christ *.

V. The Scripture represents to us a *Commutation between Christ and believers, as to sin and righteousness* ; this also must previously be considered.

This

* So died that great Emperor, *Charles the Fifth*. Thus he reasoned with himself: " That in himself he was altogether unworthy to obtain the kingdom of heaven by his own works or merits ; but that his Lord God, who enjoyed it on a double right, by inheritance of the Father, and the merit of his own passion, was contented with the one himself, and freely granted unto him the other ; on whose free grant he laid claim thereto, and in confidence thereof he should not be confounded : for the oil of mercy is poured only into the vessel of faith ; that is, the trust of a man despairing of himself, and resting in his Lord : otherwise to trust unto his own works or merits, is not faith, but treachery ; that sins are blotted out by the mercy of God ; and therefore we ought to believe that our sins can be pardoned by him alone, against whom alone we have sinned ; and whom there is no sin, and by whom alone sins are forgiven."

This was taught in the church of old by the ordinance of the *Scape Goat*. " And Aaron shall lay his hands on the head of the Goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, putting them on the head of the Goat; and the Goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities," Lev. xvi. 21. Now it is generally acknowledged, that what was done to this animal, was only a representation of what was done really in the person of Christ. Aaron not only confessed the sins of the people over the Goat, but he also put them on his head. It is therefore said, *he bare them all upon him.* He did not *transfuse* sin from one subject into another, but *transferred* the guilt of it from one to another. Hence, the Jews say, that " all Israel was made as innocent on the day of expiation, as they were on the day of creation." The language of every sacrifice is—" Let the guilt be upon him." Hence the sacrifice itself was called **SIN**, and **GUILT**.

So God " laid on Christ the iniquities of us all," that " by his stripes we might be healed *." Our " iniquity was laid on him," and " he bare it;" and through his bearing it, we are freed from it. Our sin was his, imputed to him; his merit is ours, imputed to us. " He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him †." This is the *Commutation* I mentioned—He was *made sin for us*, we are *made the righteousness of God in him*; God not imputing sin to us, but imputing righteousness to us, doth it on this ground alone, That he was made sin for us.

This blessed *Permutation*, as to sin and righteousness, is a principal object of our faith, and on this our peace with God is founded. And though these are the acts of God, and not ours; yet are we by faith to *exemplify* them in our own souls, and really to perform what on our part is required to their *application* to us, whereby we receive the atonement. Christ calls to him all those

C 2 who

* Isa. liii. 5, 6, 11. † 2 Cor. v. 21.

who are weary and heavy laden * ;" the weight that lies on the consciences of men, is the burden of sin. So the Psalmist complains, that " his sins were a burden too heavy for him to bear † ." This burden Christ bore, when God " laid our iniquities upon him,"—" made them to meet upon him" as a heavy burden ‡ . In the application of this to our own souls, it is required that we be sensible of the weight and burden of our sins ; so the Lord Christ calls us unto him with it, that he may ease us. This he doth in the preaching of the Gospel, wherein he is " evidently crucified before our eyes || ." In the view which faith takes of him as crucified, and under a sense of his invitation to come to him with our burden, the believer cordially approves and embraces the righteousness and grace of God ; gives consent to what is thus done, as becoming the infinite wisdom and grace of God, and therein he rests. Such a person seeks no more to establish his own righteousness, but submits to the righteousness of God. Herein by faith doth he leave that burden on Christ, which he called him to bring with him, and complies with the wisdom and righteousness of God in laying it upon him : and thus he receives that " everlasting righteousness" which Christ brought in, when " he made an end of sin, and reconciliation for transgressors § ."

VI. We

* Matt. xi. 28. † Psal. xxxviii. 4. ‡ Isa. liii. 6. || Gal. iii. 1.

§ The early Fathers of the Christian Church expressed themselves in the same manner. The excellent words of *Justin Martyr* deserve the first place:—" He gave his Son a ransom for us; the Holy " for transgressors; the Innocent for the nocent; the Just for the " unjust; the Incorrputible for the corrupt; the Immortal for mortals. For what else could hide or cover our sins but this righteous- " ness? In whom else could we wicked and ungodly ones be justified, " or esteemed righteous, but in the Son of God alone? O sweet per- " mutation! O unsearchable operation! O blessed beneficence, ex- " ceeding all expectation!" Epist. ad Diognet.

Gregory

VI. We can never state our thoughts aright in this matter, unless we have a clear apprehension of the Introduction of Grace, by Jesus Christ, into the whole of our relation to God.

By the law of creation, we were in a state of immediate relation to God in our own persons, as our creator, preserver, and rewarder. "Do this and live" was the sole rule of that relation; and nothing was required to the consummation of that state but what was given us in our creation, enabling us to perform rewardable obedience. Consequently, there was nothing like that which the Gospel celebrates under the name of the grace, kindness, and love of God; nothing of the interposition of a Mediator, which is now the life and soul of religion. The introduction of these things renders our religion a mystery, a great mystery, 1 Tim. iii. 16. which men, for the most part, are very unwilling to receive: nor can it be otherwise, for there are no notions of this kind in the natural conceptions of our minds, nor are

C 3 they

Gregory Nyssen speaks to the same purpose, *Orat. 2. in Cant.* "He hath transferred unto himself the filth of my sins; communicated to me his purity, and made me partaker of his beauty."

So *Augustine*. "He was sin, that we might be made righteousness; not our own, but the righteousness of God; not in ourselves, but in him; as he was sin, not his own, but ours; not in himself, but in us. He made our sins to be his, that he might make his righteousness to be ours. O sweet commutation and change!" *Enchirid. ad Laurent.* cap. 41.

Chrysostome on the same words—*That we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* “ What word, what speech is this? what mind can comprehend or express it? for he saith, *He made him, who was righteous, to be made a sinner, that he might make sinners righteous;* nor doth he yet say so neither, but that which is far more sublime and excellent: for he speaks not of an inclination or affection, but expresseth the quality itself. For he says not he made him a sinner, but sin; that we might be made not merely righteous, but righteousness; and that, the righteousness of God!” *Hom.* 23. on 2 Eph. to Corinth.

they discoverable by reason in its best exercise * : for before our reason was debased by the fall, nothing of this kind was revealed to us ; it would have been inconsistent with the state in which we were to live to God, and must suppose the entrance of sin. It is not, therefore, probable, that our reason, as now corrupted, should embrace that which it knew nothing of in its best condition, and which was inconsistent with the way of attaining happiness which was suited to it. Our reason, therefore, which was given to us as a guide in the first constitution of our nature, is unapt to receive what is above it ; and, as corrupt, hath an *enmity* to it.

Hence, in the first public proposal of the mystery of grace, and the introduction of a Mediator and his righteousness into our relation to God, the whole was accounted mere folly by the wise and rational men of the world * : nor has the faith of them been ever truly received but by an act of the Holy Spirit on the human mind in its renovation. Hence it is very difficult to keep up, doctrinally and practically, the minds of men to the reality and spiritual height of this mystery ; for natural men neither understand nor like it. They look on it as difficult, perplexed, and unintelligible ; and therefore every attempt to accommodate religion to the principles of corrupt reason is generally acceptable. Men approve of what may be attained without the exercise of faith, prayer, or supernatural illumination ; but the mysteries of the Gospel, which can gain no admission into the mind, but by the effectual working of the Spirit of God, are opposed and despised, as enthusiasm and fanaticism.

This opposition to the mystery of grace arises, either from a desire to reduce the whole to the private reason of man, or, from not comprehending the harmony which subsists between all the parts of it.

1. The Socinians, and others, would reduce the whole to reason, and their own weak imperfect management

of

* 1 Cor. i. 18 *Vulgat.*

of it. On this very account they deny and deride the doctrine of the *Trinity*. The substance of all their pleas against it is, that it is incomprehensible by reason ; for unless you will grant them that what is *above their reason* is therefore *contrary to true reason*; that what is infinite and eternal, is perfectly comprehensible ; that what cannot be in things finite, cannot be in things infinite, with other such irrational imaginations, all the arguments of these pretended men of reason against the Trinity, become like “ chaff before the wind.” On the same ground they reject the *Incarnation of the Son of God*, as a most absurd conception. Now it is to no purpose to dispute with such men about Justification ; for we freely acknowledge, that all we believe concerning it are no better than “ old wives tales,” if the incarnation of the Son of God be such also. For I can as well understand how a mere man, however exalted, can exercise dominion over all mankind, knowing all their hearts at all times, as how the righteousness of *one* should be esteemed the righteousness of all believers, if that *one* be no more than a man ; if he be not the Son of God incarnate *.

2. The second branch of this opposition arises from the want of a due comprehension of that *Harmony* which subsists between all the parts of the mystery of grace.

There

* It is a fundamental rule with these men, that, “ Not what the Scripture saith is therefore to be accounted true, although it seems repugnant to any reasonings of ours, or is above what we can comprehend; but what seems repugnant to our reason, let the words of the Scripture be what they will, that we must conclude that the Scripture doth not say so, though it seem never so expressly so to do.” *Schleising. ad Meisn. def. Socin. pag. 102.* — So *Socinus*, speaking of the Satisfaction of Christ, saith in plain terms : “ For my part, if this (*doctrine*) were extantand written in the holy Scripture, not once but often, yet would I not therefore believe it to be so as you do: for whereas it can by no means be so” (*whatever the Scripture faith*), “ I would, as I do with others, in other places, make use of some less incommodious interpretation, whereby I would draw a sense out of the words that should be consistent with itself.”

There is a perfect harmony in all the works of creation, so that no part is destructive of the whole, or of any other part; but every thing contributes to the preservation and use of the universe. But in the mystery of God and his grace, the harmony and suitableness of one thing to another, with their tendency to the same end, is incomparably more excellent and glorious. For though God made all things at first in wisdom, yet is the new creation in Christ Jesus, ascribed peculiarly to the *riches* and *treasures* of that wisdom. Nevertheless it is generally despised. Some think there is no great wisdom in it; and others that no great wisdom is required to comprehend it. Few think it worth while to spend half that time in prayer and meditation in order to understand it, that others devote to the study of philosophy.

From the want of a due comprehension of this harmony, it is, that persons imagine an inconsistency between the most important parts of the mystery of the Gospel; and from hence proceed many of the present confusions respecting religion.

Thus the *Socinians* can see no consistency between the *Grace of God* and the *Satisfaction of Christ*; but oppose the latter, under pretence of vindicating the former. And where these things are expressly united in the same proposition, as in Rom. iii. 24. “We are justified freely by the grace of God, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through his blood.”—They will offer violence to common sense and reason, rather than not disturb that harmony which they cannot understand..

So likewise God’s *efficacious grace*, in the conversion of sinners, and the *exercise of the faculties of their minds* in a way of duty, are said to be inconsistent. And though they are both positively and frequently declared in the Scripture, yet, say these men, their consistency being repugnant to our reason, we maintain that the Scripture doth not assert one of them.

But

But there is no instance more pregnant to this purpose, than that now under consideration. *Free Justification, through the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ,* is opposed as inconsistent with the necessity of personal holiness ; and because the Socinians insist principally on this, it shall fully be considered apart ; and that holiness which they pretend to, without it, shall be tried by the unerring rule.

Wherefore I desire it may be observed, that in pleading for this doctrine, we do it as a principal part of the introduction of grace into our whole relation to God. Hence we grant—That it is unsuited, yea, foolish, to the principles of unenlightened and unsanctified reason ; and this is the principal cause of all the opposition that is made to it. We grant also—That the necessary relation there is between Justification and personal Obedience, will neither be understood nor improved, but by, and in, the exercise of the wisdom of faith. For

This relation is evident to that *spiritual wisdom,* whereby we are enabled, doctrinally and practically, to comprehend the harmony of the mystery of God, and the consistency of all its parts. It is also made evident by the Scripture, wherein both these are plainly asserted. It is likewise fully evident, in the gracious conduct of the Spirit of truth and grace, which the minds of believers are under, and the inclinations of that new principle of the divine life by which they are actuated : for though, from the remains of sin within them, temptations may arise to a continuance in sin, because grace hath abounded ; yet are their minds so formed by the doctrine of this grace, and the grace of this doctrine, that the abounding of grace therein, is the principal motive to their abounding in holiness.

VII. There are some *common prejudices,* which are frequently urged against the doctrine of the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ, which, as they will not come under our notice in the progress of the work, may be briefly examined in these previous considerations.

I. It

1. It is urged by some, that this *Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ*, is no where expressly mentioned in the Scripture*. To this we answer: (1.) It is the *Thing only* which we plead for; if that be not plainly taught and confirmed in Scripture; we will relinquish it: but if we can prove that the doctrine intended by this expression, is a divine truth sufficiently testified in the word of God, then is this expression *reductively scriptural*, and the truth itself, so expressed, a divine verity. (2.) We also say, that the *same thing* is taught by *similar phrases* in Scripture; for it affirms, that by the obedience of one (that is, Christ) many were made righteous," Rom. v. 18.; and that we are made righteous by the *Imputation of Righteousness* unto us.— "Blessed is the man unto whom God *imputeth righteousness*," chap. iv. 6. and if we are made righteous by the imputation of righteousness unto us, then, that obedience or righteousness whereby we are made righteous, is imputed to us.

2. *Socinus* objects against this doctrine—That nothing is said of it in the *Evangelists*, nor in the public sermons of Christ, nor in his private discourses with his Disciples †. This notion of his has been adopted by some among ourselves, and improved by a dangerous comparison between the writings of the Evangelists and other parts of the New Testament.

But this boldness is not only unwarrantable, but to be abhorred. What place of Scripture, what ecclesiastical writer, what single precedent of any one sober christian writer, will countenance such a comparison? At present, to remove this objection, it may be observed,

* This objection comes with an ill grace from *Bellarmino*, and others of the Romish persuasion, for they not only profess their whole faith in unscriptural terms; but also believe, as they avow, many things with divine faith, which are not at all revealed, but drained out of the tradition of the church.

† *Socinus* vehemently urges this objection against the whole of the expiation of sin by the death of Christ. *De Servator.* par. 4. cap. 9.

served, (1.) That what the Lord Christ taught his Disciples in his personal ministry, was suited to that œconomy of the church which was antecedent to his death and resurrection. He withheld nothing from them that was necessary to their faith, obedience, and consolation in that state. He instructed them in many things out of the Scripture; made many new revelations to them, and frequently rectified their judgments; but he made no clear distinct revelation to them of those sacred mysteries, which are peculiar to the faith of the New Testament, and which were not to be distinctly apprehended before his death and resurrection.

(2.) What he revealed afterwards by his Spirit to the Apostles, was no less *immediately from himself*, than what he delivered to them with his own mouth. The epistles of the Apostles are no less Christ's sermons, than that which he uttered on the mount. Wherefore,

(3.) Neither in the things themselves, nor in the way of their delivery, is there any advantage of the one sort of writing above the other; both proceed from the same wisdom, grace and love, and are of equal veracity, authority and efficacy.

(4.) The writings of the Evangelists do not contain all the instructions which Christ gave to his Disciples; for he was seen of them, "after his resurrection forty days, and spake with them of the things pertaining to the kingdom," Acts i. 3. yet nothing is recorded except a few occasional speeches. Wherefore,

(5.) As to the extent of divine revelations, objectively, those which he granted by his Spirit to his Apostles after his ascension, were beyond those which he personally taught them; for he told them plainly not long before his death, that he had *many things* to say to them, which then they could not bear *, for the knowledge of which he refers them to the *coming of the Spirit* †; on which account it was expedient he should depart,

* John xvi. 2. † Ver. 13, 14.

depart, that the Spirit might come, to which he refers the *full* and *clear* manifestation of the mysteries of the Gospel. So false, as well as dangerous and scandalous, are the insinuations of *Socinus* and his followers.

We observe, further, that the writings of the Evangelists are adequate to their intended purposes; which were, to record the genealogy, conception, birth, acts, miracles and teachings of our Saviour, so as to evince him to be the true Messiah. So St. John testifieth, who wrote the last of them.—“ Many other signs truly did Jesus, which are not written in this book; but these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God *.” Upon this confirmation, all things declared concerning him in the Old Testament, all that was taught in types and sacrifices, became the object of faith, in that sense, wherein they were interpreted by the accomplishment (that this doctrine was before revealed in them, shall hereafter be proved). It is therefore not to be wondered at if some things, and those of the highest importance, should be declared more fully in other writings of the New Testament, than in the Evangelists.

Again, The pretence itself is wholly false; for there are as many pregnant testimonies to this truth in one alone of the Evangelists, as in any other book of the New Testament; namely, in the book of *John* †. These shall be produced in their proper place.

3. The *differences* which have been among *Protestant* writers on this subject, have been pleaded in prejudice of it. We answer, that till very lately it might be truly said, that the faith and doctrine of all Protestants, as to this article, was entirely the same. For however they varied in their way and methods of declaring it, which gave an appearance of some contradiction among them, yet in this they generally agreed, that it is the righteousness of Christ, and not our own,

on

* John xx. 30, 31. † See John i. 12, 17, 19. ch. iii. 14.—18, 36. chap. v. 24.

on account of which we receive the pardon of sin ; acceptance with God ; are declared righteous, and have a title to the heavenly inheritance.

VIII. To close these previous discourses.—It is worthy our consideration, *What weight was laid on this doctrine of Justification, at the first Reformation; and what influence it had in the whole of that great work.*

It is well known, that this doctrine gave the first occasion to the Reformation, and was the main hinge on which it turned. It was justly declared to be *Articulus stantis aut cadentis Ecclesie*.—That article of faith on which the standing or falling of the church depends, and the vindication of this alone, deserved all the pains which were taken in the whole affair. But things are now, and that by virtue of this doctrine, much changed in the world, though it be not so understood or acknowledged ; for no small benefit accrued to the world by the Reformation, even among them who did not receive it.

It has fallen out, in this respect, much as it did upon the first entrance of Christianity ; for then there was an emanation of light from the Gospel, which affected the minds even of those who remained Pagans. The vulgar themselves obtained better notions of God, and of the origin and rule of the universe, than they had before. And by virtue of this light, speculative men reformed and improved the old philosophy. Nevertheless they still maintained their cause, and rendered their opposition to the Gospel far more plausible ; for after they had discarded the grosser conceptions of men about the divine nature, and had blended the light of truth with their philosophical notions, they made a vigorous effort for the reinforcement of Heathenism.

It has been partly the same, I say, with respect to the Reformation. The first Reformers found their own consciences, and the consciences of men in general, immersed in darkness, harrassed with fear and terror,

and kept under the bondage of endless anxieties upon their convictions of sin : to obtain relief, they were directed to auricular Confession, Penances, Pilgrimages, Sacramentals, Indulgencies, priestly Absolutions, mis-satical expiatory Sacrifices for the living and the dead, Works, satisfactory and supererogatory, the Merit and Intercession of departed saints, Purgatory, &c. Almost the whole of their religion consisted in these things, and to instigate them to the utmost diligence in the observation of them, their minds were stuffed with traditions, and stories of visions, apparitions, and other frightful imaginations. But a great alteration has taken place, even in the Papal Church, with regard to these things. That every church is at ease, compared with its former state before the Reformation ; for by the light of truth which was thereby diffused, the consciences even of the vulgar sort, are in some measure freed from their childish terrors : while the learned among them have been enabled to reduce the opinions and practices of their church to a more defensible posture, and make their opposition to the truths of the Gospel more plausible than before ; so that that doctrine, which was so horrid, as to drive many from their communion, is now so artfully represented, as to be made an argument for returning to it.

The Reformers, finding the consciences of men tormented with guilt and fear, and destitute of any steady guidance into the way of peace with God, laboured diligently in their inquiries after the truth in this matter, which they knew must be the only mean of deliverance : they took pains to eradicate from the minds of the people their former superstitions ; and to communicate to them the knowledge of the righteousness of God by faith, which is revealed to faith ; and thereby to deliver them from their bondage and distress, that they might enjoy solid peace with God : and God was with them. Now it deserves our consideration, whether we should, on every cavil and sophism of men, not so

so taught, nor employed, nor tried, nor owned of God as they were, easily part with that doctrine of truth, in which alone they found peace to their own souls, and whereby they were instrumental to give peace and liberty to multitudes; accompanied with the visible effects of holiness, to the praise of God by Jesus Christ.

We have, now, the same reasons that they had, to be careful about the preservation of this doctrine pure and entire, though we may not expect equal success; for, in general, the minds of men are in another posture. Under the power of ignorance and superstition men formerly were, yet many were impressed with a sense of guilt. With us it is much otherwise. Notional light, without a sense of sin, leads men into a contempt of this doctrine, and indeed of the whole mystery of the Gospel*. Men may talk and dispute as they please, while at peace in their own minds; but when once they shall be awakened to another apprehension of things than they are now aware of, they will be put upon new resolutions. And if the doctrine

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* In my judgment *Luther* spoke the truth when he said—*Anno articulo justificationis, simul amissa est tota doctrina Christiana.* And I wish he had not been a true prophet, when he foretold, that in the following ages the doctrine hereof would be again obscured.

Some Protestant writers, *Ludovicus le Blanc* particularly, have lately endeavoured to reduce the controversy between us and the Papists on this point to an appearance of less difference than was commonly supposed. Hence, they have produced the concessions of the most sober among them, in their ascriptions to grace and the merit of Christ, on the one hand; and the express judgment of the Protestants as to the necessity of good works, on the other. But, although it is commendable to pare off all unnecessary occasions of debate, provided we go not too near the quick; yet, I must say, I have not seen the effect that might be desired from such an attempt: for when each party interprets its own concessions, as it must, the breach continues as wide as ever. Nor can it be otherwise, unless we submit entirely to the Decrees and Canons of the Council of Trent, wherein the doctrine of Scripture is anathematized. Nor will they make any other use of our concessions, than to increase the clamour of differences among ourselves.

of free Justification by the blood of Christ be again corrupted, exploded and forgotten; if men are diverted from putting their trust in the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ, the first impressions of a sense of sin, which shall reach their consciences, will drive them to seek shelter in any thing that offers relief. And though the methods provided in the Church of Rome for that purpose are now generally disliked and despised, yet, as men cannot always live in such an uncertainty of mind, as the best of their own righteousness will produce, they will rather betake themselves to that variety of means for the ease of conscience, which the Roman church affords, foolish as they now appear, than abide where they are, without the least hope of relief. Men may go on for a time with satisfaction to their own minds, but if once they are brought to a stand, through conviction of sin, they must look beyond themselves for peace, or sit down without it to all eternity. Nor are the principles and ways which others adopt, in a contrary extreme, upon the rejection of this doctrine, at all more useful to the souls of men, though they may be more plausible, and better adapted to the genius of the present age; for they all arise from the want of a due sense of sin, and of the holiness and righteousness of God with respect to it; and when such principles prevail in the minds of men, they soon become careless, negligent, secure in sinning, and for the most part end in perfect indifference to all religion, or in *Atheism* itself.

C H A P. I.

*Justifying Faith; the Causes, Object, and Nature
of it, declared.*

TH E mean of Justification on our part is *Faith*. This is so frequently and expressly affirmed in Scripture, that it cannot, in direct terms, be denied. We shall therefore consider, 1. Its *nature*; and, 2. Its *use* in our Justification.

The Scripture mentions a *twofold* faith, whereby men believe the Gospel. There is a faith whereby we are justified, which “worketh by love,” which “purifieth the heart;” and he who hath this faith, shall assuredly be saved. There is also a faith, or believing, which produces none of these effects; which a man may have, and having no more, is not justified, nor can be saved. Thus it is said of *Simon* the magician, that “*be believed**,” when he was “in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity;” and therefore did not believe with that faith which “purifieth the heart.” We read also of many †, who, on seeing the miracles of Jesus, “believed on his name;” but “he did not commit himself to them, for he knew what was in man.” They did not believe on him as those do, who thereon “receive power to become the sons of God §.” Some, also, hearing the word, “receive it with joy; believing for awhile, but have no root §;” and faith without a root in the heart will not justify; for “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness ||.” And thus it is with them who shall cry, “Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?” who were, nevertheless, always workers of iniquity ||.

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* *Act* viii. 33. † *John* ii. 23, 24. § *John* i. 12. § *Luke* viii. 13. || *Rom.* x. 10. ¶ *Matt.* vii. 22, 23.

This faith is usually called *Historical*, not merely because the *history* of the Scripture is the object of it, for it respects the truth of the word and the promises of the Gospel in general; but because the *nature of that assent*, in which it consists, is the same that we give to any historical circumstances which are credibly related to us.

This faith hath various *degrees* and *effects*. All faith is an assent upon testimony; and divine faith is an assent upon divine testimony: according as this testimony is received, so are the degrees of this faith. Some receive it merely on human motives, and its agreement with their reason: this assent is a mere natural act of their understanding, which is the lowest degree of historical faith. Others, by means of some spiritual illumination, discover the evidences of divine truth on which it is founded, and their assent is firmer and more operative.

The *effects* are also various. In some it hath very little or no influence on their will, affections, or conversation; they profess to believe the Gospel, and yet live in all manner of sin. This is that *dead-faith* of which St. James speaks; it is like a mere carcass, without life or motion; it is an assent of the same kind which devils themselves are compelled to give, and this faith abounds in the world. In other persons, it produces various degrees of influence on the affections, and on the life, as represented in the several sorts of ground into which the seed of the word is cast. But this faith, in its utmost improvement, is usually called a *temporary faith*; for it is neither permanent against opposition, nor will it bring any to eternal rest *.

This, men may have and not be justified; yea, St. James affirms, that no man can be justified by it. It may, as we have said, produce great effects, which though not such as are peculiar to justifying faith, are such that the persons in whom they are wrought, may

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* Matt. xiii. 21.

and ought to be looked upon, in the judgment of charity, as true believers. This is that faith which may be *alone*. We are justified by faith *alone*; but we are not justified by that faith which can be alone. And I mention this to obviate that calumny, which some would fix on this doctrine, and who reproach us as *Solifidians*, *Antinomians*;—adversaries to the necessity of obedience and good works. Most of those who produce this charge, know it in their own consciences to be false; but this is their way of managing controversy: they can aver any thing that serves their cause, to the great scandal of religion. If by *Solifidians* they mean those who believe that faith alone is, on our part, the instrument of Justification—all the prophets and apostles were so, as shall be proved; but, if they mean those who affirm that the faith whereby we are justified is *alone*—separate, or separable, from the principle and fruit of holy obedience, they must find them out themselves: we know nothing of them, for we allow no faith to be justifying, but what virtually and radically contains in it universal obedience, as the effect is in the cause, and the fruit in the root.

In our consideration of the special nature of justifying faith, we shall inquire into four things. 1. The *Causes* of it on the part of God. 2. What is *previously required* unto it, in us. 3. The proper *Object* of it. 4. Its proper and peculiar *Effects*.

1. The doctrine of the *Causes* of faith, as to its origin in the divine will, is so large, and so connected with that of the way of the operation of divine grace in conversion, which I have handled elsewhere, that I shall not here insist upon it. For as it cannot be treated of in a few words according to its weight and worth; so to consider the subject largely, would divert us from our present argument. We shall therefore inquire,

2. *What is required, on our part, previously to our believing unto Justification of life.* And I say there is supposed, in all in whom this faith is wrought, the work

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of the law, in the conviction of sin, whereby the sinner hath a practical understanding of the nature of sin, its guilt and punishment, with his utter inability to deliver himself out of that state. This we affirm to be antecedently necessary to justifying faith. For

Without this, the true nature of faith can never be understood; for Justification is the deliverance of a convinced sinner, whose "mouth is stopped;" who is "guilty before God," and "shut up under sin;" a sense, therefore, of his condition is required unto believing. Hence one defines faith to be "the flight of a penitent sinner to the mercy of God in Christ."

The *order, relation, and use* of the Law and Gospel, evince the necessity of this conviction. That which any man is first concerned with, as to his eternal condition, is the Law. This is first presented to the soul, with its terms of righteousness and life, and its curse in case of failure. Without this the Gospel cannot be understood, nor its grace duly valued; for it is the revelation of God's way of relieving men from the curse of the law. Wherefore true faith, being evangelical in its principle, rule, and object, it cannot be acted by us, but on a supposition of the effect of the law in the conviction of sin.

This, also, our Saviour intimates in the Gospel; for he calls to him only those who are "weary and heavy laden;" affirming that "the whole need not a physician, but the sick;" and that he came "to call, not the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" meaning, not those who were *really* sinners, as all men are, but such as were *convinced of sin*, burdened with it, and seeking after deliverance. Such were the persons to whom St. Peter proposed the promise of the Gospel; they were "pierced to the heart," and exclaimed— "What shall we do?" Such also was the state of the Jailer, to whom St. Paul proposed salvation by Christ, as what he was to believe for his deliverance.

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The state of Adam, and God's dealing with him therein, is the best representation of the order of these things. As he was after the fall, so are we. He was utterly lost by sin, and convinced both of its nature and effects, by "the opening of his eyes."—This was the communication to his mind, of a sense of the nature, guilt, and effects of sin; this filled him with shame and fear; against the former he provided by fig-leaves; against the latter by hiding himself. In this condition, God, by an immediate inquisition into the matter of fact, sharpened the conviction by the addition of his own testimony, and cast him actually under the curse of the law, in a juridical denunciation of it. In this forlorn condition, God proposed the promise of redemption by Christ; and this was the object of that faith whereby he was to be justified.

The Effects of this conviction, with their respect to our Justification, may also be briefly considered; and these are sorrow, fear, and a desire of deliverance. It is impossible that any one should be really convinced of sin, but that a dislike of it, sorrow for it, and shame on account of it will ensue. Fear of punishment will follow; for conviction respects not only the preceptive part of the law, but also the sentence and curse of it; wherefore, as by faith we "fly from the wrath to come," where there is no apprehension of that wrath, there can be no ground for believing. Desire of deliverance then becomes unavoidable; and discovers itself by care, solicitude and restlessness of soul. These internal acts of the mind will also produce several external duties, as abstinence from known sins; for those who begin to find it is an evil and bitter thing to sin against God, cannot but endeavour to abstain from it. The duties of religious worship, in prayer and hearing the word, will be diligently regarded; and all

all these will be accompanied with *Reformation of life* and *conversation* *.

3. The next thing to be considered, is *The proper object of justifying faith*, or its office and duty in our Justification. Concerning which there are two opinions, which may be looked upon as extremes; the one in an *Excess*, and the other in *Defect*. The first, is that of the Roman Church, and those who agree with them therein; who affirm, that faith is nothing more than an *assent to divine revelation*—that the whole Scripture, and all the truths of it, are equally the object of faith, as justifying. Some observations I shall make, whereby we may discover what truth there is in this assertion, and wherein it falls short of it.

We readily grant, that *all faith* is an act of our souls, whereby we assent to the truth of what is not evident to *sense* or *reason*, upon the testimony of another; and that divine faith is, in general, an assent to the truth that is proposed to us upon divine testimony. Now, justifying faith certainly includes this assent; but the whole nature of it does not consist therein, be it ever so firm and steadfast, or whatever effects in obedience it may produce: For, (1.) This assent is an act of the *understanding* only; but believing is an *act of the heart* †, which comprises all the faculties of the soul: and it is frequently described as an *act of the will*, though not of

* It must, however, be carefully observed, that none of these are *conditions* of our Justification, for there is no covenant or promise of God making them such. Besides, Justification may be where the *outward acts* just mentioned, are not performed. Adam, the jailer, and the converts mentioned Acts ii. were justified without them. Nor are they *formal dispositions* to Justification, because it consists not in the introduction of any new form or inherent quality in the soul. Nor are they *moral preparations* for it; for being antecedent to evangelical faith, no man has any design in them but to seek righteousness by the works of the law, which is no preparation for Justification. It is an act of mere sovereign grace to call a convinced sinner to believing, or faith in the promise, unto Justification of life.

† Rom. x. 10.

of that only ; but without an act of the will, no man can believe as he ought. We come to Christ as an act of the will—" whosoever *will*, let him come :" and to be willing, is taken for, to believe *. (2.) *All divine truth* is equally the object of this assent ; it respects not the special nature or use of any one truth, more than another : hence, that Judas was the traitor, must have as great an influence into our Justification, as, that Christ died for our sins. (3.) This assent may be true and sincere, where there hath been no previous work of the law, nor conviction of sin ; the necessity of which we have shewn. (4.) It is not a way of seeking relief to a convinced sinner, who is the only capable subject of Justification. (5.) It is no more than devils themselves may have, who, " believe there is one God," and doubtless believe also what that God reveals, and may consist with all manner of wickedness : and it is no wonder if men deny us to be justified by faith, who know no other faith than this. (6.) It no way answers the Scripture descriptions of faith, as—" receiving Christ"—" receiving the atonement"—" the word or grace of God"—" cleaving to God," or, " trusting and hoping in him :" all which require other acts of the soul, which are not peculiar to the understanding only. (7.) It agrees not with the *experience* of true believers, to which we must always have respect in our inquiries in this matter. It is not what *notions* men may have hereof, but what we, if true believers, actually perform : and in this view, I deny that a mere assent to the truth, however firm it may be, and whatever effects in a way of duty it may produce, amounts to the genuine experience of any one true believer, as containing the entire actings of his soul towards God for pardon and justification. (8.) That faith alone is *justifying*, which is actually accompanied with Justification ; for to suppose a man to have justifying faith, and not to be justified, is to

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* See John i. 12. || v. 40. || vi. 35. Psal. cx. 3.

suppose a contradiction. But it is not so with all those who give this assent; it is therefore sufficiently evident, that something more is absolutely necessary unto justifying faith.

On the other hand, it is supposed, that by some, the *object of faith* is too much restrained, and the nature of it confined to one particular act of the mind, so as not to comprise all that is ascribed to it in Scripture.

Some affirm, that the *pardon of our sins* in particular is the object of justifying faith. Faith, therefore, they say, is a full persuasion of the forgiveness of *our sins*; or, that what Christ did, and suffered, was *for us*, in particular: and thus a particular application of special mercy to our own consciences is made the essence of faith; from whence it would follow, that whoever is destitute of this persuasion, hath no saving faith; which is by no means to be admitted. Those who maintain this opinion, are, I fear, neglective of their own *experience*; or rather consider not other actings of their faith, included in this persuasion, in which its essence consists. I doubt not that this persuasion, for which they plead, faith is suited unto, aimeth at, and doth ordinarily effect, in true believers who improve it, and grow in its exercise in a due manner.

Many great Divines, at the first reformation, did, as the Lutherans generally still do, make the mercy of God in Christ, and thereby the forgiveness of our own sins, to be the proper object of justifying faith, as such; the essence of which, therefore, they placed in a *fiducial trust* in the grace of God by Christ, as declared in the promises, with a certain *unwavering application* of it to ourselves. And I say, with some confidence, that those, who endeavour not to attain this, either understand not the nature of believing, or are very neglective both of the grace of God, and of their own peace.

That which induced those great and holy persons so to express themselves, was the state of the consciences of

of men with whom they had to do. Their contest with the Roman Church, was about the way in which the troubled conscience might attain peace : for at that time men were instructed to seek this, not only by obedience to the commands of God, but also by the observance of numberless superstitions of human invention ; and hereby the consciences of men were kept in constant bondage and perplexity. When the leaders of the people in that church observed this, and found that all the methods they proposed were insufficient to produce the least peace of conscience, or assurance of the pardon of sin, they made it a part of their doctrine, that "the belief of the pardon of our own sins, and "assurance of the love of God in Christ, were false and "pernicious." Hence arose the important controversy, "Whether there be, by and according to the Gospel, "a state of rest and assured peace with God to be attained in this life?" And having all imaginable advantages for the proof hereof, from the very nature, use, and end of the Gospel ; from the grace, love, and design of God in Christ ; from the efficacy of his death and intercession, they assigned these things to be the special object of justifying faith; and that faith to be a fiduciary trust in Christ : But yet, I never read any of them who affirmed, that every true and sincere believer always had a full assurance of the special love of God, or of the pardon of his own sins ; though they plead that the Scripture requires this of them in a way of duty, and that they ought to aim at the attainment of it.

These things I shall leave as I find them ; for I shall not contend about the way of expressing the truth, where the substance of it is retained. What I aim at, is the glory of the grace of God in Christ, and the attainment of rest and peace to the souls of men. Wherefore, neither opposing nor rejecting the judgments of others, I shall propose my own thoughts concerning it ;

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38 JUSTIFYING FAITH, THE CAUSES,

not without some hope, that they may communicate light on the subject, and promote the reconciliation of some differences among learned and holy men. I say, therefore, that the *Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the ordinance of God, in his work of mediation for the salvation of sinners, and as proposed in the promise of the Gospel for that end, is the proper adequate object of justifying faith.*

1. “The *Lord Jesus Christ himself*” is asserted to be the proper object of justifying faith. This appears from all those Scriptures, wherein that faith is declared to be—*believing in him—on his name; our receiving him, or looking to him.*

2. He is not proposed as the object of our faith *absolutely*, but “as the ordinance of God” to that end; who therefore is also the immediate object of faith as justifying: so *John v. 24.* “He that believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life:” and herein is comprised that grace and love of God, which is the moving cause of our Justification. *Rom. iii. 23, 24.* To which, if we add, *John vi. 29.* the object of faith is complete—“This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.” God the Father as *sending*, and the Son as *sent*—or as the ordinance of God, for the recovery of lost sinners, is the object of our faith *.

3. That he may be the object of our faith, he is “proposed in the promises of the Gospel;” which I here consider, not merely as divine revelations, but as they exhibit Christ as the ordinance of God, and the benefits of his mediation, to those who believe. Now there is a special *assent* to these promises, which some make the essence of justifying faith; and they consider the promises themselves as the proper *object* of it. It is true, that, in the actings of faith, there is a peculiar assent to them; yet this being only an act of the mind, neither the whole nature, nor the whole work of faith can consist therein.

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* *1 Pet. i. 21.*

4. "The *end*" for which Christ is proposed in the promises of the Gospel, namely, "the salvation of sinners," belongs to the object of faith, as justifying. Hence, the forgiveness of sins and eternal life, are proposed as things to be believed unto Justification, or as the object of our faith; and whereas the just is "to live by his faith," and believe for himself in particular, some have affirmed, that the pardon of our own sins, is the proper object of our faith; and indeed it belongs thereto, when in the way and order of God and the Gospel we can attain unto it.

Wherefore asserting "the Lord Jesus Christ, in the work of his mediation, to be the object of faith unto Justification," I include therein—the *grace of God*, which is the cause; the *pardon of sin*, which is the effect; and the *promises of the Gospel*, which are the means of communicating Christ and the benefit of his mediation to us. And all these things are so united in their mutual relations, and so connected in the purpose of God and in the Gospel, that the believing of any one of them virtually includes the belief of the rest; and if any one of them is disbelieved, the rest are frustrated and made void.

The due consideration of these things, removes all the difficulties that arise about the nature of faith. Some fix their faith, principally, on the *grace and love of God*; so especially did the saints under the Old Testament, before the clear revelation of Christ and his mediation: so did the Psalmist, *Psal. cxxx. 4.* and *xxxiii. 18.* and the Publican, *Luke xviii. 13.*: but this they did, not absolutely, but with respect to "the redemption that is in the blood of Christ *;" and so the Scripture proposes them to us, for this the channel of their communication to us. Some, again, fix their faith, principally, on Jesus Christ, his Mediation, and the benefits thereof; so the Apostle Paul, *Gal. ii. 20.*

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* *Dan. ix. 17.*

40 JUSTIFYING FAITH, THE CAUSES,

Phl. iii. 8. but this they do, not *absolutely*, but with respect to the grace and love of God, from whence they are communicated*. Some, in a *peculiar* manner, fix their souls in believing, on the Promises, as Abraham, for example †; and thus they are proposed to us in the Scripture, as the *object* of faith ‡; but not merely as divine revelations, but as they propose Christ and his benefits to us, from the grace and love of God. Some fix their faith on the things themselves, as pardon and eternal life; and these also are proposed to us in Scripture as the *object* of faith §; but in their proper order, as effects of the love of God, through Christ, and as proposed in the *Gospel*. And thus we have the object of faith entire, agreeably to the Scripture and experience||.

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* Rom. viii. 32. John iii. 16. Eph. i. 6, 8. † Gen. xv. 16. Rom. iv. 20. ‡ Acts ii. 39. Heb. iv. 1, 2. chap. vi. 12, 13. § Psal. 130. iv. Acts xxvi. 18. Tit. i. 2.

|| Some have inquired whether justifying faith, as such, hath equal respect to Christ, as a King and Prophet, as well as a Priest? To which I answer, 1. Faith respects the person of Christ for all those ends for which he is the ordinance of God. 2. We cannot so receive Christ in the promise, as to exclude any of his offices. 3. In receiving Christ for Justification, formally, our distinct design is to be justified, to be freed from guilt, and to obtain a perfect righteousness: every believer hath other designs also, as the sanctification of his nature, &c. But this is all he aims at in receiving Christ for Justification. 4. Justifying faith, in that act of it whereby we are justified, respects Christ in his priestly office alone, as he was the surety of the covenant. 5. But in this assertion, we do not *exclude*, but comprise all that depends on the satisfaction of Christ, or concurs to render it effectual to our Justification: as, (1.) The free grace of God, in giving Christ for us and to us. (2.) Whatever in Christ himself was necessary antecedently to his discharge of that office, accompanying it, or consequent upon it: such as his incarnation, obedience, resurrection, &c. (3.) All the means whereby the righteousness of Christ is applied to us; as the promise of the *Gospel*, and especially the Holy Spirit, who is the efficient cause thereof. 1 Cor. vi. xi.

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These things are impiously opposed by the Socinians and others, as inconsistent. They say, that the *grace of God*, and the satisfaction of Christ, are opposite and inconsistent; so that if we admit the one, we must deny the other: but as these things are so proposed in Scripture, as, that without granting them both, neither can be believed; so faith, which fixeth itself on Christ and redemption in his blood, as the ordinance of God, the effect of his wisdom, grace and love, finds rest in them both, and in nothing else.

The whole is expressed by the Apostle, *Rom.* iii. 24, 25. "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a Propitiation, through faith in his blood; to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins." To which we may add, *Ephes.* i. 6, 7. "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, according to the riches of his grace." That, by which we are justified, is the special *object* of our faith unto Justification: this is *Christ*, in the work of his mediation; for "in him, we have redemption, through his blood:" Christ, *as a propitiation*, is the cause of our Justification, and the object of our faith; but, then, he is so, under this formal consideration—as the *ordinance of God* for that end: God *set him forth* for that purpose; he is the effect of divine *wisdom*, grace and love: we have "redemption in his blood, according to the *riches of his grace*; and herein he abounds towards us in all *wisdom**."

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All the actings of the kingly and prophetical offices of Christ, are good, holy, and blessed in themselves; and no less necessary to our salvation, than the atonement which he made: but whatever he did on earth with God for the church, in obedience, suffering, and offering up of himself; and whatever he doth in heaven in intercession, belong entirely to his priestly office: And in these things alone doth a convinced sinner find relief, when he seeks after deliverance from sin and acceptance with God.

* Eph. i. 8.

Thus we reduce into a perfect harmony, whatever is spoken in the Scripture respecting the object of justifying faith: several things are distinctly mentioned, yet no one of them is to be taken as the entire, adequate object of faith: but consider them all in their relation to Christ, and they have all their proper place; namely, the grace of God, which is the cause; the pardon of sin, which is the effect; and the promises of the Gospel, which are the means, whereby Christ, and the benefits of his mediation, are communicated to us.

C H A P. II.

The Nature of Justifying Faith.

JUSTIFYING faith consisteth in the Heart's approbation of the way of Justification and salvation of sinners by Jesus Christ proposed in the Gospel, as proceeding from the grace, wisdom, and love of God, with its acquiescence therein as to its own concern and condition.

In the confirmation of this description of faith, we shall consider,

1. Its opposite, or privative unbelief.
 2. The design of God in the Gospel.
 3. The compliance of faith with that design; and,
 4. The order, method, and way of believing, as declared in the Scripture.
1. The Gospel is the revelation of that way of salvation for sinners, which God in his infinite wisdom, love, and grace, hath prepared. Herein, "the righteousness of God," that which he requires, accepts and approves unto salvation, "is revealed from faith to faith." It is "the record of God †;" and,
- "the

* Rom. i. 17. † 1 John v. x.

"the counsel of God*." In the preaching of the Gospel, this way of salvation is proposed to sinners, as the grand effect of divine wisdom and grace. Unbelief is the rejection, neglect, non-admission, or disapprobation of it, on the terms whereon, and for the ends for which, it is proposed. Thus the Pharisees "rejected the counsel of God against themselves," or to their own ruin †. "They would none of my counsel," is an expression to the same purpose ‡; so is, the "neglect of this great salvation §;" not giving it that admission which its excellency demands. It is called, a "disallowing of Christ ||;" "the stone, which the builders *disapproved*," as unfit for the place and use to which it was designed. This is unbelief.

Most of those who first rejected the Gospel, did it under this notion, that the way of salvation therein proposed, was a way not answering the divine goodness and power, such as they might safely confide in. "We preach Christ crucified," said the Apostle; "to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but to them that are called—Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God ¶." They proposed Christ crucified as the ordinance of God for the salvation of sinners; as the great effect of his wisdom and power; but unbelievers rejected it as such, esteeming it both weakness and folly.

And thus it is with unbelievers still. Their unbelief does not consist in the want of an *assent* to the truths of the doctrine of the Gospel; for, from such an assent they are said, in many places of the Scripture, to believe: Nor is it the want of a *special fiduciary application* of the promises of the Gospel to themselves, and the belief of the pardon of their own sins in particular; for this is not proposed to them in the Gospel, as that which they are first to believe; and there may be a believing

* Acts xx. 27. † Luke vii. 30. ‡ Prov. i. 30. § Heb. ii. 3-
|| Pet. ii. 7. Acts iv. 14. ¶ 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

lieving to righteousness where this is not attained *. Nor is it the want of *obedience* to the precepts of the Gospel, for these are formally given only to believers ; but their unbelief consists in this—the want of the *heart's approbation of the way of life and salvation* by Jesus Christ, as the effect of divine wisdom, love and grace, and as suited to all the wants of guilty sinners.

Again, There are some, who do not reject this way *absolutely*, and in the notion of it ; but *comparatively*, and as reduced to practice. They think the way of their own righteousness to be better ; that it may be more safely depended upon, more agreeable to the mind of God, and more for his glory. Thus did the Jews in general † ; many of whom assented to the Gospel doctrine as true, but they did not heartily approve of it as the best way of salvation, but preferred that of the law. Unbelief, therefore, formally, consists in the want of a spiritual discernment and approbation of the way of salvation, by Jesus Christ, as an effect of the infinite wisdom, goodness, and love of God.

2. The *design of God* in and by the Gospel, with the office of faith respecting it, further confirms our description of it. The design of God, in and by the Gospel, is not, in the *first place*, the salvation of sinners ; his utmost end, in all his counsels, is *his own glory*. He *doth all things for himself* ; nor can He, who is infinite, do otherwise ; but he expresseth this, in a peculiar manner, concerning the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. Particularly, He designed herein *the glory of his Righteousness*—“ to declare his Righteousness ‡.” *The glory of his Love*—“ God so loved the world §.” *The glory of his Grace*—“ accepted, to “ the praise of the glory of his grace ||”—*The glory of his Wisdom*—“ Christ crucified the wisdom of God ¶.”

The

* Isa. 1. 10. † Rom. x. 3, 4. ‡ Rom. iii. 25. § John iii. 16.
¶ John iii. 16. || Ephes. i. 5, 6. ¶ 1 Cor. i. 24. Ephes. iii. 10.

The glory of his Power — “ the Gospel is the power of God to salvation *.” Thus God designed, not only the reparation of all that glory which had been obscured by sin, but a far more eminent manifestation and exaltation of it ; all which is called, “ the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ † ;” and which it is the office of faith to behold.

3. This being the principal design of God, that which is required of us is, the ascription of that glory to Him which he designs so to exalt—the acknowledgment of all these glorious properties of the divine nature, as manifested in this way of salvation, with an approbation of the way itself, as an effect of them, and that which may be safely trusted to ; and this is faith :—thus Abraham was “ strong in faith, giving glory to God ‡ ;” and this is in the nature of true faith, however weak in degree. And hence we may learn, both the nature of faith, and why it is required unto our Justification ; for it is the *only* grace whereby we, directly and immediately, give that glory to God which he designs to manifest and exalt in and by Jesus Christ. This is to—“ give glory to God §”—to “ behold his glory as in a glass ||”—to have “ the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ ¶.” The contrary to which, makes “ God, a liar **,” and robs him of the glory of all those holy properties which he designed to manifest by the Gospel.

4. To understand the nature of justifying faith aright, we must consider the order of it ; first, the things which are previously necessary thereto, and then what it is to believe with respect to them. As,

(1.) The state of a *convinced sinner*, who is the only subject capable of Justification, as we have already proved.

* Rom. i. 16. † 2 Cor. iv. 6. ‡ Rom. iv. 22. § Rom. iv. 20.

|| 2 Cor. iii. 18. ¶ 2 Cor. iv. 6. ** 1 John v. 10.

proved. If we lose a respect to this, we lose our best guide towards a discovery of the nature of faith. God's constitution, and the nature of the things themselves, have given the law the precedence with respect to sinners; for, "by the law is the knowledge of sin;" and Gospel faith is the soul's acting according to the mind of God for deliverance from that state into which it is cast by the law.

(2.) We suppose herein a *sincere assent* to all divine revelations; particularly the promises of grace and mercy by Jesus Christ: and this assent which respects the promises, not as they propose and exhibit Christ, but as divine revelations of infallible truth, is true and sincere in its kind, as we described it before, under the notion of temporary faith. But as it proceeds no further, as it includes no act of the will or heart, it is not that faith whereby we are justified; it is, however, required thereto, and included therein.

(3.) The *proposal of the Gospel*, according to the appointment of God, is here supposed; for not only the Gospel itself, but, ordinarily, the preaching of it in the ministry of the Church is required unto believing *. Herein Christ, and his mediation with God, are declared and proposed to lost sinners.

(4.) The persons who are required to believe, and whose immediate duty it is, are those, who are really brought to inquire—What shall we do to be saved?

On these suppositions the direction given to men being—"Believe and you shall be saved," the inquiry is, What is that act or work of faith, whereby we may obtain a real interest in the promises and blessings of the Gospel?

It is evident, from what we have said, that justifying faith doth not consist in any one single act of the mind whatever; nor can an exact method of those acts of the soul, which are concurrent therein, be prescribed; only what is *essential* to it is manifest.

That

* Rom. x. 11—17,

That which seems to have the precedence, in the order of nature, is *the assent of the mind*. Thus the Psalmist, under a sense of sin, cries—“ If thou Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand *?” The sentence of the law, and the judgment of conscience, lie against him as to any acceptance with God. In this state, the first thing he fixeth upon for relief, is—that “ there is forgiveness with God.” This, as declared in the Gospel, is, that God in his love and grace will pardon and justify guilty sinners through the blood of Christ †. The assent of the mind to this truth is the *root of faith*.

This is accompanied with an *approbation* of the way of salvation thus proposed; as an effect of divine grace, wisdom and love, whereon the heart doth rest in it, and apply itself unto it, according to the mind of God. This is *that faith* whereby we are justified; which I shall further evince, by shewing what is included in it, and inseparable from it.

It includes a *sincere renunciation* of all other ways and means of attaining righteousness, life and salvation. To a person in the condition before described, many things will present themselves for relief; particularly his own righteousness ‡; but a renunciation of them all, as to any expectation of relief from them, belongs to sincere believing. “ I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only §.”

The *consent of the will*, is also included; whereby the soul betakes itself cordially and sincerely to the **Gospel** way of salvation. This is that coming to Christ, receiving of him, and believing on his name, so often expressed in Scripture, particularly John xiv. 6. “ Jesus saith—I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me.”

Acquiescence

* Psal. cxxx. 3, 4. † Rom. iii. 23, 24. ‡ Rom. x. 3. § Psal. lxxi. 16. Acts iv. 12. Hos. xiv. 2, 3. Jerem. iii. 33. Isa. 1. 10, 11.

Acquiescence in God, as the author and principal cause of salvation is included ; God, as acting in a way of sovereign grace and mercy towards sinners—“ Who by him do believe in God who raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God *.” The heart of a sinner doth herein give to God the glory of all those holy properties of his nature which he designed to manifest in and by Jesus Christ †. And this acquiescence of heart in God is the immediate root of that waiting, patience, long-suffering and hope, which are the proper acts and effects of justifying faith ‡.

Trust in God belongeth hereto ; for the person called unto believing is convinced of sin, and exposed to wrath ; hath nothing else to trust unto for relief ; doth actually renounce all other things ; and therefore, without some act of trust, must sink into despair. The most frequent declaration of the nature of faith in the Old Testament is by this trust ; because it composeth the soul and brings it to all the rest it can attain ; for all our rest in this world is from trust in God.

Having given this brief declaration of the nature of justifying faith, and the acts of it, I shall not trouble myself to give an accurate *definition* of it. What my thoughts concerning it are, will be better understood by what hath been spoken, than by any precise definition I can give : and the truth is, definitions of faith have been so multiplied by learned men, with so much variety and contradiction, that instead of being of any advantage to the truth, they have occasioned new controversies ; and while each hath laboured to defend his own definition, it hath been difficult for a true believer to find any thing in them agreeable to his own experience. The lively Scriptural expressions of faith, such as, “ receiving of Christ—leaning on him

—rolling

* 1 Pet. i. 21. † Isa. 42. 1. || xlix. 3. ‡ Heb. vi. 12, 15, 18, 19.

— rolling ourselves or our burden on him — tasting how gracious the Lord is,” and the like, convey to the enlightened mind far better ideas of the nature, work, and object of justifying faith, than the most accurate and laboured human definitions.

C H A P. III.

The Use of Faith in Justification.

THE description before given of justifying faith, sufficiently discovers its use in Justification; but as different writers have expressed this use of it with some variety, and in several ways inconsistent with each other, they must be considered in our progress; and this I shall do with all possible brevity.

Protestant Divines, until of late, have unanimously affirmed faith to be the *instrumental cause* of our Justification. This use of faith was from the first opposed by the Papists, afterwards by the Socinians, and lately by some among ourselves.

Those who assert faith to be as the *instrumental cause* in our Justification, do so for two purposes. First, they design hereby to explain those Scriptures, wherein we are said to be justified *by faith*, or *through faith**; by which, and other similar expressions, the generality of Protestants understand an *instrumental cause*.

F

Some

* Rom. iii. 28. We are said to be justified, *μιστη*, by faith, *absolutely*; which must denote, either *instrumentum aut formam, aut medium actionis*. So *dia της μιστης*, ver. 22. *εκ μιστης*; Rom. i. 17. Gal. iii. 8. *dia της μιστης*; Eph. ii. 8. Rom. iii. 22, 30. That is, *fide, ex fide, per fidem*; which we can express only *by faith, or through faith*. *Propter fidem, or dia μιστη, for our faith we are no where said to be justified.*

50 USE OF FAITH IN JUSTIFICATION.

Some kind of causality they plainly intimate, of which the lowest and meanest is that which is instrumental.

But it may be said, that “ If faith be the instrumental cause of Justification ; it is either the instrument of God, or of believers. That it is not the instrument of God, is plain ; because it is an act which he requires, and which we perform ; and no act of ours can be an instrument of his work. And if it be our instrument, seeing an efficiency is ascribed to it, then are we the efficient causes of our own Justification, and may be said to justify ourselves, which is derogatory to the grace of God and the blood of Christ.”

I confess I lay not much weight on exceptions of this nature ; for notwithstanding what is objected, the Scripture is express—God justifieth us *by faith*, and *through faith**, and purifieth the hearts of men *by faith*†; wherefore faith may, in some sense, be called *the instrument of God* in our Justification ; both as it is the means appointed by him, whereby we shall be justified ; as also because he bestoweth it on us, and works it in us to that end. But that which is principally intended is, that it is the *instrument of them that believe* ; yet are they not said hereon to justify themselves ; for it being a pure sovereign act of God, it doth not produce the effect of Justification, by a *physical* operation ; nor is it *morally* meritorious thereof ; nor doth it dispose the subject to the introduction of an inherent formal cause of Justification ; nor hath it any other respect to the effect of Justification, but what arises merely from the constitution and appointment of God.

Secondly, Those who speak of faith as the instrumental cause of our Justification, intend thereby to declare the *use* of faith, as expressed in Scripture by *apprehending and receiving Christ*, or his righteousness,

and

* Rom. iii. 30. Gal. iii. 8. † Acts xv. 9.

and remission of sins thereby. We are said to "receive Christ"—"the gift of righteousness"—"the abundance of grace"—"the atonement"—"the promise"—"the forgiveness of sins."—There is nothing which concurs to our Justification, but we receive it by faith. Now, when we receive outward things, which are given to us, we do it by our hand, which is the proper instrument of that reception: so, the object of faith in our Justification being tendered, granted, and given to us of God, in the promise of the Gospel; and the office of faith being to receive it, or lay hold upon it, that it may be our own, I know not how it can be better expressed than by an instrument.

Those indeed, who plead for Justification by their own *inherent* righteousness, and so deny the imputation of Christ's righteousness, cannot admit of this term; for as they do not allow that we receive the righteousness of another by way of gift, they cannot allow of any instrument whereby it should be received.

Some persons assert, that "faith is the *condition* of our Justification." I shall not contend, as I said before, about words, so long as what is intended by them is agreed upon: and there is an *obvious sense* in which faith may be so termed; for if no more is intended than that it is the *duty* which God requires of us that we may be justified, it is a truth to which the whole Scripture beareth witness; but this does not forbid, that, as to its *use* in Justification, it may properly be called an instrument.

The word *condition* is nowhere used in Scripture in this matter, which I argue no further, but that we have no certain standard to try its *signification* by. Wherefore it cannot first be introduced in what sense men please, and then *that sense* turned into an argument for other ends. For thus, on a supposed concession, that it is the condition of our Justification, some heighten it into a *subordinate righteousness* imputed to us, antecedent to the imputation of the righteousness

ness of Christ, whereof it is the condition. We must therefore examine the meaning of the word, and what is intended by it, before we admit of its use in this case.

The word *Conditio*, in the best Latin writers, is variously used * : but in common use among us, it sometimes signifies the state or quality of men ; and sometimes it signifies a valuable consideration of what is to be done ; and herein it is applied with great variety : sometimes the principal procuring purchasing cause is so expressed—as the *condition* on which a man lends another an hundred pounds, is that he be repaid with interest : the condition on which a man conveys his land to another, is that he receive so much money for it : thus a condition is a valuable consideration. Sometimes it signifies such things as are added to the principal cause, and on which its operation is suspended ; as when a man bequeaths an hundred pounds to another, on condition that he come to such a place to demand it. There is an endless variety as to the degree of respect to that, whereof any thing is a condition ; therefore we cannot obtain a determinate sense of the word, without exactly knowing what is intended by those who use it.

For instance ; it is commonly said, that “ faith and “ new obedience are the condition of the new cove-“ nant ;” but because of the ambiguous use of the word, *condition*, we cannot certainly understand what is intended by the assertion. If it mean no more than—that God *in* and *by* the new covenant doth indispensably require these things of us, in order to his own glory, and our full enjoyment of all the benefits of it—it is unquestionably true : but if it be intended, that they are such a condition of the covenant, as to be performed by us *antecedently* to the participation of any grace, mercy, or privilege of it, so that they should be the *consideration* and procuring causes of them ; or, as some

* *Status, Fortuna, Dignitas, Causa, Pactum initum.*

some speak, "the reward of our faith and obedience," it is most false; and not only contrary to express testimonies of Scripture, but destructive of the nature of the covenant itself. Or, if it be said, that faith and obedience (that is, our works of righteousness), are so the condition of the covenant, as that whatever the *one* is ordained of God to be the means of, as Justification; that the other is likewise ordained to the same end, with the same kind of efficacy, or with the same respect to the effect—it is contrary to the express design of the Apostle on that subject. But if it be intended, that these things, though promised in the covenant, and wrought in us by the grace of God, are yet *duties* required of us, in order to the participation and enjoyment of the *full end* of the covenant, in glory—it is the truth that is asserted.

C H A P. IV.

Of Justification—the Signification of the Word in Scripture.

THE proper sense of the words *Justification*, and *to justify*, must be carefully examined, in order to obtain a clear understanding of the nature of Justification, and to preserve our discourses from equivocation: for some persons having taken these words in one sense, and some in another, have appeared to deliver contrary doctrines, who have nevertheless fully agreed in their proper import.

The true and genuine signification of these words is to be determined from those in the original languages of the Scripture, which are expounded by

them *. The Hebrew word (צָדֵק), is rendered, by the Seventy, δικαιον ἀποφασιν, Job xxvii. 5. δικαιος ἀποφανομενος, chap. xiii. 18. δικαιον κρινω, Prov. xvii. 15. to declare one righteous ; to appear righteous ; to judge any one righteous. And the sense may be taken from any one of them, as chap. xiii. 18. “Behold now, I have ordered my cause ; I know that I shall be justified”—the ordering of his cause, is his preparation for a sentence of abolition or condemnation ; and hereon his confidence was, that he should be *justified* ; that is, *absolved*, *acquitted*, pronounced righteous.

This word, whether expressing the act of God towards men, or of men towards God, or of men among themselves, is always used in a *forensic sense* ; and never denotes a *physical operation*, or *transfusion*. Thus, in 2 Sam. xv. 4. “If any man hath a suit, or cause, let him come to me, and I will do him justice”—וְהַצְדִּיכָּיו I will *justify him*, judge in his cause, and pronounce for him. So in Deut. xxv. 1. “If there be a controversy among men, and they come to judgment, that the judges may judge them, וְהַצְדִּיקוּ אֲחֵיהֶם they shall *justify*

* The Latin derivation and composition of the word *Justification*, would seem to denote an *internal change* from inherent unrighteousness to righteousness likewise inherent ; for such is the signification of the words of the same composition. So *Sanctification*, *Mortification*, *Hierification*, &c. denote an internal work. Hence, in the whole *Roman School*, *Justification* is taken for *Justification*, or the making a man inherently righteous, by the infusion of a principle of grace. And this apparent sense of the word possibly deceived some of the ancients, as *Austin* particularly, to declare the doctrine of *gratuitous sanctification*, under the name of *Justification* ; but they never thought of a *Justification before God* in that manner.

Indeed, *Justificatio*, and *Justifica*, do not properly belong to the Latin tongue ; nor can any good author be produced who ever used those words for making a person inherently righteous, who was not so before ; and as they are derived from *Jus* and *Iustum*, they must respect an *act of Jurisdiction*, rather than a *physical operation*. *Justificari* is *Justus concipi, pro iusto haberi* ; to be esteemed, accounted, as adjudged righteous.

justify the righteous;” pronounce sentence on his side; to which is opposed וְהַרְשֵׁעוּ אֶת־הָרָשָׁע וְהַרְשֵׁעוּ אֶת־הָרָשָׁע and they shall condemn the wicked—make him wicked, as the word signifies; that is, declare him so; whereby he becomes so judicially, as the other is made righteous by acquittal. The same *Antitbeis* occurs, Prov. xvii. 15. מִצְרִיק רְשָׁע וּמַרְשֵׁיעַ צָדִיק “He that justifieth the wicked, and condemneth the righteous”—not, he that maketh the wicked inherently righteous, but he that without reason aquits him in judgment, or declares him to be righteous, “is an abomination to the Lord*.”

The Greek word Δικαιωσις, is used in the New Testament to the same purpose, and that alone; nor is it used in any good author to signify the making a man righteous, or producing internal righteousness in him, but either to *absolve* and *acquit*, to *judge*, *esteem*, and *pronounce righteous*; or, on the contrary, to *condemn* †.

That this is the true sense of the word, will appear from the following passages: Matt. xi. 19. “Wisdom is justified of her children”—not *made just*, but approved and declared so to be. So Matt. xiii. 37. “By thy words shalt thou be justified; not made just by them, but judged according to them; as appears by the *antitbeis*—“and by thy words shalt thou be condemned.” Again, Luke vii. 29. “They justified God;” not surely by making him righteous in himself, but by *avowing* and

* To the same purpose is the word used, Isa. v. 23. chap. 1. 8. 2 Kings, viii. 33, 32. 2 Chron. vi. 22, 23. Psal. lxxxiii. 3. Exod. xxiii. 7. Job. xxvii. 5. Isa. liii. 11.

† So *Suidas* says—It hath two significations; “to punish, and to account righteous;” which he confirms by instances from *Herodotus*, *Appianus*, and *Josephus*. They never thought of any sense of the word but what is forensic: and in our language, “to be justified,” was used formerly for “to be judged and sentenced,” as it still is among the *Scots*. One of the articles of peace, at the surrender of *Leith*, in the days of Edward VI. was, “That if any one committed a crime, he should be justified by the law, upon his trial.”

and declaring his righteousness*. Many other Scriptures are referred to in the notes; and, in fact, it is not in many places of Scripture, as *Bellarmino* grants, that the words have this signification; but in all places where they are used, they are capable of no other than a forensic sense, especially where mention is made of Justification before God. And it is observable, that all things concerning Justification are proposed in Scripture under a juridical scheme, or forensic trial and sentence. As, (1.) A JUDGMENT is supposed in it, concerning which the Psalmist prays that it may not proceed on the terms of the law †. (2.) The JUDGE is God himself‡. (3.) The TRIBUNAL, on which God sits in judgment, is “the Throne of Grace||.” (4.) A GUILTY PERSON; the sinner, who is obnoxious to the judgment of God§. (5.) ACCUSERS, who are ready to propose and promote the charge against the guilty persons; namely, the Law¶, and Conscience**, and Satan††. (6.) The CHARGE is admitted and drawn up into an band-writing, in form of law, and is laid before the tribunal of the Judge, in bar to the deliverance of the offender‡‡. (7.) A PLEA is prepared in the Gospel for the guilty person; and this is grace, through the blood of Christ; the ransom paid, the atonement made, the eternal righteousness brought in by the surety of the covenant |||. (8.) To this alone the sinner flies, renouncing every other defence or apology §§. Other plea than this for a sinner before God there is none; and he, who knoweth God

* See also Luke x. 29. chap. xvi. 15. chap. xviii. 14. Acts xiii. 38, 39. with Rom. ii. 13. chap. iii. 4. and xx. 26, 28, 30. chap. iv. 2, 5. chap. v. 1, 9. chap. vi. 7. chap. viii. 30. Gal. ii. 16, 17. chap. iii. 11, 24. chap. v. 4. 1 Cor. iv. 4. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Tit. iii. 7. James, ii. 22—25.

† Psal. cxliii. 2. ‡ Isa. i. 7, 8. Rom. viii. 33. || Heb. iv. 16. Isa. xxx. 18. § Rom. i. 32. iii. 19. ¶ John v. 45. ** Rom. ii. 15. †† Zech. iii. 2. Rev. xii. 10. ‡‡ Col. ii. 14. ||| Rom. iii. 23, &c. Dan. ix. 24. Eph. i. 7. §§ Psal. cxxx. 2, 3. Psal. cxliii. 2, &c. &c.

God and himself, will trust to no other, were he sure of all the angels in heaven to plead for him. (9.) To make this plea effectual, we have an ADVOCATE with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. (10.) The SENTENCE hereon is Absolution, on account of the ransom, blood and righteousness of Christ, with acceptance into favour, as persons approved of God †.

Of what use the declaration of this process in the Justification of a sinner may be, hath been in some measure before declared : and if persons did but seriously consider, that all these things are required to the Justification of every one who shall be saved, they would not entertain such slight thoughts of sin, and of the way of deliverance from it as they seem to have. It was from this consideration, that St. Paul learned, that “ terror of the Lord,” which made him so earnest with men to seek after reconciliation †.

Further to confirm the sense we have given of the word *Justification*, we may observe the opposition in which *Condemnation* is placed unto it, in several Scriptures already referred to, and in many others §. Now, as Condemnation is not the infusing a habit of wickedness into him that is condemned, but the passing a sentence upon him with respect to his wickedness ; so Justification is not the change of a person from inherent unrighteousness to righteousness, by the infusion of a principle of grace, but a sentential declaration of him to be righteous.

Moreover, the thing intended is frequently declared in the Scripture by other *equivalent* terms, which are absolutely exclusive of any other sense ; so the Apostle expresseth it by the “ imputation of righteousness without works ;” Rom. iv. 6, 11. and calls it the “ blessedness,” which we have by the pardon of sin, and the

[¶] John iii. 17. [†] Job xxxiii. 24. Psal. xxxii. 1, &c. [‡] 2 Cor. v. 10. [§] Isa. i. 8, 9. Prov. xvii. 15. Rom. v. 16, 18. and viii. 33, 34, &c.

58 DISTINCTION OF A FIRST AND SECOND

the covering of iniquity, in the same text. So it is called "Reconciliation with God;" Rom. v. 9, 10. "To be justified by the blood of Christ" is the same with being "reconciled by his death *." Reconciliation is not "the infusion of a habit of grace," but the effecting of peace and love, by the removal of all enmity and cause of offence. "To save," and "Salvation," are used to the same purpose. "He shall save his people from their sins †," is the same with, "by him all that believe are justified ‡." It is also expressed, by "receiving the atonement;" "blotting out sins and iniquities;" "casting them into the sea," and many other expressions of similar import.

I have insisted the more on the signification of the word in Scripture, because a right understanding of it, doth not only exclude the pretences of the Romanists about the infusion of "a habit of charity," from being the *formal cause* of our Justification before God, but may also give occasion to some to consider into what place they can dispose their own *personal inherent righteousness* in their Justification before him.

C H A P. V.

The Distinction of a first and second Justification examined.—The Continuation of Justification, on what it depends.

THE Roman Church builds her whole doctrine of Justification upon a distinction of a *double Justification*, which they call the *first* and *second*. The first, they say, is the infusion of an inherent principle of grace, whereby original sin is extinguished, and all habits of sin are

* See 2 Cor. v. 20, 21. † Matt. i. 21. ‡ Acts xliii. 39.

are expelled: this, they say, is *by faith*, the satisfaction of Christ, being the only meritorious cause thereof; and this, according to them, is the Justification of which St. Paul treats in his Epistles, and from the procurement of which he excludes all the works of the Law. Their *second Justification*, is an effect hereof; the formal cause being *good works*, proceeding from this principle of grace and love: hence they are the righteousness with which believers are righteous before God, and whereby they merit eternal life: this they call “the ‘righteousness of works,’” and suppose it taught by the Apostle James: for this is the way in which they attempt to reconcile the seeming difference between Paul and James; the former treating of the first Justification by faith, and the latter of the second by works *. But this distinction was intended merely to confound the whole doctrine of the Gospel. Justification, through the free grace of God, by faith in the blood of Christ, is evacuated by it. Sanctification is turned into a Justification, and corrupted by making the fruits of it meritorious.

The Socinians and others embrace this distinction, though not absolutely in their sense. Indeed it must be allowed, in some sense, by all who maintain our inherent righteousness to be the cause of Justification before God: for they admit of a Justification antecedent to works truly gracious and evangelical: but, consequential to such works, there is a Justification differing in degree, if not in nature, from the former: but they generally say, “it is only the continuation of our Justification, and the increase of it in degree, that they intend.” And if they may be allowed to turn *Sanctification* into Justification, and to make an increase thereof to be a new Justification, they may make twenty Justifications as well as two.

Justifi-

* So Bellarm. lib. 2. cap. 16. and lib. 4. cap. 18. And it is the express determination of the Council of Trent. Sess. 6. cap. 10.

Justification by faith in the blood of Christ may be considered either as to the *nature* or the *manifestation* of it ; and the manifestation of it, either as *initial*, in this life ; or *solemn* and *complete* at the day of judgment. The manifestation of it in this life respects the consciences of justified persons, or others, the church and the world. Now each of these hath the name of Justification assigned to it, though our real Justification before God be always one and the same. A person may be really justified before God, and yet not have the evidence or assurance of it in his own mind ; but this manifestation, whenever enjoyed, is not a second Justification, but the application of the former to his conscience by the Holy Ghost. There is also a manifestation of it to others ; yet it is not a second Justification ; for it depends wholly on the visible effects of that faith whereby we are justified before God, by which that single Justification is evidenced and declared to his glory, the benefit of others, and increase of our own reward.

The distinction of a first and second Justification, as explained by the Papists, is exceedingly derogatory to the merit of Christ ; for it leaves no effect towards us but merely the “ infusion of a habit of charity ;” when that is done, all the rest must be done by ourselves. He merits the “ first grace” for us, and by that we merit eternal life ; and so our works perfect and complete his merit, without which it is imperfect : and thus more is ascribed to ourselves than to the blood of Christ. In fact, this distinction leaves us no Justification at all ; for their *first*, which consists in the infusion of a principle of grace, is *Sanctification*, and nothing else ; and to call this “ Justification through faith in the blood of Christ,” is to exclude the only true evangelical Justification from any place in religion ; and so instead of coining two Justifications, leaves us none at all.

Besides,

Besides, if we consider what belongs to our *first Justification*, (if they will call it so,) as described in Scripture, we shall find there is no room left for the second; nor have they any foundation for the distinction but what arises from a denial of what properly belongs to Justification by the blood of Christ. For instance; therein we receive the pardon of our sins;—we are made righteous—are freed from condemnation and death—are reconciled to God, and have peace with him—we receive adoption and all its privileges—have a right and title to glory; and hereon, everlasting life doth follow. Now, if there be any thing left for their second Justification, let them take it as their own. It is evident, therefore, that either the *first Justification* overthrows the *second*, by rendering it needless; or the *second* destroys the *first*, by taking away what essentially belongs to it: we must therefore part with the one or the other, for consistent they are not.

But there is something more plausible in what is pleaded concerning *The Continuation of our Justification*; for those who are freely justified, are continued in that state till they are glorified. The question is, “On what does this continuation depend; on faith, or works?” None can deny that good works are required of all justified persons; but whether, upon our Justification at first before God, faith be immediately dismissed from its place, and its office assigned to works, so that the continuation of our Justification shall depend on them, and not on the renewed exercise of faith, is worth our inquiry. I shall offer my thoughts hereon, in the following observations.

1. Justification is a work, which, as to all the causes and effects of it, though not as to the possession of all it entitles to, is completed at once: for all our sins, past, present, and to come, were at once imputed to Christ. All our sins were on him; he bare them all at once, and therefore once died for all; by one offering he hath perfected, (consummated, completed, as

62 DISTINCTION OF A FIRST AND SECOND

to their spiritual state) all them that are sanctified*. By our actual believing on Christ, we receive him, and become the sons of God. Hereby we have a right to, and an interest in, all the benefits of his mediation; which is to be at once completely justified †.

2. Upon this complete Justification, believers are obliged to universal obedience. The law is not *abrogated*, nor is it possible it should; for it is nothing but the rule of that obedience which the nature of God and of man render necessary; and it is *antinomianism*, of the worst sort, which affirms it to be divested of its power to oblige to perfect obedience; so that what is not such, shall be accepted as if it were, and for the end required by the law. There is no *medium*; either the law is utterly abolished, and so there is no sin; or it must be allowed to require the same obedience it did at first: nor is it in the power of any man to keep his conscience from judging and condemning that, wherein he is convinced that he comes short of the perfection of the law.

3. The commanding power of the law, which justified persons are subject unto, makes all their inconformities to it to be no less truly and properly sins in their own nature, than they would be if their persons were obnoxious to the curse of it. Obnoxious to the curse they are not, nor can they be; for this is the very reverse of Justification †; but it is a subjection to the commanding power of the law, and not an obnoxiousness to its curse, that constitutes the nature of sin: still there abideth the *true nature of sin* in every transgression of the law in justified persons, which stands in need of daily actual pardon: and none are more sensible of sin, none are more troubled for it, none are more earnest in prayer for the pardon of it than justified persons: for this is the effect of the sacrifice of Christ applied to their souls; which takes away a conscience condemning

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* Heb. x. 10, 14. Isa. liii. 6, 7. 1 Pet. ii. 24. Dan. ix. 24, &c. &c. † Col. ii. 10, 13. and Acts xxvi. 18. Eph. i. 3, 7. John v. 24. Rom. viii. 1, 33. ‡ Rom. viii. 1, 33, 34.

the sinner for sin, but not a conscience condemning sin in the believer. Heb. x. 1—4, 10, 14.

Whereas, therefore, one essential part of Justification consists in the pardon of our sins, and sins cannot be *actually pardoned* before they are actually committed, the question is, on what does the continuation of our Justification depend, notwithstanding the interveniency of sin, whereby such sins are actually pardoned, and our persons continued in a state of acceptance with God? I answer,

"It is God that justifieth;" and therefore the continuation of our Justification is *his act* also. This, on his part, depends on the immutability of his counsel; the unchangeableness of his everlasting covenant, which is ordered in all things and sure; the faithfulness of his promises; the efficacy of his grace; his complacency in the propitiation of Christ; with the power of his intercession, and the irrevocable grant of the Holy Ghost to believers.

On our part, say some, it depends on the *condition of good works*: in our Justification itself, there is something peculiar to faith; but as to the continuation of it, they ascribe it either to works alone, provided they be done in faith; or to faith and works conjointly. But for my part, I cannot understand that the continuation of our Justification hath any other dependencies than our Justification itself hath: as faith alone is required to the one, so faith alone is required to the other, though its operations and effects differ. For,

1. The Continuation of our Justification is the continuation of the imputation of righteousness: Now the first act of God, in the imputation of righteousness, cannot be repeated; and the actual pardon of sin after Justification is an effect of that imputation: wherefore, to this actual pardon, nothing is required but the application of that righteousness which is the cause of it; and this is done by faith alone.

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64 DISTINCTION OF A FIRST AND SECOND

2. The *Continuation* of our Justification, is before God, or in the sight of God, no less than our Justification itself; whatever is the means, condition, or cause hereof, is pleadable before God, and ought to be pleaded to that purpose. So then the inquiry is, this :

" When a justified person is guilty of sin, (as guilty " he is, more or less every day) and his conscience is " oppressed with a sense of it, as the only thing which " can endanger his justified state, his favour with God, " and title to glory, What is that which he ought " to resort to for the continuation of his state, and the " pardon of his sins?" I answer, That it is not his own obedience, as the condition of the covenant, which is evident from the *Experience of believers—the Testimony of Scripture—and the Examples recorded therein.*

Let the *Experience of believers* be consulted, for their consciences are continually exercised herein. What do they plead with God for this purpose? Is it any thing but sovereign grace and mercy through the blood of Christ? Are not all their pleas taken from the name of God, his mercy, grace, faithfulness, covenant and promises, as manifested in the Lord Christ and his mediation alone? Does any other thought enter their hearts? Do they leave the prayer of the Publican, and use that of the Pharisee? And is it not of *Faith alone*, which is that grace, whereby they apply themselves to the mercy of God through the mediation of Christ?

The *Scripture* also expressly declares this to be the *only way* of the continuation of our Justification, 1 John ii. 1, 2. " These things write I unto you, that you sin not: and if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins." It is the duty of justified persons not to sin; but it is not so required, as that if they fail therein, they should immediately lose the

the privilege of Justification. Wherefore, on a supposition of sin, what way is prescribed for them to take? The apostle directs—The application of our souls by faith to the Lord Christ, as our advocate with the Father, on account of the propitiation he made for our sins. In this double act of his *jacerdotal office*, his oblation and intercession, he is the object of our faith in our absolute Justification, and so he is as to the continuation of it.

It is no part of our inquiry, what God requires of justified persons. There is no grace, nor duty required, either by the law or the gospel to which they are not obliged; when these are omitted, guilt is contracted: and hence believers are constantly exercised in repentance and godly sorrow. And these duties are so far necessary to a justified state, that it cannot consist with their opposite sins and vices. “ If we live after the flesh we shall die.” He who doth not carefully avoid falling into the fire or water, cannot live; but these are not the things on which his life depends. The best of our duties have no other respect to the continuation of our Justification, but that in them we are preserved from things destructive of it. The sole question is, upon what does this continuation depend? not what duties are required of us. If those, who affirm that obedience is the condition of it, mean that God indispensably requires it, and that the neglect of it is inconsistent with a justified state, we readily grant it. But if it be asked, What is that, whereby, in a way of duty, we concur to the continuation of our Justification? we say, it is Faith alone; “ for the just shall live by his faith,” Röm. i. 17. And as the Apostle applies this divine testimony to prove our first or absolute Justification to be by faith; so he applies it (Heb. x. 38, 39.) to the continuation of it. “ Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them that draw back to perdition, but of them that

believe to the saving of the soul." "Drawing back to perdition," includes the loss of a justified state, really so, or in profession: the Apostle opposes to this—"believing to the saving of the soul;" that is, to the continuation of Justification to the end. So Gal. ii. 20. "*The life which we now live, in the flesh, is by faith;*" that is, the continuation of our Justification; a life of righteousness, in opposition to a life by the works of the law, ver. 21. and this life is by faith in Christ, "*as he loved us and gave himself for us;*" that is, as he was a propitiation for our sins. This, then, is the only way, means, and cause, on our part, of the preservation of this life, of the continuance of our Justification.

The Examples of justified persons recorded in Scripture bear witness to the same truth. The continuation of the Justification of Abraham was by faith only, Rom. iv. 3. for the instance of his Justification given by the Apostle, from Gen. xv. 6. was long after he was justified absolutely: and if our first Justification, and the continuance of it, did not depend on the same cause, the instance of the one could not be produced as a proof of—the way and means of the other. And David, when a justified believer, not only places the blessedness of man in the free remission of sins, in opposition to his own works in general, Rom. iv. 6, 7. but in his own particular case ascribes the continuation of his Justification to grace, mercy, and forgiveness alone; all which are received by faith. Psal. cxxx. 3—5. Psal. cxl. 2: All other works and duries of obedience accompany faith in the continuation of our justified state, as necessary fruits and effects of it; but not as the causes, means, and conditions on which that effect is suspended. Wherefore there is but *one Justification*, and that of one kind only; nor can we admit of any other; for if there be a *second*, it must either be of the same kind with the first, or of another,

ther; if it be of the same kind, then the same person is often justified with the same kind of Justification; if it be not of the same kind, then the same person is justified before God with two sorts of Justification, of both which the Scripture is utterly silent. And the continuation of our Justification depends solely on the same causes with our Justification itself.

C H A P. VI.

Evangelical Personal Righteousness considered. Final Judgment, and its Respect to Justification.

IT is apprehended by some, that there is an *Evangelical Justification* upon our *Evangelical Personal Righteousness*, which they distinguish from that Justification which is by faith; for, say they, "The Righteousness of Christ imputed to us is our *legal righteousness*; thereby we are acquitted from the sentence of the law: but as there is a personal inherent righteousness required of us, so there is a Justification by the Gospel thereon. By our faith we are justified from the charge of unbelief; by our sincerity, from the charge of hypocrisy; and so by all other graces and duties from the charge of contrary sins," &c. With respect to this we may observe,

1. That God doth require of all believers a sincere obedience to be performed by their own persons, through the aids of grace supplied unto them by Jesus Christ, Eph. ii. 10.

2. Believers are, from the performance of this obedience, denominated *righteous* in the Scripture, and are personally and inherently righteous; but they are so called not with respect to grace *habitually* inherent, but to the effects of it in duties of obedience. Thus

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68 EVANGELICAL PERSONAL RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"Zacharias and Elisabeth were both righteous before God, walking in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless *." The latter words give the reason of the former, or their being esteemed righteous; and "he that doth righteousness is righteous :" the denomination is from doing.

3. This inherent righteousness, taking it from that which is habitual and actual, is the same with our *Sanctification*; for this is the inherent renovation of our nature, exerting itself in newness of life, and works of righteousness. But *Sanctification* and *Justification* are in Scripture always distinguished.

4. By this inherent personal righteousness, we may be said to be justified: (1.) *In our own consciences*, as it affords an evidence of our interest in Christ, and so contributes to our peace: "our rejoicing being this, the testimony of our conscience," &c. † (2.) *Before men*; hereby we are acquitted of evils laid to our charge, and approved as righteous and unblameable ‡. (3.) *Against the charges of Satan*, the accuser of the brethren. Now, admitting these as the proper uses of our personal righteousness, I cannot see that there is an evangelical *Justification* on account of it in the sight of God: for,

1. None have it but those who are *antecedently justified*; it is merely the obedience of faith. "Works before faith" are by general consent excluded; and we have before proved, that they are neither conditions of it, dispositions to it, nor preparations for *Justification*. But every believer is immediately justified on his believing; nor is there any moment of time wherein he is not justified. This personal righteousness cannot, then, be the condition of *Justification*, seeing it is *consequential thereto*.

2. *Justification before God*, is an *absolution from a charge before God*; the instrument of which charge is either

Luke i. 6. John iii. 7. † 1 Cor. i. 12. ‡ 1 Pet. i. 12. and
iii. 16. James ii.

either the *Law* or the *Gospel*; but neither of these charges the true believer with unbelief, hypocrisy, or the like. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" If Satan, the world, or others do, this righteousness is pleadable against it. But what is charged before God, is charged by God himself, either by the *Law* or the *Gospel*; if by the *Law*, by the law we must be justified: but the plea of *sincere obedience* will not satisfy the law; it demands *perfect obedience*. And where the *Gospel* exhibits a charge against any before God, there can be no *Justification* before God, for what can justify him whom the *Gospel* condemns?

3. This pretended *Justification* is altogether needless and useless. Let that be considered, which has already been spoken concerning our *Justification* by the blood of Christ, and it will appear, that there is no place nor use for this, neither *antecedent* and *subordinate* thereto, nor *consequential* and *perfactive* thereof.

4. It agrees with no scriptural account of *Justification*. *Justification* by the *Law* is this—"The man who doth all the works of it shall live in them;" but this is not pretended: and as to *evangelical Justification*, it is entirely contrary to it; for therein the charge against the person to be justified is true—"He hath sinned, and come short of the glory of God:" in this, the charge is false, namely, that a believer is an unbelieve—a sincere person, an hypocrite, &c.; and this false charge is supposed to be exhibited in the name of God and before him. In true *Justification*, our acquittal is by *absolution* of sin; here, by vindication of our own righteousness: there, the plea is, *Guilty*; here, *Not guilty*: but this is a plea which the law will not admit, and which the *Gospel* disclaims.

5. If we are justified before God by our own personal righteousness, then "God enters into judgment with us" on something in ourselves, and *acquits us* thereon,

thereon, which neither did the Psalmist *, nor the Publican † believe. Besides, God justifieth the *ungodly*, and imputeth righteousness to him that “ worketh not.” “ Personal righteousness,” and “ our own righteousness,” are equivalent terms; and our own righteousness is *unmeet* to be the material cause of our Justification ‡, and is directly opposed to the righteousness whereby we are justified, and expressly excluded as inconsistent with it unto that end ||.—§

A few words may suffice, with respect to what is called—

SENTENTIAL JUSTIFICATION *at the day of Judgment*; for of whatever nature it be, the person concerning whom that sentence is pronounced, was *actually* and *completely* justified before God in this world; and was made a *partaker* of all the benefits of that Justification, even to a blessed resurrection ¶. Besides, the souls of the most will long before have enjoyed a blessed rest with God; absolutely acquitted from all their sins, and discharged from all their labours: nothing remaining but an actual admission of their whole persons into eternal glory. Wherefore this judgment need not be reduced

* Ps. cxxx. 2, 3. Ps. cxliii. 2. † Luke xviii. ‡ Isa. liv. 6.
|| Phil. iii. 9. Rom. x. 3, 4. Eph. ii. 7, 8.

§ If it be said, that “ our own righteousness is the righteousness of the Law, but this is evangelical;” I answer, (1.) It will be hard to prove, that it is any other than “ our own righteousness,” which is expressly rejected, Phil. iii. 9, &c. (2.) That Righteousness, which is *evangelical*, in respect of its efficient cause, motives and ends, is *legal* in respect of the formal reason of it, and our obligation to it; for there is no instance of duty belonging to it, to which we are not obliged by the first commandment—acknowledging therein his essential verity and sovereign authority, we are bound to believe all he shall reveal, and to obey all he shall command. (3.) The good works rejected from any interest in our Justification, are those unto which we are created in Christ Jesus, Eph. ii. 8, 9. Tit. iii. 5. works in which the Gentiles are concerned, who never sought for righteousness by the works of the law, Rom. ix. 30.

¶ 1 Cor. xv.

reduced to a new *Justification*, but considered as merely declaratory, to the glory of God, and the everlasting refreshment of believers. The design of that solemn judgment, in the manifestation of the wisdom and righteousness of God in appointing salvation by Jesus Christ, as well as in giving the Law—the public conviction of those who have transgressed the law, and despised the Gospel—the vindication of the righteousness, power, and wisdom of God, in the rule of the world by his providence—the glory and honour of Christ triumphant over all his enemies; and—the glorious exaltation of grace in all who believe, is sufficiently manifest.

And hence it appears, how little force there is in that argument, which some pretend to be so weighty: “As every one, say they, shall be judged of God at the last day, in the same manner is he justified in this life. But by works and not by faith alone, shall every one be judged at the last day. Wherefore, by works, and not by faith only, is every one justified before God in this life.” For,

1. It is no where said, that we shall be judged at the last day (*ex operibus*) for our works, but that God will render to men (*secundum opera*) according to their works. But God doth not justify any *in this life* “according to their works;” we are justified “freely by his grace,” and “not according to works of righteousness which we have done:” We are justified in this life, *by faith*, (*ex fide, per fidem*), not *for our faith* (*propter fidem*), nor according to our faith (*secundum fidem*); and we are not to depart from the expressions of Scripture, where such a difference is constantly observed.

2. It is somewhat strange, that a man should be judged at the last day, and justified in this life, exactly in the same way; that is, with respect to faith and works, when the Scripture constantly ascribes our *Justification*

tification before God to " *faith, without works;*" and the judgment at the last day is said to be " *according to works,*" without any mention of faith.

3. In our present Justification by faith, Christ is considered as our *Pronitiation* and *Advocate*; but at the last day only as our *Judge*.

4. The end of God in our Justification, is the glory of his *grace*; but in the last judgment, the glory of his *remunerative righteousness* *.

5. The representation made of the final judgment, in Matt. vii. and xxv. is only that of the *visible church*; in which the plea of *faith*, as to the profession of it, is common to all. Upon that plea, it is put to the trial, whether it were *true faith*, or only that which was dead and barren; and this trial is made solely by the fruits and effects of it; and otherwise in the public declaration of things to all, it cannot be made: In no other way does the faith whereby we are justified come into judgment at that day †.

C H A P. VII.

Imputation, the Nature of it; with the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ in particular.

THE first express record of the Justification of any sinner is of Abraham. Others, doubtless, were from the beginning justified; but this prerogative was reserved for the " father of the faithful," that his Justification, and the manner of it, should be first entered on the sacred record. *He believed in the Lord, and it was counted (or imputed) to him for righteousness* ‡.
 " Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it " was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall

* Eph. i. 6. 2 Tim. iv. 8. † John v. 24. Mark xvi. 16.

‡ Gen. xvi. 6.

"shall be imputed, if we believe *." Wherefore, the first express declaration of the nature of Justification in the Scripture affirms it to be by imputation—the imputation of somewhat unto righteousness; and this instance is recorded as the precedent or example of all who shall be justified.

Under the New Testament, there was a necessity of a more full and clear declaration of the doctrine of it; for it is one of the principal parts of that mystery of truth, which was to be brought to light by the Gospel. And, besides, there was from the first a strong and dangerous opposition made to it. The doctrine of Jufification was that on which the Jewish church broke off from God, refused Christ and the Gospel, perishing in their sins †: and, in like manner, an opposition to it ever was and ever will be a principle and cause of the apostasy of any professing church, as it was among the Galatians. But in this state the doctrine was fully proved and vindicated by the apostle Paul: and this he did, by proving, that the righteousness whereby we are justified becomes ours by *imputation*.

But yet, although the first recorded instance of Justification is expressed by imputation ; and the doctrine of it, in that great case wherein the welfare or ruin of the Jewish church was concerned, is so expressed by the Apostle; yet has it so fallen out in our days, that nothing in religion is more despised and reproached than an imputed righteousness.—*A putative righteousness—the shadow of a dream—a fancy—a mummery—an imagination, say some among us †.*

However, the *importance* of this doctrine, whether true or false, is on all hands acknowledged. It is not a dispute about terms and speculations, in which christian practice is little concerned, but such as has an immediate influence into our whole present duty and eter-

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* Rom. iv. 23, 24. † Rom. ix. 30. and x. 3, 4.

¹ An opinion, faith Socinus, *fœda, execranda, pernitiiosa, defœpanda.*

nal welfare. Those who reject this doctrine, say that it destroys the necessity of Gospel obedience, introducing antinomianism and libertinism in life, and therefore must necessarily be destructive of salvation in those who believe it, and conform their practice to it. On the other hand, those, by whom it is believed, judging it impossible that a sinner can be justified except by the righteousness of Christ imputed, conceive that without it none can be saved. But they do not think that all are excluded from salvation, who cannot apprehend, or who deny, this doctrine, as by them received; but those to whom that righteousness is not imputed. These things greatly differ. To believe, or not to believe, the doctrine, as thus and thus explained, is one thing; and to enjoy, or not enjoy the thing itself, is another. I doubt not that many persons receive more grace from God than they understand or will own; that they may be saved by that grace, which they (doctrinally) deny; and that they may be justified by the imputation of that righteousness, which, in opinion, they deny to be imputed: for the faith of it is included in that general assent which they give to the truth of the Gospel; and such an adherence to Christ may ensue thereon, that their mistake of the way in which they are saved by him, shall not defraud them of a real interest therein. And I must say, after all the disputes I see and read about Justification, I do not believe but that the authors of them (if they be not Socinians throughout, denying the whole merit and satisfaction of Christ) do really trust to the mediation of Christ for pardon and acceptance, and not to their own works: nor will I believe the contrary till they expressly declare it.

The judgment of the reformed churches herein is known to all. The church of England, especially, is, in her doctrine, express as to the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. This hath of late been so fully manifested out of her articles, homilies, and other authentic

thentic writings, that it is needless to give any further demonstration of it. I shall not contend with those who pretend the contrary ; for to what purpose is it to dispute with men who will deny the sun to shine, because they cannot bear the heat of its beams. Wherefore, in what I have to offer on this subject, I shall not in the least depart from the *ancient doctrine* of the church of England ; yea, I have no design but to declare and vindicate it, as God shall enable me.

The first thing we are to consider, is the meaning of these words, *to impute*, and *imputation*. Now *εἰπεν* the word first used for this purpose, signifies *to think*, *esteem*, *judge*, or *refer* a thing or matter to any ; *to impute* it for good or evil. The *Seventy* express it by *λογίζω* and *λογίζομαι* ; as do the writers of the New Testament also : and these are rendered by *reputare*, *imputare**, *acceptum ferre*, *tribuere*, *assignari*, *ascribere*.

When any thing is imputed to a person, it is either *that which was really his own before that imputation*, or *it was not*.

1. There is an imputation of that which was really ours *antecedent to that imputation*. And this includes, (1.) An acknowledgment that the thing so imputed is really and truly ours ; and, (2.) A dealing with us according to it, whether it be *good* or *evil*. Thus he that imputes *wisdom* or *learning* to any man, first acknowledges that he is *wise* or *learned*. So when upon trial

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* *Imputare* is used by Latin authors in the same sense as by Divines. Thus *Seneca (ad Mart.)* : “ Optime de pessimis meruisti, ad “ quos pervenerit incorrupta rerum fides, magno authori suo impu- “ tata.” And *Pliny (lib. 18. cap. 1.)*, in his *Apology for the Earth*, our common Parent, “ Nostris eam criminibus urgemos, culpamque “ nostram illi imputamus.” In their sense, to impute any thing to another, is, if it be evil, to charge it upon him, to burden him with it; if it be good, to ascribe it to him. But *Vasquez*, in *Thom. 22. Tom. 2. Diff. 132.* confounds the word with *refutare*: but *imputare* includes an act antecedent to accounting a thing to belong to a person : To be *reputed righteous*, and to have *righteousness imputed*, differ as cause and effect.

a man is acquitted because he is found righteous : first he is judged and esteemed righteous ; and then dealt with as a righteous man ; his righteousness is imputed to him. See this exemplified, Gen. xxx. 33.

2. To impute to us that which was not our own antecedently to that imputation, includes also two things : (1.) *A grant* of the thing itself, so that it may be ours ; and, (2.) *A dealing with us accordingly*. But these things will appear more clearly by some instances.

1. There is an imputation to us of that which is really our own, inherent in us, performed by us, *antecedently* to that imputation, and this, whether it be *good* or *evil*. The rule hereof is given us, Ezek. xxviii. 20. “The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him ; the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.” We have instances of both sorts. Thus *Simeon* deprecated the imputation of evil to him, 2 Sam. xix. 19. “Let not my Lord *impute** iniquity unto me, neither remember what thy servant did perversely ; for thy servant doth know that I have sinned.” He was guilty, and acknowledged his guilt, but deprecates the imputation of it in such a sentence as his sin deserved †. To impute that which is *good* to any, is to acknowledge it to be theirs, and to deal with them accordingly. “The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him. So Jacob provided, that his “righteousness should answer for him,” Gen. xxx. 33. and we have an instance of it in God’s dealing with men, Psal. cxi. 31. “Then stood up Phinehas, and executed judgment ; and it was imputed to him for righteousness.”

2. There is an imputation to us of that which is *not our own*, antecedently to that imputation, at least not in the same manner as it is afterwards ; and this is various also according to the grounds and causes on which it proceeds. Only it must be observed, that this imputation

* It is the same word as is used Gen. xv. 6.

† So Stephen deprecated the imputation of sin to his murderers, Acts vii. 60.

tation is not to account those to whom any thing is imputed, to have *themselves* done what is imputed to them ; this would not be to *impute*, but to *err* in judgment, and utterly destroy the whole nature of gracious imputation : But it is to *make that to be ours* by imputation, which was not ours before, to all the same intents and purposes, as if it had been our own without such imputation.

To declare more distinctly the nature of this imputation, I shall consider the several grounds on which it proceeds.

1. Things which are not our own originally, may be imputed to us (*ex iustitia*) by the rule of righteousness ; and that on account either of a *federal* or *natural relation* to those whose they are. On the first account the sin of Adam was imputed to all his posterity, for we all stood in the same covenant with him, who was our head and representative therein. So sin, in the latter way, may be imputed to others, on account of a natural relation between them and those who actually contracted the guilt of it : but this is only with respect to the *temporary effects* of it. So God speaks concerning the children of the rebellious Israelites in the wilderness—“ Your children shall wander forty years, and bear your whoredoms*.” Your sins shall be so far imputed to your children, because of their relation to you, and your interest in them, that they shall suffer for them in an afflictive state in the wilderness.

2. Imputation may ensue (*ex voluntaria sponsione*) when one freely undertakes to answer for another. An illustrious instance of which we have in St. Paul, who, writing to Philemon in behalf of Onesimus, faith †, “ If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, *impute it unto me* ; put it to my account.” So Judah voluntarily undertook unto Jacob for the safety of Benjamin, and obliged himself to perpetual guilt in case of failure :

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“ I will

* Num. xiv.-33. † Phil. 18.

" I will be surety for him ; of my hand shalt thou require him : if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee—I will sin—or be a sinner, be guilty, and, as we say, bear the blame *." And this voluntary sponson was one ground of the imputation of our sin to Christ.

3. There is an imputation (*ex injuria*), when that is charged upon any one of which he is not guilty : so Bathsheba says to David ; " It shall come to pass, that when my Lord the King shall sleep with his fathers, that I and my son Solomon shall be sinners † ;"—so esteemed, and dealt with accordingly. But this kind of imputation hath no place in the judgment of God.

4. There is an imputation (*ex mera gratia*), of mere grace and favour ; as when that which, antecedently to this imputation, was no way ours, is granted to us, and made ours, so that we are judged of and dealt with accordingly. This is that imputation, in the non-imputation of sin, and in the imputation of righteousness, which the Apostle so vehemently pleads for, Rom. iv. and which he declares to be of mere grace : and if this kind of imputation cannot be exemplified in any other instance but this of which we treat, it is because the foundation of it in the *mediation of Christ* is singular, and hath no parallel in the affairs of men. From what has been advanced, it is evident,

1. That there is a plain difference between the *imputation of any works of our own to us*, and the *imputation of the righteousness of faith without works* ; for the imputation of works, be they what they will, or of faith itself, as our work, is the imputation of that which was ours, before such imputation : but the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, is the imputation of that which is made ours by virtue of that imputation.

2. The imputation of works, is a matter of *right*, and not of *grace* ; for it is only a judgment that such

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* Gen. xliv. 9. † 1 Kin. i. 21.

and such things are ours, which are really so ; and this is an act of justice : whereas the imputation of righteousness, mentioned by the Apostle, is of *mere grace* ; and therefore these two sorts of imputation are absolutely inconsistent. See Rom. xi. 6.

3. But in one respect they both agree ; for whatever is imputed to us, is imputed for *what it is*, and not for *what it is not*. If it be a *perfect righteousness* that is imputed to us, so it is esteemed, and we are dealt with as possessed of a perfect righteousness ; and if it be an *imperfect righteousness* that is imputed, we must be dealt with accordingly. And therefore as our *inherent righteousness* is imperfect, if that be imputed to us, we cannot be accepted on account of it, as perfectly righteous, without an error in judgment.

4. Hence, then, the true nature of that imputation, which we plead for, is manifest ; and that both *negatively* and *positively*.

It is not adjudging them to be righteous, who really are not so. The clamour of the Papists, and others, is a mere effect of ignorance or malice, who cry out, that we affirm God to esteem them to be righteous who are wicked. But this falls heavily on those, who maintain that we are justified by our own inherent righteousness ; for then a man is judged righteous who is not so.

Nor is it a naked pronunciation of any one to be righteous without a just foundation for the judgment of God therein declared. God declares no man to be righteous but he who is so ; the whole question being, how he becomes righteous.

Nor is it the *transfusion* of the righteousness of another into him who is justified, so that it should become his *subjectively*, which is impossible. But it is a great mistake on the other hand, to say that therefore the righteousness of one can no way be made the righteousness

ousness of another, which is to deny all imputation. Wherefore, positively,

This imputation is *an act of God's free grace, whereby, on consideration of the mediation of Christ, he makes an effectual grant of a true, real, perfect righteousness; even that of Christ himself, unto all who believe; and accounting it as theirs, on his own gracious act, absolves them from sin, and grants them right and title to eternal life.*

In this imputation, the *thing itself* is first imputed to us, and not any of its effects; but they are made ours by virtue of that imputation. To say that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us only as to its effects, is to say, we have the *benefit* of them, and no more; but imputation itself is denied *. The effects of the righteousness of Christ cannot properly be said to be imputed to us; for instance, pardon of sin is a great effect of the righteousness of Christ; our sins are pardoned on account thereof; God for Christ's sake forgiveth us all our sins: but the *pardon of sin* cannot be said to be imputed to us, nor is it so. Adoption, Justification, Peace with God, all Grace and Glory, are effects of the righteousness of Christ; but that they are not imputed to us, nor can be so, is evident from their nature: but we are made partakers of them all on account of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ unto us, and no otherwise.

CHAP.

* So say the *Socinians*, who know well enough, and ingenuously grant, that they overthrow all true imputation by it. The effects of the righteousness of Christ cannot properly be said to be imputed to us, if his righteousness itself be not imputed. And the *Socinians*, who deny the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and plead only for a participation of its effects, do wisely deny such a kind of righteousness of Christ, namely, of his *satisfaction* and *merit*, as alone may be imputed to us.

C H A P. VIII.

*Imputation of the Sins of the Church unto Christ.
Grounds of it. The Nature of his Suretisip. Causes
of the New Covenant. Christ and the Church one
mystical Person; Consequents thereof.*

THOSE who believe the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to believers for the Justification of life, unanimously profess, that *the sins of all believers were imputed to Christ.*

The principal foundation hereof is, that *Christ and the Church, in this design, were one mystical person;* which state they actually coalesce in, through the uniting efficacy of the Holy Spirit. He is the *head,* and believers are the *members* of that one person, as the Apostle declares, 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Hence, as what he did is imputed to them, as if done by them; so what they deserved, on account of sin, was charged upon him*.

And

* The ancients express themselves in the same manner.—“We hear the voice of the body from the mouth of the head. The Church suffered in him, when he suffered for the Church; as he suffers in the Church, when the Church suffereth for him: for as we have heard the voice of the Chuch in Christ suffering—My God, my Lord, why hast thou forsaken me? so we have heard the voice of Christ in the Church suffering—Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?” *Augustine, Epist. 120. ad Honoretum.*

So Cyprian speaks: “He bare us,” or suffered in our person, “when he bare our sins.”—Eusebius applies those words of the Psalmist to Christ; “Heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee:” “because (saith he) he took of our sins to himself; communicated our sins to himself, making them his own. How then did he make our sins to be his own, and how did he bear our iniquities? Is it not from thence, that we are said to be his body, as the Apostle speaks? “You are the body of Christ, and members, for your part, or of one another; and, as when one member suffers, all the members do suffer; so the many members, sinning and suffering, He, according

And here it will be unnecessary for us critically to inquire, what a *person* is, and in what senses that word may be used ; or what is the true notion of a person, whether natural, legal, civil, or political; for Christ and believers constitute not any such person, as the laws and customs of men acknowledge ; they are one *mystical* person, of which there are only some imperfect resemblances among men ; and because of the weakness of our understanding, which is unable to comprehend the depth of heavenly mysteries, it is compared to various kinds of union : for instance, that of a *man* and *wife*; not from those natural affections, which give them only a moral union, but from the extraction of the first woman from the flesh and bone of the first man. See Eph. v. 25, &c. where the Apostle declares, that, from the union thus represented, “ we are members of his body, of his flesh and his bone,” or have such a relation to him as Eve had to Adam. So it is compared to the union of the *head* and *members* of the same natural body * ; and to a *political* union also between a ruling head and its political members † ; and so also to a *vine* and *branches* ‡ . It is declared also by the relation that was between Adam and his posterity, by God’s institution and the law of creation § . The Holy Ghost, by such a variety of resemblances, shews that this union cannot be reduced to any one of them ; which will be more evident by considering the *causes* of it.

The first spring or cause of this union, lieth in the *eternal compact*, that was between the Father and the Son

“ ing to the laws of sympathy in the same body, took their sorrows on
 “ him —For what was he, but a substitute for us? A price of re-
 “ demption for our souls? In our person therefore the Oracle speaks—
 “ whilst freely uniting himself unto us, and us unto himself, and
 “ making our sins his own, I have said, Lord, be merciful unto me;
 “ heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee.”

* 1 Cor. xii. 12. † Eph. iv. 15. ‡ John xv. 1. § Rom. v. 12. &c.

Son concerning the recovery of fallen man ; wherein, the *assumption* of our nature, (the foundation of this union) was designed. In this human nature he was predestinated unto *grace* and *glory* *; both that which was *peculiar to himself*, and that which was to be *communicated* through him to the church. Of the first sort was the grace of personal union, that single effect of divine wisdom, of which there is no shadow or resemblance in the whole creation : *full of grace and truth* : and this includes all his personal glory, power, authority, and majesty, as mediator at the right hand of God.

But he was thus predestinated also with respect to that grace and glory which in him and by him was to be communicated to the Church. (1.) As the pattern and exemplary cause of our predestination : for we are “ predestinated to be conformed to the image of the Son of God, that he might be the first born among many brethren †.” (2.) As the means of communicating all spiritual blessings, grace and glory to us, who are chosen in him ‡. (3.) He was thus foreordained, as the head of the Church ; it being the design of God to gather all things into a head in him §. (4.) All the elect of God were, in his eternal purpose and covenant, committed to him, to be delivered from the law, sin, and death, and to be brought to the enjoyment of God : “ Thine they were, and thou gavest them unto me ||.” (5.) In the prosecution of this design, in the fulness of time, he took upon him our nature, and took it into personal subsistence with himself. The special relation, that ensued hereon, between him and his people, is declared at large, Heb. ii. 10—17. (6.) On these foundations he undertook to be the **SURETY OF THE NEW COVENANT**, Heb. vii. 22. “ Jesus was made a surety of a better testament.” This, alone, of all the fundamental considerations of the imputation of our sins

* 1 Pet. i. 20. † Rom. viii. 29. ‡ Eph. i. 3—5 § Eph. i. 10.
|| John xvii. 6.

fins to Christ, I shall insist upon, in order to obviate some mistakes about the nature of his Suretiship.

A Surety is one who voluntarily takes on himself the cause or condition of another ; to answer, undergo, or pay what he is liable to ; whereon he becomes justly and legally obnoxious unto performance.*

Our principal inquiry on this subject is, Whether the Lord Christ was made a surety on the part of God to us, to assure us, that the promise of the covenant should be fulfilled ; or also, and principally, an undertaker, on our part, for the performance of what is required of us?

The first of these is vehemently asserted by the Socinians, who are followed by *Grotius* and *Hammond*; the latter is generally affirmed by expositors, ancient and modern, both of the Roman and Protestant churches; who maintain, that Christ was properly *a surety unto God for us*, and *not a surety unto us for God*. And because this is a matter of great importance, wherein the faith and consolation of the church is highly concerned, I shall insist a little upon it.

The sole argument produced to prove that Christ was only a surety for God to us, is this : “ That we do not “ give him as a surety to God, but that he gives him “ to

* The word, Εγγυος, is used only, Heb. vii. 22. Τυχλον is *Vela manus*, the palm of the hand; thence is εγγυος, or εις το γυαλον, to deliver into the hand. Εγγυητης is of the same signification. Hence being a Surety is interpreted by *striking the hand*, Prov. vi. x. So it answers the Hebrew (ORcB) which signifies *to mingle*; hence the mixture between a surety and him for whom he is a surety, whereby they coalesce into one person. This word the *Seventy* render by εγγυω, Prov. vi. i. xvii. 18. xx. 16, &c.

It is unreasonable to object, as some do, that the word εγγυος is used in no other place of Scripture; for surely one divine testimony is as authoritative as twenty; and, besides, the signification of the word is so well known, from its common use among men, that there can be no danger of mistake.

" to us ; and therefore he is a surety for God and the accomplishment of his promises, and not for us to pay our debts, or answer what is required of us."

But there is no force in this argument ; for, it belongs not to the nature of a surety, *by whom* he is appointed. His own *voluntary susception* of the office is sufficient : he who voluntarily undertakes for another, on whatever ground, is his surety. And this Christ did in behalf of his Church ; for when it was said— " Sacrifice and offering for sin God would not have"—or accept as a sufficient atonement—then said he, " Lo, I come to do thy will, O God *." He willingly, out of his own abundant love and goodness, took upon him to make atonement for us, wherein he was our surety. Indeed, it is weak, and contrary to all common experience, that a person cannot be a surety for others, unless they appoint him to that office. The principal instances we have of Suretiship, have been entirely voluntary and without any such appointment. And in such undertakings, he, *to whom* it is made, is considered as much as they *for whom* it is made. As when Judah, of his own accord, became surety for Benjamin, he had as much respect to the satisfaction of his father, as to the safety of his brother : and so the Lord Christ, in his undertaking to be our surety, had respect to the glory of God before our safety.

But we shall offer some arguments to prove, that he neither was, nor could be a surety *for God to us*, but *for us to God*. For

A Surety is one who undertakes for another wherein he is *defective*, really or reputedly. Whatever that undertaking be, whether in a promise, the deposit of security, or any other personal engagement, it respects the defect of the person engaged for ; for if he be of absolute credit and unquestionable reputation, there is no need of a surety. God, therefore, can have no

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surety,

* Heb. x. 5—6.

surety, properly ; because there can be no *defect* on his part. A question, indeed, may arise, whether such or such a word or promise be his or not ; but to assure us of this is the work of a *witness*, not of a surety, and God does make use of witnesses for this purpose*. Besides, a surety must be of greater *ability* or *credit* than he for whom he is surety ; at least, he must add to their credit and improve it : this, none can be for God ; no, not the Lord Christ himself, who in his whole work was the servant of the Father.

The Apostle had before declared (Heb. vi. 13, 14.) who was God's surety in this matter of the covenant, namely, himself alone ; *interposing himself by his oath*, and for this reason—*because he had none greater to swear by* : wherefore, if God would give any other surety, it must be one greater than himself, which being impossible, he swears by *himself* alone. In various ways he testifies his truth unto us, that we may know it to be his ; and so Christ, in his ministry, was the principal witness of the truth ; but other surety than himself he cannot have. And, therefore,

When he would have us come to the *full assurance of faith* in his promises, he resolves it wholly into “the immutability of his counsel,” as declared by his promise and oath ; so that neither is God capable of having any surety, properly so called ; nor do we need any, on his part, for the confirmation of our faith. But,

On all accounts, *we need a surety*, on our behalf. In the first covenant made with Adam, there was no surety : God and man were the immediate covenanters ; and though we were then in a condition to perform all the terms of it, yet it was broken and disannulled. If this failure had been on the part of God, it would have been necessary, in making the new covenant, that he should have a surety, that it might be firm and everlasting : but this would be blasphemous to imagine. It was

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* See Isa. xliii.-10. John xviii. 37. Rom. xv. 8.

man alone who failed; wherefore it was necessary that in making the new covenant, which was to be everlasting, that we should have a surety; we alone are capable of a surety, properly so called; we alone needed him, and without him the covenant would not, on our part, be firm and inviolate. The surety therefore is so, with God, for us.

Again, It is the *Priesthood of Christ* alone, of which the Apostle treats in this place. Wherefore *he is a surety, as he is a priest*, and in the discharge of that office, and therefore is so with God on our behalf; for as all the *sacerdotal acts* of Christ, have God for their immediate object, and are performed with him for us, he was a surety *for us* also.

A Surety, then, he was for us, by his voluntary undertaking, out of his rich grace and love, to do, answer, and perform all that is required on our parts, that we may enjoy the benefits of the covenant, the grace and glory prepared, proposed, and promised in it, in the way determined on by divine wisdom. And this may be reduced to two heads: 1. His answering for our transgressions against the first covenant. 2. His procurement of the grace of the new.

(1.) He undertook, as the surety of the covenant, to answer for all the sins of those who were to be partakers of the benefits of it; that is, to undergo the punishment due to their sins; to make atonement for them, by offering himself, as a propitiatory sacrifice for the expiation of their sins; redeeming them by the price of his blood from their state of misery and bondage under the law and its curse *. And this was absolutely necessary, that the grace and glory prepared in the covenant might be communicated to us. Without this, the righteousness and faithfulness of God would not permit, that sinners, who had apostatised from him, and

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* Isa. iii. 4—10. Matt. xx. 28. 1 Tim. ii. 6. 2 Cor. vi. 20.
Rom. iii. 25. Heb. x. 5—8. Rom. viii. 2, 3. Gal. iii. 13.

rebelled against him, falling thereby under the sentence and curse of the law, should again be received into his favour, and made partakers of grace and glory.

(2.) That those, who were to be taken into this covenant, should *receive grace*, enabling them to comply with the terms of it, fulfil its conditions, and yield the obedience which God required therein. For, by the ordination of God, he was to procure for them the Holy Spirit, and all needful supplies of grace, to make them new creatures, and enable them to yield obedience to God from a new principle of spiritual life, and that faithfully to the end. So was he the surety of this better testament.

But to return from this digression *. (7.) That in which all the preceding causes of the *union* between Christ and believers centre, is, *The communication of his Spirit*—the same Spirit that dwelleth in him, unto them; to abide in, to animate, and guide the whole mystical body and all its members.

On these considerations, whereby the Lord Christ became one *mystical person* with the church, in the holy, wise disposal of God, and by his own consent, *the sins of all the elect were imputed to him*. This having been the faith and language of the church in all ages, cannot now with any modesty be denied. Wherefore the *Socinians* themselves allow, “that our sins may be said to be imputed to him, and he suffered the punishment of them, so far as that all the afflictions he endured

* The reader will perceive, that what has been advanced respecting the true nature of Christ's Suretiship, is a digression from the principal subject; namely, the chief cause of the imputation of the sins of believers to Christ; which is, their union as one mystical person: this, because of its great importance to the subject, is retained. But the author, after having declared the nature of the Suretiship of Christ, represents at large the views of others concerning it, which he refutes; but this very copious digression is, for the sake of brevity, omitted. The learned and critical reader may refer to the original work, page 264. (Ed.)

" dured, and the death he suffered, were *occasional* by " our sins ; for had we not sinned, there had been no " occasion for them :" but notwithstanding this concession, they expressly deny his *satisfaction*, or that, properly, he underwent the punishment due to our sins ; wherein they deny also all imputation of them unto him. Others say, that " our sins were imputed " to him, but not as to the *guilt of them* ;—that he " suffered on the special command of God ; not that " his death was any way due on account of our sins, " or required in justice." I shall therefore inquire into the meaning of the words *guilt* and *guilty* in Scripture.

The Hebrews express *sin* and *guilt* by the same word (*עֹשֶׂה*), and this they use both for the *punishment* due to it, and a *sacrifice* for it *. *Guilt* is the *respect of sin to the sanction of the law*, whereby the sinner becomes obnoxious to punishment : there is, therefore, no imputation of sin, where there is no imputation of guilt ; for the guilt of punishment, which is not its respect to the desert of sin, is a mere fiction ; there is no guilt of sin but its relation to punishment.

What we affirm herein is, That our sins were so transferred to Christ, as that thereby he became (*υπόδικος τῷ Θεῷ, reus*), *responsible* unto God, and obnoxious unto punishment in the justice of God for them. And this includes, both the act of God, imputing sin to him, and the voluntary act of Christ himself, in undertaking it.

1. The act of God is expressed by " his laying all our iniquities upon him; making him to be sin for us,

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* So David prays : " Deliver me from blood ;" (Heb.) which we render, from *blood guiltiness* ;^{*} because, by the law of God, he, who was *guilty of blood*, was to die. In the New Testament, he that is guilty, is said to be *υπόδικος*, Rom. iii. 19. obnoxious to judgment, or vengeance from sin, as Acts xxviii. 4. See also Matt. xxiii. 18. and 1 Cor. xi. 27.

Reatus in the Latin was formed of *reus*, guilty ; and signifies *obligatio ad paenam*.

who knew no sin ;” and the like. For, as the supreme Governor, Law-giver, and Judge of all, unto whom it belonged to take care that his holy law was observed, or the offenders punished, He admitted upon the transgression of it the *Suretiship* of Christ, to answer for the sins of men. In order to this, “ he made him under the law,” or gave the law power over him, to demand of him, and inflict upon him the penalty which was due to the sins of those for whom he undertook. For the declaration of the righteousness of God in this setting forth Christ to be a propitiation, the *guilt* of our sins was transferred to him in an act of the righteous judgment of God, accepting and esteeming of him as the *guilty person*; as it is with public sureties in all cases.

2. Christ’s *voluntary susception* of the state of a surety for the church, to appear before the throne of God’s justice for them, to answer whatever was laid to their charge, was required hereunto. And this he did absolutely. There was a concurrence of *his own will* in and to all those divine acts, whereby he and the church were constituted one mystical person: And of his own love and grace did he, as our surety, stand in our stead before God, when he made inquisition for sin; he took it on himself, as to the punishment which it deserved. Hence it became just and righteous that he should suffer, “ the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God;” for if this be not so, I desire to know what is become of the *guilt of the sins* of believers: If it were not transferred to Christ, it remains still upon themselves, or it is nothing. It will be said, that guilt is taken away by the *free pardon of sin*: but if so, there was no need of punishment at all; which, indeed, is what the *Socinians* plead; for if punishment be not for guilt, it is not punishment *.

C H A P.

* *Bellarmino*, and others, object, that “ if this be true, then Christ was made a sinner (*et quod horret animus cogitare, filius Diaboli*); “ and

C H A P. IX.

The formal Cause of Justification. Objections answered.

"THE Righteousness of Christ (in his obedience and suffering for us) imputed to believers, as they are united to him by his Spirit, is that righteousness whereon they are justified before God, on the account whereof their sins are pardoned, and a right is granted to them unto the heavenly inheritance."

In this position, the substance of what we plead for is plainly and fully expressed ; and I have chosen to express it in these words, because it is that Thesis in which the learned Davenant laid down that common doctrine of the Reformed Churches, whose defence he undertook. This is the shield of truth in the whole cause of Justification, which, whilst it is preserved safe, we need not trouble ourselves about the differences that are among learned men, about the most proper stating of some lesser concerns of it. This is the refuge, the only

"and that God must hate Christ, for he hateth the guilty." I answer, nothing that Christ undertook could constitute him *subjectively, inherently, and thereon personally*, a sinner. To bear the blame or guilt of other men's faults, makes no man a sinner : besides, this is absolutely inconsistent with the *hypothetical union*. And, I confess, it hath always seemed scandalous to me, that *Socinus, Crellius, and Grotius* grant, that, in some sense, "Christ suffered for his own sins;" which they attempt to prove from *Heb. vii. 27.* where it is positively denied. Again, none ever dreamed of a *transfusion* of sin from us to Christ ; nor of such an imputation of them to him as that they should cease to be our sins, and become his *absolutely* ; which would overthrow what we affirm ; for, on that supposition, Christ would not suffer for our sins, for they ceased to be ours, antecedently to his suffering : but the *guilt of them* was so transferred unto him, that through his suffering for it, it might be pardoned to us. Christ suffering for our sins was an high act of obedience, for which the Father *loved him*, *Heb. x. 5, 6. John x. 17, 18.*

only refuge of distressed consciences, wherein they may find rest and peace.

Before I proceed to state the arguments for Justification, by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, I shall take notice of the principal objections which are made to it; because the answers given to them will tend to the further explanation of that truth, which I shall afterwards confirm by Scripture testimonies.

We are not to wonder at the objections frequently made to this doctrine, seeing it is a part, yea, an eminent part of the *mystery of the Gospel*, and not so exposed to the *common notions* of reason, as some pretend: More is required to the true spiritual understanding of such mysteries; yea, unless we intend to renounce the Gospel, it must be asserted, that reason, as it is corrupted, dislikes every such truth, and rises up in enmity against it *. Hence, the minds of men are wonderfully fertile in coining sophistical objections against evangelical truths, and raising cavils against them: for *carnal reason*, being once set at liberty, under the false notion of truth, to act itself freely and boldly against *spiritual mysteries*, is subtle in its arguings, and pregnant in its invention of them.

These objections generally arise from not considering the *order of the works of God's grace*, and of our compliance with it in a way of duty (as was before observed); for they consist in opposing those things as inconsistent, which in their proper places are not only consistent, but mutually subservient to each other; and are so found in the experience of true believers. These objections, also, are all taken from *certain consequences*, which, it is supposed, will ensue on the admission of this doctrine; and, as this is the only expedient to perpetuate controversies; so, to the best of my observation, I never met with any one, who, in order to give an appearance of absurdity to the consequences, from whence

* Rom. viii. 7. 1 Cor. ii. 14.

whence he argues, did not frame his *suppositions* to the *disadvantage* of his opposers ; a course of proceeding, which I wonder good men are not ashamed or weary of.

I. It is objected, " That the imputation of the righteousness of Christ doth overthrow all remission of sins on the part of God."

A confident charge this seems to them, who steadfastly believe, that without this imputation, there could be no remission of sins. But they say, " That he who hath a righteousness, absolutely perfect, imputed to him, so as to be made his own, needs no pardon ; hath no sin that should be forgiven ; nor can he ever need forgiveness."

Grotius shall answer this objection — " Whereas we have said, that Christ hath procured two things for us, freedom from punishment, and a reward ; the ancient Church attributes the one of them distinctly to his satisfaction, the other unto his merit. Satisfaction consisteth in the translation of sins, merit in the imputation of his most perfect obedience performed for us." In his judgment, the remission of sins, and the imputation of righteousness, were as consistent as the satisfaction and merit of Christ ; as indeed they are.

2. Had we not been *sinners*, we should not have needed the *imputation* of the righteousness of Christ, to render us righteous before God : being so, the first end for which it is imputed, is the pardon of sin ; without which we could not be righteous by the imputation of the most perfect righteousness. These things therefore are consistent ; namely, that the *satisfaction* of Christ should be imputed to us for the pardon of sin, and the *obedience* of Christ be imputed to us, to render us righteous before God ; and neither of them singly was sufficient to our *Justification*.

II. It

* *Socinus, de Servat. lib. 4. cap. 2, 3, 4.*

II. It is objected — “ That the imputation of the righteousness of Christ overthroweth all necessity of repentance for sin, in order to the pardon of it ; for if Christ satisfied for all our sins, and paid all our debts, and his righteousness be made ours before we repent, then is all repentance needless *.”

Answer. 1. We require *evangelical faith*, in order of nature, antecedently to our *Justification*; and whatever is necessary thereto, is in like manner required; among which is sorrow for sin, and a repentance of it: for whoever is truly convinced of sin, as to its evil nature and dreadful consequences, cannot but be perplexed in his mind, that he hath involved himself therein; and this will be accompanied with shame, fear, and sorrow. Hence arise resolutions, and sincere endeavours to abstain from sin, and reform the life. This is usually called *legal repentance*; because its motives are taken chiefly from the law. There is also required unto it, that *temporary faith* of the Gospel, before described; and as it doth usually produce great effects in confession of sin, humiliation for it, and change of life, as in Ahab and the Ninevites; so, ordinarily, it precedeth true saving faith and *Justification* thereby. The necessity, therefore, of repentance is not weakened by our doctrine, but strengthened; for without it, in the order of the Gospel, an interest in the righteousness of Christ cannot be attained.

2. Justifying faith includes, in its nature, the entire principle of *evangelical repentance*; so that it is utterly impossible that a man should be a true believer, and not at the same instant be truly penitent: and therefore are they so frequently joined in Scripture as one *simultaneous* duty: Yea, the call of the Gospel unto repentance, is a call to faith, acting itself by repentance. The sole reason of that call to repentance, to which the forgiveness of sins is annexed, (Acts ii. 38.) is

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* *Socinus*, in *ibid.*

the proposal of *the promise*, which is the object of faith, ver. 39. And those conceptions and affections which a man hath about sin, upon a *legal conviction*, being enlivened and made *evangelical* by the introduction of faith, as a new principle of them, and giving new motives unto them, become *evangelical*: so impossible is it that faith should be without repentance.

3. It is granted, that Christ, as our Surety, “ satisfied for all our sins ; paid all our debts ; and that his righteousness is really communicated to us :” but it does not hence follow, “ that there is no need of re-pentance, all being done for us already.” Must we assent to one part of the Gospel, to the exclusion of another ? Was it not free to God to appoint what way, method, and order he pleased, whereby these things should be communicated to us ?

It was necessary that this righteousness of Christ should be made ours in such a manner, as that God might be glorified therein ; this was to be *by faith*. It was equally necessary that our nature, which is corrupt and depraved, should be renewed and changed, in order to our partaking of the righteousness of Christ ; and therefore, as faith, under the formal consideration of it, was necessary to the *first end* ; it was necessary also, to the *second end* ; that this faith should be accompanied with, and include in itself, the seeds of all those graces wherein that divine nature consists, whereof we are to be made partakers. Wherefore, although Christ did, as a surety, make satisfaction for all the sins of the church, and pay all their debts ; yet the particular interest of every one in what he did and suffered, depends upon the way, means, and order appointed of God to that end. This alone gives the true necessity of all the duties which are required of us, with their order and their ends.

III. It

III. It is objected, " That the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, which we defend, overthrows the necessity of faith itself ; for, on this supposition, say they, the righteousness of Christ is ours before we believe : for Christ satisfied for all our sins, as if we had satisfied in our own persons ; and he who is esteemed to have satisfied for all his sins, in his own person, is acquitted from them all, and accounted just, whether he believe or not ; nor is there any reason why he should be required to believe *."

I answer, that the whole *fallacy* of this objection lies in opposing one part of the design of God's grace to another ; or in taking one part of it for the whole, of which we before warned the reader : for it supposes that the satisfaction of Christ must have its whole effect without believing on our part, which is contrary to Scripture. And, I say,

1. When Christ died for us, " God laid all our sins upon him † ;" " he bare them all in his own body on the tree † ;" and made a full satisfaction for our sins.

2. Notwithstanding this *plenary satisfaction*, all men continued to be born " Children of wrath ;" and whilst they believe not, " the wrath of God abideth on them :" nor can any one be said to have an interest in it, antecedent to another act of God in its imputation to him.

3. That which Christ *paid for us*, is as truly paid, as if we had paid it ourselves ; but yet the act of God, in laying our sins on Christ, conveyed to us no *actual right* to what he did and suffered ; because God hath appointed something else, not only antecedently thereto, but as the means thereof, unto his own glory.

4. God hath appointed that there shall be an *immediate foundation*, for the imputation of Christ's righteousness

* Socinus, de Serv. lib. 4. cap. 2, 3, 4, 5. — † Isa. liii. 6.

‡ 1 Pet. ii. 24.

ousness to us, whereon we may be said to have done and suffered in him, what he did and suffered in our stead, by that grant, donation, and imputation of it unto us : and this is our *actual coalescence into one mystical person* with him by faith. Hereon the necessity of faith originally depends : to which, if we add, the necessity of it unto that special glory of God, which he designs to exalt in our Justification, and also to the ends of our obedience to him, its station is sufficiently secured against all objections.

IV. It is objected, “ That if the righteousness of Christ be made ours, we may be said to be Saviours of the world as he was ; for he was a Saviour by his righteousness.” This, like the former, is a mere sophistical cavil ; for

The righteousness of Christ is not *inherently* in us, as it was in him ; or wrought by us, as it was by him ; but only *imputed* to us, for *our own individual* benefit : and if it were inherently ours, yet we could not save others thereby ; the righteousness performed by Christ in the *human nature*, would not have been sufficient for the salvation of the church, had it not been the righteousness of his *person*, who is both God and man ; for “ God redeemed the church with his own blood.”

V. It is objected, “ That if we insist on *personal imputation* to every believer of what Christ did ; or if any believer be personally righteous in the very *individual acts* of Christ’s righteousness, many absurdities will follow.”

Ans. I have never heard of any who have thus expressed themselves ; and therefore I am not concerned in their defence. And the objection seems to me to suppose not only that Christ did every individual act required of us, but also that those acts are made our own *inherently* ; which is false and impossible. What we plead for is, That what Christ did and suffered, as

our surety, in answer to the law, for us, and in our stead, is imputed to every believer ; and this is sufficient to that end without any such supposals. (1.) From the dignity of his person. (2.) From the nature of his obedience, which was a perfect compliance with and satisfaction to the whole law, in all its demands. (3.) From the constitution of God ; that what he did and suffered, as a public person, and our surety, should be reckoned to us as if done by ourselves. But it does not therefore follow, that "God judgeth that we have "in our own persons done those very acts which Christ "did ;" for this would overthrow all imputation : nor does it follow, that "Christ, in his own person, per- "formed every individual act, which, in our own "circumstances, is required of us." This imputa-
tion stands on other foundations. Nor does it follow, that "every saved person's righteousness before God "is the same identically and numerically with Christ's, "in his public capacity, as Mediator :" for this ob-
jection destroys itself, by affirming, that, as it was his, it was the righteousness of God-Man ; and so hath a special nature as it relates to his person : but there is a wide difference in the consideration of it, as *his absolutely*, and as *made ours* : his *inherently* ; ours by *im-
putation* : his *actively* ; ours *passively* ; wrought in the person of God-Man for the whole church ; *imputed to* each single believer, as to his own concernment only. Nor is there any absurdity in the supposed consequence of our doctrine, that thus "we shall be accounted to "have done, what was done long before we were in a "capacity of doing any thing :" for what is done for us, and in our stead, before we are in any such capacity, may be imputed to us, as is the sin of Adam : and there is a manifold sense in which men may be said to have done, what was done *for them*, and in their name, be-
fore their actual existence.

VI. It

VI. It is objected, "That upon the supposed imputation of the righteousness of Christ, it will follow, that every believer is justified by the works of the law; for the obedience of Christ was a legal righteousness, and if that be imputed to us, then are we justified by the law, which is contrary to Scripture."

Ans. The Scripture, which affirms, that "by the deeds of the law no man can be justified," affirms also, that "by faith we do not make void the law, but establish it"—that "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us"—and, that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness unto them that believe." But "we are not justified by the law, or the works of it," in the true and only sense of that proposition, which is, that only "the doers of the law shall be justified," Rom. ii. 13. and that "he who doth the things of it, shall live by them," chap. x. 5. namely, *in his own person*, which the law requires: But if we, who have not fulfilled the law by personal obedience, are justified by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to us, then are we justified by Christ, and not by the law.

VII. Neither, on the supposition of this imputation, can any be said "to merit their own salvation;" for *satisfaction* and *merit* are properties of the righteousness of Christ, as formally inherent in his own person; but which do not accompany that righteousness, as it is imputed to individual believers.

C H A P. X.

Arguments for Justification by the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ. The first Argument from the Nature and Use of our own personal Righteousness.

THERE is a Justification of convinced sinners on their believing : hereon their sins are pardoned, their persons accepted with God, and a right is given them to the heavenly inheritance. This state they are immediately taken into upon their believing in Jesus Christ : and a state it is of actual peace with God.

These things, at present, I take for granted ; and they are the foundation of all that I shall plead in the present argument. And I take notice of them, because some persons seem to me, to deny any *real actual Justification* in this life ; for they make it only a conditional sentence declared in the Gospel ; which, as to its execution, is delayed till the day of judgment : for while men are in this world, the *whole condition* of it not being fulfilled, they cannot be absolutely justified. Hence it follows, that there is no real state of assured rest and peace with God for any persons in this life. This, at present, I shall not dispute about, because it seems to me to overthrow the whole Gospel, and all the comfort of believers, about which I hope we are not yet called to contend.

Our inquiry is, how *convinced sinners* do, on their believing, obtain Justification ? If this can be done only by the *Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ*, then, thereby alone are they justified. And this assertion proceeds on a supposition, that a righteousness is required to the Justification of every person : and if there be *no other righteousness*, whereby we may be thus justified, but that of Christ imputed to us, then thereby must we be justified, or not at all. And if there be any

- any other such righteousness, it must be *our own*, inherent in us, and wrought by us: But that there is no such righteousness of our own, whereby we may be justified before God, I shall now prove: *First*, From express testimonies of Scripture; and, *Secondly*, From the consideration of the thing itself.

First, We shall produce some testimonies of Scripture. Psal. cxxx. 3, 4. "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." These words include an inquiry, How a man may be justified, or stand, before God, so as to be accepted of him*. That which first offers itself to this end, is his own obedience; for this both the law and his conscience demand: but the Psalmist declares, that no man can plead this with success; because, notwithstanding the best obedience of the best men, "iniquities are found with them against the Lord their God;" and if men come to their trial, these must be taken into the account; and then no man can stand. Wherefore, the wisest and safest course is utterly to forego this plea, and not to insist on our own obedience, lest our sins also should appear, and be heard.

Two things are required in this trial, that a sinner may stand: (1.) That his iniquities be not observed; for if they be he is lost for ever. (2.) That a righteousness be produced, that will endure the trial; for the first of these, the Psalmist tells us it must be through pardon—"there is forgiveness with thee;" the other cannot be by our own obedience, because of our iniquities; wherefore the same Psalmist directs us † to "go in the strength of the Lord God, and make mention of *his* righteousness, and that only:"—the righteousness of *God*, not his *own*; yea, in opposition to his *own*, is his only plea. If no man, then, can stand a trial before God upon his own obedience,

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because

* Psal. i. 5. † Psal. lxxi. 16.

because of his iniquities ; and if our only plea in that case be the righteousness of God, and not our own ; then is there no personal righteousness in believers by which they may be justified.

The same is asserted still more plainly, Psal. cxliii. 2.
“ Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified *.”

The person who insists on this plea with God, professeth himself to be *his servant*—one that loved, feared, and obeyed him ; not an unbeliever, nor an unregenerate person, whose works were only *legal*. It was *David*, who was not only converted ; a true believer ; had the Spirit of God, and the aids of his grace in his obedience, but had this testimony, that he was “ a man after God’s own heart ;” and this witness he had in his own conscience, which he frequently avows. This person then, thus circumstanced ; thus testified unto by God and his own conscience, considers how he may “ stand before God, and be justified in his sight.” Why doth he not now plead *his own merits*?—No : he left this plea for a future generation of men, who would “ justify themselves, and despise others.” But supposing he had no such confidence in the merit of his works as some have now attained ; yet why doth he not enter into judgment with God, by pleading, “ that he had fulfilled the condition of the new covenant ?” for upon a supposition of the procurement of that covenant and its terms by Jesus Christ, this was all that was required of him †. Is it not to be feared he was one of those, who see no necessity, or leave none, for personal holiness, seeing he makes no mention of it, when it should stand him in the greatest stead ? At least, he might plead his
faith,

* This testimony is the more to be considered, because, as it is derived from the *law* (Exod. xxxiv. 7.), so it is transferred into the *Gospel* ; and twice urged by the Apostle to the same purpose, Rom. iii. 20. Gal. ii. 16.

† For I suppose the virtue of that purchase he made of it is allowed to extend to the Old Testament.

faith, as a work of his, to be imputed to him for righteousness. But, whatever the reason be, he waves them all, and absolutely deprecates a trial upon them.

The Psalmist gives us the reason, in this general axiom ;—“ for in thy sight shall no man living be justified ;” that is, by his own obedience or works. This is an eternal rule of truth, that by his own obédience, no man living can be justified.

From hence we argue; If the most holy of God’s servants, after a course of sincere fruitful obedience, testified unto by God himself, and witnessed in their own consciences, do renounce all thoughts of such a righteousness thereby, on which, in any sense, they may be justified before God; then there is no such righteousness in any; but it is the righteousness of Christ alone, whereon they are so justified *.

Another testimony to the same purpose, we have in the prophet Isaiah, who says, in the name of the church, (chap. lxiv. 6.) “ We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” Here the Prophet makes a confession of the sins of the people, including himself; asserting at the same time, that God was their father, and they his people; yet their righteousnesses were such, that Justification in the sight of God was not to be expected on account of them.

Many others, to the same purpose, I shall omit: namely, all those wherein the saints, in an humble confession of their own sins, betake themselves to the mercy and grace of God alone, as dispensed through the mediation of Christ: And all those, wherein God promiseth “ to pardon sin for his own name’s sake;” to bless the people; “ not for any good, or righteousness that was

* It is true, that a man may plead his integrity and obedience before God himself, but only with respect to *temporal deliverance*, or any other particular end wherein the glory of God is concerned. So did Hezekiah, for the sparing of his life, Isa. xxxviii. 3. and Neh. xiii. 22. but resolves his personal acceptance with God into pardoning mercy—“ Spare me, O God, according to thy mercy.”

was in them :" And all those, in which God declares his delight in them alone, who " hope in his mercy," and " trust in his name ;" pronouncing a curse upon them, who " trust in any thing else, or who glory in themselves." All these testimonies prove, that the best of God's saints have not a righteousness of their own, whereon they can be justified before God ; for they all renounce any such thing, and fly to grace and mercy alone.

The second part of the present argument is taken from *The nature of the thing itself*; our own personal inherent righteousness, what it is, and of what use in our Justification.

1. We have before granted, that there is an *inherent righteousness* in all believers ; for " the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness * ;" and though *righteousness* be generally taken for a special grace or duty, yet it may be taken for the whole of our obedience ; and is so used, where our own righteousness is opposed to the righteousness of God. And this is either *habitual* or *actual*. There is an *habitual* righteousness inherent in believers, as they have " put on the new man, and are created in Christ Jesus unto good works :" and there is an *actual* righteousness, consisting in those good works unto which they are so created †.

But this personal inherent righteousness is not that by which we are justified before God, for it is *imperfect* ; it does not perfectly answer any rule of obedience which is given to us, and therefore cannot be our justifying righteousness.

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* Eph. v. 9. Rom. vi. 20.

† This being the constant doctrine of all the Reformed Churches and Divines, it is an open calumny whereby the contrary is ascribed to them. *Bellarmino* affirms, that no Protestant writers acknowledge an inherent righteousness, but only *Bucer* and *Cheznitius* ; whereas there is not one of them by whom it is denied ; only they carefully distinguish between *inherent holiness*, and that *righteousness* whereby we are justified.

It is imperfect, as to the principle of it ; for there is a contrary principle of sin abiding in us ; “ the flesh lusting always contrary to the Spirit.” None of the faculties of our souls are perfectly renewed ; “ the inward man is renewed day by day ;” and we are always to be “ purging ourselves from all pollution of flesh and spirit.” Believers find in themselves the remainders of indwelling sin, in the darkness of their minds ; whence, at best, they know but in part, and are ready to wander out of the way. I know not how any one can think of his pleading his own righteousness, on this very account ; such notions arise from ignorance of God and ourselves, or want of a due consideration of both : neither can I apprehend how a thousand distinctions can safely introduce it into any place in our Justification. He who can search, in any measure, by a spiritual light, into his own heart, will find, “ God be merciful to me a sinner,” a better plea than any work of his own.

It is imperfect also, with respect to every act and duty of it ; whether internal or external. There is iniquity cleaving to our holy things ; and “ all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.” It has been often and well observed, that if a man, the best of men, were left to choose the best of his works, and thereon to enter into judgment with God, if only under this notion, that he hath fulfilled the condition required of him, as to his acceptance with God, it would be his wisest course (so Bellarmine thought) to renounce it, and betake himself to grace and mercy alone.

It is imperfect, by reason of the incursion of actual sins. Hence our Saviour hath taught us continually to pray for the forgiveness of our sins ; and “ if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, for in many things we offend all.” And what confidence can be placed in this righteousness, which is thus weak, maimed, and imperfect ?

I have but touched on these things ; but enough has been said, to prove, that though this righteousness of believers

believers be on other accounts like *the fruit of the vine*, that gladdens the heart of God and of man ; yet, as to our Justification before God, it is like *the wood of the vine*, a pin cannot be taken from it to hang any weight of this cause upon *.

I shall conclude this argument, by observing,

1. *That righteousness, which answereth neither the law of God, nor the design of God in our Justification by the Gospel, is not the righteousness by which we are justified ; but such is the inherent righteousness of believers.* That it answereth not the law of God, has been proved from its imperfection ; nor doth it answer the design of God in our Justification by the Gospel ; for this is to take away all glorying in ourselves ; so that the whole might be to the praise of his grace † : but it is evident, that no man can possibly have any greater occasion of boasting, than that he is justified by performing the condition of it, which consists in his own personal righteousness.

2. *No man was ever justified by it in his own conscience, much less can he be justified by it in the sight of God :* for “ God is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things.” There is no man in the world so righteous, or holy, but his conscience will charge him with coming short of the obedience required of him,

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* Some plead, “ that this righteousness is *absolutely perfect* ; hence some say they are perfect and sinless ; but were it so with any, his having been a sinner would spoil all : but this vain imagination is so contrary to Scripture and experience, that I shall not insist on the refutation of it.

Others say, “ that it is the accomplishment of the condition of the new covenant, though it fulfil not the moral law.” I answer, If this obedience answer the only rule of it, then there is *no sin*, nor need of pardon ; but whoever considers the principle of it, its acts and duties, will find that it answers not the commands of the Gospel, any more than the commands of the Law. Besides, this opinion puts an irreconcileable difference between the Law and the Gospel ; for according to it, God declares a man by the Gospel to be perfectly righteous, who is declared by the Law to be a sinner, and under its curse.

† Rom. iii. 27. 1 Cor. i. 29, &c.

in matter, manner, or degree of perfection. Let any man try himself, whether he can be justified in his own conscience by his own righteousness, and he will be condemned at his own bar : and he who doth not thence conclude, that there must be another righteousness than his own, whereby he must be justified, will be at a loss for peace with God.

C H A P. XI.

*The Nature of the Obedience that God requireth of us.
The eternal Obligation of the Law thereto.*

OUR second argument shall be taken from the nature of that obedience, or righteousness, which God requireth of us, that we may be accepted of him. This is a copious subject, but I shall reduce what belongs to our present concern in it, to the following heads.

1. God being a most perfect, and therefore a most free agent, the existence, and natural circumstances of mankind, together with all his actings towards them, are to be resolved into his sovereign will and pleasure : no other reason can be given of the original—of the whole system of them *.
2. The order of all things, and their relation to each other depend on the free Constitution of God, no less than their existence ; and in this order some things may be relatively necessary, which were not absolutely so, in their own nature.
3. It was a free, sovereign act of God's will to create man, intelligent, rational, capable of moral obedience, with rewards and punishments ; and being so formed, he could

* See Psal. cxv. 3. cxxxv. 6. Prov. xvi. 4. Eph. i. 9, 11.
Rev. iv. 11.

could not be governed like the brutes, by a mere *physical influence*, but by a *moral instrument of law or rule*, influencing his rational faculties to obedience, and guiding him therein.

4. This law did necessarily ensue upon the constitution of our nature in relation to God ; and is nothing but the rule of that relation ; which is therefore *indispensable, invariable, and eternal*.

5. The substance of this law was, that man, adhering to God, in trust, love, and fear, as the chief good, the author of his being and happiness, should *yield obedience* to him ; respecting his infinite wisdom, righteousness, and power, to protect, reward and punish. And nothing more is required to the establishment of this law, but that *God be God, and man be man*. Wherefore,

6. This law doth eternally and unchangeably oblige all men unto obedience to God ; even *that obedience* which it requires, both as to the *substance* and *manner* of it : for God cannot deny himself, nor is the nature of man changed as to the *essence* of it (to which alone this law has respect), by any thing that can fall out.

7. In the constitution of this order of things, God made it possible, and foresaw it would be future, that man would rebel against this law. This gave occasion to the constituting the *punishment* of man upon his transgression of it. But this was not an effect of *arbitrary will*, any more than the law itself was. On the creation of man, the law was necessary, from all the properties of the divine nature ; and on the transgression of man, the constitution of the punishment was a necessary effect of divine righteousness. The constitution of the penalty, therefore, is no more liable to change, than the law itself.

8. This is that law, which Christ came “ *not to destroy, but to fulfil* ; that he might be the end of it for righteousness to those who believe.” This law he *abrogated*

gated not, nor could he, without a destruction of the relation that subsists between God and man.

9. This law, the law of sinless, perfect obedience, with its sentence of death on every transgression, doth, and must, abide in force for ever: for nothing more is required hereto, but that God be God, and man be man. Yet this shall be further proved.

(1.) There is not one word in Scripture intimating any alteration in, or abrogation of this law; so that any thing should not be duty, which it makes to be duty; or any thing not be sin, which it makes to be sin; or that what it makes to be sin should not deserve the punishment it threatens—"The wages of sin is death."

(2.) Take away this law, and you leave no *standard of righteousness* to mankind; no certain boundaries of good and evil; but those pillars, on which God has fixed the earth, are left to float about like the isle of Delos in the sea. Some say, that the light of nature, or the dictates of reason, and not this law, is the rule. If they mean that light, which was concreated with our nature, and those dictates of right and wrong, which reason *originally* approved, they only say, in other words, that this law is still the rule of obedience: but if they intend the remaining light of reason, in its present depraved state, under the additional deprivations of traditions, customs, lusts, and prejudices, then there is nothing more irrational; for thus no *certain boundaries* of good and evil are preserved. That which is *good* to one, will be *evil* to another; and on this pretence all the idolatries in the world may be excused.

(3.) Conscience bears witness hereto. There is no good nor evil required or forbidden by this law, that, upon the discovery of it, any man can bribe his conscience not to comply with it *in judgment*. It will *accuse* and *excuse*, according to the sentence of the law, let him do what he can to the contrary.

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10. From

10. From these premises it follows, (1.) That as all mankind have by sin incurred the penalty of this law ; the suffering of which, being inconsistent with acceptance before God and eternal life ; it is impossible that any one individual of Adam's race should be justified, unless this *penalty* be suffered *by them*, or *for them*. (2.) That to the same end, of acceptance with God, the righteousness of this eternal law must be fulfilled in us ; so that in the judgment of God, which is according to truth, we may be esteemed to have fulfilled it, and be dealt with accordingly. For, upon a supposition of a failure herein, the sanction of the law is not arbitrary, so that the penalty may or may not be inflicted, but *necessary*, from the righteousness of God, as the supreme Governor of all.

11. About the *first* of these, our controversy is with the *Socinians* only, who deny the satisfaction of Christ : concerning this, I have elsewhere treated at large ; and expect not to see an answer to what I have written on that subject. As to the *latter*, we must inquire how we may comply with the rule, and answer the righteousness of this unalterable law, whose authority we cannot be exempted from. And we affirm, that *the obedience and righteousness of Christ imputed to us*, is that whereon we are judged and esteemed to have answered the righteousness of the law, Rom. v. 19. viii. 4. And hence we argue,

If there be no other way, whereby the righteousness of the law may be fulfilled in us, (without which we cannot be justified, but must inevitably fall under its penalty) but only the righteousness of Christ imputed unto us ; then that is the sole righteousness whereby we are justified in the sight of God : But the former is true, and so therefore is the latter.

12. On the supposition of this law, and its original obligation to obedience, with its sanction and threatenings, there can be but one of these *three ways*, whereby a sin-

a sinner can be justified ; each of which must be by a sovereign act of God with respect to this law. The first is, 'The Abrogation of it.' This we have proved impossible ; and they will wofully deceive their own souls, who shall trust to it. The second, is by transferring its obligation on a Surety ; which we plead for, as the substance of the Gospel. The third way, is by changing the nature of the righteousness which the law requires : and this we shall examine, as the only reserve against our present argument.

13. It is said, therefore, that " by our own personal obedience we answer the righteousness of the law, so far as it is required of us." But as no sober person can imagine, that any fallen man ever yielded sinless obedience to the law ; two things are supposed, in order that our imperfect obedience may be accepted as perfect : of these, one respects the law, the other our obedience.

14. That which respects the law, is not the abrogation of it ; for though this would seem the most expeditious way to remove the difficulty, yet this is pretended but by few : but what they intend, is a derogation from its obliging power as to obedience : for whereas it originally required perfect sinless obedience, it shall be allowed still to oblige us unto obedience, but not that which is absolutely sinless ; but if it be performed in a lower degree, provided it be sincere, and universal, as to all the parts of it, it is all that the law now requires of us. Whether these things be so or not, we shall see in a few words.

15. Hence it follows, that the act of God, with respect to our obedience, is not an act of judgment according to any law of his own, but an esteeming and accepting that as perfect, which really and in truth is not so.

16. It is added, " that both these depend on, and are procured by the obedience and merits of Christ : for

" on their account it is that our imperfect obedience
 " is accepted, as if it were perfect ; and the power of
 " the law, to require obedience absolutely perfect, is
 " taken away : and these being *effects* of the righteous-
 " ness of Christ, that righteousness may, so far, be
 " said to be imputed to us."

17. But, notwithstanding the pains that have been taken to give a colour of truth to these things, they are mere fictions and imaginations of men, having *no ground in the Scripture*, nor agreeing with the *experience* of believers. As to *experience*, there is nothing in a believer's walk and conversation, wherein he fails of compliance with the holy law of God, requiring sinless obedience, but his conscience convinces him it is a sin ; and, as such, deserving the curse of that law : Nor does he seek relief in this case, but by the mediation of Jesus Christ, who of God is made righteousness unto him.

Nor is there any ground for this opinion in Scripture. It is *unwritten*. There is no intimation of any such dispensation of God with reference to the original law of obedience. Much is said of our deliverance from the *curse* of the law by Christ, but not a word of the *abatement* of its preceptive power. It is *contrary* to Scripture : for it is plainly affirmed, that the law is *not to be abolished*, but *fulfilled* : not to be *made void*, but to be *established* : that the *righteousness of it must be fulfilled in us*. Further,

It is a supposition *unreasonable and impossible*. For, (1.) The law was a representation to us of the *holiness of God*, and his *righteousness in the government of his creatures* : therefore there can be no alteration made in it ; for "with God there is no variableness, nor shadow of changing." (2.) It would leave (as before observed) no standard of *righteousness*, but only a *Lebian rule*, which applies itself to the abilities of all men, and leaves as many *various measures of righteousness*, as there are believers in the world. (3.) It includes a variation in the

the centre of all religion, which is the natural and moral relation of men to God. (4.) It is dishonourable to the mediation of Christ; for it makes the principal end of it to be, that God should accept of a righteousness, inexpressibly inferior to that which he required in the law of our creation: and, in a sense, makes him the minister of sin. (5.) It reflects on the goodness of God: for on this supposition, that he hath reduced the law, so as to be satisfied with a weak and imperfect obedience, what reason can be given, consistent with his goodness, why he should give at first a law of perfect obedience, one sin against which involved all mankind in ruin?

18. All these, and various other consequences, follow also on the *second supposition*; namely, An imaginary estimation of that as *perfect*, which is *imperfect*—of that as *sinless*, which is attended with *sins innumerable*. But “the judgment of God is according to truth;” neither will he reckon that unto us for a perfect righteousness, which is so imperfect as to be like tattered rags; especially, having promised to us “Robes of righteousness,” and “Garments of Salvation.”

That which necessarily follows on these discourses is, *That there is no other way whereby the original immutable law of God may be established and fulfilled, with respect to us, but by the imputation of the perfect obedience and righteousness of Christ; who is “the end of the law for righteousness unto all who believe.*

C H A P. XII.

The Imputation of the Obedience of Christ to the Law declared and vindicated.

FROM the last general argument, the following, in particular, proceeds.

If it was necessary, that Christ, as our surety, should suffer the *penalty* of the law in our stead, because we have sinned ; then it was also necessary that, as our Surety, he should yield obedience to the *preceptive* part of the law also : and if the imputation of the former be needful to our Justification, then is the imputation of the latter also necessary to the same purpose. For,

Why was it necessary, that, as our surety, he should suffer the penalty of the law ? Was it not, that the glory of his righteousness, as the author of the law, and supreme governor of the world, might not be violated in the *absolute impunity* of sinners ? And is it not as requisite to the glory of God, that the preceptive part of the law be complied with for us, in as much as obedience thereto is required of us ? And as we are no more able of ourselves to fulfil the law, in a way of obedience, than to undergo the penalty of it, so as to be justified thereby : So no good reason can be given, why God is not as much concerned that the preceptive power of the law be complied with by perfect obedience, as that the sanction of it be established by suffering its penalty. On the same grounds, therefore, that Christ's suffering the penalty of the law for us, was necessary to our Justification, and that the satisfaction he made thereby be imputed to us ; on the same grounds it was equally necessary, that he should fulfil the preceptive part of it, in his perfect obedience thereto,

to, which also is to be imputed to us for our Justification*.

Three things are usually objected against this imputation. That it is *impossible*—*useless*—and the belief of it *pernicious*.

1. *Socinus* says it is *impossible*, because “our Lord “Jesus Christ was for himself, or on his own account, “obliged to all that obedience which he performed; “for if it were otherwise, then he might, if he would, “have neglected the whole law of God, and have broken it at his pleasure †.”

To vindicate the truth from this objection, we observe: 1. The *obedience* of which we treat, was the obedience of Christ the *mediator*: but the obedience of Christ, as mediator, was the obedience of his *person*; for “God redeemed the church with his own blood,” Acts xx. 28. It was performed in the human nature; but it was the person of Christ who performed it. As in the person of a man, some of his acts, as to the immediate principle of operation, are *acts of the body*, and some are *acts of the soul*; yet, in their performance, they are the acts of the person: so the acts of Christ, in his mediation, as to their *immediate operation*, were the actings of his distinct natures; some of the divine, some of the human: but as to the *perfecting efficacy* of them, they

* What we assert is, That Christ fulfilled the whole law for us; he not only suffered its penalty, but yielded perfect obedience to it. I shall not engage in the debate of the distinction between the *active* and *passive* obedience of Christ: for, as he exercised the highest active obedience in his suffering, so all his obedience was mixed with suffering. And it must be owned, that the sufferings of Christ, as purely penal, are imperfectly called his *passive righteousness*: for all righteousness is either in *habit*, or in *action*; but *suffering* is neither; nor is any man *righteous* from what he suffereth. Neither do sufferings give satisfaction to the commands of the law, which require only obedience; and hence it follows, that we need more than the sufferings of Christ, if righteousness is required of us that we may be justified.

† Part 3. cap. 5. de servat.

they were the acts of his whole person : *bis acta*, who was that person ; and whose power of operation was a property of his person. Wherefore the obedience of Christ was the obedience of the Son of God, but the Son of God was never absolutely made under the law, nor could he be formally obliged thereby. He was indeed made so in his human nature, wherein he performed this obedience ; he was so far made under the law, as he was *made of a woman** ; for, in his person, he was Lord of the Sabbath †, and therefore of the whole law. But the obedience itself, was the obedience of *that person*, who never was nor could be made under the law in his whole person : for the *divine nature* cannot be subject to an outward work of its own, such as the law is ; nor can it have an *authoritative power* over it, as it must have, if it were *under the law* ‡.

2. As Christ *owed not*, in his own person, this obedience for himself, by virtue of any authority that the law had over him, so he *intended it not* for himself, but for us. It was in *our nature*, that he performed all this obedience : now the *susception of our nature* was his voluntary act, with respect to some end ; and the end which he had in view in the assumption of our nature, was the end of all he did therein : Now it was *for us*, and not *for himself*, that he assumed our nature ; nor was any thing added to him thereby : wherefore, in the issue of his work, he proposes this only to himself, “ that he may be glorified with that glory which he had with the Father, before the world was,” by the removal of that veil which was put upon it in his humiliation. Whereas, therefore, he was made man, not for himself, but for the church, that he might become thereby the surety of the covenant ; his obedience, as a man,

* Gal. iv. 4. † Mark ii. 28.

‡ Socinus evades the force of this argument, by denying the Divine Person of Christ ; but here I take that for granted, having proved it elsewhere, beyond what any of his followers are able to contradict.

man, to the law, was for us, and not for himself ; so designed, so performed, and without a respect to the church was of no use to himself*. He was born to us, given to us, lived for us, and died for us ; obeyed for us, and suffered for us ; that “ by the obedience of one man many might be made righteous.” And what he did for us, is *imputed to us* ; and this is included in the very notion of his doing it *for us*.

3. Setting aside the consideration of the grace and love of Christ, and the compact between the Father and the Son, as to his undertaking for us (which proves that all he did was *for us*, and not for himself;) the human nature of Christ, by virtue of its union with the person of the Son of God, had a right unto, and might immediately have been admitted into the highest glory whereof it was capable, without any antecedent obedience to the law ; for from the first instant of that union, the whole person of Christ, with our nature existing therein, was the object of divine worship from angels and men, wherein consists the highest exaltation of that nature.

It is true, there was a peculiar glory that he was actually to possess, consequent to his obeying and suffering for us ; but as to the *right* thereto, it was laid in the union of his person.

4. It is granted, that the *human nature* of Christ, or “ that which was made of a woman,” was made *under the law*, and thereby obedience became necessary to him ; but this being by a special dispensation, intimated in the expression of it—*he was made under the law*; namely, *as he was made of a woman* ; the obedience he yielded

* It is said, “ That this obedience was necessary as a qualification of his person, that he might be meet to be our Mediator, and therefore was for himself.” This I deny ; for He was every way meet for this work, by the union of the human nature with the divine : besides, that which he did, as Mediator, could not concur to the making him *meet so to be*.

yielded thereon, was for us, and not for himself: for, as made under the law, he not only owed obedience to its precepts, but he was made *obnoxious to its curse*; but surely this was not for himself, but for us. We owed obedience to the law, and were obnoxious to its curse: obedience was as necessarily required of us, if we would enter into life, as the answering of the curse for us was, if we would escape death eternal. Christ, as our surety, is made under the law for us, whereby he becomes obliged to the obedience which it required, and to the penalty that it threatened. Who will now say, that indeed he suffered the penalty of the law for us, but yielded obedience to it for himself only?

5. The Lord Christ, in his obedience, was not a *private*, but a *public* person. He obeyed, as he was a Surety and Mediator. But what a public person does, as a public person or representative of others, whatever may be his own concern therein, he doth it not for himself, but for others; and were it not for them, it would be of no use: yea, it implies a contradiction, that a public person, as such, should do any thing for himself only. Wherefore, as Socinus would have Christ to have *offered for himself*, (which is to make him a Mediator for himself,) so to affirm his *mediatory obedience*, to have been for himself, has little less of folly and impiety in it.

6. It is granted, That Christ having a *human nature*, which is a creature, it was impossible but that it should be subject to the law of creation; but this law respects not the present life only, but the future and eternal state also; and the human nature of Christ is therefore subject to it, even now in heaven, and cannot but be so: but none will say that he is *now* under the law in the sense intended by the Apostle. But the law, in the sense described, the human nature of Christ was subject to, on its own account, while in this world. And this is sufficient to answer the objection just mentioned

—“ that

—“ that if Christ were not obliged to obedience for “ himself, then he might have neglected the whole “ law ;” for, besides that it is a foolish imagination concerning that “ holy thing,” which was united to the Son of God, and incapable of any deviation from the divine will ; the eternal law of love to God, under which his human nature was and is, as a creature, gives sufficient security against any such suppositions.

The second part of the objection against the imputation of Christ’s obedience to us is, “ *That it is useless* “ to the persons who are to be justified ; for as they “ have in their Justification the pardon of all their sins, “ they are thereby righteous, and have a title to eternal life : for he who is so pardoned, as not to be “ esteemed guilty of any sin of omission, or commission, “ wants nothing requisite thereunto ; hence he becomes “ not unrighteous, which is the same as to be righteous ; “ as he who is not dead is alive ; for there is no middle state between death and life. Wherefore those, “ who have all their sins forgiven, have the blessedness “ of Justification ; and there is neither need nor use “ of any further imputation of righteousness unto “ them.”

I answer. This cause is of more importance, and more evidently stated in the Scripture, than to be turned into such niceties, which have more of *philosophical subtlety* than *theological solidity* in them. This exception, therefore, might be dismissed without further answer than what is given us in the known rule, “ That a truth, well established and confirmed, is not “ to be questioned, much less relinquished, on every “ entangling sophism, though it should appear insoluble.” But there is no such difficulty in these arguments, but what may be easily discussed. This plea proceeds upon several mistakes.

i. It

1. It supposes, " That he, who is pardoned, is esteemed to have done all that is required of him, &c." But no such thing is included in the nature of pardon; neither God nor man do judge, that *he, who hath sinned, bath not sinned*. If a malefactor be tried and convicted for a crime, and afterwards discharged by *sovereign pardon*, he is looked upon in the eye of the law an innocent man, as to the punishment that was due to him; but no man thinks him made righteous thereby, or esteems him not to have done that which he really did, and of which he was convicted. Joab and Abiathar were guilty of the same crime: Solomon gives orders to put Joab to death, but pardons Abiathar. Did he thereby declare him righteous? Himself expresses the contrary, only he remitted the punishment of his fault*. Wherefore the pardon of sin dischargeth the guilty person from being liable to punishment; but it doth not suppose that he is thereby to be adjudged to have done no evil, and to have fulfilled all righteousness. Some say, " pardon gives a righteousness of innocence, but not of obedience;" but it cannot give a righteousness of innocence, absolutely, such as Adam had; for he had actually done no evil: it only removes guilt, which is the respect of sin to punishment, ensuing on the sanction of the law.

2. It proceeds on this supposition, " That the law, in case of sin, doth not oblige both to punishment and obedience;" but this is an evident mistake, and doth not establish the law, but makes it void. For the law hath two parts or powers.—Its *preceptive* part, commanding obedience, with a promise annexed; " Do this and live :" and the *sanction*, on supposition of disobedience, binding the sinner to punishment—" In the day thou finnest thou shalt die."

This law was first given to man *in innocency*; and therefore the *first power* of it only was in act; it obliged only

* 1 Kings ii. 26.

only to obedience; for an innocent person could not be obnoxious to its sanction, which supposes disobedience.

But on the commission of sin, man came under an *actual obligation* to punishment; this can no more be questioned, than whether he was, at first, under an obligation to obedience; but then the question is, Whether the first intention and obligation of the law unto *obedience*, doth cease to affect the sinner, or continue so as at the same time to oblige him to *obedience* and *punishment*, both its powers being in act towards him? I observe,

(1.) Had the threatened punishment been immediately inflicted, in its full extent, this could have been no question; for man had died immediately: and he, who is finally executed, hath so fulfilled the law, that he owes no more obedience to it. But, (2.) God, in his infinite wisdom and patience, hath otherwise disposed of things; man is still a traveller on the way to his end, and not fully placed in his eternal and unchangeable state; where neither promise nor threatening, reward nor punishment, could be proposed to him. In his present condition he may be considered, both as *a guilty person*, and so obliged to the full punishment threatened by the law: and, as *a rational creature of God*, not yet brought unto his eternal end. (3.) In this state, the law is the only instrument of the continuance of the relation between God and him; and it cannot but still oblige him to obedience, unless we shall say, that *by his sin* he hath exempted himself from the government of God. A wicked servant, who is punished for his fault, is not thereby freed from his obligation to duty; unless his punishment be capital, and so put an end to his state. Wherefore seeing, that by the pardon of sin, we are freed only from *the obligation to punishment*; there is, moreover, required unto Justification, that obedience which the law requireth.

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And this greatly strengtheneth our argument ; for being sinners, we were obnoxious both to the *command* and *curse* of the law : and as Christ could not, by his most perfect obedience, satisfy the curse of the law—“ dying thou shalt die ;” so, by the utmost of his suffering, he could not fulfil the command of the law—“ do this and live.” Wherefore, as we plead, that the death of Christ is imputed to us for our Justification, so we deny that it is imputed to us for our righteousness. For, by the imputation of the sufferings of Christ, our sins are pardoned, and we are delivered from the curse of the law, which he endured ; but we are not thence esteemed righteous, nor can we be so, without respect to the fulfilling of the commands of the law.

3. The objection proceeds also on this supposition, “ That pardon of sin gives title to eternal blessedness :” but this is a mistake. Pardon of sin depends solely on the death or suffering of Christ ; but suffering for punishment, gives title to nothing ; it satisfies for something, but deserves no reward. It is nowhere said, Suffer this and live ; but, Do this and live.

These things are indeed *inseparably connected* in the appointment of God, and are therefore put together by the Apostle, Rom. iv. 6—8. But it is one thing to be freed from being liable to eternal death—another to have right and title to a blessed and eternal life. It is one thing “ to be redeemed from under the law ;” another, “ to receive the adoption of sons.” One thing to be “ freed from the curse,” another to have “ the blessing of Abraham.” Can it be supposed, that all the great and glorious effects of present grace, and future blessedness, should follow necessarily on, and be the effect of mere pardon of sin ? Can we not be pardoned, but we must of necessity be made “ sons, heirs of God, and co-heirs with Christ ?”

Pardon of sin, with respect to the sinner, is a free gratuitous act of God ; but with respect to the satisfaction

faction of Christ, it is an act in judgment : for on the consideration thereof, as imputed to him, God absolves the sinner upon his trial. But pardon, on a juridical trial, gives no right nor title to any privilege, but merely deliverance. It is one thing to be acquitted of crimes before the throne of a king, another to be made his son by adoption, and heir to his kingdom.

These things are represented in Scripture as distinct, and depending on distinct causes. Thus, in the vision concerning Joshua the high-priest *—“ Take away the filthy garments from him : and to him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee ; and I will clothe thee with change of raiment,” &c. It is generally granted, that the Justification of a sinner is here represented. The “ taking away of his filthy garments,” is expounded by the “ passing away of his iniquity”—he is no more *defiled* by them ; but he is not thereby *clothed*: “ change of garments” is an additional favour. What this raiment is, is declared, Isa. lxi. 10. “ He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness,” (to which the Apostle alludes, Phil. iii. 9.) These things, therefore, are distinct—“ taking away the filthy rags,” and “ clothing us with change of raiment ;” or the pardon of sin, and the robe of righteousness ; by the one we are freed from condemnation, by the other we have a right to salvation.

There is therefore no force in the comparison of these things to *life* and *death natural*; “ so that he who is “ not dead is alive, &c. there being no middle state ;” for though it may be so in things *natural*, it is otherwise in things *moral* and *political*; if there were no difference between being acquitted at a human bar, and having a right to a kingdom, it might prove the point. It is true, that right to eternal life, succeeds a freedom

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from

• Zech. iii, 4, 5.

from eternal death; but not from a necessity in the nature of the things themselves, but only in the free constitution of God: he might have pardoned men their past sin, and placed them in a condition of seeking righteousness for the future, by the works of the law; for this would answer the original state of Adam: hence it is evident, that the disposal of men into this state and condition of right to life and salvation, doth not proceed from the pardon of sin, but hath another cause; which is, "the imputation of the righteousness of Christ unto us, as he fulfilled the law for us."

3. The last part of the objection is, "That our doctrine is *pernicious*, because it takes away the necessity of our personal obedience, introducing Antinomianism, Libertinism, and all manner of evils." I refer an answer to this to its proper place; for though it be urged by some against this part of the doctrine in a peculiar manner, yet it is advanced by others against the whole of it: and although we should grant, that the obedience of Christ unto the law is not imputed to us; yet shall we not be freed from this false accusation, unless we will renounce the whole of the satisfaction of Christ also: and we intend not to purchase peace with the whole world at so dear a rate. Wherefore, I shall, in its proper place, give this part of the charge its due consideration, as it reflects on the whole doctrine which we believe and profess.

Hitherto we have treated of and vindicated the imputation of the active obedience of Christ unto us, as the truth of it was deduced from the preceding argument about the obligation of the law of creation. I shall now briefly confirm it with other reasons and testimonies.

That which Christ, the Mediator and Surety, did in obedience to God, in the discharge of his office, he did for us, and it is imputed to us. This hath been proved already;
" for

"for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us," Rom. viii. 3, 4. Whatever is spoken of the grace, love and purpose of God, in sending or giving his Son, or of the love, grace, and condescension of the Son, in coming and undertaking the work of redemption assigned to him, gives testimony to this assertion. Yea, it is the fundamental principle of the Gospel, and of the faith of all who truly believe. Wherefore, what he so did, is to be inquired into. And,

1. The Lord Christ, our mediator and surety, was, in his human nature, made under the law; not for himself, but for us. But, as made under the law, he yielded obedience to it; this therefore was for us, and is imputed to us.

The exception of the *Socinians*, that it is the *judicial* law only that is intended, is too frivolous to be insisted on: for he was made under *that law*, whose *curse* we are delivered from: and if we are delivered only from the curse of the *law of Moses*, wherein they contend, that there were neither promises nor threatenings of eternal things, we are still in our sins, under the curse of the *moral law*, notwithstanding all he has done for us. It is excepted, with no colour of sobriety, "that he was made under the law only as to the *curse* of it;" for it is plain, that he was made under it as we are made under it—"to redeem them that were under the law:" and if he were not made so as we are, there is no consequence from his being made under it unto our redemption from it. But we are so under the law, as not only to be obnoxious to its curse, but so as to be obliged to all the obedience, that it required, as has been proved. And if he hath redeemed us only from the *curse*, by undergoing it, leaving us, in ourselves, to an-

sver its *obligation to obedience*, we are not freed nor delivered. And the expression, *under the law*, properly signifies the obligation of it unto obedience, and *consequently* only with a respect to the curse. Gal. iv. 21. “Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law.”—They did not desire to be under the curse of the law, but its obligation to obedience.

2. As Christ was thus made under the law, so he did *actually fulfil it*, by his obedience to it. “Think not, said he, (Matt. v. 17.) that I am come to destroy the law, but to fulfil *;” so he expressly declares, in his ensuing discourse ; shewing both its power of obliging us always to obedience, and giving an exposition of it. This law he came (*πρηγματι*) to fulfil ; that is, *to yield full perfect obedience* to its commands, whereby they are absolutely fulfilled. It is a vain exception of some, “that he fulfilled the law *by his doctrine*, in the exposition of it. The opposition between the words (*πρηγματι* and *καταλύσαι*) to *fulfil* and to *destroy*, will admit of no such sense ; and our Saviour himself expounds the “fulfilling of the law,” by doing the commands of it, ver. 19. Wherefore Christ, as our mediator and surety, fulfilling the law, by yielding perfect obedience to it, he *did it for us*, and to us it is imputed. This is expressly, and in terms, asserted by the Apostle, Rom. v. 18, 19. “Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto Justification of life. For as by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made

* The Jews object these words against the Christians, as contradictory to what they pretend to be done by him ; but the reconciliation is plain and easy. There was a twofold law ; *moral* and *ceremonial* ; the first is of eternal obligation ; the other was given for a time, and then to be abolished, as St. Paul proves, in his epistle to the Hebrews : Christ first *accomplished it*, and then *abolished it*, Eph. ii. 14, &c. But the law, which obliges all men to obedience, he came not to destroy.

made righteous." The full vindication of this testimony, I refer to its proper place ; here I shall only observe, that the Apostle expressly affirms, that *by the obedience of Christ we are made righteous* ; which cannot be, but by the imputation of it unto us.

C H A P. XIII.

The Nature of Justification proved from the Difference of the Covenants.

OUR third argument is taken from the difference between the two Covenants.

1. By the two covenants, I understand those which were absolutely given to the whole church, and were all to bring it to a perfect state : that is, the covenant of works, or the law of creation, with promises and threatenings annexed ; and the covenant of grace, proposed in the first promise.

2. The essence of the covenant of works consisted in this ; *That, upon our personal obedience, we should be accepted and rewarded* ; and whatever covenant proceeds on these terms, however varied or altered, it is still the same ; for as in the renovation of the promise, wherein the essence of the covenant of grace was contained, God made frequent additions to it, as to Abraham and David ; yet it was still the same covenant ; so whatever variations or additions may be made to the dispensation of the first covenant, so long as this rule is retained, "Do this and live," it is still the same covenant, for the substance and essence of it.

3. In this covenant, observe, (1.) All things were transacted immediately between God and man ; there was no mediator on either part : for the whole depending on every one's personal obedience, there was no place

place for a mediator. (2.) Nothing but perfect sinless obedience would be accepted ; there was no provision for any defect, nor for the pardon of sin.

4. This covenant, being once established, no new covenant could be made, unless the *essential form* of it were new, so that our own personal obedience should not be the condition of acceptance with God ; for while this is so, however the covenant may be reformed or reduced to suit our present state, it is still the same.

5. Wherefore the covenant of grace, supposing it to be a covenant absolutely *new*, and not an alteration of the old one, must differ from it in *essence, substance, and nature*. And this it cannot do, if we are to be justified before God on our personal obedience, wherein the essence of the first covenant consisted. If then the righteousness, wherewith we are justified, be *our own*, we are yet under the first covenant, and no other.

6. But the new covenant is totally different. For, (1.) *It is of grace*, which wholly excludes works ; that is, so of grace, that our own works are not the means of Justification before God. (2.) *It hath a mediator* and surety, which supposes, that what we ourselves cannot do, and which was originally required of us, should be done for us by him. And this is one of the very first notions of the christian religion, that the Lord Christ was given to us, born to us ; that he became our mediator, to do for us what we could not do for ourselves ; and not merely to suffer what we had deserved. And here, instead of our own righteousness, we have the righteousness of God ; instead of being righteous in ourselves before God, he is “ the L O R D our Righteousness :” and nothing but a righteousness of another kind and nature unto Justification before God, could constitute another covenant. Wherefore, the righteousness, whereby we are justified, is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, or we are still under the law, under the covenant of works.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIV.

The Exclusion of all Sorts of Works from an Interest in Justification. What is intended by the Law, and the Works of it, in the Epistles of St. Paul.

WE shall take our fourth argument from the express exclusion of all works whatever from our Justification before God. For this is what we assert, that no works of our own are the causes or conditions of our Justification; but that the whole of it is resolved into the free grace of God, through Jesus Christ, as the mediator and surety of the covenant. To this purpose the Scripture speaks expressly, Rom. iii. 28. "Therefore we conclude, that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law." Rom. iv. 5. "But unto him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Rom. xi. 6. "If it be of grace, then it is not of works." Gal. ii. 16. "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." Eph. ii. 8, 9. "For by grace are ye saved, through faith; not of works, lest any man should boast." Tit. iii. 5. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us."

These testimonies are express, and assert all that we contend for. And I am persuaded, that no person, whose mind is not prepossessed with *notions* and *distinctions* of which the least tittle is not offered to them in these, or any other texts, can avoid judging, that the law, in every sense of it, and all sorts of works whatever, are, in every way, and in all senses, excluded from our

our Justification before God. And if so, then it is the righteousness of Christ alone on which we can depend, or this matter must cease for ever *.

Our adversaries are divided among themselves, as to the meaning of the Apostle, in these assertions ; for their plain and obvious meaning they cannot allow, without the ruin of their opinions. We shall therefore examine their various conjectures, which will discover their inconsistency, and confirm our present argument.

1. Some say, “ It is the *ceremonial law* ; or the law “ *as given to Moses at Sinai*, with all the works of it, “ which were to be abolished, that are intended.” But of all other conjectures, this is the most impudent and contradictory to the design of the Apostle. The law he intends, is that, whereby is *the knowledge of sin*, which is the *moral law* ; “ for I had not known lust, saith he, except the law had said, *thou shalt not covet.*” That law he intends, which “ stops the mouths of all sinners, and makes all the world guilty before God,” which none but the law of creation can do—That law, which brings all men under the *curse* for sin—That law, which is *established by faith* ; which the ceremonial law is not—That law, whose righteousness is to be *fulfilled in us*. And the instance he gives us of the Justification of Abraham without the works of that law which he intends, was some hundreds of years before the giving of the ceremonial law †.

2. Others say, “ the Apostle only excludes *the perfect works required by the law of innocence.*” But if so, they allow all that we plead for ; namely, that it is the

* So the Apostle infers, Gal. ii. 16.

† Yet I do not say, that the *ceremonial law*, and its works, are excluded from the Apostle’s design ; for when that law was given, the observation of it was a part of the obedience due to the first table of the decalogue ; and the exclusion of its works from our Justification, as they were a part of moral obedience, is exclusive of all other works. But that this *alone* is intended is false.

the moral indispensable law of God that is intended ; and that by the works of it no man can be justified ; yea, that all the works of it are excluded from our Justification ; for it is, saith the Apostle, *without works*. The works of this law, performed according to it, will justify the doers of them * ; but because this cannot be done by any sinner, therefore they are excluded. Granting the law intended to be the moral law, there is no such distinction intimated, as that we are not justified by the *perfect works* of it, which we cannot perform, but by some *imperfect works* that we can perform. This is wild imagination, and foreign to the design and express words of his whole discourse. Their *evasion* is equally vain ; namely, “ that the Apostle opposeth Justification by faith to that of works, which he excludes :” for they would have this faith to be *our obedience* to the divine commands, in that imperfect manner to which we can attain ; for when he excludes all such Justification by the law, and the works thereof, he doth not advance in their room, *our own faith and obedience* ; but adds, “ being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ,” &c.

3. Some affirm, “ That the works excluded are only the *outward works* of the law, performed in a servile manner, without an inward principle of faith and love,” But this opinion is false and impious. For, (1.) The Apostle excludes the *works of Abraham*, which were not outward and servile. (2.) The works excluded are those which the law requires ; and the law is holy, just, and good : but a law requiring only outward works, without internal love to God, is neither holy, just, nor good. (3.) The law condemns all such works as are separated from the internal principle of faith and love ; for it requires, that in all our obedience we should love God with all our hearts. And the Apostle saith not that we are not justified by the works the law condemns,

* Rom. ii. 15.

demns, but not by them which the law commands. (4.) In reflects on the honour of God, that he, who only knows the hearts of men, and who regards them alone in duties of obedience, should give a law requiring servile works only; for if the law intended require more, then those are not the only works excluded.

4. Some say, in general, it is the *Jewish law* that is intended. If they mean the *ceremonial law*, or the law as absolutely given by *Moses*, we have already shewed the vanity of that pretence: but if they mean the *whole law*, or rule of obedience given to the church of Israel under the Old Testament, they express much of the truth, probably more than they designed.

5. Others say, “ That it is works done with a *conceit of merit*, making the reward to be of *debt*, and “ *not of grace*, that are excluded:” But no such distinction appears in the Apostle’s words. The Apostle excludes all works of the law, of every sort. The law requires no works with a conceit of merit; and the works of the law, originally, included *no merit*, as that which ariseth from the proportion of one thing to another in the balance of justice; and in that sense only it is rejected by those who plead for an interest of works in Justification. The *merit*, which the Apostle excludes, is that which is inseparable from works; so that it cannot be excluded, unless the works themselves be so; and he excludes all works on this very account, that the admission of them would *necessarily* introduce merit, which is inconsistent with grace.

6. Some contend, that the Apostle excludes only “ Works wrought before believing, in our own natural “ strength, without the aid of grace.” The falsehood of this notion will be sufficiently evinced in what we shall immediately prove, concerning the law and works intended by the Apostle; but the heads of the demonstration of the truth to the contrary may be just mentioned.

(1.) The

(1.) The Apostle excludes *all works* without distinction ; and we are not to distinguish where the law doth not. (2.) All the works of the law are excluded, consequently all works wrought after believing by the aids of grace ; for they are all required by the law *, or they would be an abomination to God. (3.) The works of believers, performed by the aids of grace, are expressly excluded ; as the works of Abraham, before mentioned, and the Apostle's own works after his conversion †. (4.) All works are excluded, which might countenance *boasting* ‡ ; but this is done more by *the good works of regenerate persons*, than by any works of unbelievers. (5.) The law required faith and love in all our works ; and, therefore, if all the works of the law be excluded, the best works of believers are so. (6.) All works are excluded, which are opposed to grace, working freely in our Justification ; but this, all works whatever are : hence the Apostle excludes those works, which the false teachers pressed the Galatians unto ; but these were works of believers, persons by grace converted to God.

7. Some affirm, “ That the Apostle excludes all “ works from our first Justification, but not from the “ second, or, as some speak, the continuation of our “ Justification.” But we have before examined these distinctions, and found them groundless.

It is evident, therefore, that men put themselves into an uncertain slippery station, where they know not what to fix upon, nor wherein to find any such appearance of truth, as to give them countenance in denying the plain and frequently repeated assertion of the Apostle.

Wherefore, in the confirmation of the present argument, I shall more particularly inquire, what the Apostle

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* Psal. cxix. 35. Rom. vii. 22. † Gal. ii. 16. 1 Cor. iv. 4.
Psal. iii. 9. Eph. ii. 9. ‡ Rom. iv. 2. iii. 17. Eph. ii. 9. 1 Cor.
i. 29—31.

tle intends, by the law and works whereof he treats ; for, as to our Justification, whatever they are, they are absolutely and universally opposed to grace, faith, the righteousness of God, and the blood of Christ, as altogether inconsistent with them ; and it is his plain design to evince that inconsistency.

It is evident, that the Apostle, by the *law* and the *works* thereof, intended what the Jews understood by those terms ; he takes the meaning of them for granted, as very well known and agreed upon between them. Now the Jews, by the *Law*, intended what the Scriptures of the Old Testament meant by that expression ; and that was, *the Law given at Mount Sinai* ; for there is no distinct mention of it before. This is commonly called, *the law absolutely* ; but most frequently *the law of God* ; and sometimes *the law of Moses*.

Of the law, so given at Horeb, there was a distribution into three parts : (1.) *The ten words* ; that is, *the ten commandments*, written in two tables of stone. This was first given ; was the foundation of the whole, and contained that perfect obedience required of mankind by the law of creation, and was now received into the church, with the highest attestations of its indispensable obligation to obedience or punishment. (2.) *The ceremonial law*, as we term it (חֲקִיכָת), *rites or statutes* ; “*the law of commandments contained in ordinances*,” Eph. ii. 15. or in a multitude of arbitrary commands. (3.) *The judicial law*, as we call it (מְשֻׁפְטִים). The whole of it is constantly called *the law* (תֹּורַה) ; that is, *the instruction* that God gave to the church, in the rule of obedience which he prescribed unto it. That which we call the *moral law*, was the foundation of the whole ; and those parts of it, termed the *judicial and ceremonial law*, were peculiar instances of the obedience which

* The LXX render it by δικαιωματα ; that is, *Jura* ; but the Latin, from thence, *Justificationes*, which has given great occasion of mistake in ancient and modern divines.

which the church, under the Old Testament, was obliged to in the special polity and divine worship, which were then necessary to it. The law, then, was a perfect rule of all that *internal, spiritual, and moral obedience*, which God required of the Church ; and also of all the external duties of obedience, for matter and manner, time and season, that in both the Church might walk acceptably before God. This law, as it was ordained of God to be the instrument of his rule of the Church, and by virtue of the covenant made with Abraham, (which its introduction on Sinai did not disannul) was accompanied with *a power and efficacy enabling unto obedience*. As merely *preceptive*, it administered no power to yield obedience to it (no more do the mere commands of the Gospel) ; but as it was God's *doctrine, teaching, instruction*, in all acceptable obedience, and was adapted to the covenant of Abraham, it was accompanied with an administration of *effectual grace*, procuring and promoting obedience in the Church*.

This being the Law, in the sense of the Apostle, and those with whom he had to do, our next inquiry is—What was their sense of *Works*, or *works of the law*? I answer : The universal sincere obedience of the Church to God according to this law. In this consisted their *personal righteousness*, as “ they walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.” And this they esteemed their own righteousness, according to the law, as it really was, Phil. iii. 6, 9. For though the Pharisees had corrupted the doctrine of the law, and put false glosses on sundry precepts of it ; yet, that the Church in those days understood by the works of the law, ceremonial duties only, or external works, or works with a conceit of merit, or without an internal principle of faith and love, or any thing but their own personal sincere obedience to the whole doctrine and rule of the law, there is nothing that can give the least colour of imagination.

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* See Psalm. i. Psalm xix. Psalm cxix.

All this is perfectly stated in the *suffrage* which the Scribe gave to that sense of the law, which our Saviour declared at his request *: “ to love God with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength ; and to love his neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt-offerings and sacrifices.” Moses himself makes *faith* and *love* the sum of the law, Deut. vi. 4, 5. And the Apostle declares as much, when he speaks of the law, and the works of it, which he excludes from our Justification †. From the whole it is evident, that *the law* signifies *the entire rule and guide of our obedience to God*; and *the works of it*, are *all the duties of obedience, internal, supernatural, external, ritual*, however we may be enabled to perform them. And these being excluded, it is *the righteousness of Christ alone*, imputed to us, whereby we are justified before God.

C H A P. XV.

Justification by Faith alone.

THE Truth, for which we plead, hath two parts. The first is—That we are justified by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. The second is-- That it is by *faith alone* we receive that righteousness to our own use and benefit. For though this faith be the radical principle of all obedience, yet, as justifying, its act and duty is such, that no other grace or duty can be associated with it, or be of any consideration.

1. *That* faith, whereby we are justified, is most frequently, in the New Testament, expressed by *receiving*. This notion of faith having been mentioned before, we shall here only notice two things concerning it: (1.) That it is so expressed with respect to the *whole object of faith*. Hereby we are said to receive *Christ himself* ‡, and as the Lord

* Matt. xxii. 36. Mark xii. 28, &c. † Rom. vii. 7, 9. ix. 31.
viii. 3. x. 3. Phil. iii. 9. ‡ John i. 12. Col. ii. 6.

Lord our righteousness. Thus we receive the atonement*, and the forgiveness of sins †—the grace of God—the abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness ‡; so that faith, with respect to all the causes of Justification, is expressed by receiving: for it also receives the promise §, the instrumental cause thereof on the part of God. Now, no grace nor duty can have any co-operation with faith herein; this reception of Christ, and his righteousness, belongs not to their nature, nor is comprised in their exercise. We observe also, (2.) That the nature of faith consisting in receiving, that which is the object of it must be offered, tendered, given to us, as that which is not our own, but made ours by that giving and receiving. Herein also, as no other grace nor duty can concur with it, so the righteousness whereby we are justified cannot be our own, antecedent to this reception, nor at any time inherent in us. Hence we argue, That if the work of faith in our Justification, be receiving what is freely given and imputed to us, that is, Christ; his righteousness; his atonement; the forgiveness of sins; then our other graces, or works, have no influence into our Justification, nor are they causes or conditions thereof.

2. Faith is expressed by looking; “Look unto me and be saved || :” and the nature of it is declared by our Lord himself ¶; “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” When any one was stung, if he used any other remedy, he perished: only those who looked to the brazen serpent lived; for this only was the ordinance of God for life and healing. This was a type of the pardon of sin and everlasting life: and by their looking, the nature of faith is plainly expressed, as our Saviour himself expounds it. Now,

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* Rom. v. 11. † Acts xxvi. 18. ‡ Rom. v. 17. § Acts viii. 41. Heb. ix. 15. || Isa. xlvi. 22. xvii. 1. Zech. xii. 10. Psal. cxxiii. 2. ¶ John iii. 14, 15.

138 JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH ALONE.

if faith, as justifying, be a looking to Christ for deliverance, righteousness and life, then it excludes all other graces and duties whatever ; for by them we do not look, nor are they the things which we look for.

3. It is frequently expressed, by *Coming to Christ* : “ Come unto me, all ye that labour *.” He, who is convinced of sin and burdened with it ; who really designs to “ fly from the wrath to come ;” and who hath heard the voice of Christ in the Gospel, inviting him to come to him for help and relief, will tell you, that this coming to Christ consists in a man’s going out of himself ; in a complete renunciation of all his own duties and righteousness, and betaking himself to Christ alone for pardon and life. Perhaps some will say, this is not *believing* but *canting* ; be it so ; we refer the judgment of it to the church of God. Now *Coming to Christ* for life and salvation, is *believing on him unto Justification* ; and no other *grace* or *duty* is a coming to Christ ; and therefore can have no place in *Justification*.

4. It is expressed by *flying for refuge* † : “ Who have fled for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before us.” Hence some have well defined faith to be (*perfugium animæ*) “ the flight of the soul to Christ for deliverance from sin and misery.” The person who believes, being convinced of his lost condition, and of the necessity of going out of himself for relief ; and considering Christ as set before him in the promise of the Gospel ; and judging this to be a holy, a safe way for his deliverance, he flies unto it for refuge ; that is, with speed and diligence, lest he perish in his present condition ; he betakes himself unto it, by placing his whole trust thereon. And the whole nature of *Justification by Christ*, is better declared hereby unto the supernatural sense and experience of believers, than by an hundred philosophical disquisitions about it.

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* Matt. xi. 28. John vi. 35, 37, 45, 65. vii. 37. † Heb. vi. 18. Prov. xviii. 10. ¶ Micah. iii. 12. || Song viii. 5.

5. The terms, by which it is expressed in the Old Testament, are, *leaning on God* †—on *Christ* ||—*rolling, or casting ourselves and our burden on the Lord* *—*resting on God* †—*cleaving to the Lord* †—as also by *trusting, hoping and waiting*, in places innumerable: and it may be observed, that those, who acted faith as it is thus expressed, do every where declare themselves to be *lost, hopeless, desolate, poor orphans*; and hence they place all their hope and expectation on God alone.

All I infer from these things is, that the faith whereby we believe unto the Justification of life, is an act of the whole soul; whereby convinced sinners go entirely out of themselves, to rest upon God in Christ, for mercy, pardon, life, righteousness, and salvation, which is the whole of the truth we plead for.

C H A P. XVI.

The Doctrine further confirmed by Testimonies of Scripture.

WE now proceed to the consideration of those *express testimonies* of Scripture, which are given to this truth; especially those places where the doctrine is designedly treated. From them we must learn the truth; into them must our faith be resolved; and to their authority all the arguments and objections of men must give place. And it is scandalous to see, among Protestants, whole books written on Justification, wherein scarcely one testimony of Scripture is produced, unless it be to evade its force. And, in particular, as the apostle Paul hath most fully declared and vindicated this doctrine, some authors are so far from declaring their faith concerning it out of his writings, that they begin to reflect upon them, as obscure and dangerous;

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* Psal. xxii. 8. and xxxvii. 5. † 2 Chron. xiv. 11. Psal. xxxvii. 7.

‡ Deut. iv. 4. Acts xi. 15.

as though they were grown wiser than he, or that Spirit by whom he was inspired. But nothing can be more alien from the genius of the christian religion, than for us not to endeavour humbly to learn the mystery of the grace of God herein, in the declaration of it made by him. But “the foundation of God standeth sure,” whatever course men may take in their profession of religion *.

Much weight in this case is deservedly laid on the *Name* of Christ, given us Jer. xxiii. 6.—THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. As the name JEHOVAH is a full indication of his divine person—so the addition of his being OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, sufficiently proves, that in, and by, him alone, we are made righteous.

Some of the Socinians would evade this testimony, by observing, that *Righteousness*, in the Old Testament, is sometimes used for *Benignity* and *Kindness*, and so they suppose it may be here: others refer it to the *righteousness of God, in delivering and vindicating his people*: but these are evasions of bold men, who care not, so that they say something, whether what they say be agreeable to the analogy of faith, or the plain words of Scripture. Bellarmine, who was more cautious to give an appearance of truth to his answers, first gives other reasons why he is called *the Lord our righteousness*; and then, whether unawares, or overpowered by the evidence of truth, grants that sense of the words which contains all that we plead for, “Christ, he says, may be called *the Lord our righteousness*, because he is the efficient cause of our righteousness, as God is said to be our strength and salvation.” Again, “Christ is said to be our righteousness, as he is our wisdom, our redemption,

* The testimonies I shall produce are but few out of many. I shall omit those which have been, or may be, alledged on particular occasions. And in the exposition of them, I shall attend to their manifest scope and design; which is, to exalt the riches of God's grace, the glory and excellency of Christ, and to debase sinful man.

"redemption, and our peace ; because he hath redeem-
"ed us, and makes us wise and righteous, and recon-
"cileth us unto God." But not trusting to these ex-
positions of the words, he adds—" Christ is said to be
"our righteousness, because he hath made satisfaction
"for us to the Father ; and doth so give and commu-
"nicate that satisfaction unto us, when he justifieth
"us, that it may be said to be our satisfaction and
"righteousness. And in this sense it would not be
"absurd, if any one should say, that the righteous-
"ness of Christ and his merits, are imputed unto us,
"as if we ourselves had satisfied God *." In this
sense, we say, that Christ is the Lord our righteous-
ness ; nor is there any thing of importance in our
whole doctrine, which the Cardinal does not here ad-
mit, and that in terms which some among ourselves
scruple and oppose. I shall therefore look a little fur-
ther into this testimony, which hath wrested so eminent
a confession of the truth from so great an adversary.

"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous branch ; and this is his name, whereby he shall be called, *The Lord our righteousness* ; ver. 5, 6. It is confessed among christians, that this is an illustrious renovation of the *first promise*, concerning the Incarnation of the Son of God and our salvation by him. This promise was first given when we had lost our *original righteousness*, and were considered only as " those who had sinned, and come short of the glory of God." In this state, *a righteousness* was absolutely necessary to our being again accepted of God ; for without *a righteousness*, yea, that which is perfect and complete, we never were, nor can ever be accepted. In this state it is promised, that *He shall be our righteousness*. That *he is so*, there can be no question : The whole inquiry is, *How he is so ?*" As he is the "*efficient cause of our righteousness* ;" that is, of
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* Bellarm. de Justific. lib. 20. cap. 10.

our *personal inherent righteousness*, say the most sober of our adversaries. But this righteousness may be considered, either *in itself*, as an effect of God's grace, and so it is *good*, and *holy*, though not complete and perfect; or, it may be considered as it is *ours*, *inherent in us*, accompanied with the remaining defilements of our nature; and in this respect, as this righteousness is *ours*, “we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags;” and Christ cannot from hence be called “the Lord our righteousness,” seeing it is all as filthy rags. It must therefore be a righteousness of another kind, from which this denomination is taken, and on account of which this name is given to him. Wherefore, he is *our righteousness*, as all *our righteousnesses are in him*: and so the church, which confesseth all her own righteousnesses to be filthy rags, saith also—“In the Lord have I righteousness*;” which the Apostle thus expresseth—“That I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law” (in this case as filthy rags), “but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness of God, which is by faith†.” Hence it is added‡—“In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified”—because *he is*, in what he was, and did, as given to and for us, *our righteousness*, and all our righteousness is in him; which totally excludes our own personal inherent righteousness from any interest in our Justification, and ascribes it wholly to the righteousness of Christ.

Agreeably hereto, is that emphatic expression of the Psalmist—“I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of thy righteousness, of thine only||.” Here he excludes all confidence, except in the righteousness of God alone. For this the Apostle affirms to be the design of God, in making Christ our righteousness, “that no flesh should glory in his presence;”

* Isa. lxv. 24. † Phil. iii. 9. ‡ Isa. xlvi. 25. || Psal. lxxi. 16.

fence * ;" for it is only by faith, making mention of God's righteousness alone, that all " boasting is excluded † ."

The Scripture also eminently declares, how he is " The Lord our righteousness ;" namely, in " making an end of sin ; making reconciliation for iniquity ; and bringing in everlasting righteousness ‡ ;" for by these things is our Justification completed.

Wherefore, seeing we had lost original righteousness, and had none of our own remaining, and stood in need of a perfect righteousness to procure acceptance with God, and such as might exclude all occasion of boasting in ourselves ; the Lord Christ being given and made unto us, " The Lord our righteousness," in whom we have all our righteousness, (our own, as it is ours, being as filthy rags in the sight of God) and this by making an end of sin, and reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in everlasting righteousness.—It is by his righteousness, by his only, that we are justified in the sight of God, and do glory. This is the substance of what we plead for ; and thus it is delivered in the Scripture, in a way bringing more light and spiritual sense into the minds of believers, than those philosophical expressions and distinctions, which vaunt themselves with a pretence of propriety and accuracy.

C H A P. XVII.

Testimonies of the Evangelists, considered.

THE reasons why the doctrine of Justification is more fully and clearly declared in the following writings of the New Testament, than in those of the Evangelists, have already been stated ; yet, in them also it is sufficiently attested. A few of the many testimonies contained in them shall be considered.

M A T T.

* 1 Cor. i. 29—31. † Rom. iii. 27. ‡ Dan. ix. 24.

M A T T. V.

THE principal design of our Saviour's sermon on the mount, is to declare the true nature of *righteousness before God*. The Scribes and Pharisees placed it in the *works of the law*; this they taught the people; who, hereupon, "*justified themselves*," as our Lord declares*; and "*went about to establish their own righteousness by the works of the law* †." They were convinced in their own consciences, that they could "*not attain to the law of righteousness*," or that perfection of obedience which it required; but being unwilling to forego their proud imagination of Justification by their own righteousness, they endeavoured to relieve their consciences, by corrupting and debasing the law, and bringing it down to their own performances. An instance of this we have in the *young man*, who affirmed, that he had kept the whole law in this sense †.

To eradicate this pernicious error, our Lord gives the *true, spiritual* sense and intention of the law; and shews, that it has regard to *the regulation of the heart*, and that the inmost thoughts and first motions of concupiscence therein, though not consented to, nor carried into acts of sin, are directly forbidden: this he instances particularly in the *seventh commandment* ||. He also declares the *penalty* of the law, on the least sin, to be *hellfire*, in his assertion of *causeless anger* to be forbidden in the *sixth commandment*. If men would try themselves by these, and other rules of our Lord in this sermon, it would prevent their boasting of their own righteousness. But most of those, who plead for Justification by *works*, corrupt the sense of the law; believe not its spirituality, nor the severity of its sanction, but accommodate it to their own practice. Wherefore, our Lord's design

* Luke xvi. 15. † Rom. ix. 33. x. 3. ‡ Matt. xix. 20. See also the Parable, Luke xviii. 10—12. || Matt. v. 27, &c.

sign was to declare the nature of that obedience which God requires by the law, and so prepare the minds of his disciples to seek after another righteousness ; the cause and means of which was not yet plainly to be declared, though many of them, being prepared by the ministry of John, hungered and thirsted after it.

But he sufficiently intimates the nature of it, when he affirms of himself, that *He came to fulfil the law*, that so the righteousness of it, “ might be fulfilled in us ;” and if we ourselves cannot fulfil the law, which yet is not to be abolished ; if we cannot avoid the curse and penalty of it upon its transgression ; and if he came to fulfil it for us ; all which he declares—then is *his* righteousness that by which we are justified before God *.

L U K E X V I I I . 9—14.

THE representation which our Saviour makes of the *ways and means*, whereby men seek to be justified, in the parable of the Pharisee and Publican, is a guide to all who have the same design. “ And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others : Two men went up into the temple to pray ; the one a Pharisee, and the other a Publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this Publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the Publican standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, This man went down to his house justified rather than the other : for

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every

* I pass by those places, wherein the *foundations* of this doctrine are surely laid ; such as those wherein Christ is said “ to die for us”—“ to lay down his life as a ransom for us,” &c. &c. because it is not expressly mentioned, though necessarily inferred.

every one that exalteth himself shall be abased ; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

That our Lord designed hereby to represent the way of our Justification before God, is plain, from *the description* he gives of the Pharisees—" they trusted to themselves that they were righteous," or, had a personal righteousness of their own ; and also, from *the general rule* by which he confirms the judgment given concerning the persons described—" every one that exalteth himself shall be abased," &c. which shews, That every plea of our own works, is a self-exaltation, which God despiseth ; and that a sense of sin is the only preparation on our part for acceptance with him on believing. Both these persons, then, are represented as seeking to be justified ; for so the issue of their respective addresses to God for that purpose is expressed —The one was justified—the other was not.

The *Pharisee* pleads, that he had *fulfilled the condition* on which he might be justified ; he had observed the law, both as to the *moral* and *ceremonial* parts of it, which he shews in instances of both kinds : he adds also the method he took to further himself in this obedience, by fasting twice a week, which was more than the law enjoined ; and it is observable that when men begin to seek after Justification by their works, they frequently resort to the performance of *something extraordinary*, and more than is required of them : and this brought forth all the pharisical austerities of the papacy.

The Pharisee ascribes all he did to God. " God, I thank thee." Though he had done all this, and thereby differed from others, yet he ascribes it not to himself, but owns the goodness of God and the assistance of his grace in all he did. He neither pleads any merit in his works, nor any works performed in his own strength without the aids of grace ; all his plea is, That by the grace of God he had fulfilled the condition of the covenant, and thereon expected to be justified. And what-

whatever words men please to use in their *vocal prayers*, God interprets their minds according to what they depend upon as to their Justification before him ; and if some persons would be true to their own principles, this is the prayer they ought to make.

The event was—*He was not justified*; nor shall any one ever be justified on account of his own personal righteousness; *for when we have done all*—when we have the testimony of our consciences to the integrity of our obedience; instead of pleading it, our Saviour directs us to say, *We are unprofitable servants* *; and he who hath nothing to trust unto but his service, will be cast out of the presence of God †.

On the other hand, we have *the state and prayer of the Publican*, who was engaged in the same design of seeking Justification before God; and the external acts of his person are expressive of his inward frame. “ He stood afar off—he did not so much as lift up his eyes—he smote upon his breast.”—All these represent a man *desponding*, yea, *despairing* in himself. This is the nature, this is the effect of that conviction of sin, which we before asserted to be antecedently necessary to Justification. Displacency—sorrow—sense of danger—fear of wrath; all are present with him. In brief, he declares himself guilty before God, and his mouth is

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* Luke xvii. 10. 1 Cor. iv. 4. Matt. xxv. 30.

† If it be said, he was rejected because he was an *hypocrite* and a *boaster*; it will be replied, That it should seem all are so who seek Justification by works: for our Saviour only represents *one* that doth so; neither are these things laid in bar against his Justification, but only exalting himself. Others say he was rejected because *he trusted in himself and despised others*. I answer: This charge respects the *tendency* of the opinion and not the mind of the person, for it includes a contempt of other means: and if Abraham had been justified by works, he might have gloried. Besides, those whom the Pharisees despised were such as the Publican, who placed their whole trust in grace and mercy; and it were to be wished that others of their mind did not the same.

148 TESTIMONIES TO THE DOCTRINE

stopped, as to any apology or excuse. And his prayer is a sincere application of soul to sovereign grace and mercy for deliverance; and in the use of the word (*μαστορει*) *be merciful*, there is respect to a propitiation. And this contains all that is required, on our part, unto Justification before God, except that *faith* whereby we apply ourselves to him for deliverance *.

A few testimonies from the other EVANGELISTS, in whom they abound, may be added.

JOHN I. 12.

"AS many as received him, to them gave he power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

Faith is here expressed by *receiving Christ*; and it includes, 1. A supposition of the proposal of Christ to us for some end and purpose. 2. That this proposal is made to us in the *promise* of the Gospel. 3. The *end* for which he is proposed to us, which is Salvation. 4. That in the tender of his person, there is a tender made of all the fruits of his mediation, as containing the way and means of our deliverance from sin, and acceptance with God. 5. Nothing is required, on our part, to an interest in the end proposed, but receiving him,

* From this parable some weakly infer, That Justification consists wholly in the pardon of sin. But the whole nature of Justification is not here declared, but only what is on our part required thereto. Besides, the Publican prays not for the mere pardon of sin, but for all that mercy and grace which God has provided for sinners. Moreover, the Pharisee did not apply for *pardon*, (he had no such errand), but for *Justification*; and the term must have the same meaning when applied to the Publican as to the Pharisee: and therefore, though the pardon of sin be included in Justification; yet, "to justify," in this place, has a respect to a righteousness, whereby a person is declared just; included, on the part of the Publican, in the procuring cause, the mercy of God.

him, or believing on his name. 6. Hereby we are entitled to the heavenly inheritance ; have power to become the Sons of God, wherein our adoption is asserted, and our Justification included. From hence we argue—That nothing more is required to the obtaining a right and title to the heavenly inheritance but *faith alone* in the name of Christ : the receiving of Christ as the ordinance of God for Justification and Salvation.

JOHN III. 14—18.

" AND as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up : That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

From these words we may observe: 1. It is of the *Justification* of men that our Saviour speaks—" He that believeth is not condemned," &c. 2. The means of attaining this condition is *believing only*, which is thrice asserted. 3. The nature of this faith is declared, by—*Its object*, the Son of God—*The special consideration* wherein he is the object of faith, namely, as he is the ordinance of God, given, proposed, and sent of the Father ; and—*The special act*, included in the type, whereby the design of God in him is illustrated ; and this was *looking* to the brazen serpent by those who were stung with fiery serpents : answerable to which is our *faith* in Christ unto *Justification*.

Not to add more particular testimonies, which are multiplied to the same purpose in this Evangelist, the sum of his doctrine is this :—

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" That

" That the Lord Jesus Christ was the Lamb of God,
" which takes away the sin of the world by the sacrifice of
" himself—That to this end he sanctified himself, that
" those who believe might be sanctified, or perfected for
" ever, by his own offering of himself :—That in the
" Gospel he is proposed, as lifted up and crucified for
" us, as bearing all our sins in his own body on the
" tree :—That by faith in him, we have adoption, jus-
" tification, freedom from judgment and condemna-
" tion, with a right and title to eternal life :—That
" those who believe not are condemned already, because
" they believe not on the Son of God." And this is
the substance of the christian faith in this matter ;
which often we rather obscure than illustrate, by deba-
ting the consideration of any thing in our Justification,
but the grace and love of God, the person and media-
tion of Christ, with faith in them.

C H A P. XVIII.

*The Nature of Justification, as declared in the Epistles
of St. Paul; in that to the Romans especially.
Chap. iii.*

THAT the doctrine of Justification is purposely de-
clared and vindicated by St. Paul, in his Epistle
to the Romans, cannot modestly be denied. The late
exceptions of some, " that it is found only in his wri-
tings, and that they are obscure and intricate," are
both false and scandalous to the christian religion. He
wrote " as he was moved by the Holy Ghost." And
as the matter he delivered was sacred truth, requiring
our faith and obedience, so the manner in which he de-
clared it was such as the Holy Ghost judged most ex-
pedient for the edification of the church. And as he
said

said himself with confidence, that “ if the Gospel he preached was hid, it was hid unto them that are lost ;” so may we say—That if what he writes concerning our Justification seems to us obscure or perplexed, it is from our prejudices, corrupt affections, or the weakness of our understandings at best, and not from any defect in his manner of declaring it. Rejecting therefore all such perverse insinuations, and acknowledging “ that we know but in part,” we shall humbly inquire into the blessed revelation of this great mystery, as declared in this epistle.

The Apostle first proves that *all men are sinners*, and guilty before God ; and hence arises an inquiry, How any of them come to be justified before God ? And as Justification is a sentence upon the consideration of a righteousness, the grand question is—What *is* that righteousness ? And he expressly affirms, that it is not the righteousness of the law, nor of the works of it, but the righteousness of God, as opposed to it * : and this he describes by the three following properties.

1. *It is without the law*, ver. 21.—separated in all its concerns from the law ; not attainable by it, nor by any works of it. Whatever is, or can be performed by us, in obedience to the law, is rejected from this righteousness of God, or procuring it to be made our own.

2. *It is witnessed by the law and the prophets* ; by which distinction it is evident that he means the books of Moses ; and in them testimony is given to the righteousness of God, in four ways. (1.) By shewing the necessity of it, in the account there given of our apostasy from God ; for by the entrance of sin, our own righteousness went out of the world ; so that another righteousness must be introduced, or all relation of love and favour between God and man must cease for ever. (2.) In the way of recovery generally declared in the first promise of the blessed Seed ; for he alone was “ to make

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* Chap. i. 17. iii, 21, 22.

an end of sin, and bring in everlasting righteousness." (3.) By excluding any other righteousness, by the threatenings of the law, and the curse which attends every transgression of it; whereby it was evident that another righteousness must be provided, which would answer and remove that curse. (4.) In the prefiguration of the way whereby this righteousness was to be wrought; namely, by various sacrifices, especially the great anniversary sacrifice on the day of expiation, wherein all the sins of the church were laid on the head of the sacrifice, and so carried away.

3. *It is received by faith alone.* "The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all, and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference," ver. 22. Faith is so the only way and means whereby it comes "upon us," or is communicated to us, that it is to all who have this faith, and *only* to them, and that without difference on the consideration of any thing else besides.

The Apostle next proceeds to declare the nature of our Justification in all the causes of it, ver. 24—26. "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God. To declare, I say, his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of them that believe in Jesus." In this passage, the principal efficient cause is first expressed with a peculiar emphasis; "being justified *freely*—*by his grace*." These expressions are put together, to give the greater emphasis to his assertion. The one denotes the principle from which our Justification proceeds, namely, grace; the other the manner of its operation, it works *freely*; which is added to exclude all consideration of any

any thing in us as the cause or condition of our Justification *.

The *means*, on our part, whereby according to the ordination of God we receive, or are made partakers of God's righteousness, is by *faith alone*; nothing else is proposed, nothing else is required to this end.

The Apostle then draws the following inferences from this doctrine, which also further illustrate the meaning of his words.

1. *Boasting is excluded*; ver. 27. It is evident from hence, and from what he affirms concerning Abraham; chap. iv. 2. that a great part of his controversy about Justification was, whether it admitted of boasting or not? The Jews, it is well known, placed all their hopes in their privileges and their righteousness, of which they thought they might boast; and wherever respect is had to any condition or qualification in one more than another, it affords a foundation for boasting; but in evangelical Justification, no such boasting in any kind can be admitted: wherefore there is no place for works therein; for if there were, boasting must be admitted.

2. He infers, ver. 28. "that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law." If we are justified freely through faith in the blood of Christ, that faith which hath the propitiation of Christ for its special object, can take no other grace nor duty into partnership with it therein: and being so justified, as that all boasting, necessarily resulting from any distinguishing graces

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* The Roman Church pretends, that by "the grace of God," the *internal inherent* grace of God is intended; but they have nothing to prove it, but that which overthrows it, namely, "that it is added to freely," which were needless if it signify the *free favour of God*; but the *grace of God* in this subject every where signifies his *goodness, love, and favour*, (see Rom. v. 15. Eph. ii. 4, 8, 9. 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. iii. 4, 5.) and the word *freely* is connected with it to give the greater force to the expression, so as to exclude all *works of our own, all conditions, preparations, and merit*.

or works in ourselves, is excluded, it is certain that we are justified by faith alone.

3. He asserts from hence, ver. 31. "that we do not make void the law through grace, but establish it: of which we have spoken before."

This is the substance of the resolution the Apostle gives to that great inquiry—How a guilty sinner may be justified in the sight of God? The sovereign grace of God—the mediation of Christ—and faith in his blood, are all that he requireth. And whatever notions men may entertain, it will not be safe to venture on any other resolution of the question; nor are we wiser than the Holy Ghost.

R O M A N S IV.

IN the beginning of this chapter the Apostle confirms his doctrine by the signal instance of Abraham, "the father of the faithful," whose Justification is proposed as the pattern of ours*; concerning whom,

1. He denies that Abraham was justified by works, ver. 2.—works of *moral obedience to God*, for they were performed some hundreds of years before the *Jewish law* was given at Sinai—works performed in faith and love—works required by the covenant of grace—*evangelical works*;—but they are all excluded from his Justification before God.

2. He proves from Scripture that he was justified by grace, through faith, ver. 3. "Abraham believed God (in the promise of Christ and his mediation), and it was counted to him for righteousness."—He was justified by *faith*; in the way before described, in opposition to all his works and personal righteousness thereby.

3. From the same testimony he declares how he became a partaker of that righteousness by which he was justified;

* Ver. 22, &c.

justified ; namely, by *imputation* ; it was *counted* or imputed to him for righteousness.

4. He asserts and proves the special nature of this imputation from its contrary, ver. 4. "Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of *grace*, but of *debt*." Where works are of any consideration, there is no room for that kind of imputation whereby Abraham was justified, for it was a *gracious imputation*, and that is not of what is our own antecedently thereto, but what is made ours by that imputation ; for what is *our own* cannot be imputed to us in a way of *grace*, but only reckoned ours in a way of *debt*.

VERSE 5.

"BUT to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."

In this verse the sum of the whole doctrine is expressed. These words—*his faith is counted for righteousness*—are allowed on all hands to express the Justification of the person intended ; he is *justified* ; and the way of it is—" *his faith is counted for righteousness*."

And first, it is said of him, that he is one *who worketh not*. It is not required, that he *should not work*, for every man in the world is obliged unto all the duties of obedience to God ; but the expression is to be limited to the subject matter treated of, which is Justification ; he who "*worketh not*" with respect unto Justification, (though not the *design* of the person, but the *nature* of the thing is intended) his works, whatever they be, have no influence into it ; God considereth them not in his Justification, seeing we are justified "*freely by his grace*."

In the description of the *subject* of Justification the Apostle adds, that God justifieth the *ungodly*. This ex-

expression hath excited much wrath in many, even against the Apostle himself; for "what need can there be, " say some, for godliness and good works, if God justifieth the ungodly?" Some explain these words by saying, "He justifieth those who formerly were ungodly, " not those who continue ungodly when they are justified." And this is most true. All who are justified were before ungodly; and justified persons are at the same instant made godly: But the question is, whether they are godly or ungodly, antecedently, in any moment of time, to their Justification? If they are considered as godly, then the Apostle's words are not true, that God justifieth the ungodly: but the contrary proposition is true—God justifieth none but the godly. Wherefore, though in and with the Justification of a sinner, he is made godly, for he is endued with that faith which "purifieth the heart," and is a vital principle of all obedience, yet antecedently to his Justification he is ungodly, as one that *worketh not*, as one whose duties and obedience contribute nothing to his Justification.

The qualification of the subject, or means on the part of the person to be justified, is *faith or believing*—"but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly." That is, it is *faith alone*; for it is the faith of him "who worketh not"; and not only so, but its special object, "God, as justifying the ungodly" is exclusive of the concomitance of any works whatever.

Concerning this person it is affirmed, that "his faith is counted for righteousness;" that is, say some, "his faith, as an act, duty or work of his, is so imputed." Others say, "his faith as it apprehends Christ, and his righteousness which is properly imputed; and so faith justifieth, or is counted for righteousness relatively, with respect to its object," and thus they admit a *trope* in the words. And this is fiercely opposed, as though they denied the express words of Scripture, whereas they only interpret this expression, once used, by many

many others wherein the same thing is declared. But all those, who are for the first sense, affirm, that *faith* is to be taken as including works, and as having the same influence with it in our Justification. But herein they not only admit a *trope*, which they blame in others, but they give this sense of the whole passage—“ Unto him “ that *worketh not*, but believeth in him that justifieth “ the ungodly, his *faith* and *works* are counted to him “ for righteousness ;” which is not only to deny what the Apostle affirms, but to assign to him a plain contradiction. But I shall oppose a few arguments to this feigned sense of the words.

1. *Faith*, as an act of ours, and *works*, are not opposed; but faith, as we are *justified* by it, and *works* are opposed. “To him that worketh not, but believeth*.”

2. It is the *righteousness of God*, that is imputed to us.
“ We are made the righteousness of God in Christ †.”
“ The righteousness of God upon them that believe ‡.”
But *faith*, absolutely considered, is not the righteousness of God.—That *unto which* the righteousness of God is revealed, is not *itself* the righteousness of God; for nothing can be the cause of itself: but the righteousness of God is revealed *to faith* ||, and by it is received §.—*Faith* is not “ the righteousness of God which is *by faith* ¶.” That by which the righteousness of God is to be *sought, obtained and submitted to*, is not that righteousness itself; but such is faith **.—The righteousness which is imputed to us, is not *our own* antecedently to that imputation; but faith is a man’s own ††.—God *imputeth righteousness unto us* ‡‡, and thereby we are justified; but we are justified by the obedience and blood of Christ §§: but faith is neither the obedience nor the blood of Christ.—Finally: If *faith*, as a work be im-

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* So Gal. ii. 16. Eph. ii. 8. † 2 Cor. v. 21. ‡ Rom. iii. 21, 22. || Rom. i. 16. § Rom. iii. 22. v. 11. ¶ Phil. iii. 9. ** Rom. ix. 30, 31. x. 3. †† Phil. iii. 9. James ii. 18. †† Rom. iv. 6. §§ Rom. v. 19. v. 9. Isa. lili. II.

puted to us, then it must be as a work wrought *in faith*, for no other work is accepted with God; then must *that* faith also wherein it is wrought be imputed, for that also is faith; that therefore must have *another* faith from whence it proceeds; and so *in infinitum*. — One observation more shall close our discourse on this chapter.

In the 6th, 7th, and 8th verses, the Apostle pursues his argument to prove the *freedom* of our Justification by faith, in the instance of *the pardon of sin*, which essentially belongs to it; and he does this by the testimony of the Psalmist, who placeth the blessedness of a man in the remission of sins—“ Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven.” He describes their blessedness by it; not that their *whole blessedness* consists therein; but this concurs to it, wherein no respect can possibly be had to any works whatever. And he may justly from hence describe the blessedness of a man, in that the *imputation of righteousness*, and the *non-imputation* of sin, are *inseparable*: But yet they are not the same—any more than righteousness imputed and sin remitted are the same; nor doth he so represent them, but mentions them distinctly, both being equally necessary to our complete Justification, as hath been proved.

C H A P.

C H A P. XIX.

Testimonies from the Epistles to the Romans continued.

C H A P. V. 12—21.

A Comparison is here proposed and pursued, between the *first Adam*, by whom sin was brought into the world, and the *second Adam*, by whom it is taken away. The general proposition is in *Verse 12*. “ As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin ; and so death passed on all men, for that all have sinned.” The entrance of sin and punishment was by one man ; yet they were not confined to him, but belong equally to all. This the Apostle expresses by inverting the order of the cause and effect. In the entrance of it, he first mentions the cause, *sin* ; and then the effect, *punishment* ; “ by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin :” But, in the application of it to all men, he expresses first the effect and then the cause : “ death passed on all men, for that all have sinned.” Death, on the first entrance of sin, passed on all ; that is, all men became obnoxious to it, as the punishment due to sin. All men, who ever were, are, or shall be, were not then existent in their own persons : but yet they were all, *then*, upon the first entrance of sin, made subject to death, or liable to punishment. They were so by virtue of divine constitution upon their *fæderal existence* in the one man that sinned : and, *actually*, they became obnoxious in their own persons to the sentence of it upon their first natural existence, being born “ children of wrath.”

It is hence manifest what *sin* the Apostle intends ; namely, the actual sin of Adam ; the *one* sin of that *one* common person, while he was so : for though the corruption of our nature necessarily ensues hereon, in every man born in the world, yet it is the guilt of

Adam's actual sin alone, that rendered them all obnoxious to death, upon the first entrance of sin into the world: So death entered by sin; the guilt of it, obnoxiousness to it, and that with respect to all men universally.

Death here comprises the whole punishment due to sin—"The wages of sin is death." Whatever sin deserved; whatever God threatened to it, is herein comprised. The Apostle therefore lays it down as the foundation of his discourse, that in and by the actual sin of Adam, all men are liable to death, or to the whole punishment of sin: That is, *the guilt of that sin is imputed* to them; for the imputation of sin to any is, the rendering them *justly obnoxious* to the punishment due to that sin; as the not imputing of sin is, the freeing them from being subject to punishment. And this sufficiently shews the vanity of the *Pelagian gloss*—"that death passed upon all, merely by virtue of natural propagation from Adam, without any imputation of guilt;" which is a contradiction to the plain words of the Apostle: for it is the guilt of sin, and not natural propagation, that he affirms to be the cause of death.

Having mentioned *sin* and *death*, the one as the cause of the other, he declares how all men universally became liable to this punishment, or guilty of death; (*ιφ ω παντες ημαρτον*) "in whom all have sinned;" for it relates to the *one man*, who sinned; which is evident from the effect thereof, inasmuch as "*in him all died*," 1 Cor. xv. 22. It is true, that death is due to every sin, whenever committed; but our inquiry is, how death passed at once on all men, how they became liable to it upon its first entrance by the actual sin of Adam; which cannot be by their own actual sin: yea, the Apostle affirms, ver. 14. that death passed on them also who never sinned *actually*: and if the actual sins of men, in imitation of Adam's sin, were intended,

then

then should men be made liable to death, before they had sinned, which is an open contradiction : for though God, by his sovereign power, might inflict *death* on an innocent creature, yet, that an innocent creature should be *guilty of death* is impossible, for to be guilty of death, is to have sinned. Wherefore, this expression—“ *inasmuch as all have sinned,*” expressing the desert and guilt of death, *then*, when sin and death first entered into the world, no sin can be intended, but the sin of Adam, and our interest therein ; and this cannot be but by the imputation of the guilt of that sin to us. And hence we argue,

If the actual sin of Adam was so imputed to all his posterity, as to be accounted their own sin unto condemnation ; then is the actual obedience of Christ, the second Adam, imputed to all his spiritual seed, that is, to all believers, unto Justification.

The Apostle proceeds to explain his comparison, in those things wherein there is a *diffimilitude* in the things compared. Ver. 15, 16.

“ But not as the offence, so is the free gift ; for if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, hath abounded unto many.”

The opposition is between, “ *the offence and the free gift* ; between which there is a *diffimilitude*, not as to their opposite effects of death and life, but only as to the degrees of their efficacy with respect to those effects. The effect of the *offence* is, that *many be dead*—the effects of that one offence were not confined to one person, they extended to *many* ; to “ *all men*” universally. By this one offence, because they all sinned, therein they are all dead ; that is, rendered obnoxious to death, as the punishment due to that one offence.

The efficacy of the *free gift* opposed to this, is expressed as that which “ *abounded much more.*” Besides the thing itself asserted, which is plain and evi-

dent, the Apostle seems to me to argue the *equity* of our Justification by grace, by comparing it with the condemnation that befel us by the sin of Adam: for if it were just that all men should be made subject to condemnation for the sin of Adam, it is much more so, that those who believe, should be justified by the obedience of Christ, through the free gift of God. And that by which we are freed from condemnation more eminently than we are made obnoxious to it by the sin of Adam, by that alone are we justified: But this is by the grace of God, and the gift by grace, through Jesus Christ alone.

In the 16th verse, the Apostle gives an instance in particular of the dissimilitude asserted in general before. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift; for the judgment was by one to condemnation; but the free gift is of many offences unto Justification.

Condemnation came upon all by *one offence*: but being under the guilt of that offence, we contract the guilt of many more innumerable; if, then, the *free gift* had respect to that one offence only, we could not be delivered: wherefore it is said to be of *many offences*, that is, of all our sins.

Adam, and all his posterity in him, were in a state of acceptance with God, and placed in a way of obtaining eternal life and blessedness, wherein God himself would have been their reward; but, by the entrance of sin, they lost the favour of God, and incurred the guilt of death: but they lost not *an immediate right and title to life and blessedness*, for this they had not, nor could have before the course of obedience prescribed to them was accomplished. But the free gift is not so: for as thereby we are freed, not from one sin only, but from all our sins; so thereby we have a right and title to eternal life; for therein grace reigns through righteousness to eternal life," ver. 22.

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The same truth is further explained and confirmed, ver. 17. “ For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one, much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.” Here observe,

1. With what variety of expressions the Apostle sets forth the grace of God in the Justification of believers. Nothing is omitted, that can any way express the freedom, sufficiency, and efficacy of grace unto that end *.

2. It is plain, that nothing more is required of any one unto Justification, but that *he receive the abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness.* And as this excludes all our works of righteousness, so it doth also the imputation of faith itself, as an act of ours ; for it is *by faith* that we receive the gift of righteousness, and surely that which receiveth, and that which is received are not the same.

3. Where *super-abounding grace* is exerted in our Justification, nothing more can be requisite ; for how can it be said to super-abound, not only giving us freedom from condemnation, but a title to life, if any thing is to be supplied by works of our own ?

4. There

* Δικαιώματος seems to me to be used in this argument for δικαιολογημα, the foundation of a cause in trial, the matter pleaded, whereon the person tried is to be acquitted and justified, and this is the righteousness of Christ. Δωρημα is a free donation, exclusive of all conditions on the part of those who receive it. Χάρις is the free grace and favour of God, the original cause of our Justification. Χάρισμα, Donum, Donum gratuitum; beneficium, id quod Deus gratificatur. Ηπειρότερα χαρέσθος, the abundance of grace is added to secure believers of the certainty of the effect. Δωρεα της δικαιοσύνης expresses the free grant of that righteousness which is imputed to us, afterwards called the obedience of Christ. Be men as wise and learned as they please, it becomes us all to think and speak of those divine mysteries from this blessed Apostle, who knew them better than us all ; and besides, wrote by divine inspiration.

4. There is a *gift of righteousness*, which all must receive who are to be justified; therefore we are not justified by our own righteousness, but by that which is *freely given us*. It is also such a righteousness as gives a *right and title to eternal life*; and therefore it cannot consist merely in the *pardon of sin*; for that cannot be called *the gift of righteousness*, nor does it entitle to eternal life.

The conclusion of what hath been evinced in the foregoing comparison, is fully expressed in the next verse: “Therefore as by the offence of one (judgment came) upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of one (the free gift) came upon all men unto Justification of life*.” The word *therefore*, denoting an *inference* from the preceding verses, shews that what is here asserted is the substance of the truth pleaded for; and our argument from the words is this: —As the *sin of one*, that came on all unto condemnation, was the sin of the first Adam imputed unto them; so, the *righteousness of the one* unto the Justification of life, that comes on all believers, is the righteousness of Christ imputed unto them. And what can be more clearly affirmed, or more evidently confirmed than this is by the Apostle, I know not: yet it is more plainly expressed, ver. 19.

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* By the *offence of one* we read it; but some Greek copies have it, by *one offence*; but both are to the same purpose; for the *one offence*, is the *offence of one*; that is, of Adam; and the *one righteousness* is the *righteousness of one*, Jesus Christ.

The word *Judgment* is supplied from the verse before; but *καταχριμα* is *guilt*; by the *sin of one*, all men became *guilty*, for otherwise it cannot come upon them to condemnation. To this is opposed the *free gift*; the translators repeating *χαρισμα* from the foregoing verse.

The “*all men*” must be limited to them that “receive the abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness,” ver. 17. and the pretence from hence, of a general grant of life unto all men, of which the greatest part are never made partakers, is vain, and contradictory to the Apostle’s design.

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" For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

That which he before called *the offence* and *righteousness*, he now terms *disobedience* and *obedience*. The *disobedience* of Adam was his actual transgression of the law of God; and hereby *many were made sinners*—sinners in such a sense as to be obnoxious to condemnation and death; for liable to death they could not be made, unless they were first made sinners, or guilty; and this they could not be, unless they are esteemed to have sinned in him; whereon the guilt of his sin was imputed to them.

That which he opposes hereto is, the *obedience of one*; that is, of Christ; and this was the actual obedience that he yielded to the whole law of God. For as the *disobedience* of Adam was his actual transgression of the whole law; so the *obedience* of Christ was his actual accomplishment or fulfilling of the whole law. This the *Antithesis* doth require.

Hereby many are made righteous. How? By the imputation of that *obedience* to them; for so, and no otherwise, are men made sinners by the imputation of the *disobedience* of Adam. And this is that which gives us a right and title to eternal life, as the Apostle declares, ver. 21. " That as sin reigned unto death, so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life." This *righteousness* is the *obedience of Christ*, and it is said to *come upon us*; that is, to be *imputed* to us; for " blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness." And hereby we have not only deliverance from that death and condemnation, whereunto we were liable by the sin of Adam, but the pardon of *many offences*; that is, of all our *personal sins*, and a right to eternal life, through the grace of God; for " we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

C H A P.

C H A P . X . 3 , 4 .

" For they (*the Jews, who had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge*) being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness unto every one that believeth."

This declaration, which the Apostle was aware, might seem strange to some persons, he introduceth, chap. ix. 30. with a prefaratory interrogation, usual with him on similar occasions: " What shall we say then ?—What shall we say to these things ?" or—" Is there unrighteousness with God ?" ver. 14. He then asserts, " that the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith : But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness ;" that is, to righteousness itself before God.

Nothing seems to be more contrary to reason, than what is here made manifest by the event. The Gentiles, who lived in sin and pleasure, not once endeavouring to attain to any righteousness before God, yet attained unto it on the preaching of the Gospel. Israel, on the other hand, which followed after righteousness diligently in all the works of the law and duties of obedience to God thereby, came short of it. All *preparations*, all *dispositions*, all *merit*, are excluded from the Gentiles ; for in all these, there is, more or less, " a following after righteousness." Only by faith in him who justifieth the ungodly, they " attained the righteousness of faith :" for to attain righteousness *by faith*, and to attain the righteousness which is *of faith*, are the same. Wherefore, all things comprised in following after righteousness, such as are all duties and works,

works, are excluded from any influence into our Justification. And this is expressed to declare the sovereignty and freedom of the grace of God herein ; namely, that we are justified freely by his grace, and that, on our part, all boasting is excluded.

Concerning Israel, on the other hand, three things are expressed :—Their attempt—the failure of it, and the reason of that failure.

Their attempt, or endeavour, was in this : “ they followed after the law of righteousness,” and that earnestly, diligently, and sincerely ; for so the word (*diwaxw*), signifies. They were not negligent, but “ instantly served God day and night ;” nor were they hypocritical, for “ they had a zeal for God :” and what they thus endeavoured after, was—“ the law of righteousness”—that law, which prescribed a perfect personal righteousness ; “ the things which, if a man do them, he shall live in them.”

The issue of this attempt was—“ they attained not unto the law of righteousness,” or to a righteousness before God thereby ; though this was the end of the law, wherein a man might live ; yet could they never attain it.

Their failure was owing to a double mistake ; first, in the means of attaining it ; and, secondly, in the righteousness itself that was to be sought after. As to the first, ver. 31. “ they sought it not by faith, but by works.” Faith and Works are the two only ways whereby righteousness may be attained, and they are opposite and inconsistent ; because, the righteousness which is attainable by faith, is given to us and received by faith ; but that which is sought by works, is *our own*, inherent in us, and not imputed to us.

Their second mistake was as to the righteousness itself, for this they judged must be their own *personal righteousness*, consisting in duties of obedience ; this there-

therefore, “ they went about to establish ; ” and this led them to reject the righteousness of God, as many do to this day. This ruined the Jews, and will ruin all who follow their example ; yet it is not easy for men to take any other way, or to be taken off from this ; so the Apostle intimates in that expression—“ they submitted not themselves to the righteousness of God”—it is of such a nature, that the proud mind of man is unwilling to *submit* to it : yet it cannot be attained without such a subjection as includes a total renunciation of all our own righteousness. And those who reproach us for affirming, that men, endeavouring after a moral righteousness, and resting therein, are not in the way for partaking of the grace of God by Jesus Christ, do expressly deride the doctrine of the Apostle, that is, of the Holy Ghost himself.

Wherefore, the plain design of the Apostle is to declare not only that the righteousness of God by faith, and a righteousness of our own by works, are inconsistent ; but also, that the intermixture of our own works, in seeking after righteousness, as the means thereof, doth wholly divert us from the acceptance of, or submission to the righteousness of God. For the righteousness which is of faith is not our own ; it is the righteousness of God which he imputes to us ; but the righteousness of works is our own, wrought in us and by us : and as works have no meetness in themselves to attain or receive a righteousness, which, because it is not our own, is imputed to us, but are repugnant to it, as that which will deprive them of their legal dignity in being our righteousness : so faith hath no meetness in itself to be an inherent righteousness, or, as such, to be imputed to us, seeing its efficacy consists in fixing all the trust, confidence, and expectation of the soul for righteousness and acceptance with God upon another.

Here was the ruin of the Jews ; they judged it a better, a more probable, a more holy way, to endeavour after

after a righteousness of their own, by duties of obedience to the law of God, than to imagine they could gain acceptance with God by faith in another. For tell them, and such as they, what you please, if they have not a righteousness of their own, which they can set upon its legs, and "make to stand" before God, the law will not be accomplished, and so will condemn them.

To demolish this last sort of unbelief, the Apostle grants that the law must have *its end*, and be completely fulfilled, or we cannot appear as righteous before God; and he also shews how this is to be done, and where alone it is to be sought after. "For Christ, faith he, is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth," ver. 4. The matter in question is—A righteousness unto Justification before God; and this is, the righteousness which the law requires. The law is the rule of righteousness; God's prescription of a righteousness; he looks for no other; and that we should be righteous herewith was the original end of the law. (Its other ends, at present, of conviction of sin, and condemning for it, are accidental to its primitive constitution.) This righteousness, then, the Jews sought after by their own personal performance of its works and duties; but, with their utmost endeavours, they could never fulfil this righteousness, nor attain this end of the law, which yet, if men do not, they must perish for ever.

Wherefore the Apostle declares, that this is done another way; that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled, and its end, as to a righteousness before God, attained; and that this is in and by Christ: for what the law required, that he accomplished, which is accounted to every one that believes.

The law demands a righteousness of us; the accomplishment of this is the end at which it aims, and which is necessary to our Justification before God. This is

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not to be attained by any works of our own : but Christ is this for us, and to us ; which, how he is, or can be, but by the imputation of his obedience in the accomplishment of the law, I cannot understand, nor does the Apostle declare.

The way whereby we attain to this end of the law, is by faith alone ; for Christ is the end of the law to every one that believeth. To mix any thing with faith herein, as it is repugnant to the nature of faith and works, with respect to their fitness for the attaining a righteousness, so it is as directly contrary to the express design and words of the Apostle as any thing that can be invented.

Let men please themselves with their distinctions, cavils, objections, and feigned consequences ; here I shall for ever desire to fix my soul, and herein to acquiesce ; namely, “ That Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”

C H A P. XX.

Testimonies from the Epistles of St. Paul, continued.

1 CORINTHIANS I. 30.

“ **B**UT of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption.”

The design of the Apostle in these words is to shew that whatever is needful for us, in order that we may please God, live unto him, and attain the enjoyment of him, *that we have in and by Jesus Christ.* This, on the part of God, is from mere, free and sovereign grace* ; he is the principal efficient cause ; and the effect

* Ver. 26, 27, 28, 29.

fect is, that we are *in Christ Jesus*; that is, engrafted into him, or united to him, as members of his mystical body, which is the constant sense of that expression in Scripture. The benefits which we hereby receive, are enumerated in the following words. But first, the way whereby we are made partakers of them is declared—“ who, of God, is made unto us wisdom,” &c. that is, it is so ordained of God that Christ should be all this unto us—it is a special ordinance and institution of sovereign grace and wisdom, that Christ should be all this unto us and for us. Having no righteousness of our own, he is appointed of God to be our righteousness, and is *made* so unto us; which cannot be but that his righteousness is made ours; for he is made it unto us, so that all boasting should be utterly excluded, and “ that he that glorieth, should glory in the Lord,” ver. 29, 31. Now there is a way of being righteous, which admits of glorying *, and does not exclude boasting †; and so it must be, if righteousness be inherent in us; but Christ is so made righteousness unto us, that all boasting and glorying on our part, is excluded, and for that very end, that it should be excluded; and this can only be by the imputation of his righteousness to us: for thereby is the grace of God, the honour of his person and mediation exalted, and all occasion of glorying in ourselves cut off. We desire no more from this testimony, but that, as we are in ourselves destitute of all righteousness in the sight of God, Christ is, by a gracious act of divine imputation, made righteousness unto us, in such a way, that all our glorying ought to be in the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ ‡.

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* Rom. iv. 2. † Rom. iii. 27.

‡ *Bellarmino* says, that “ Christ is our righteousness, because he is the efficient cause of it, as God is said to be our strength.” I answer: He is the efficient cause of our personal inherent righteousness, but that is our *Sanctification*; and is here distinguished from the righteousness of Christ imputed to us for *Justification*.

Socinus

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2 CORINTH. V. 21.

THE truth pleaded for is yet more emphatically expressed. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

To display the greatness of the grace of God in our reconciliation by Christ, he describes him, "as he who knew no sin." He knew the *nature* of sin, and he knew experimentally the *effects* of it in his sufferings; but he *knew it not*—that is, was most remote from it, as to its *commission* or *guilt*—"he did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth"—"he was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." There is an *emphasis* in this mode of expression, and those who desire to learn the excellency of the grace of God herein, will not neglect it.

"He hath made him to be sin"—that is, say many expositors, *a sacrifice for sin*; I shall not contend about this exposition, because that which is signified in it is according to truth; but there is a more proper signification

Socinus objects, "That if Christ be said to be made righteousness unto us, because his righteousness is imputed to us; then is he said to be made Wisdom to us, because his wisdom is so imputed; and so of his Sanctification; yea, he must be redeemed for us, and his Redemption also be imputed," &c. I answer: Christ is not made all those things to us in the same way and manner; they are so different in their nature, that it is impossible he should be so.

He is made *Sanctification* to us, in that by his Spirit and grace we are *freely sanctified*; but he cannot be said to be made *redemption* to us, in that by his Spirit and grace we are *freely redeemed*; and if he be said to be made *righteousness* unto us, because by his Spirit and grace he works inherent righteousness in us, then it is the same with his being made *Sanctification* to us. And this is not at all the way whereby Christ was made *redemption* to us; for this being a thing external, it can only be by the imputation to us of what he did, that we might be *redeemed*; and not that he was *redeemed for us*, as he childishly cavils.

fication of the word, *Sin* (*αμαρτία*), being put for a *Sinner* (*αμαρτωλος*), that is, *passively*, not *actively*; not by *imposition*, but *imputation*; for this the phrase of speech and the force of the *antithesis* seem to require. And if this was the interpretation of the Greek *Scholia*ſt, as *Ephesius* and others affirm, *Luther* was not the first, who asserted, “That Christ was made the greatest “ sinner ;” namely, by imputation. But we shall allow the former exposition, provided that the true notion of a *sin-offering*, or *expiatory sacrifice* be admitted.

But, how did God make him to be sin? “ He hath made him to be sin ;” so that an act of God is intended; and this is elsewhere expressed by his “ laying all our iniquities upon him,” or, “ causing them to meet on him * ;” and this was the imputation of our sins unto him, as the sins of the people were put on “ the head of the goat,” that they should be no more theirs, but his ; so as that he was to carry them away from them. Take sin in either of the senses just mentioned, either of a *sacrifice for sin*, or, a *sinner*, and the imputation of the guilt of sin, antecedently to the punishment of it, and in order thereto, must be understood. In every sacrifice for sin, he that brought it, put his hand on the head of it, denoting an imposition of sin, or transfer of guilt unto it † ; nor could any sin-offering be made without it. And if the word be taken in the second sense, namely, for a *sinner*; that also is by imputation; for none can be denominated a sinner from mere suffering. Some affirm, that “ sin was imputed to him as to punishment,” which is indeed to say, that the *guilt of sin* was imputed to him, for the guilt of sin is its respect unto punishment; and that any one should be punished for sin, without the imputation of the guilt of it to him, is impossible; and were it possible, would be unjust. A person may suffer on the occasion of the sin of another, that is no way

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* Isa. liii. 6. † Lev. i. 4. and 26, 21.

made his ; but he cannot be punished for it, for punishment is the recompence of sin on account of its guilt : wherefore, the Lord Christ was made sin for us, by the imputation of the guilt of our sins unto him.

In answer hereto, and by virtue hereof, we are “made the righteousness of God in him ;” this was the end of his being “made sin for us.” And this also, is an act of God himself, for it is God that justifieth *. It is God that imputeth righteousness †. And to be made “the righteousness of God,” is to be made righteous before God, though emphatically expressed by the *abstract* for the *concrete*, to answer what was said before of Christ’s being made sin for us. To be made the righteousness of God is to be justified ; and to be made it so, *in him*, as he was made sin for us, is to be justified by the imputation of his righteousness unto us, as our sin was imputed to him.

No man can assign any other way whereby he was *made sin*, but by God’s “laying all our iniquities upon him ;” that is, imputing our sin to him. How then are we made the righteousness of God in him ? “By “the infusion of an habit of grace,” say the Papists. Then, by the rule of the *antithesis*, he must be made *sin for us* by the infusion of a habit of sin, which would be a blasphemous imagination. “By his meriting, “procuring, and purchasing righteousness for us,” say others. So, possibly, we might be made righteous *by him* ; but so we cannot be made righteous *in him* : this can only be by his righteousness, as we are in him, or united to him : to be righteous *in him*, is to be righteous with his righteousness, as we are one mystical person with him. Wherefore,

To be made the righteousness of God in Christ, as he was made sin for us, and because he was so, can be no other than to be made righteous by the imputation of

* Rom. viii. 33.

† Rom. iv. 6.

of his righteousness to us, as we are in him and united to him. All other expositions of these words are jejune and forced, leading the mind from the first, plain, obvious sense of them*.

GALATIANS II. 16.

THE Epistle of the same Apostle to the Galatians, is wholly designed for the vindication of the doctrine of Justification by Christ, without the works of the law ; and the sum of his design is thus expressed :—

“ Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ ; even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law ; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”

That which is here asserted, was such a fundamental and well-known principle of truth among all believers, that their conviction of it was the ground of their transition from Judaism to the faith of Christ. And in these words the Apostle determines that great question, How a man may be justified before God. The subject spoken of is expressed indefinitely—*A man*—any man, a Jew or Gentile—the Apostle who writes, and the Galatians, to whom he writes, who had also, for a time, believed and professed the Gospel.

The answer he gives to this question is both *negative* and *positive* ; asserted with the highest assurance, and as the common faith of all christians, excepting only those who had been led aside from it by seducers. He asserts that a man *is not, cannot be* justified by the works of the law. What he intends by the law in these disputes

* Here the author introduces and answers several objections of *Bellarmino* against the sense of the words just given ; but as most of these had been noticed in the 8th and 9th chapters, they are omitted in this place. (Ed.)

putes hath been before evinced. The *law of Moses* is sometimes signally intended ; not absolutely, but as it was the present instance of men's cleaving to the law of righteousness, and not submitting themselves to the righteousness of God. But that he anywhere excepts the *moral law* in this argument, is a weak imagination ; for this would be to except the *ceremonial law* itself, for the observation of it, while it was in force, was a duty of the moral law.

And the *works of the law*, are the duties of obedience which this law of God requires, and performed in the manner he prescribes, in faith and love, as hath been proved. To say, that the Apostle excludes only "works absolutely perfect," which no man since the fall ever performed, is to suppose him to dispute with great earnestness against what no man asserted. Nor can he be said to exclude only "works looked on as "meritorious," seeing he excludes all works, that there may be no place for merit in our Justification. Nor did the Galatians look for Justification from any works but such as they *then* performed, when they were believers. Not this, nor that sort of works—not this nor that manner of performing them—not this nor that kind of interest in our Justification ; but all works, of every kind, and however performed, are excluded from every kind of consideration in our Justification. For these Galatians only desired that their works might be admitted into *co-partnership* with their faith in Christ. But the Apostle excludes them altogether ; and so much weight does he lay on their total exclusion, that he affirms, that the admission of them would overthrow the whole Gospel, ver. 21. "For if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain ;" and it is dangerous to venture on so sharp a fence.

In opposition hereto, he *positively ascribes* our Justification to *faith in Christ alone*—"We have believed in Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ :"

Christ : "not by works, but by faith, is by faith alone *." And it is not probable that we shall have an end of contending in this world, if men will not acquiesce in such plain determinations of controversies given by the Holy Ghost himself.

C H A P. XXI.

Testimonies from the Epistles of St. Paul, continued.

E P H E S I A N S II. 2, 8, 9, 10.

" **F**OR by grace are ye saved, through faith ; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath fore-ordained that we should walk in them."

The evident design of the Apostle in this chapter, is to declare the way in which lost and condemned sinners are translated out of that condition into a state of acceptance with God, and eternal salvation thereon: And therefore, in the first place (according to his usual method) he fully describes their *natural state*, with their being obnoxious to the wrath of God thereby — "They were dead in trespasses and sins ;" expressing the power that sin had on their souls as to *spiritual life* and all the actions of it ; but also that they "lived and walked in sin," and on all accounts were "children of wrath," or subject to eternal condemnation.

What

* That the particles *εαν μη* are not *exceptive* but *adversative*, hath not only been undeniably proved by Protestant Divines, but is acknowledged by the modest and candid writers of the Roman Church.

What such persons can do towards their own deliverance, many terms are invented to express, all passing my understanding ; seeing the entire design of the Apostle is to prove that they can do nothing at all. But another cause is discovered, and that in direct opposition to any thing that may be done by ourselves to that end. It is not a work for us to undertake ; it is not what we can contribute any thing to—“ but God, who is rich in mercy *.” Would men have rested on this divine revelation, the church of God had been free from many perverse opinions and wrangling disputes which it has been pestered with : but men will not so easily part with thoughts of some kind of interest in being the authors of their own happiness. And it is observable, 1. That the Apostle assigns the whole of this work absolutely to *grace, love, and mercy* ; and that with an exclusion of the consideration of any thing on our part, (ver. 5, 8.) 2. He magnifies this grace in a marvellous manner ; expressing it by various names —*mercy, love, grace and kindness* ; he also gives such epithets to divine grace as to render it singular, and herein solely to be adored ;—*rich in mercy—the great love wherewith he loved us—the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness, ver. 4—7.* He evidently designs deeply to affect the hearts of believers with a sense of the grace and love of God in Christ, as the only cause of their Justification before God. I think no words can fully express those conceptions of mind which this representation suggests. Whether they think it their duty to be like-minded, and comply with the Apostle in this design, who scarcely ever mention the grace of God, but to diminish its efficacy, and to whom these ascriptions to it are matter of contempt, it is not difficult to judge.

The

* Ver. 4. The *adversative* includes an opposition to every thing on our part, and incloseth the whole work to God.

The Apostle's general position is, *That we are saved by grace*; and what he intends by being saved, we must examine. *Eternal salvation* is not immediately intended, otherwise than it is included in the causes of it; nor do I think that *Justification* only is designed, though it be so principally; *conversion to God*, and *sanctification*, are also included, (ver. 5, 6.) : and they are no less of sovereign grace than *Justification* itself. But the Apostle speaks of what the Ephesians, being now believers, and by virtue of their being such, were made partakers of in this life; for having described their condition in common with all the posterity of Adam (ver. 1, 2, 3.) ; he declares also their state in particular, as *Gentiles, Idolaters, Atheists* (ver. 11, 12.) ; wherefore, their present deliverance by Jesus Christ from this whole miserable state and condition, is what he intends by their being saved; and that which was principally designed in the description of this state is, that therein they were liable to the wrath of God. From this condition they had deliverance by faith in Christ Jesus; for "he that believeth on him is not condemned;" that is, he is *saved*; but "he that believeth not, the wrath of God abideth on him." In this sense, *saved* and *salvation* are frequently used in the Scripture. Besides, he gives us so full a description of the salvation which he intends (ver. 13, &c.), that there can be no doubt of it. It is our being "made nigh by the blood of Christ—our peace with God by his death—our reconciliation by the blood of the cross—our access unto God"—and all spiritual privileges thereon depending.

Concerning the causes of our *Justification* he determines both *positively* and *negatively*. Positively—in the supreme moving cause, ~~the~~ free sovereign grace and love of God—in the meritorious procuring cause, Jesus Christ in the work of his mediation, as the ordinance of God for rendering this grace effectual to his glory

glory *—and, in the only means, or instrumental cause, on our part, which is faith. “ By grace are ye saved through faith ;” and lest you should seem to derogate any thing from the grace of God, in asserting the use of faith, he adds, “ and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” The communication of this faith unto us, is no less of grace than is the Justification which we obtain thereby : so he secures the whole work unto the grace of God through Christ, wherein we are interested by faith alone.

But not content herewith, he describes the work *negatively*, excluding what might be pretended to have a concern therein. And here he distinctly states—*What he so excludes*—The *reason* why he excludes them ; and —The *confirmation* of that reason, wherein he obviates an objection that might arise.

‘ What he excludes, are *works* — “ not of works,” ver. 9.—“ Works of the *law of Moses*,” say some. But why should the Apostle inform the Ephesians, that they were not justified by them, for they were never under that law ? they never sought for righteousness by it. Others say, he intends “ works wrought in the strength of our natural abilities, without the aid of grace, “ and before believing.” But what were the works of the Ephesians antecedent to believing ?—“ They were dead in trespasses and sins, they walked according to the course of this world, in the lusts of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh, and of the mind.” Certainly these works had no share in their Justification. The works here excluded, then, are those performed by the Ephesians when they were believers, “ quickened with Christ ;” even the works which God fore-ordained that we should walk in them, ver. 10: and these are excluded, not only in opposition to *grace*, but in opposition to *faith* also. “ Through faith, not of works”—he not only rejects their *merit* as inconsistent

* Ver. 7, 13, 16.

fident with grace, but their co-interest with, or subsequent interest unto faith, in our Justification. If then, we are saved by grace, through faith in Christ, exclusively of all works whatever, then cannot such works be the whole or part of our righteousness unto Justification of life.

The Apostle adds a *reason* of this exclusion—“*Not of works, lest any man should boast.*” God hath thus ordained the method of our Justification, that no man might have ground, reason, or occasion to glory or boast in himself*. Glorying consists in an ascription of something to ourselves, that is not in others, in order to Justification; and it is works alone that can administer occasion for glorying; “*for if Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to glory:*” This *boasting*, all works are apt to beget in the minds of men; and wherever it is, the design of God in this work of his grace is frustrated, as far as lieth in us.

The Apostle *confirms* the foregoing reason, and at the same time obviates a supposed objection: “*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them.*” The force of this reason consists in this—That all good works—evangelical works, are the effects of the grace of God in those who are in Christ Jesus, and so are truly justified antecedently to them. He also designs hereby to obviate an objection which he foresaw would be made against this doctrine; namely, “*That if good works be thus excluded from our Justification before God, then of what use are they? We may live as we list, utterly neglect them, and yet be justified!*” This objection some men continue to manage with great vehemence; we meet with nothing in this cause more frequently; and on this *theme* those persons are very apt to enlarge, who give no great evidence of their own evangelical obedience.

R

For

* 1 Cor. i. 21. xxx. 31. Rom. iii. 32.

For the present, I shall only say—that if the answer here given by the Apostle be not satisfactory to them; if the grounds and reasons of the necessity and use of good works here declared, be not judged sufficient to establish them in their proper place and order, I shall not consider myself obliged to attempt their further satisfaction.

P H I L. III. 8, 9.

"YEA, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ; the righteousness which is of God by faith."

This is the last testimony which I shall insist upon; and the following things are observable in it.

1. The Apostle's design, in this chapter, is to declare on what account we are accepted with God; and he fixeth upon an interest in Christ, by faith; in opposition to those *legal privileges* in which the Jews, on whom he reflects, boasted and rejoiced, ver. 3.

2. He supposeth that a *righteousness* is necessary, in order to that acceptance before God, in which we are to rejoice.

3. He mentions a twofold righteousness—our own, which is of the law—and that which is through the faith of Christ. These he asserts to be opposite and inconsistent as to the purpose of Justification: "not having mine own righteousness, but that," &c. An intermediate righteousness between these he acknowledgeth not.

4. Placing

4. Placing the instance in himself, he declares emphatically (and there is scarcely a greater pathos, or vehemency of speech in all his writings) which of these he adhered to and placed his confidence in; and in doing this, there were some things which engaged his holy mind into a peculiar earnestness of expression in the exaltation of the one, and the depression of the other: as,

(1.) This was the turning point, on which he and others had forsaken Judaism, and embraced the Gospel. This therefore was to be secured as the main instance, wherein the greatest controversy that ever was in the world was debated. So he expresseth it, Gal. ii. 15, 16.
 " We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law." (2.) Hence, great opposition was made to this doctrine by the Jews in all places, and the minds of many were turned off from the truth, and perverted from the simplicity of the Gospel. This greatly affected his holy soul, and he notices it in most of his epistles. (3.) The weight of the doctrine itself, with that reluctance which is in the natural man to embrace it, as laying the axe to the root of all spiritual pride and elation of mind; whence innumerable subterfuges are invented to avoid the efficacy of it, affected his mind. (4.) In the days of his ignorance, he himself had been a great sinner, by a peculiar opposition to Christ and the Gospel. This he was deeply sensible of, as well as of the excellency of the grace of God, and the righteousness of Christ, whereby he was delivered. And men must have some experience of what he felt in himself, as to sin and grace, before they can well understand his expressions about them.

R 2

5. Hence

5. Hence it was that he treats this subject with peculiar earnestness and vehemence of spirit. Thus, on the part of *Christ*, whom he would exalt, he mentions not only "the knowledge of him," but "the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," with an emphasis in every word; and those other redoubled expressions—"all loss for him—that I may win him—that I may be found in him—that I may know him"—all argue the working of his affections under the conduct of faith and truth, unto an acquiescence in Christ alone, as all in all. Somewhat of this frame of mind is necessary to all who would believe his doctrine. Those, who are utter strangers to the one, will never receive the other.

In his expression of all other things which are *our own*, that are not Christ, whether privileges or duties, however good, useful, and excellent in themselves, yet, in comparison of Christ and his righteousness, and with respect to our acceptance with God, with the same vehemence of spirit he casts contempt on them, calling them (*σκιβαλα*) dog's-meat; to be left for them whom he terms *dogs*: that is, evil workers of the concision; or the wicked Jews, who pertinaciously adhered to the righteousness of the law, ver. 2*.

6. The question being thus stated, the inquiry is, What any person, desiring acceptance with God, or a righteousness whereby he may be justified before him, ought to betake himself unto. One of the ways proposed, he must adopt. Either he must comply with the Apostle in his resolution to reject all his own righteousness,

* *Bellarmino* objects, "That it is blasphemous to call the duties "of inherent righteousness "loss and dung." I answer: The Apostle doth not call our inherent righteousness dung, but only says that he accounts it so; and he accounts it so not *absolutely*, which he was far from, but only in comparison of Christ, and as to his trust in it for the purpose of Justification. And the prophet Isaiah speaks of it with the same contempt, chap. Ixiv. 6.

ness, and confide alone in that of Christ, or invent some *exceptions* to the Apostle's conclusion, or some distinctions which may prepare a reserve for his own works in his Justification. Here every one must chuse for himself. In the mean time we thus argue.

If our own righteousness, and the righteousness of God by faith, are opposite and inconsistent in the work of Justification before God, then are we justified by faith alone, through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ unto us. The consequence is plain from the removal of all other ways, causes, means, and conditions of it, as inconsistent with it; but the antecedent is expressly the Apostle's—"not my own, but that of God." Again,

That whereby, and wherewith, we are "found in Christ," is *that whereby alone we are justified before God;* for "to be found in Christ," expresses the state of the person who is to be justified before God: to which is opposed "to be found in ourselves:" and according to these different states doth the judgment of God pass concerning us. And as for those who are found "in themselves," we know what will be their portion; but "in Christ" we are found by faith alone*.

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C H A P.

* All manner of evasions are used to escape the force of this testimony, the substance of which is included in the objections of *B. Llarmine* (Lib. 1. cap. 18 and 19. Lib. 5. cap. 5. de Justif.), who saith, "That the righteousness which is by the law, and opposed to "that of faith, is not the righteousness written in or required by the "law, but that which is wrought without the aid of grace; and that "the righteousness which is by faith is our evangelical righteousness, or righteous works wrought in faith." But all this is mere sophistry, and has been repeatedly answered by the author in former parts of this work, and therefore his large refutation of these and similar evasions is here omitted. (Edit.)

C H A P. XXII.

Objections against the Doctrine considered. Personal Holiness and Obedience not obstructed but furthered by it.

THAT which remains to close this discourse, is the consideration of some objections that are made in general against the truth pleaded for. Many, indeed the principal of these, we have already occasionally met with, and removed. Those we have now before us, are rather *sophistical cavils*, from supposed absurd consequences, than real *theological arguments*. To insist on them all would be endless; there are two, however, pleaded by all sorts of persons; Papists, Socinians, and others, which I shall notice. The first is, "That the doctrine of Justification, by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, renders our personal righteousness needless, and overthrows all necessity of an holy life :" The other is, "That the apostle James, in his epistle, plainly ascribes our Justification to works; and what he affirms there, is inconsistent with that sense of many other testimonies of Scripture which we plead for."

As to the first of these, those who oppose the truth we contend for, though they differ among themselves, as to what they exalt in opposition to it, yet agree to urge it with great vehemence; and the charge, as managed by those of the church of Rome, must be acknowledged by all sober men to be an open calumny: for the wisest of them, and those of whom it is hard to conceive but that they knew the contrary, as Bellarmine *, Vasquez, Suarez, openly aver, that Protestant writers deny all inherent righteousness; that they maintain

* Bellarmine excepts Bucer and Chemnitius.

maintain that men may be saved though they live in all manner of sin ; that nothing is required of them but to believe that their sins are forgiven, and that while they do so, though they give up themselves to the most sensual vices and abominations, they may be assured of their salvation. *Socinus* also pursues the same honest course : for he charges it on the Protestant Divines, that they taught that God justifieth the ungodly, not only those who are so, and while they are so, but though they continue so—That they require no inherent righteousness or holiness in any, nor could they on their principles, seeing the imputed righteousness of Christ is sufficient for them, though they live in sin ; and so introduce Libertinism and Antinomianism into the church. *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum.*

So will men, out of a perverse zeal to promote their own interest, wilfully give up themselves to the worst of evils, such as false accusation and open calumny ; for such is the nature of these assertions, which none of the writings or sermons of those who are so charged ever gave the least countenance unto. Whether the forging and promulgation of such impudent falsehoods, be an expedient to obtain Justification by works, they who continue in them will do well to consider. For my part, I must say, that it is all one to me what religion men are of, who can justify themselves in such proceedings. When I find men at this kind of work, I have very little concern in what they say afterwards, be it true or false.

The objection itself, properly stated, is this—“ If “ God justify the ungodly, merely by his grace, through “ faith in Christ Jesus, so that works of obedience are “ not antecedently necessary to Justification, nor are “ any part of that righteousness whereby they are jus- “ tified, then are they no way necessary, but men may “ be justified and saved without them.”

This

This objection has already been sufficiently answered, in what we have said concerning the *Nature of justifying faith*, and the *Continuation of the moral law* in force as a rule of obedience to all believers; an unprejudiced consideration of which, will discover the iniquity of this charge, and shew that our doctrine does not give the least countenance to it*. A few things, however, may be spoken on the present occasion: and we premise,

1. That we do not assert that all who maintain this doctrine, have *exemplified* it in a holy and fruitful conversation. Many, it may be feared, have lived and died in sin; and some, possibly, have abused this doctrine, to countenance themselves in their sins, and neglect of duty. The best of holy things or truths cannot be secured from abuse, so long as the sophistry of the old serpent hath an influence on the depraved minds of men. So it was with them of old, who "turned the grace of God into lasciviousness;" or, from the doctrine of grace, countenanced themselves in their ungodly deeds. Many, from the beginning, so walked as to manifest, that "their belly was their God, and their end destruction." It is one thing, to have only the conviction of truth in our minds; another, to have the power of it in our hearts. The former will produce an outward profession; the latter only, effect an inward renovation of our souls. However, I must add three things to this concession.

(1.) I am not satisfied, that any of those persons who now oppose this doctrine, surpass in holiness, in faith, love, zeal, self-denial, and all other christian graces, those,

* See also the author's discourse on the Holy Spirit, particularly book iv. chap. 1. On the Nature of Sanctification and Gospel Holiness; and book v. On the Necessity of Holiness, with the grounds and reasons thereof, in compliance with the doctrine of Justification; the perusal of which will abundantly detect the vanity of this charge. (Edit.)

those, who in the last ages have firmly adhered to it, and constantly testified to that effectual influence which it had on their walk before God : nor do I know that any persons, in those days, who were eminent for holiness, can be named, who did not cordially assent to it. I doubt not, that many, who greatly differ from others, in the explication of the doctrine, may be eminently, at least, sincerely holy : but it is not comely to find some others who give very little evidence of their diligent " following after that holiness, without which no man can see God," vehemently declaiming against that doctrine as destructive of holiness, which was so fruitful in it, in former days. Nor, (2.) Doth it yet appear, that an attempt to introduce a contrary doctrine, hath had any great success in the *reformation* of men's lives ; nor hath personal righteousness, as yet, thrived much under the conduct of it. It will be time enough to seek countenance to it by declaiming against that which had better effects, when it hath a little more commended itself by its fruits. And, (3.) It would not be amiss, if this part of the controversy among us all, were issued in the advice of the Apostle James — " Shew me *thy* faith by thy works, and I will shew thee *my* faith by my works." Let us all labour that fruits may thus far determine of doctrines, as to their use unto the interest of holiness : for that faith which doth not evidence itself by works ; that hath not this (*ενδείξιν*) *index*, which St. James calls for, is of no consideration herein.

2. The same objection was laid against the doctrine of the Apostle Paul, which sufficiently argues, that it is the same doctrine which is now assaulted with it. This himself notices more than once. Rom. iii. 31. " Do we make void the law through faith ?" It is an objection he anticipates ; the substance of which was, that " he destroyed the law," took off all obligation to obedience, and brought in Antinomianism. So again, chap. vi. 1. " What shall we say then, shall we continue in sin,

sin, that grace may abound?" — Some thought this the natural consequence of his doctrine, and some think so still. The same objection occurs again, ver. 15. " What then, shall we continue in sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace?" We have therefore no reason to be surprised nor moved at this charge, for it is no other than what was insinuated against the doctrine of the Apostle himself, whatever enforcements are now given it by subtlety of arguing, or rhetorical exaggerations. It is evident, however, that there are naturally in the minds of men, *efficacious prejudices* against this part of the mystery of the Gospel, which discovered themselves betimes, and ceased not till they had corrupted the whole doctrine of the church.

3. It is granted, that this doctrine, singly by itself, or in conjunction with whatever else concerns the grace of God by Jesus Christ, is liable to abuse, by those in whom darkness and the love of sin is predominant. Hence, from the beginning, some fancied that a bare assent to the Gospel was that faith whereby they should be saved; and that they might be so, however they continued to live in sin. This is evident, particularly from the Epistles of John, James, and Jude. Against this pernicious evil we can give no relief, while " men love darkness more than light :" and it is vanity to suppose that the new modellings of this doctrine will prevent future abuse.

These general observations being sufficient of themselves, to discard this objection from any place in the minds of sober men, I shall only add the consideration of those answers which the Apostle Paul gives to it.

The objection made to the Apostle was—That he made void the law—rendered good works needless—and that, according to his doctrine, men might live in sin, unto the advancement of grace. And as to his sense hereof, we may observe,

First,

First, He never once returns that answer, which some think is the only one that can remove the objection, namely, the necessity of our own personal righteousness, obedience or works, in order to our Justification before God. And is it not strange, that if this indeed was his doctrine, and the contrary a mistake of it, namely, that our own righteousness had a share in our Justification ; that he, who so remarkably insists upon the nature, use, and necessity of good works, should not make use of this truth in answer to the objection, which charged him with rendering them all needless and useless ? Is it not strange that he should not, once at least, somewhere or other, intimate, that, though he rejected the *works of the law*, yet he maintained the necessity of *evangelical works*, in order to our Justification before God, as the condition of it ? But he is so far from any such plea, that when the most unavoidable occasion was administered unto it, he not only waves any mention of it, but affirms that which plainly shews he allowed not of it. See Eph. ii. 9, 10.

Secondly, In his answer to this objection he nowhere insists on the common principle of moral duties, but on those reasons and motives of holiness and good works which are peculiar to believers : for the question was not, whether all mankind were obliged to obedience by the moral law ; but whether there were *an obligation from the Gospel* upon believers to good works, suited to affect and constrain their minds unto them. This is the true state of the question ; for, as to unbelievers, we have nothing to do with them in this matter ; evangelical motives are not adapted to enforce their obedience * ; they are under the law, and there we leave them to the authority of God in the law. The Apostle confines his inquiry to believers †.

Thirdly, The answers, which he returns (*positively*) to this objection, wherein he declares the necessity, nature

* 1 Cor. i. 23, 24. 2 Cor. iv. 4. † Rom. vi. 2, 3. Eph. ii. 10.

ture and use of good works, are large, and comprehensive of a great part of the doctrine of the Gospel. I shall mention only the heads of them; and they are the same that we plead in vindication of the same truth.

1. He pleads the *ordination* of God—"God hath before ordained that we should walk in them," (Eph. ii. 10.) In the disposal of the order of the causes of salvation, he hath designed, that those who believe in Christ should *live in, walk in, abound in* good works. To this end, precepts, directions, motives and encouragements, are multiplied in the Scripture. And what need there any further dispute about their necessity, among those who know what it is to believe, or what respect there is in the souls and consciences of believers to the commands of God? *

2. The Apostle answers, as we also do: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." For though the law is principally established by the obedience of Christ, yet it is not made void as to believers by faith, and the imputation of his righteousness. Neither of these exempts them from that obligation to obedience, which is prescribed by the law.

* But what force, say some, is there in this command or ordination of God, when, notwithstanding it, and if we are not obedient, we shall be justified by the imputation of Christ's righteousness? I answer: It is believers only that we speak of; and to suppose that their minds are not as effectually influenced with the authority of God, as to duty, as if it was in order to Justification, arises from ignorance of the nature of faith, and the motives by which the minds of believers are affected. Besides, the fallacy of this exception consists in separating Justification and Sanctification, which God has made inseparable; and in compounding things that are distinct, namely, Justification and eternal Salvation. It is faith alone that gives efficacy to gospel commands, effectually to influence the soul to obedience; and the obligation is more powerfully constraining, as they are given to those who are justified, than if they were given to them in order to their Justification; for then they must be supposed to have their efficacy on them before they believed, which is impossible.

law. They are still, by virtue thereof, obliged to " love the Lord their God with all their heart, and their neighbour as themselves." They are indeed freed from the law and all its commands to duty, as it abides in its first consideration—" Do this and live ;" the opposite to which is—" Cursed is every one that sinneth." For he who is under the obligation of the law in order to Justification, is under its curse. But we are made free to give obedience to it, on gospel motives, and for gospel ends * ; and the obligation of it on all believers is such, that *the least transgression of it* hath the nature of sin. But are they hereon bound over by the law to everlasting punishment ? or, as some phrase it, " Will " God damn those who transgress the law, without " which all this is nothing ?"—I ask again, what do *they* think of it ? and, upon a supposition that he will do so, what they think will become of *themselves* ? For my part, I say, No ; even as the Apostle saith, " There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."—" Where then, they will say, is the necessity " of obedience from the obligation of the law, if God " will not damn those who transgress it ?" I answer ; it were well if some men understood what they say in these things, or else would learn to hold their peace. The law equally requires obedience in all instances of duty, if it require any at all. As to its obligatory power, it is capable neither of dispensation nor relaxation, while the essential differences of good and evil remain. If, then, none can be obliged to duty by virtue of its commands, unless they must, on every transgression, fall under its curse, either it obligeth no person at all to obedience, or no one can be saved. But, although, we are freed from the curse and condemning power of the law by Jesus Christ, yet while we are in this world, in order to the accomplishment of God's design for the

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restoration

* Rom. vi.

restoration of his image in us, we are obliged to endeavour after all that holiness and righteousness which the law requires.

3. The Apostle answereth this objection, by shewing the necessary relation that faith hath unto the death of Christ, and the grace of God; with the nature of sanctification, the excellency, use and advantage of gospel holiness, and the end of it, in God's appointment. This he doth at large in the whole sixth chapter of his epistle to the Romans, and with the express design of shewing the consistency of Justification by faith alone, with the necessity of personal righteousness and holiness. I shall only say, that those, to whom the reasons and motives therein expressed, are not effectual to their own personal obedience, are so unacquainted with the gospel, the nature of faith, the genius and inclinations of the new creature, the constraining efficacy of the grace of God and love of Christ, and the œconomy of God in the disposition of the causes and means of our salvation, that I shall never trouble myself to contend with them about these things.

C H A P. XXIII.

The Doctrine of the Apostle James concerning Faith and Works; and its Agreement with that of St. Paul.

THE seeming difference, between the Apostles Paul and James, in what they teach concerning Faith, Works and Justification, requires some consideration; for many take advantage from some expressions of the latter, directly to oppose the doctrine fully and plainly declared by the former. This hath been so satisfactorily

ly answered by others, that I should wholly omit speaking any thing of it here, but that it will probably be expected in a discourse on this subject ; and I hope I may contribute some light unto the clearing and vindication of the truth. To this purpose it may be observed,

1. That it is taken for granted, on all hands, that there is no *real contradiction* between the two Apostles ; if there were, the writings of one of them must be falsely ascribed to the author whose name they bear, and be uncanonical ; and indeed the authority of the epistle of James hath, both formerly and lately, been highly, but rashly, questioned. Wherefore, their expressions are certainly capable of a just reconciliation.

2. It is also taken for granted, on all other occasions, that when there is an *appearance of contradiction* between any places of Scripture, if any of them treat directly, designedly, and largely of the matter in question ; and others speak of it only transiently or occasionally in order to other ends, then the truth is to be learned from the former places. And there is not a more rational and natural rule of interpreting Scripture, among all those which are, by common consent, agreed upon.

3. According to this rule, it is unquestionable, that the doctrine of Justification before God is to be learned from the writings of the Apostle Paul ; especially considering how exactly it represents the whole *scope* of the Scripture, and is witnessed to by particular testimonies without number, occasionally given to the same truth. It must be acknowledged, that he wrote on this subject, on purpose to declare it for its own sake, and its use in the Church ; and that he doth it fully, largely, and frequently, in a constant harmony of expressions.

As to what is delivered by the Apostle James, so far as our Justification is included therein, things are quite otherwise. He doth not undertake to declare the doctrine of our Justification before God, but having another

ther design in hand, he vindicates it from the abuse that some in those days had put it unto. Wherefore it is from the writings of St. Paul chiefly, that we are to learn the truth in this matter ; and, to what is by him plainly declared, the interpretation of other places is to be accommodated.

4. Some of late are of another mind, and contend that Paul is to be interpreted by James ; for, they tell us, the writings of Paul are obscure ; that many take occasion of errors from them ; and that James, writing after him, is presumed to give an interpretation to his sayings, which are therefore to be understood accordingly.

(1.) As to the vindication of St. Paul's writings, which now begin to be severely reflected on, (which is one effect of the secret prevalence of modern Atheism) it is unnecessary : He needs not the testimony of men, nor of the whole church together, whose security it is to be built on the doctrine he taught.

(2.) This was not the judgment of the ancient church for three or four hundred years ; for, while the Epistles of Paul were always esteemed the principal treasure of the church ; the great guide and rule of "the christian faith" ; this epistle of James was scarce received

* I wonder how any persons, pretending the least acquaintance with antiquity, can plead a passage out of *Irenaeus*, wherein he was evidently mistaken, or a rash word of *Origen*, in derogation from the perspicuity of the writings of the Apostle ; when they cannot but know how easy it were to overwhelm them with testimonies to the contrary, from all the famous writers of the church in several ages. *Chrysostome*, for instance, in forty places, accounts for it why some men understood not his writings, which in themselves were so gloriously evident and perspicuous. (See his Preface to his Exposition of his Epistles.) It is also worth notice how those, who agree in their dislike of his writings, differ in their accounts of them. Some will have it, that most of his Epistles were written against the Gnostics ; others, that the Gnostics took the occasion of their errors from his writings. So bold will men make with things divine to satisfy a present interest.

received as *canonical*, by many, and doubted of by the most, as both Eusebius and Jerom testify.

(3.) The design of the Apostle James is not at all to explain the meaning of Paul, as is pretended; but only to vindicate the doctrine of the Gospel from the abuse of such as used their “liberty for a cloak of malice-
ness,” and continued in sin under a pretence that grace had abounded to that end.

(4.) The Apostle *himself*, vindicates his own doctrine from such *exceptions* and *abuses* as men made to it, or turned it unto. Nor have we any other doctrine in his epistles than that he preached all the world over, and whereby he laid the foundation of the Christian religion among the Gentiles.

I shall now proceed to shew that there is not the least contradiction between the two Apostles in this matter; and this I shall do,

I. By some general considerations of the design and tendency of both their discourses; and,

II. By a particular explication of the context in that of St. James.

I. I shall give some general considerations of the design of both their discourses; and here I shall shew—That they have not the same scope—That they speak not of the same faith—That they speak not of Justification in the same sense, and—That, as to works, they both intend works of obedience to the moral law.

1. As to their *scope* and *design*. That of St. Paul, in all his writings, and particularly in his epistles to the Romans and Galatians, is—to declare how a guilty convinced sinner may obtain, through faith in the blood of Christ, the pardon of all his sins, acceptance with God, and a right to the heavenly inheritance. The doctrine hereof belonging eminently to the

Gospel, the publication of which to the Gentiles was in a peculiar manner committed to him, he had a special reason to insist much upon it, from the opposition made to it by Jews, and judaizing christians, who ascribed Justification to the law.

The apostle James had no such design. He doth not inquire how a guilty sinner may be justified in the sight of God; his intention was totally different. For, as we have said, there were many persons in those days professing the christian religion, who thereon presumed that they were already justified, and that nothing more was needful to their being saved. Some think they imbibed this poisonous tenet from Simon Magus and his followers; but more probably it was merely the corruption of their own hearts and lives that prompted them to seek after such a countenance to sin. Such a sort of professors the world still swarms with, who suppose that their faith, or the religion they profess, be it what it may, will save them, though they live in flagitious wickedness, and are utterly barren as to the duties of obedience. The design, therefore, of the Apostle, was to prove the necessity of works to all who profess the Gospel; and to evince the vanity of their pretence to Justification, by that faith which was so far from being fruitful in good works, that it was pretended by them only as a cloak for sin.

The design, then, of the Apostles being so distant, there is no contradiction in their assertions; though their words make an appearance thereof. James doth not once inquire how a guilty sinner may be justified before God, and Paul speaks to nothing else.

2. They speak not of the same *faith*. We have before proved, that there are two sorts of faith; and none I suppose will deny that by *faith* in the matter of our Justification, St. Paul intends—the faith of God's elect—the faith that purifieth the heart, and works by love; the faith whereby Christ dwelleth in us, and we in him: but

but as to the faith intended by St. James, it is altogether different ; he calls it—a dead faith—a carcase without breath—the faith of devils. Well may he deny Justification in any sense to this faith, when yet it may be justly ascribed to that faith which St. Paul speaks of.

3. They speak not of *Justification* in the same sense, nor to the same end. St. Paul professedly treats of our absolute Justification before God, the Justification of our persons, our acceptance with him, and the grant of a right to the heavenly inheritance. But the apostle James doth not treat at all of this : his whole inquiry is concerning the *nature of that faith* by which we are justified, and the only way whereby it may be evidenced to be of the right kind. He treats of Justification only as to the evidence and manifestation of it, as appears from both the instances, whereby he confirms his purpose.

The first is that of ABRAHAM ; for he says, that by Abraham's being justified *by works* (that is, *declaratively*), the Scripture was fulfilled, which says, that Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness, (ver. 21—23.) Now, if his intention were to prove, that we are justified before God *by works*, and not by faith, this testimony is directly contrary to his purpose, being alledged by St. Paul to prove that Abraham was justified *by faith* without works. Besides, he asserts, that Abraham was justified *by works then*, when he had offered his son on the altar : we believe the same ; but only inquire in what sense he was so justified : for it was about thirty years after it was testified of him that “ he believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness ;” he was then justified “ in the sight of God ;” and twice justified in the same sense he was not. How then was he justified when he offered up his son ? Certainly he was, by this work, *evidenced and declared*, in the sight of God and man, to be justified. Thus he gave a signal testimony to the sincerity

of

of his faith, manifesting the truth of that Scripture, “ he believed God,” &c,

His other instance is that of **RAHAB**, of whom he asserts, “ that she was justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and sent them away :” but she received them *by faith*, as the Holy Ghost witnesseth, Heb. xi. 30. ; and therefore had true faith before their coming ; and if so, was really justified. In this state she received the messengers ; made a full declaration of her faith to them (Josh. ii. 10, 11.) ; and then exposed her life by concealing and dismissing them. Hereby she justified the sincerity of her faith and confession ; and in that sense alone, is said to be justified by works : and in no other sense doth the Apostle James, in this place, make mention of Justification.

4. As to the *works*, mentioned by both the Apostles, the same are intended, and there is no disagreement at all about them ; for as St. James intends by *works*, duties of obedience to God, according to the Law, as is evident from the first part of the chapter, so the same are intended by St. Paul, as we proved before. And, as to the necessity of them in all believers, as evidences of their Faith and Justification, it is equally insisted upon by them both.

II. We shall now proceed to a more particular explanation of the discourse of the Apostle James : and we observe,

He makes no *composition* or *conjunction* between faith and works, but *opposeth* them ; asserting the one, and rejecting the other, in order to Justification. He makes no *distinction* of a *first* and *second* Justification—of the beginning and continuation of Justification ; but speaks of one only, which he ascribes *wholly to works* ; and he doth not at all inquire how a sinner is justified before God, but how professors of the Gospel may prove themselves to be justified.

He

He first (1—14.) reproves the persons to whom he wrote for many sins committed by them ; and having shewn them their danger, he discovers the root of the whole (ver. 14.), which was their vain and delusive presumption that the faith required in the Gospel, was merely an assent to the doctrine of it ; whereon they were delivered from all obligation to moral obedience, and might live in sin, without any danger to their eternal state (chap. iv. 1—4. chap. v. 1—5.) : “ What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works ; can faith save him ? ”— Suppose a man, any one, chargeable with the sins mentioned in the foregoing verses, do yet say that he hath faith ; that he hath forsaken Judaism or Paganism, and now professes the faith of the Gospel, and therefore, though destitute of good works, and living in sin, he is accepted of God, and shall be saved—Will this faith save him ? This is the question proposed : the Gospel faith—“ He who believeth shall be saved.” — Is that faith which consists with an indulgence of sin and neglect of duty, the faith to which the promise of salvation is annexed ? And hence, the inquiry proceeds—How any man, particularly he who “ says he has faith,” may prove that he possesses that faith which will secure his salvation ? And the Apostle denies that this is such a faith as can consist without works ; or that any man can evidence himself to have true faith except by his works of obedience.

That the faith he describes is useless as to salvation, he proves by comparing it with the *love* or *charity* of a like kind ; (ver. 15,16.) “ If a brother or a sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled ; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body ; what doth it profit ? ” This love, is not that gospel grace which is required of us under that name, nor hath it any of the effects of love ; it is neither

neither useful nor profitable. Hence he infers, ver. 17.—“ Even so *faith*, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone :” for this is what he was to prove, not that we are not justified by faith alone, before God, but that the faith which is alone, without works, is unprofitable.

“ Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works : shew me thy faith without thy works’ (that is, which is without works, or by thy works), “ and I will shew thee my faith by my works,” ver. 18. The Apostle here again propoſeth his main question, on a ſuppoſition that there is a dead uſeless faith, which he had prov- ed before : for now all the inquiry is, how true faith may be *evidenced*, ſo that their folly may appear who trust to any other. “ Shew me”—evidence or demon- ſtrate, thy faith to be true, by the only means thereof, which is *works*.

That the faith which cannot be ſo evidenced, is not the faith which will justify, or ſave us, he further proves, by ſhewing that it is no other than what the Devils themſelves have, and no man can hope to be ſaved by that which is common to them with Devils : “ thou believest there is one God, thou doſt well, the Devils also believe and tremble.

The Apostle proceeds, ver. 20. to the last confirmation of his aſsertion—“ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith, without works, is dead ?” And here obſerve—The *perſon*, whose conviction is deſigned, is caſted a *vain man*; one who is vainly puffed up in his own fleshly mind; one who hath entertained vain imagina- tions of being ſaved by an empty unfruitful profession of the Gofpel. What he deſigns is, his *conviction*; a con- viction of the foolish and pernicious error he had imbibed; “ wilt thou know, O vain man ?” That which he deſigns to convince him of, is, “ that faith without works is dead” and uſeless. This alone is what he un- der-

dertakes to prove by the following instances and arguments.

He first considers the faith of Abraham, ver. 21. "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" Here observe, (1.) It is certain that Abraham was justified many years before; when that testimony was given concerning him—"he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness." (2.) It is certain, that in the relation of the story here repeated by the Apostle, not a word is spoken of Abraham's being *then justified before God* by that, or any other work. But, (3.) It is plain, that in the place referred to, Abraham was *declared to be justified* by an open attestation to his faith, and fear of God, as sincere, Gen. xxii. 12. "Now I know that thou fearest me, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." This is the Justification which the Apostle intends; this was the manifestation of the truth of his faith, whereby he was justified before God; and hereby the Apostle proves, what he produces this instance for, namely, that faith without works is dead. Justifying faith, as evinced in the case of Abraham, is that, and that alone, which brings forth fruits of obedience; for on such a faith alone is a man evidenced and declared to be justified before God. Abraham was not then first justified; he was not then said to be justified; he was *declared to be justified*, and that by and upon his works, which is all that the Apostle intended to prove.

There is therefore not the least contradiction between this Apostle and Paul, who professedly asserts, that "Abraham was *not* justified before God by works." For James only declares, that by the works which he performed after he was justified, he was declared so to be: and that this was the whole of his design, appears in the next verses. "Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect,"

ver.

ver. 22. Here he enforces, as proved, two things for the conviction of him with whom he had to do.—That true faith will operate by works, as did Abraham's; and, that it was made *perfect* by works, that is, *evidenced* to be so*. It was complete, as to its proper effect, when he was first justified; and it was now *manifested* so to be †.

In confirmation of the whole, he adds—“ And the Scripture was fulfilled (*not contradicted*) which faith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness; and he was called, The friend of God,” ver. 23.—What the Scripture affirmed so long before of Abraham, was then evidenced to be most true, by the works which his faith produced. Hereupon, “ he was called the friend of God ‡.” This is of the same importance with his being justified by works; for he was not thus called merely as a justified person, but as one who had received singular privileges from God, and answered them by a holy walking before him: and the name intimates God's approbation of his faith and obedience, which is the Justification by works that the Apostle asserts.

Hereon he makes a double conclusion; first, as to his present argument, ver. 24.; and then, as to his whole design, ver. 26. The first is—“ that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.” “ Ye see, then:— You, whom I design to convince of the vanity of that imagination, that you are justified by a dead faith, a breathless carcase of faith, a mere assent to the truth of the Gospel, consistent with all manner of impiety, and wholly destitute of good fruits;—you may see what that faith is, which is required unto Justification and salvation;

* Τέλειος, Τέλειωμαι never signifies, in Scripture, the *internal, formal perfecting* of any thing, but only the *external complement, perfection, or manifestation* of it.

† See Matt. v. 48. Col. iv. 12. 2 Cor. xii. 9. ‡ 2 Chron. xx. 7. Isa. xii. 8.

vation ; for Abraham was declared to be righteous, to be justified, on that faith which is wrought by works, and not by such a faith as you pretend to. A man is justified by works as Abraham was, when he had offered up his son to God ; that is, what he really was by faith long before, was then and thereby evidenced and declared : And therefore let no man suppose, that by a dead faith any one can be justified, since that, whereon Abraham was declared so to be, was that which evidenced itself by its fruits.

The Apostle then lays down that great conclusion, which he had evinced by his whole disputation, and which, at first, he designed to confirm, ver. 26. " For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." A breathless carcase and an unoperative faith are alike, as to all the ends of natural or spiritual life.

T H E E N D.

T

A

TABLE OF TEXTS,

More or less illustrated in this Work.

GENESIS.			JOB.		
chap.	ver.	page	chap.	ver.	page
3.	15.	11	13.	18.	54
15.	6.	66, 72, 76	27.	5.	54
	16.	40	40.	3, 5.	4, 74
30.	33.	76	42.	4, 6.	4, 74
43.	9.	78			
LEVITICUS.			PSALMS.		
1.	4.	173	33.	18.	39
16.	21.	15, 173	40.	7.	85
			41.	4.	81
			71.	16.	47, 101, 142
NUMBERS.			106.	31.	76
14.	33.	77	110.	3.	35
			130.	3, 4.	6, 39, 47, 66, 101
DEUTERONOMY.			140.	2.	2, 66
6.	4, 5.	136	143.	2.	2, 6, 102
25.	1.	54			
JOSHUA.			PROVERBS.		
2.	10, 11.	200	6.	1.	84
			17.	15.	54, 55
				18.	84
			20.	16.	84
2 SAMUEL.			ISAIAH.		
15.	4.	54	6.	5.	3
19.	19.	76	33.	14.	3
			38.	3.	103
1 KINGS.			43.	10.	86
1.	21.	78		25.	2
NEHEMIAH.			45.	22.	137
13.	22.	203		24, 25.	142
			53.	5, 6, 11.	15, 96, 89, 173

ISAIAH.		JOHN.			
chap.	ver.	chap.	ver.		
61.	10.		16.		44
64.	6.	103, 184	24.		38, 72
			29.		38
			37.		138
JEREMIAH.			38.		138
23.	4, 5, 6.	149—143	17.	18.	91
			14.	6.	47
DANIEL.			15.	1.	82
9.	7, 18, 19.	6, 13, 39	16.	2, 13, 14.	23
24.		16, 143	17.	6.	83
ZECHARIAH.			20.	30, 31.	24
3.	4, 5.	123			
MATTHEW.					
5.		144	1.	3.	23
17, 19.		126	2.	38, 39.	94
27, &c.		144	4.	12.	47
7.	21, &c.	29, 72	8.	14.	43
11.	19.		13.	12.	29
27, 28.		55	14.	39.	58
32.	37.	16, 138	15.	9.	50
13.	21.		16.	30.	1, 32
19.	20.	144	20.	27.	43
20.	28.				
22.	36.	87	ROMANS.		
25.	30, 31.	136	1.	17.	9, 42, 65, 157
46.		72, 147	2.	13.	99
MARK.		81	3.	15.	131
2.	28.	116	4.	19.	89
12.	28.		21.		189
36.	16.	136	22.	30.	10, 49, 150
		72	24.	25.	20, 38, 41, 44, 47
LUKE.			27.		143
1.	6.	66	28.		49, 129.
7.	20.		31.		192
29.		43	4.	3.	66, 154
30.		55	4.		155
8.	13.	43	5.		129, 155
16.	15.	29, 39	6.	7, 8.	22, 57, 66,
17.	10.	144			122, 158, 174
18.	9—14.	144, 145	20.		40
JOHN.			22.		45
1.	12.	29, 35, 136, 148	23.	24.	73
2.	23, 24	29	5.	9, 10.	58
3.	14, 15.	137, 149	11.		137
			12—21.		82, 159
			18.		22, 126
			19.		110, 126

ROMANS.

chap.	ver.	page
6.	1, 2.	189, 191, 192
	20.	104
8.	1.	193
	3, 4.	110, 125
	7.	92
	29.	83
	33.	2, 174
9.	30.	70, 73
10.	3, 4.	9, 73, 166, 169,
		144
	5.	99
	5, 6.	91
	10.	29, 34
	11.	17, 46
10.	13.	9
11.	6.	2, 79, 129

1 CORINTHIANS.

1.	21, 23, 24.	18, 43, 181
	30.	106, 143, 170, 171
2.	14.	92
4.	4.	347
12.	12.	81
15.	22.	160

2 CORINTHIANS.

1.	12.	68
5.	21.	15, 17, 172—175
		183

GALATIANS.

2.	16.	129, 130, 157, 175,
		183
20.	21.	39, 66
21.		176
3.	8.	50
10.		193
4.	4.	116, 117
21.		126

EPHESIANS.

1.	3—5.	83
	5, 6, 7.	41, 44
	8.	41
	10.	83
2.	1—10.	177
	8.	49, 177, 129
4.	9.	70, 180, 191

EPHESIANS.

chap.	ver.	page
2.	10.	67, 180, 191
3.	10.	44
4.	15.	82
5.	9.	104
	25.	82

PHILIPPIANS.

3.	8, 9.	40, 182—185
	9.	70, 223, 142

COLOSSIANS.

2.	6.	136
	14.	56

1 TIMOTHY.

3.	16.	37
----	-----	----

TITUS.

3.	5.	70, 129
----	----	---------

PHILEMON.

18.		77
-----	--	----

HEBREWS.

2.	3.	43
	10—17.	83
6.	13, 14.	86
	18.	138
7.	22.	83, 84
10.	1, 4, 10, 14.	63
	5, 6.	85
	38, 39.	65
11.	30.	200

JAMES.

1.	1—14.	201
2.	14—26.	199—205

1 PETER.

1.	12.	68
	21.	38, 48
2.	7.	43
	24.	96

1 JOHN.

2.	1, 2.	57, 64
5.	10.	42

INDEX.

I N D E X.

 The letter **N** refers to the *notes*, and the figures to the *pages*.

A

- A** *Basement*, of the greatest saints, before God, 3, 4, 102, 182.
See *Boasting*.
- Abram**, how justified, 66, 72, 154, 181.
before men, 199.
- Adam**, God's dealing with him considered, 3, 33.
his first sin imputed to us, 159.
the first and second, compared, 159.
- Ambrose**, quotation from, 5. **N.**
- Anselm**, his direction for the sick, 4. **N.**
- Antinomianism**, falsely charged on the doctrine of *Justification by faith*, 124, 181, 186—190.
- Arguments** for *Justification by faith*, 100, 107, 110, 127, 156.
- Affurance** of faith, considered, 36, 86.
- Augustine**, quoted, 17. **N.**
- Authority** of the epistles of the Apostles asserted, 22, &c.

B

- Bellarmino**, his famous concession, 13.
his objections to this doctrine; see *Objections*.
- Brazen serpent**, a type of Christ, 149.
- Boasting** excluded, 153, 171, 181. the danger of it, 13.
- Socinian**, a specimen of, 5. **N.** *pharisaical*, 146.
deistical, 5. **N.** of Pagan Philosophers, 8, 9. **N.**

C

- Calumnies**, of the Papists and Socinians, refuted, 186, &c.
- Charles V.** his dying experience, 14. **N.**
- CHRIST**, the second Adam, 159. made sin for us, 15, 87, 172.

- Christ,** the Lord our righteousness, 140.
 the proper object of justifying faith, 38.
 the ordinance of God for our salvation, 38, &c.
 the surety of the church, how, 83, 87.
 the end of the law for righteousness, 113, 170.
- Chrysostome,** quoted, 17. N.
- Church,** the, one with Christ, 81.
 of England, her doctrine of Justification, 74.
- Coming to Christ,** an expression of faith, 138.
- Commutation** of sin and righteousness, 15.
- Comparision** between the authority of some parts of the Scripture with others, unwarrantable, 22.
- Concession** of Bellarmine, 13, 105.
- Condition,** whether faith be a, 51.
- Conscience,** bears witness to the requirements of the law, 109.
 its proper relief, under a sense of sin, 1, 92.
- Consistency** of divine truths, comprehended by believers, 21.
- Continuation** of Justification, on what it depends, 61.
- Conviction of sin,** necessary to a right understanding of Justification, 6—8, 28. necessary, 32. its effects, 33, 147. not the condition of Justification, 34.
- Convinced sinner,** described, 1, 147. invited to Christ, 32.
 the only capable subject of Justification, 45.
- Covenants,** the difference between the two, 127.
- Cyprian** quoted, 81. N.

D

- Davenant,** bishop, his definition of Justification, 91.
- Death,** the punishment of sin, 159.
- beds,** speak other things than many contend for, 6.
- Differences** among Protestants, unduly objected, 24, 49.
- Distinction** of a first and second Justification, rejected, 24, &c.
- Doctrine** of Justification, universally allowed to be important, 73.
 capable of abuse, 188. not justly chargeable with an unholy tendency, 124, 181—190.
- Dying expressions** of Charles V. 14. N.
- Rousseau,** 5. N.

E

- Effects,** of conviction of sin, 33.
- Epicurus,** quoted, 9. N.
- Epistles** of St. Paul, &c. their authority asserted, 22.
 testimonies from the, 150, &c.
- Epile*

Epistle of St. James, its scope, &c. 194.

Evangelical personal righteousness, considered, 67.

Evangelists, unwarrantably preferred to the epistles, 22.

reason why the doctrine of Justification is not so fully declared in them, as in the epistles, 23. Testimonies from them, 143—150.

Eusebius, quoted, 81. n.

F

Faith, its nature, and use in Justification, 29—42, 49, 156.

historical, 29. dead, 30, 198. temporary, 30.

as justifying, its proper object, 34, &c.

the instrumental cause of justification, 49.

how counted for righteousness, 155.

not the condition of our Justification, 51.

when true, always operative, 31, 192, 203. glorifies God, 45.

assurance of, whether of its essence, 36.

Scripture, descriptions of, 136—139.

Final judgment, its respect to Justification, 70.

Flying for refuge to Christ, 138.

Forensic signification of the word Justify, 56.

G

Glorying in ourselves. See *Boasting*.

Gospel, rejected by unbelievers, 43.

Grace, the doctrine of, a mystery, 17.

Salvation by, what, 177—182.

of God, and satisfaction of Christ, consistent, 20.

introduction of, into our relation to God, 17.

abounding in our Justification, 163.

and works, opposed, 8, 176.

some receive more than they will own, 74.

Greatness and holiness of God, necessary to be considered, in order to a right view of Justification, 2.

Gregory Nyssen, quoted, 17. n.

Grotius, a quotation from, 93.

Guilt of sin, what, 89.

H

Harmony, of all the doctrines of grace, 19. not understood by some, 19. but comprehended by believers, 21.

Holiness, the duties of, not rendered needless, by this doctrine, 21, 186.

James,

- James*, St. the scope of his epistle, 30, 195. does not contradict St. Paul, 194, &c. nor treat of a second Justification, 59.
Jerom, a quotation from, 5. N.
Jews, their ignorance of God's righteousness, 166.
 their ruin, how occasioned, 73, 168.
Imperfection, of human righteousness, 104, 142.
Impputation, what, 72, 75.
 of the sins of the church to Christ, 81, &c.
 of Christ's righteousness, 157, 164.
Imputed righteousness, objections to it, answered, 91, &c.
 derided by the Socinians, &c. 73.
Incarnation of the Son of God, 19.
Inherent, or *personal righteousness*, what, 67, 104. imperfect, 104,
 142. not the cause of our Justification, 67—70, 104, 142,
 174. the proper use of it, 68.
Job, his deep abasement before God, 4.
Isaiah, his humility, on the vision of Christ, 3.
Johan. Polanus, his blasphemous prayer for the sick, 5. N.
Judgment, final, its respect to Justification, 70.
Justification, signification of the word, 53.
 importance of the doctrine of, 25, 26.
 what is previously required to, 31.
 to be distinguished from *Sanctification*, 59.
 effect of the doctrine of, at the Reformation, 25.
 more than the pardon of sin, 120.
 of the ungodly, explained, 155.
 by faith alone, chap. xv. page 136.
 and *sanctification inseparable*, 192. N.
 of our faith before men, 198.
 SENTENTIAL, what, 70.
 the distinction of a first and second, rejected, 58, 133.
 the continuation of, on what it depends, 61.
Justified believers, obliged to obedience, 62, 65.
Justifying faith, its nature, 29, 42, &c.
Juslyn Martyr, a quotation from, 16. N.

L

- Law*, its nature declared by Christ, 144.
 distributed into three parts, 134.
 what, intended by St. Paul in his epistles, 130.
 the only standard of righteousness, 109.
 the eternal obligation of man to obey the, 108.
 the nature of obedience required by it, 107.

not

Law, not abrogated, 111. nor reduced in its demands by the new covenant.

Christ was made under the, 116, 125. fulfilled by him, 126.

its penalty suffered by him, 114. Christ the end of the law, 113, 170.

not made void through faith, 62, 65, 181, 186, 192.

Looking to Christ, an expression of faith, 137, 149.

Love, the sum of the law, 136.

Luther, his view of the importance of Justification by faith, 27.

Lutherans, their general idea of faith, 36.

M

Mediation of Christ, 17, 80, 115, 118, 124.

Merit of works, excluded, 102, 166. See *Boasting*.

Mystery of grace, rejected by proud reasoners, 17, 92.

O

Obedience, the nature of that, required by the law, 107, &c.

required of all believers, 62, 65, 193.

of Christ, imputed to believers, 114, 126.

Object of justifying faith, what, 34.

Objections against the imputation of Christ's righteousness, answered, 22, 186—192. the same formerly made against the doctrine of St. Paul, 189. his answers to them, 190. by *Cardinal Bellarmine*, and the Papists, 22, 24, 49, 60, 71, 79, 90, 153, 171, 184, 185.

by *Socinus*, and others, 19, 20, 41, 49, 73, 80, 84, 93, 93, 96, 97, 115, 116, 124, 172.

Obligation of all men to obey the law, 129, 193.

believers to obedience, 62, 65, 193.

Opposition between grace and works, 8.

to the mystery of grace, whence, 18—21, 92.

Order of God's gracious operations, 92.

P

Paganism, improved by christianity, 25.

Papacy, the advantage it gained by the Reformation, 25.

Pardon of sin, not the whole of Justification, 80, 120; but inseparably connected with it, 122.

not the only object of justifying faith, 136, 158.

does not entitle to eternal life, 122.

- P**aul, St. his experience, 183.
 his writings disliked by the Socinians, 196.
 vindicated, 196.
 and St. James, teach the same doctrine, 194.
- P**eace of conscience, 37.
- P**elagians, the foundation of their mistakes, 7. their inconsistency, 7.
- P**elagius, the prayer he taught the widow, 5. n.
- P**enalty of the law, suffered by Christ, 114.
- P**ermutation or commutation of sin and righteousness, 15.
- P**ersonal righteousness; see Inherent.
- P**othill, Mr. quoted, 9.
- P**rayer, a Socinian, 5. n.
- P**rayers of most men more orthodox than their disputes, 6.
- P**rejudices against Justification considered, 21, &c.
- P**harisee and Publican, 146.
- P**ride of the heathen philosophers, 8, 9.
- P**rotestant writers misrepresented by the Papists, 186.
- P**punishment of sin, borne by Christ, 15, 87.

Q

- Q**uotation from Ambrose, 5. n. Anselm, 5. n. Bellarmine, 13.
 Chrysostome, 17. n. Cyprian, 81. n. Epictetus, 9. n.
 Eusebius, 81. n. Gregory Nyssen, 17. n. Grotius, 93. Fer-
 ram, 5. n. Johan. Polanus, 5. n. Justin Mar. yr., 16. n.
 Balbill, 9. n. Rousseau, 5. n. Seneca, 9. n.

R

- R**ahab, her faith and works, 200.
- R**eason, unduly exalted by the Socinians, 18.
- R**econciliation of the supposed difference between St. James and St. Paul,
 194—205.
 with the church of Rome, impracticable, 27.
- R**eceiving Christ, an expression of faith, 136, 148.
- R**eformation, the influence of the doctrine of Justification in it, 25.
- R**iformers, their wisdom, 25.
- R**elation of men to God, original, 17, 107, 127. introduction of grace
 into it, 17, &c.
- R**epentance, included in justifying faith, 94. See Conviction.
- R**ighteousness, justifying, revealed by the gospel, 9.
 our own, what, 135, 182.
 imperfection of it, 104, 142.
 personal, or evangelical, 67.
 of Christ, witnessed by the law, &c. 151.

- Righteousness*, of Christ, mingled with their own, by the Papists, 5. n.
 the gift of God, 164.
 received by faith alone. 152.
Romans, Epistle to the, its design, 8, 9, 11.
 testimonies from, 150, &c.
Rousseau, his dying boast, 5. n.

S

- Satisfaction of Christ*, consistent with grace, 20.
Scandalous opinions of Socinus, &c. concerning Christ's sufferings, 91.
Scape Goat, explained, 15.
Scriptures, a collection of, asserting Justification by faith, 11—13.
 invalidated by the Socinians, 19. n.
Second Justification, exploded, 58, 133.
Sermon of Christ, on the mount, its design, 144.
Seneca, quoted, 9. n.
Sentential Justification, what, 70.
Sick, various advice to the, 4, 5.
Sins of believers, imputed to Christ, 81, 89, 96, 172.
Socinian sentiments, not fruitful in holiness, 189.
Socinians, their objections to the righteousness of Christ, 18, 20, 21,
 22, 41, 49, 73, 80, 84, 91, 93, 96, 97, 111, 116, 172. n.
 deride the righteousness of Christ, 73.
Solidarians, who are, 31.
Spirit of God, dwelling in believers, the cause of their union to Christ,
 88.
Suretiship, its nature, 77, 84.
Surety, Christ a, for us to God, 83, 84.

T

- Testimonies of Scripture*, in support of the doctrine of Justification by
 faith, 11—13.
 of the Old Testament, (Jer. 23. 6.) 140.
 Evangelists, chap. 17. page 143.
 Fathers; see Quotations.
 Ancients, to the writings of St. Paul, 196. n.
Trusting in Christ, an expression of faith, 139.

V

- Virtue*, pride of, among the philosophers, 8, 9.
Unbelief, the nature of, 42, &c.
 the ruin of the Jews, 168.



Ungodly, justified, how, 155.
Union of Christ and the Church, 81.

W

Works of the law, what, 130, 135.
 of all sorts, excluded from Justification, 129, 155, 176, 180.
 and grace, incompatible, 176, 180.
 good, not rendered needless, 124, 181, 186, &c.
 their interest secured, 192.
 evidences of faith, 194—204.
 obligations of believers to perform them, 62, 65, 193.



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