baptism to the ſalvation of thoſe who have an opportunity of hearing the goſpel preached with power (see Bap­tism) ; and in his ſermon on the mount, which is ſuch a lecture of ethics founded on religion as the Son of God on­ly could have delivered, we learn, that “ unleſs our righteouſneſs ſhall exceed the righteouſneſs of the Scribes and Phariſees, we ſhall in no caſe enter into the kingdom of heaven ; that not every one who ſaith unto Chriſt, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who doth the will of his Father who is in heaven ; and that ma­ny will ſay to him at the day of judgment, Lord, Lord, have we not propheſied in thy name ? and in thy name done ma­ny wonderful works ?” which could not be done without faith ; “ to whom he will, notwithſtanding, ſay, Depart from me, ye that work iniquity @@\*.” St Paul, however, ſeems to attribute our juſtification to the bare act of believing; for he repeatedly aſſures us, " that a man is juſtified by faith with­out the deeds of the law ;” while St James, on the other hand, affirms, “ that by works a man is juſtified, and not by faith only.”

This apparent difference in the language of the two apoſtles, for we hope to ſhow that it is only apparent, has produced among divines opinions really different respecting the juſtification of Chriſtians ; and the principal or theſe opinions it is our duty to ſtate. But previous to this, it will be neceſſary to aſcertain the meaning of the word *jusification ;* for we are ſorry to ſay, that for want of accurate definitions, many theological controverſies are nothing bet­ter than empty logomachies ; and perhaps againſt no controversy can this charge be brought with greater truth than againſt that which, in the end of the laſt century and in the beginning of the preſent, was ſo violently agitated concern­ing the *causes,* the *instruments,* and the *conditions,* of juſtification.

Between *pardon* of sin and *justification* there is ſo cloſe a connection, that many writers ſeem to conſider the terms as ſynonymous, and to infer, that he who is pardoned is *ipſo facto* juſtified. That every Chriſtian, who ſhall be pardoned at the judgment of the great day, will likewiſe be juſtified, is indeed true; but in propriety of ſpeech, *justification* is a word of very different import from *pardon,* and will entitle the Chriſtian to what mere pardon could not lead him to expect. An innocent perſon, when falſely accuſed and ac­quitted, is just*ified* but not *pardoned ;* and a criminal may be *pardoned,* though he cannot be *justified* or declared innocent. A man whoſe sins are pardoned is free from puniſhment ; but the juſtified Chriſtian is entitled to everlaſting life, happineſs, and glory. If we were only pardoned through Chriſt, we ſhould indeed eſcape the pains of hell, but could have no claim to the enjoyments of heaven ; for theſe, being more than the moſt perfect human virtue can merit, muſt be, what in the Scriptures they are always ſaid to be, “ the gift of God through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.” Hence it is that St Paul, diſtinguiſhing, as we have done upon his au­thority, between mere remiſſion of sins and juſtification of life, declares@@\*, that “ Jeſus our Lord was *delivered* for our *offences,* and *raised* again for our *justification."*

The word juſtification, as uſed both by St Paul and St James, has been very generally considered as a forenſic term expreſſing the ſentence of a judge. The moſt eminent re­formed divines of all denominations@@\*, and even many of the Romaniſts themſelves, have ſtrenuouſly contended, that this is its genuine ſenſe, when it is diſtinguiſhed from mere remission of sins, regeneration, and ſanctification ; and if ſo, it will ſignify God’s pronouncing a person just, either as be­ing perfectly blameleſs, or as having fulfilled certain condi­tions required of him in the Chriſtian covenant. But that “ there is not a juſt man upon earth, who doth good and ſinneth not,” is made known to us by the moſt complete evidence poſſible, the joint dictates of our own conſciences and of divine revelation; and therefore whoſoever is pro­nounced juſt by the Judge of all the earth, muſt be ſo, ei­ther becauſe, though not abſolutely blameleſs, he has per­formed the conditions required of him in the covenant of grace, or becauſe Chriſt has fulfilled all righteouſneſs in his stead.

If this be the Scripture notion of juſtification, it muſt be wholly the act of God, and cannot be the effect either ofour faith or of our virtue. Accordingly, we are ſaid by the apoſtle to be juſtified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt ; whom *God hath set forth* to be a propitiation through faith in his blood@@\*. The act of juſtification therefore proceeds from the divine philan­thropy, and cannot be performed by the inſtrumentality of faith ; for it is not God, but man, who believes; and man is not the juſtifier of himſelf. To talk of any kind of instrument of juſtification beſides the propitiation ſet forth by God, is indeed to make uſe of very improper language : “ Omnis cauſa inſtrumentalis (ſays Biſhop Bull @@\*), ſuo modo in effectum influit, eique effecti productio proprie attri­bui potest. Jam vero, cum juſtificatio nihil aliud sit quam gratiosus Dei actus, quo peccata nostra nobis condonet, ac nos ad salutem acceptet, valde absurdum esset dicere, vel fi­dem, vel opera nostra, vel quidvis aliud nostri aut remittere peccata nostra, aut perſonas nostras acceptare : quod tamen, ſi inſtrumentalis cauſa juſtificationis fides sit, plane dicendura effet.”

In this ſentiment of the illuſtrious Biſhop of St David’s, ſome of the moſt eminent divines both among the Calviniſts and Arminians agree ; and indeed it is not eaſy to be con­ceived how any man can entertain a different ſentiment, when conſidering juſtification in its proper ſenſe. Many, however, have choſen to treat of juſtification not only in the active ſenſe, as it is the act of God, for all admit that it is he who juſtifies ; but likewise in a passive ſenſe, as it means our *privilege* or *possession* holden of him, when we are ſaid to be juſtified by his grace. In this view of the ſubject they may talk, with ſufficient propriety, of an inſtrument of ju­ſtification, not as the mean by which it is conveyed, but as the medium through which it is received by the true Chri­ſtian. And hence it follows, that the Doctors Waterland and Warburton, of whom the former was not a thorough Calviniſt, and the latter was a profeſſed Arminian, ſtrenuouſly maintain the doctrine of the Weſtminſter Conſeſſion, that “ faith receiving and reſting on Chriſt is the alone inſtrument of juſtification ; though it cannot be alone in the per­ſon juſtified, but muſt ever be accompanied with all other ſaving graces, and be a faith which worketh by love.”

But notwithſtanding this agreement between the leaders of the rival ſects, they have found abundant matter of controverſy reſpecting faith and works, in deciding the great queſtion, “ Whether, when God juſtifies man, he conſiders him as abſolutely righteous on account of Chriſt’s righte­ouſneſs performed in his ſtead; or only as juſt, becauſe he has fulfilled the conditions of the covenant of grace, which does not require of him perfect righteouſneſs?” The former is the doctrine of the more rigid Calviniſts, the latter that of the Arminians or Remonſtrants.

“ A notion (ſays Dr Gill @@\*) obtained ſome years ago, that a relaxation of the law and the ſeverſties of it has been obtained by Chriſt ; and a new law, a remedial law, a law of milder terms, been introduced by him, which is the goſpel; the terms of which are, faith, repentance, and new obedi­ence ; and though theſe be imperfect, yet, being ſincere, they are accepted by God in the room of a perfect righteouſneſs. But every article of this ſcheme (continues he) is wrong;

@@@[m]\* St Matth. v. 20. vii. 21, -24.

@@@[m]\* Romans iv. 25.

@@@[m]\* Limburch, Bull, Waterland, Warburton, Beveridge, Vitringa, Gill, &c.

@@@[m]\* Rom. iii. 24, 25.

@@@[m]\* Harmonia Apostolia, cap. ii. 9.

@@@[m]\* Body of Divinity, vol. ii. book. iii. chap. 8. 5.