

JUSTIFICATION



CHARLES HODGE

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by Charles Hodge

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1. Symbolical Statement of the Doctrine

Justification is defined in the Westminster Catechism, "An act of God's free grace, wherein He pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, and received by faith alone."

The Heidelberg Catechism in answer to the question, "How dost thou become righteous before God?" answers, "Sola fide in Jesum Christum, adeo ut licet mea me conscientia accuset, quod adversus omnia mandata Dei graviter peccaverim, nec ullum eorum servaverim, adhæc etiamnum ad omne malum propensus sim, nihilominus tamen (modo hæc beneficia vera animi fiducia amplectar), sine ullo meo merito, ex mera Dei misericordia, mihi perfecta satisfactio, justitia, et sanctitas Christi, imputetur ac donetur; perinde ac si nec ullum ipse peccatum admissem, nec ulla mihi labe inhæreret; imo vero quasi earn obedientiam, quam pro me Christus præstitit, ipse perfecte præstitissem." And in answer to the question, Why faith alone justifies? it says. "Non quod dignitate meæ fidei Deo placeam, sed quod sola satisfactio, justitia ac sanctitas Christi, mea justitia sit coram Deo. Ego vero eam non alia ratione, quam fide amplecti, et mihi applicare queam."

The Second Helvetic Confession, says "Justificare significat Apostolo in disputatione de justificatione, peccata remittere, a culpa et pœna absolvere, in gratiam recipere, et justum pronunciare. Etenim ad Romanos dicit apostolus, 'Deus est, qui justificat, quis ille, qui condemnet?' opponuntur justificare et condemnare.... Etenim Christus peccata mundi in se recepit et sustulit, divinæque justitiæ satisfecit. Deus ergo propter solum Christum passum et resuscitatum, propitius est peccatis nostris, nec illa nobis imputat, imputat autem justitiam Christi pro nostra: ita ut jam simus non solum mundati a peccatis et purgati, vel sancti, sed etiam donati justitia Christi, adeoque absoluti a peccatis, morte vel condemnatione, justi denique ac hæredes vitæ æternæ. Proprie ergo loquendo, Deus solus nos justificat, et duntaxat propter Christum justificat, non imputans nobis peccata, sed imputans ejus nobis justitiam."

These are the most generally received and authoritative standards of the Reformed Churches, with which all other Reformed symbols agree. The Lutheran confessions teach precisely the same doctrine on this subject. "Unanimi consensu, docemus et confitemur ... quod homo peccator coram Deo justificetur, hoc est, absolvatur ab omnibus suis peccatis et a judicio justissimæ condemnationis, et adoptetur in numerum filiorum Dei atque hæres æternæ vitæ scribatur, sine ullis nostris meritis, aut dignitate, et absque ullis præcedentibus, præsentibus, aut sequentibus nostris operibus, ex mera gratia, tantummodo propter unicum meritum, perfectissimam obedientiam, passionem acerbissimam, mortem et resurrectionem Domini nostri, Jesu Christi, cujus obedientia nobis ad justitiam imputatur."3

Again, "Credimus, docemus, et confitemur, hoc ipsum nostram esse coram Deo justitiam, quod Dominus nobis peccata remittit, ex mera gratia, absque ullo respectu præcedentium, præsentium, aut consequentium nostrorum operum, dignitatis, aut meriti. Ille enim donat ague imputat nobis justitiam obedientiæ. Christi; propter eam justitiam a Deo in gratiam recipimur et justi reputamur." "Justificari significat hic non ex impio justum effici, sed usu forensi justum pronuntiari." And "Justificare hoc loco (Rom. 5:1.) forensi consuetudine significat reum absolvere et pronuntiare justum, sed propter alienam justitiam, videlicet Christi, quæ aliena justitia communicatur nobis per fidem." So also "Vocabulum justificationis in hoc negotio significat justum pronuntiare, a peccatis et æternis peccatorum suppliciiis absolvere, propter justitiam Christi, quæ a Deo fidei imputatur."6

Hase, concisely states the Lutheran doctrine on this subject in these words: "Justificatio est actus forensis, quo Deus, sola gratia ductus, peccatori, propter Christi meritum fide apprehensum, justitiam Christi imputat, peccata remittit, eumque sibi reconciliat."

The "Form of Concord" says, "Hic articulus, de justitia fidei, præcipuus est (ut Apologia loquitur) in tota doctrina Christiania, sine

quo conscientiae perturbatae nullam veram et firmam consolationem habere, aut divitias gratiae Christi recte agnoscere possunt. Id D. Lutherus suo etiam testimonio confirmavit, cum inquit: Si unicus his articulus sincerus permanserit, etiam Christiana Ecclesia sincera, concors et sine omnibus sectis permanet: sin vero corrumpitur, impossibile est, ut uni errori aut fanatico spiritui recte obviam iri possit." The Lutheran theologians, therefore, speak of it as the "ἀκρόπολις totius Christianae religionis, ac nexus, quo omnia corporis doctrinae Christianae membra continentur, quoque rupto solvuntur."

President Edwards

This statement of the doctrine of justification has retained symbolical authority in the Lutheran and Reformed churches, to the present day. President Edwards, who is regarded as having initiated certain departures from some points of the Reformed faith, was firm in his adherence to this view of justification, which he held to be of vital importance. In his discourse on "Justification by Faith alone," he thus defines justification: "A person is said to be justified when he is approved of God as free from the guilt of sin and its deserved punishment; and as having that righteousness belonging to him that entitles to the reward of life. That we should take the word in such a sense and understand it as the judge's accepting a person as having both a negative and positive righteousness belonging to him, and looking on him therefore as not only quit or free from any obligation to punishment, but also as just and righteous, and so entitled to a positive reward, is not only most agreeable to the etymology and natural import of the word, which signifies to make righteous, or to pass one for righteous in judgment, but also manifestly agreeable to the force of the word as used in Scripture." He then shows how it is, or why faith alone justifies. It is not on account of any virtue or goodness in faith, but as it unites us to Christ, and involves the acceptance of Him as our righteousness. Thus it is we are justified "by faith alone, without any manner of virtue or goodness of our own."

The ground of justification is the righteousness of Christ imputed to the believer. "By that righteousness being imputed to us," says Edwards, "is meant no other than this, that that righteousness of Christ is accepted for us, and admitted instead of that perfect inherent righteousness that ought to be in ourselves: Christ's perfect obedience shall be reckoned to our account, so that we shall have the benefit of it, as though we had performed it ourselves: and so we suppose that a title to eternal life is given us as the reward of this righteousness.... The opposers of this doctrine suppose that there is an absurdity in it: they say that to suppose that God imputes Christ's obedience to us, is to suppose that God is mistaken, and thinks that we performed that obedience that Christ performed. But why cannot that righteousness be reckoned to our account, and be accepted for us, without any such absurdity? Why is there any more absurdity in it, than in a merchant's transferring debt or credit from one man's account to another, when one man pays a price for another, so that it shall be accepted, as if that other had paid it? Why is there any more absurdity in supposing that Christ's obedience is imputed to us, than that his satisfaction is imputed? If Christ has suffered the penalty of the law for us, and in our stead, then it will follow, that his suffering that penalty is imputed to us, i.e., that it is accepted for us, and in our stead, and is reckoned to our account, as though we had suffered it. But why may not his obeying the law of God be as rationally reckoned to our account, as his suffering the penalty of the law?"

Points included in the above Statement of the Doctrine

According to the above statements, justification is,—

1. An act, and not, as sanctification, a continued and progressive work.
2. It is an act of grace to the sinner. In himself he deserves condemnation when God justifies him.

3. As to the nature of the act, it is, in the first place, not an efficient act, or an act of power. It does not produce any subjective change in the person justified. It does not effect a change of character, making those good who were bad, those holy who were unholy. That is done in regeneration and sanctification. In the second place, it is not a mere executive act, as when a sovereign pardons a criminal, and thereby restores him to his civil rights, or to his former status in the commonwealth. In the third place, it is a forensic, or judicial act, the act of a judge, not of a sovereign. That is, in the case of the sinner, or, in foro Dei, it is an act of God not in his character of sovereign, but in his character of judge. It is a declarative act in which God pronounces the sinner just or righteous, that is, declares that the claims of justice, so far as he is concerned, are satisfied, so that he cannot be justly condemned, but is in justice entitled to the reward promised or due to perfect righteousness.

4. The meritorious ground of justification is not faith; we are not justified on account of our faith, considered as a virtuous or holy act or state of mind. Nor are our works of any kind the ground of justification. Nothing done by us or wrought in us satisfies the demands of justice, or can be the ground or reason of the declaration that justice as far as it concerns us is satisfied. The ground of justification is the righteousness of Christ, active and passive, i.e., including his perfect obedience to the law as a covenant, and his enduring the penalty of the law in our stead and on our behalf.

5. The righteousness of Christ is in justification imputed to the believer. That is, is set to his account, so that he is entitled to plead it at the bar of God, as though it were personally and inherently his own.

6. Faith is the condition of justification. That is, so far as adults are concerned, God does not impute the righteousness of Christ to the sinner, until and unless, he (through grace), receives and rests on Christ alone for his salvation.

That such is the doctrine of the Reformed and Lutheran churches on this important doctrine, cannot be disputed. The statements of the standards of those churches are so numerous, explicit, and discriminating as to preclude all reasonable doubt on this subject. That such is the doctrine of the Word of God appears from the following considerations.

It will not be necessary to discuss all the points above specified separately, as some of them are necessarily included in others. The following propositions include all the essential points of the doctrine.

2. Justification is a Forensic Act

By this the Reformers intended, in the first place, to deny the Romish doctrine of subjective justification. That is, that justification consists in an act or agency of God making the sinner subjectively holy. Romanists confound or unite justification and sanctification. They define justification as "the remission of sin and infusion of new habits of grace." By remission of sin they mean not simply pardon, but the removal of everything of the nature of sin from the soul. Justification, therefore, with them, is purely subjective, consisting in the destruction of sin and the infusion of holiness. In opposition to this doctrine, the Reformers maintained that by justification the Scriptures mean something different from sanctification. That the two gifts, although inseparable, are distinct, and that justification, instead of being an efficient act changing the inward character of the sinner, is a declarative act, announcing and determining his relation to the law and justice of God.

In the second place, the Symbols of the Reformation no less explicitly teach that justification is not simply pardon and restoration. It includes pardon, but it also includes a declaration that the believer is

just or righteous in the sight of the law. He has a right to plead a righteousness which completely satisfies its demands.

And, therefore, in the third place, affirmatively, those Symbols teach that justification is a judicial or forensic act, i.e., an act of God as judge proceeding according to law, declaring that the sinner is just, i.e., that the law no longer condemns him, but acquits and pronounces him to be entitled to eternal life.

Here, as so often in other cases, the ambiguity of words is apt to create embarrassment. The Greek word δίκαιος, and the English word righteous, have two distinct senses. They sometimes express moral character. When we say that God is righteous, we mean that He is right. He is free from any moral imperfection. So when we say that a man is righteous, we generally mean that he is upright and honest; that he is and does what he ought to be and do. In this sense the word expresses the relation which a man sustains to the rule of moral conduct. At other times, however, these words express, not moral character, but the relation which a man sustains to justice. In this sense a man is just with regard to whom justice is satisfied; or, against whom justice has no demands. The lexicons, therefore, tell us that δίκαιος sometimes means, leges observans; at others insons, culpa vacans (free from guilt or obligation to punishment)—judicio Dei insons. Pilate (Matt. 27:24) said, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person;" i.e., of this person who is free from guilt; free from anything which justifies his condemnation to death. "Christ, also," says the Apostle, "hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust;" the innocent for the guilty. See Romans 2:13; 5:19. "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." "As the predicate of judicandus in his relation to the judge, 'righteousness' expresses, not a positive virtue, but a judicial negative freedom from reatus. In the presence of his judge, he is צַדִּיק who stands free from guilt and desert of punishment (straflos), either because he has contracted no guilt (as, e.g., Christ), or, because in the way demanded by the Judge (under the Old Testament by expiatory sacrifice) he has expiated the guilt

contracted." If, therefore, we take the word righteous in the former of the two senses above mentioned, when it expresses moral character, it would be a contradiction to say that God pronounces the sinner righteous. This would be equivalent to saying that God pronounces the sinner to be not a sinner, the wicked to be good, the unholy to be holy. But if we take the word in the sense in which the Scriptures so often use it, as expressing relation to justice, then when God pronounces the sinner righteous or just, He simply declares that his guilt is expiated, that justice is satisfied, that He has the righteousness which justice demands. This is precisely what Paul says, when he says that God "justifieth the ungodly." (Rom. 4:5.) God does not pronounce the ungodly to be godly; He declares that notwithstanding his personal sinfulness and unworthiness, he is accepted as righteous on the ground of what Christ has done for him.

Proof of the Doctrine just stated

That to justify means neither simply to pardon, nor to make inherently righteous or good is proved,—

From the Usage of Scripture

1. By the uniform usage of the word to justify in Scripture. It is never used in either of those senses, but always to declare or pronounce just. It is unnecessary to cite passages in proof of a usage which is uniform. The few following examples are enough. Deuteronomy 25:1, "If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them; then they shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked." Exodus 23:7, "I will not justify the wicked." Isaiah 5:23, "Which justify the wicked for reward." Proverbs 17:15, "He that justifieth the wicked" is "abomination to the Lord." Luke 10:29, "He willing to justify himself." Luke 16:15, "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men." Matthew 11:19, "Wisdom is justified of her children." Galatians 2:16, "A man is not justified by the works of the law." 5:6, "Whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." Thus men are said to justify God. Job 32:2,

"Because he justified himself, rather than God." Psalms 51:4, "That thou mightest be justified when thou speakest." Luke 7:29, "All the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God." The only passage in the New Testament where the word δικαιόω is used in a different sense is Revelation 22:11, ὁ δίκαιος, δικαιοθήτω ἔτι, "He that is righteous, let him be righteous still." Here the first aorist passive appears to be used in a middle sense. 'Let him show himself righteous, or continue righteous.' Even if the reading in this passage were undoubted, this single case would have no force against the established usage of the word. The reading, however, is not merely doubtful, but it is, in the judgment of the majority of the critical editors, Tischendorf among the rest, incorrect. They give, as the true text, δικαιοσύνην ποιησάτω ἔτι. Even if this latter reading be, as De Wette thinks, a gloss, it shows that ὁ δίκαιος δικαιοθήτω ἔτι was as intolerable to a Greek ear as the expression, 'He that is righteous, let him justify himself still,' would be to us.

The usage of common life as to this word is just as uniform as that of the Bible. It would be a perfect solecism to say of a criminal whom the executive had pardoned, that he was justified; or that a reformed drunkard or thief was justified. The word always expresses a judgment, whether of the mind, as when one man justifies another for his conduct, or officially of a judge. If such be the established meaning of the word, it ought to settle all controversy as to the nature of justification. We are bound to take the words of Scripture in their true established sense. And, therefore, when the Bible says, "God justifies the believer," we are not at liberty to say that it means that He pardons, or that He sanctifies him. It means, and can mean only that He pronounces him just.

Justification the Opposite of Condemnation

2. This is still further evident from the antithesis between condemnation and justification. Condemnation is not the opposite either of pardon or of reformation. To condemn is to pronounce guilty; or worthy of punishment. To justify is to declare not guilty; or

that justice does not demand punishment; or that the person concerned cannot justly be condemned. When, therefore, the Apostle says (Rom. 8:1), "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," he declares that they are absolved from guilt; that the penalty of the law cannot justly be inflicted upon them. "Who," he asks, "shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? God who justifieth? Who is he that condemneth? Christ who died?" (vers. 33, 34.) Against the elect in Christ no ground of condemnation can be presented. God pronounces them just, and therefore no one can pronounce them guilty.

This passage is certainly decisive against the doctrine of subjective justification in any form. This opposition between condemnation and justification is familiar both in Scripture and in common life. Job 9:20, "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me." 34:17, "And wilt thou condemn him that is most just." If to condemn does not mean to make wicked, to justify does not mean to make good. And if condemnation is a judicial, as opposed to an executive act, so is justification. In condemnation it is a judge who pronounces sentence on the guilty. In justification it is a judge who pronounces or who declares the person arraigned free from guilt and entitled to be treated as righteous.

Argument from Equivalent Forms of Expression

3. The forms of expression which are used as equivalents of the word "justify" clearly determine the nature of the act. Thus Paul speaks of "the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." (Rom. 4:6.) To impute righteousness is not to pardon; neither is it to sanctify. It means to justify, i.e., to attribute righteousness. The negative form in which justification is described is equally significant. "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Rom. 4:7, 8.) As "to impute sin" never means and cannot mean to make wicked; so the negative statement "not to impute sin" cannot mean to sanctify. And as "to impute sin" does

mean to lay sin to one's account and to treat him accordingly; so to justify means to lay righteousness to one's account and treat him accordingly. "God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world.... He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already." (John 3:17, 18.)

For "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." (Rom. 5:18.) It was κρῖμα, a judicial sentence, which came on men for the offence of Adam, and it is a judicial sentence (justification, a δικαίωσις) which comes for the righteousness of Christ, or, as is said in ver. 16 of the same chapter, it was a κρῖμα εἰς κατάκριμα, a condemnatory sentence that came for one offence; and a χάρισμα εἰς δικαίωμα, a sentence of gratuitous justification from many offences. Language cannot be plainer. If a sentence of condemnation is a judicial act, then justification is a judicial act.

Argument from the Statement of the Doctrine

4. The judicial character of justification is involved in the mode in which the doctrine is presented in the Bible. The Scriptures speak of law, of its demands, of its penalty, of sinners as arraigned at the bar of God, of the day of judgment. The question is, How shall man be just with God? The answer to this question determines the whole method of salvation. The question is not, How a man can become holy? but, How can he become just? How can he satisfy the claims which justice has against him? It is obvious that if there is no such attribute as justice in God; if what we call justice is only benevolence, then there is no pertinency in this question. Man is not required to be just in order to be saved. There are no claims of justice to be satisfied. Repentance is all that need be rendered as the condition of restoration to the favour of God. Or, any didactic declaration or exhibition of God's disapprobation of sin, would open the way for the safe pardon of sinners. Or, if the demands of justice were easily satisfied; if partial, imperfect obedience and fatherly chastisements,

or self-inflicted penances, would suffice to satisfy its claims, then the sinner need not be just with God in order to be saved. But the human soul knows intuitively that these are refuges of lies. It knows that there is such an attribute as justice. It knows that the demands thereof are inexorable because they are righteous. It knows that it cannot be saved unless it be justified, and it knows that it cannot be declared just unless the demands of justice are fully satisfied. Low views of the evil of sin and of the justice of God lie at the foundation of all false views of this great doctrine.

The Apostle's Argument in the Epistle to the Romans

The Apostle begins the discussion of this subject by assuming that the justice of God, his purpose to punish all sin, to demand perfect conformity to his law, is revealed from heaven, i.e., so revealed that no man, whether Jew or Gentile, can deny it. (Rom. 1:18.) Men, even the most degraded pagans, know the righteous judgment of God that those who sin are worthy of death. (ver. 32.) He next proves that all men are sinners, and, being sinners are under condemnation. The whole world is "guilty before God." (3:19.) From this he infers, as intuitively certain (because plainly included in the premises), that no flesh living can be justified before God "by the deeds of the law," i.e., on the ground of his own character and conduct. If guilty he cannot be pronounced not guilty, or just. In Paul's argument, to justify is to pronounce just. Δίκαιος is the opposite of ὑπόδικος (i.e., "reus, satisfactionem alteri debens"). That is, righteous is the opposite of guilty. To pronounce guilty is to condemn. To pronounce righteous, i.e., not guilty, is to justify. If a man denies the authority of Scripture; or if he feels at liberty, while holding what he considers the substance of Scripture doctrines, to reject the form, it is conceivable that he may deny that justification is a judicial act; but it seems impossible that any one should deny that it is so represented in the Bible. Some men professing to believe the Bible, deny that there is anything supernatural in the work of regeneration and sanctification. 'Being born of the Spirit;' 'quickened by the mighty power of God;' 'created anew in Christ Jesus,' are only, they say, strong oriental expressions

for a self-wrought reformation. By a similar process it is easy to get rid, not only of the doctrine of justification as a judicial act, but of all other distinguishing doctrines of the Scriptures. This, however, is not to interpret, but to pervert.

The Apostle, having taught that God is just, i.e., that He demands the satisfaction of justice, and that men are sinners and can render no such satisfaction themselves, announces that such a righteousness has been provided, and is revealed in the Gospel. It is not our own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness of Christ, and, therefore, the righteousness of God, in virtue of which, and on the ground of which, God can be just and yet justify the sinner who believes in Christ. As long as the Bible stands this must stand as a simple statement of what Paul teaches as to the method of salvation. Men may dispute as to what he means, but this is surely what he says.

Argument from the Ground of Justification

5. The nature of justification is determined by its ground. This indeed is an anticipation of another part of the subject, but it is in point here. If the Bible teaches that the ground of justification, the reason why God remits to us the penalty of the law and accepts us as righteous in his sight, is something out of ourselves, something done for us, and not what we do or experience, then it of necessity follows that justification is not subjective. It does not consist in the infusion of righteousness, or in making the person justified personally holy. If the "formal cause" of our justification be our goodness; then we are justified for what we are. The Bible, however, teaches that no man living can be justified for what he is. He is condemned for what he is and for what he does. He is justified for what Christ has done for him.

Justification not mere Pardon

For the same reason justification cannot be mere pardon. Pardon does not proceed on the ground of a satisfaction. A prisoner delivered by a ransom is not pardoned. A debtor whose obligations have been cancelled by a friend, becomes entitled to freedom from the claims of his creditor. When a sovereign pardons a criminal, it is not an act of justice. It is not on the ground of satisfaction to the law. The Bible, therefore, in teaching that justification is on the ground of an atonement or satisfaction; that the sinner's guilt is expiated; that he is redeemed by the precious blood of Christ; and that judgment is pronounced upon him as righteous, does thereby teach that justification is neither pardon nor infusion of righteousness.

Argument from the Immutability of the Law

6. The doctrine that justification consists simply in pardon, and consequent restoration, assumes that the divine law is imperfect and mutable. In human governments it is often expedient and right that men justly condemned to suffer the penalty of the law should be pardoned. Human laws must be general. They cannot take in all the circumstances of each particular case. Their execution would often work hardship or injustice. Human judgments may therefore often be set aside. It is not so with the divine law. The law of the Lord is perfect. And being perfect it cannot be disregarded. It demands nothing which ought not to be demanded. It threatens nothing which ought not to be inflicted. It is in fact its own executioner. Sin is death. (Rom. 8:6.) The justice of God makes punishment as inseparable from sin, as life is from holiness. The penalty of the law is immutable, and as little capable of being set aside as the precept. Accordingly the Scriptures everywhere teach that in the justification of the sinner there is no relaxation of the penalty. There is no setting aside, or disregarding the demands of the law. We are delivered from the law, not by its abrogation, but by its execution. (Gal. 2:19.) We are freed from the law by the body of Christ. (Rom. 7:4.) Christ having taken our place, bore our sins in his own body on the tree. (1 Pet. 2:24.) The handwriting which was against us, he took out of the way, nailing it to his cross. (Col. 2:14.) We are therefore not under

the law, but under grace. (Rom. 6:14.) Such representations are inconsistent with the theory which supposes that the law may be dispensed with; that the restoration of sinners to the favour and fellowship of God, requires no satisfaction to its demands; that the believer is pardoned and restored to fellowship with God, just as a thief or forger is pardoned and restored to his civil rights by the executive in human governments. This is against the Scriptures. God is just in justifying the sinner. He acts according to justice.

It will be seen that everything in this discussion turns on the question, Whether there is such an attribute in God as justice? If justice be only "benevolence guided by wisdom," then there is no justification. What evangelical Christians so regard, is only pardon or sanctification. But if God, as the Scriptures and conscience teach, be a just God, as immutable in his justice as in his goodness and truth, then there can be no remission of the penalty of sin except on the ground of expiation, and no justification except on the ground of the satisfaction of justice; and therefore justification must be a judicial act, and neither simply pardon nor the infusion of righteousness. These doctrines sustain each other. What the Bible teaches of the justice of God, proves that justification is a judicial declaration that justice is satisfied. And what the Bible teaches of the nature of justification, proves that justice in God is something more than benevolence. It is thus that all the great doctrines of the Bible are concatenated.

Argument from the Nature of our Union with Christ

7. The theory which reduces justification to pardon and its consequences, is inconsistent with what is revealed concerning our union with Christ. That union is mystical, supernatural, representative, and vital. We were in Him before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4); we are in Him as we were in Adam (Rom. 5:12, 21; 1 Cor. 15:22); we are in Him as the members of the body are in the head (Eph. 1:23, 4:16; 1 Cor. 12:12, 27, and often); we are in Him as the branches are in the vine (John 15:1–12). We are in Him in such

a sense that his death is our death, we were crucified with Him (Gal. 2:20; Rom. 6:1–8); we are so united with Him that we rose with Him, and sit with Him in heavenly places. (Eph. 2:1–6.) In virtue of this union we are (in our measure) what He is. We are the sons of God in Him. And what He did, we did. His righteousness is our righteousness. His life is our life. His exaltation is our exaltation. Such is the pervading representation of the Scriptures. All this is overlooked by the advocates of the opposite theory. According to that view, Christ is no more united to his people, except in sentiment, than to other men. He has simply done what renders it consistent with the character of God and the interests of his kingdom, to pardon any and every man who repents and believes. His relation is purely external. He is not so united to his people that his merit becomes their merit and his life their life. Christ is not in them the hope of glory. (Col. 1:27.) He is not of God made unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. (1 Cor. 1:30.) They are not so in Him that, in virtue of that union, they are filled with all the fulness of God. (Col. 2:10; and Eph. 3:19.) On the other hand, the Protestant doctrine of justification harmonizes with all these representations. If we are so united to Christ as to be made partakers of his life, we are also partakers of his righteousness. What He did in obeying and suffering He did for his people. One essential element of his redeeming work was to satisfy the demands of justice in their behalf, so that in Him and for his sake they are entitled to pardon and eternal life.

Arguments from the Effects ascribed to Justification

8. The consequences attributed to justification are inconsistent with the assumption that it consists either in pardon or in the infusion of righteousness. Those consequences are peace, reconciliation, and a title to eternal life. "Being justified by faith," says the Apostle, "we have peace with God." (Rom. 5:1.) But pardon does not produce peace. It leaves the conscience unsatisfied. A pardoned criminal is not only just as much a criminal as he was before, but his sense of guilt and remorse of conscience are in no degree lessened. Pardon

can remove only the outward and arbitrary penalty. The sting of sin remains. There can be no satisfaction to the mind until there is satisfaction of justice. Justification secures peace, not merely because it includes pardon, but because that pardon is dispensed on the ground of a full satisfaction of justice. What satisfies the justice of God, satisfies the conscience of the sinner. The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin (1 John 1:7) by removing guilt, and thus producing a peace which passes all understanding. When the soul sees that Christ bore his sins upon the cross, and endured the penalty which he had incurred; that all the demands of the law are fully satisfied; that God is more honoured in his pardon than in his condemnation; that all the ends of punishment are accomplished by the work of Christ, in a far higher degree than they could be by the death of the sinner; and that he has a right to plead the infinite merit of the Son of God at the bar of divine justice, then he is satisfied. Then he has peace. He is humble; he does not lose his sense of personal demerit, but the conscience ceases to demand satisfaction. Criminals have often been known to give themselves up to justice. They could not rest until they were punished. The infliction of the penalty incurred gave them peace. This is an element in Christian experience. The convinced sinner never finds peace until he lays his burden of sin on the Lamb of God; until he apprehends that his sins have been punished, as the Apostle says (Rom. 8:3), in Christ.

Again, we are said to be reconciled to God by the death of his Son. (Rom. 5:10.) But pardon does not produce reconciliation. A pardoned criminal may be restored to his civil rights, so far as the penalty remitted involved their forfeiture, but he is not reconciled to society. He is not restored to its favour. Justification, however, does secure a restoration to the favour and fellowship of God. We become the sons of God by faith in Jesus Christ. (Gal. 3:26.) No one can read the eighth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans without being convinced that in Paul's apprehension a justified believer is something more than a pardoned criminal. He is a man whose salvation is secure because he is free from the law and all its demands; because the righteousness of the law (i.e., all its righteous

requirements) has been fulfilled in him; because thereby he is so united to Christ as to become a partaker of his life; because no one can lay anything to the charge of those for whom Christ died and whom God has justified; and because such believers being justified are revealed as the objects of the mysterious, immutable, and infinite love of God.

Again, justification includes or conveys a title to eternal life. Pardon is purely negative. It simply removes a penalty. It confers no title to benefits not previously enjoyed. Eternal life, however, is suspended on the positive condition of perfect obedience. The merely pardoned sinner has no such obedience. He is destitute of what, by the immutable principles of the divine government, is the indispensable condition of eternal life. He has no title to the inheritance promised to the righteous. This is not the condition of the believer. The merit of Christ is entitled to the reward. And the believer, being partaker of that merit, shares in that title. This is constantly recognized in the Scriptures. By faith in Christ we become the sons of God. But sonship involves heirship, and heirship involves a title to the inheritance. "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:17.) This is the doctrine taught in Romans 5:12–21. For the offence of one, judgment passed on all men to condemnation. For the righteousness of one, the sentence of justification of life has passed on all; that is, of a justification which entitles to life. As the sin of Adam was the judicial ground of our condemnation (i.e., was the ground on which justice demanded condemnation), so the righteousness of Christ is the judicial ground of justification. That is, it is the ground on which the life promised to the righteous should in justice be granted to the believer. The Church in all ages has recognized this truth. Believers have always felt that they had a title to eternal life. For this they have praised God in the loftiest strains. They have ever regarded it as intuitively true that heaven must be merited. The only question was, Whether that merit was in them or in Christ. Being in Christ, it was a free gift to them; and thus righteousness and peace kissed each other. Grace and justice unite in placing the crown of righteousness on the believer's head.

It is no less certain that the consequences attributed to justification do not flow from the infusion of righteousness. The amount of holiness possessed by the believer does not give him peace. Even perfect holiness would not remove guilt. Repentance does not atone for the crime of murder. It does not still the murderer's conscience; nor does it satisfy the sense of justice in the public mind. It is the *πρῶτον ψεῦδος* of Romanism, and of every theory of subjective justification, that they make nothing of guilt, or reduce it to a minimum. If there were no guilt, then infusion of righteousness would be all that is necessary for salvation. But if there be justice in God then no amount of holiness can atone for sin, and justification cannot consist in making the sinner holy. Besides this, even admitting that the past could be ignored, that the guilt which burdens the soul could be overlooked or so easily removed, subjective righteousness, or holiness, is so imperfect that it could never give the believer peace. Let the holiest of men look within himself and say whether what he sees there satisfies his own conscience. If not, how can it satisfy God. He is greater than our hearts, and knoweth all things. No man, therefore, can have peace with God founded on what he is or on what he does. Romanists admit that nothing short of perfect holiness justifies or gives peace to the soul. In answer to the Protestant argument founded on that admission, Bellarmin says: "*Hoc argumentum, si quid probat, probat justitiam actualem non esse perfectam: non autem probat, justitiam habitualem, qua formaliter justi sumus, ... non esse ita perfectam, ut absolute, simpliciter, et proprie justi nominemur, et simus. Non enim formaliter justi sumus opere nostro, sed opere Dei, qui simul maculas peccatorum tergit, et habitum fidei, spei, et caritatis infundit. Dei autem perfecta sunt opera.... Unde parvuli baptizati, vere justi sunt, quamvis nihil operis fecerint.*" Again, "*Justitia enim actualis, quamvis aliquo modo sit imperfecta, propter admixtionem venalium delictorum, et egeat quotidiana remissione peccati, tamen non propterea desinit esse vera justitia, et suo etiam quodam modo perfecta.*" No provision is made in this system for guilt. If the soul is made holy by the infusion of habits, or principles, of grace, it is just in the sight of God. No guilt or desert of punishment remains.

"Reatus," says Bellarmin,² ... "est relatio," but if the thing of which it is a relation be taken away, where is the relation. It is impossible that such a view of justification can give peace. It makes no provision for the satisfaction of justice, and places all our hopes upon what is within, which our conscience testifies cannot meet the just requirements of God.

Neither can the theory of subjective justification account for reconciliation with God, and for the same reasons. What is infused, the degree of holiness imparted, does not render us the objects of divine complacency and love. His love to us is of the nature of grace; love for the unlovely. We are reconciled to God by the death of his Son. That removes the obstacle arising from justice to the outflow toward us of the mysterious, unmerited love of God. We are accepted in the beloved. We are not in ourselves fit for fellowship with God. And if driven to depend on what is within, on our subjective righteousness, instead of peace, we should have to despair.

Again, justification according to the Scriptures gives a title to eternal life. For this our own righteousness is utterly inadequate. So far from anything in us being meritorious, or entitled to reward, the inward state and the exercises of the holiest of men, come so far short of perfection as to merit condemnation. In us there is no good thing. When we would do good, evil is present with us. There is ever a law in our members warring against the law of the mind. Indwelling sin remains. It forced even Paul to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death." (Rom. 7:24.) "Nullum unquam exstitisse pii hominis opus, quod, si severo Dei judicio examinaretur, non esset damnabile." Ignoring this plain truth of Scripture and of Christian experience expressing itself in daily and hourly confession, humiliation, and prayers for forgiveness, the doctrine of subjective justification assumes that there is no sin in the believer, or no sin which merits the condemnation of God, but on the contrary that there is in him what merits eternal life. The Romanists make a distinction between a first and second justification. The first they admit to be gratuitous, and to be founded on the merit of Christ,

or rather, to be gratuitously bestowed for Christ's sake. This consists in the infusion of habitual grace (i.e., regeneration). This justifies in rendering the soul subjectively just or holy. The second justification is not a matter of grace. It is founded on the merit of good works, the fruits of regeneration. But if these fruits are, as our consciousness testifies, defiled by sin, how can they merit eternal life? How can they cancel the handwriting which is against us? How can they be the ground of Paul's confident challenge, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" It is not what is within us, but what is without us; not what we are or do, but what Christ is and has done, that is the ground of confidence and of our title to eternal life. This is the admitted doctrine of the Protestant Reformation. "Apud theologos Augustanæ confessionis extra controversiam positum est," says the "Form of Concord," "totam justitiam nostram extra nos, et extra omnium hominum merita, opera, virtutes atque dignitatem quærendam, eamque in solo Domino nostro, Jesu Christo consistere." As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high is a hope founded on the work of Christ for us, above a hope founded on the merit of anything wrought in us. Calvin teaches the same doctrine as Luther.² He quotes Lombard as saying that our justification in Christ may be interpreted in two ways: "Primum, mors Christi nos justificat, dum per eam excitatur caritas in cordibus nostris, qua justii effcimur: deinde quod per eandem exstinctum est peccatum; quo nos captivos distinebat diabolus, ut jam non habeat unde nos damnet." To which Calvin replies, "Scriptura autem, quem de fidei justitia loquitur, longe alio nos ducit: nempe ut ab intuitu operum nostrorum aversi, in Dei misericordiam ac Christi perfectionem, tantum respiciamus.... Hic est fidei sensus, per quem peccator in possessionem venit suæ salutis, dum ex Evangelii doctrina agnoscit Deo se reconciliatum: quod intercedente Christi justitia, impetrata peccatorum remissione, justificatus sit: et quanquam Spiritu Dei regeneratus, non in bonis operibus, quibus incumbit, sed sola Christi justitia repositam sibi perpetuam justitiam cogitat."

That justification is not merely pardon, and that it is not the infusion of righteousness whereby the sinner is made inherently just or holy, but a judgment on the part of God that the demands of the law in regard to the believer are satisfied, and that he has a right to a righteousness which entitles him to eternal life, has been argued, (1.) From the uniform usage of Scripture both in the Old and New Testament. (2.) From the constant opposition between justification and condemnation. (3.) From equivalent forms of expression. (4.) From the whole design and drift of the Apostle's argument in his Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians. (5.) From the ground of justification, namely, the righteousness of Christ. (6.) From the immutability of the law and the justice of God. (7.) From the nature of our union with Christ. (8.) From the fact that peace, reconciliation with God, and a title to eternal life which according to Scripture, are the consequences of justification, do not flow either from mere pardon or from subjective righteousness, or from sanctification. That this is the doctrine of Protestants, both Lutheran and Reformed, cannot with any show of reason be disputed.

Calvin's Doctrine

It is true, indeed, that by the earlier Reformers, and especially by Calvin, justification is often said to consist in the pardon of sin. But that that was not intended as a denial of the judicial character of justification, or as excluding the imputation of the righteousness of Christ by which the believer is counted just in the sight of the law, is obvious,—

1. From the nature of the controversy in which those Reformers were engaged. The question between them and the Romanists was, Does justification consist in the act of God making the sinner inherently just or holy? or, Does it express the judgment of God by which the believer is pronounced just? What Calvin denied was that justification is a making holy. What he affirmed was that it was delivering the believer from the condemnation of the law and introducing him into a state of favour with God. The Romanists

expressed their doctrine by saying that justification consists in the remission of sin and the infusion of charity or righteousness. But by the remission of sin they meant the removal of sin; the putting off the old man. In other words, justification with them consisted (to use the scholastic language then in vogue) in the removal of the habits of sin and the infusion of habits of grace. In those justified, therefore, there was no sin, and, therefore, nothing to punish. Pardon, therefore, followed as a necessary consequence. It was a mere accessory. This view of the matter makes nothing of guilt; nothing of the demands of justice. Calvin therefore, insisted that besides the subjective renovation connected with the sinner's conversion, his justification concerned the removal of guilt, the satisfaction of justice, which in the order of nature, although not of time, must precede the communication of the life of God to the soul. That Calvin did not differ from the other Reformers and the whole body of the Reformed Church on this subject appears from his own explicit declarations, and from the perfectly unambiguous statements of the Confessions to which he gave his assent. Thus he says, "Porro ne impingamus in ipso limine (quod fieret si de re incognita disputationem ingrediremur) primum explicemus quid sibi velint istæ loquutiones, Hominem coram Deo justificari, Fide justificari, vel operibus. Justificari coram Deo dicitur qui judicio Dei et censetur justus, et acceptus est ob suam justitiam: siquidem ut Deo abominabilis est iniquitas, ita nec peccator in ejus oculis potest invenire gratiam, quatenus est peccator, et quamdiu talis censetur. Proinde ubicunque peccatum est, illic etiam se profert ira et ultio Dei. Justificatur autem qui non loco peccatoris, sed justi habetur, eoque nomine consistit coram Dei tribunali, ubi peccatores omnes corruunt. Quemadmodum si reus innocens ad tribunal æqui judicis adducatur, ubi secundum innocentiam ejus judicatum fuerit, justificatus apud judicem dicitur: sic apud Deum justificatur, qui numero peccatorum exemptus, Deum habet suæ justitiæ testem et assertorem. Justificari, ergo, operibus ea ratione dicitur, in cujus vita reperietur ea puritas ac sanctitas quæ testimonium justitiæ apud Dei thronum mereatur: seu qui operum suorum integritate respondere et satisfacere illius judicio queat. Contra, justificabitur ille fide, qui operum justitia

exclusus, Christi justitiam per fidem apprehendit, qua vestitus in Dei conspectu non ut peccator, sed tanquam justus apparet. Ita nos justificationem simpliciter interpretamur acceptionem, qua nos Deus in gratiam receptos pro justos habet. Eamque in peccatorum remissione ac justitiæ Christi imputatione positam esse dicimus."

This passage is decisive as to the views of Calvin; for it is professedly a formal statement of the "Status Quæstionis" given with the utmost clearness and precision. Justification consists "in the remission of sins and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ." "He is justified in the sight of God, who is taken from the class of sinners, and has God for the witness and assertor of his righteousness."

3. Works not the Ground of Justification

In reference to men since the fall the assertion is so explicit and so often repeated, that justification is not of works, that that proposition has never been called in question by any one professing to receive the Scriptures as the word of God. It being expressly asserted that the whole world is guilty before God, that by the works of the law no flesh living can be justified, the only question open for discussion is, What is meant by works of the law?

To this question the following answers have been given, First, that by works of the law are meant works prescribed in the Jewish law. It is assumed that as Paul's controversy was with those who taught that unless men were circumcised and kept the law of Moses, they could not be saved (Acts 15:1, 24), all he intended to teach was the reverse of that proposition. He is to be understood as saying that the observance of Jewish rites and ceremonies is not essential to salvation; that men are not made righteous or good by external ceremonial works, but by works morally good. This is the ground taken by Pelagians and by most of the modern Rationalists. It is only

a modification of this view that men are not justified, that is, that their character before God is not determined so much by their particular acts or works, as by their general disposition and controlling principles. To be justified by faith, therefore, is to be justified on the ground of our trust, or pious confidence in God and truth. Thus Wegscheider says, "Homines non singulis quibusdam recte factis operibusque operatis, nec propter meritum quoddam iis attribuendum, sed sola vera fide, i.e., animo ad Christi exemplum ejusdemque præcepta composito et ad Deum et sanctissimum et benignissimum converso, ita, ut omnia cogitata et facta ad Deum ejusque voluntatem sanctissimam pie referant, Deo vere probantur et benevolentiae Dei confisi spe beatitudinis futuræ pro dignitate ipsorum morali iis concedendæ certissima imbuuntur." Steudlin, expresses the same view. "All true reformation, every good act," he says, "must spring from faith, provided we understand by faith the conviction that something is right, a conviction of general moral and religious principles." Kant says that Christ in a religious aspect is the ideal of humanity. When a man so regards him and endeavours to conform his heart and life to that ideal, he is justified by faith.³ According to all these views, mere ceremonial works are excluded, and the ground of justification is made to be our own natural moral character and conduct.

Romish Doctrine

Secondly. The doctrine of Romanists on this subject is much higher. Romanism retains the supernatural element of Christianity throughout. Indeed it is a matter of devout thankfulness to God that underneath the numerous grievous and destructive errors of the Romish Church, the great truths of the Gospel are preserved. The Trinity, the true divinity of Christ, the true doctrine concerning his person as God and man in two distinct natures and one person forever; salvation through his blood, regeneration and sanctification through the almighty power of the Spirit, the resurrection of the body, and eternal life, are doctrines on which the people of God in that communion live, and which have produced such saintly men as

St. Bernard, Fénelon, and doubtless thousands of others who are of the number of God's elect. Every true worshipper of Christ must in his heart recognize as a Christian brother, wherever he may be found, any one who loves, worships, and trusts the Lord Jesus Christ as God manifest in the flesh and the only Saviour of men. On the matter of justification the Romish theologians have marred and defaced the truth as they have almost all other doctrines pertaining to the mode in which the merits of Christ are made available to our salvation. They admit, indeed, that there is no good in fallen man; that he can merit nothing and claim nothing on the ground of anything he is or can do of himself. He is by nature dead in sin; and until made partaker of a new life by the supernatural power of the Holy Ghost, he can do nothing but sin. For Christ's sake, and only through his merits, as a matter of grace, this new life is imparted to the soul in regeneration (i.e., as Romanists teach, in baptism). As life expels death; as light banishes darkness, so the entrance of this new divine life into the soul expels sin (i.e., sinful habits), and brings forth the fruits of righteousness. Works done after regeneration have real merit, "meritum condigni," and are the ground of the second justification; the first justification consisting in making the soul inherently just by the infusion of righteousness. According to this view, we are not justified by works done before regeneration, but we are justified for gracious works, i.e., for works which spring from the principle of divine life infused into the heart. The whole ground of our acceptance with God is thus made to be what we are and what we do.

Remonstrant Doctrine

Thirdly. According to the Remonstrants or Arminians the works which are excluded from our justification are works of the law as distinguished from works of the Gospel. In the covenant made with Adam God demanded perfect obedience as the condition of life. For Christ's sake, God in the Gospel has entered into a new covenant with men, promising them salvation on the condition of evangelical obedience. This is expressed in different forms. Sometimes it is said

that we are justified on account of faith. Faith is accepted in place of that perfect righteousness demanded by the Adamic law. But by faith is not meant the act of receiving and resting upon Christ alone for salvation. It is regarded as a permanent and controlling state of mind. And therefore it is often said that we are justified by a "fides obsequiosa," an obedient faith; a faith which includes obedience. At other times, it is said that we are justified by evangelical obedience, i.e., that kind and measure of obedience which the Gospel requires, and which men since the fall, in the proper use of "sufficient grace" granted to all men, are able to render. Limborch says, "Sciendum, quando dicimus, nos fide justificari, nos non excludere opera, quæ fides exigit et tanquam fœcunda mater producit; sed ea includere." And again, "Est itaque [fides] talis actus, qui, licet in se spectatus perfectus nequaquam sit, sed in multis deficiens, tamen a Deo, gratiosa et liberrima voluntate, pro pleno et perfecto acceptatur, et propter quem Deus homini gratiose remissionem peccatorum et vitæ æternæ premium conferre vult." Again, God, he says, demands, "obedientiam fidei, hoc est, non rigidam et ab omnibus æqualem, prout exigebat lex; sed tantam, quantam fides, id est, certa de divinis promissionibus persuasio, in unoquoque efficere potest." Therefore justification, he says,² "Est gratiosa æstimatio, seu potius acceptatio justitiæ nostræ imperfectæ pro perfecta, propter Jesum Christum."

Protestant Doctrine

Fourthly. According to the doctrine of the Lutherans and Reformed, the works excluded from the ground of our justification are not only ritual or ceremonial works, nor merely works done before regeneration, nor the perfect obedience required by the law given to Adam, but works of all kinds, everything done by us or wrought in us. That this is the doctrine of the Bible is plain,—

1. Because the language of Scripture is unlimited. The declaration is, that we are not justified "by works." No specific kind of works is designated to the exclusion of all others. But it is "works;" what we do; anything and everything we do. It is, therefore, without authority

that any man limits these general declarations to any particular class of works.

2. The word law is used in a comprehensive sense. It includes all revelations of the will of God as the rule of man's obedience; and, therefore, by "works of the law" must be intended all kinds of works. As νόμος means that which binds, it is used for the law of nature, or the law written on the heart (Rom. 2:14), for the Decalogue, for the law of Moses, for the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures. (Rom. 3:19.) Sometimes one, and sometimes another of these aspects of the law is specially referred to. Paul assures the Jews that they could not be justified by the works of the law, which was especially binding on them. He assures the Gentiles that they could not be justified by the law written on their hearts. He assures believers under the Gospel that they cannot be justified by works of the law binding on them. The reason given includes all possible works. That reason is, that all human obedience is imperfect; all men are sinners: and the law demands perfect obedience. (Gal. 3:10.) Therefore, it is that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified." (Rom. 3:20.)

3. The law of which Paul speaks is the law which says, "Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7:7); the law which is spiritual (ver. 14); which is "holy, and just, and good" (ver. 12); the law of which the great command is, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbour as thyself. Besides, what are called works of the law are in Titus 3:5 called "works of righteousness." Higher works than these there cannot be. The Apostle repudiates any ground of confidence in his "own righteousness" (Phil. 3:9), i.e., own excellence, whether habitual or actual. He censures the Jews because they went about to establish their own righteousness, and would not submit to the righteousness of God. (Rom. 10:3.) From these and many similar passages it is clear that it is not any one or more specific kinds of work which are excluded from the ground of justification, but all works, all personal excellence of every kind.

4. This is still further evident from the contrast constantly presented between faith and works. We are not justified by works, but by faith in Jesus Christ. (Gal. 2:16, and often elsewhere.) It is not one kind of works as opposed to another; legal as opposed to evangelical; natural as opposed to gracious; moral as opposed to ritual; but works of every kind as opposed to faith.

5. The same is evident from what is taught of the gratuitous nature of our justification. Grace and works are antithetical. "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." (Rom. 4:4.) "If by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace." (Rom. 11:6.) Grace of necessity excludes works of every kind, and more especially those of the highest kind, which might have some show of merit. But merit of any degree is of necessity excluded, if our salvation be by grace.

6. When the positive ground of justification is stated, it is always declared to be not anything done by us or wrought in us, but what was done for us. It is ever represented as something external to ourselves. We are justified by the blood of Christ (Rom. 5:9); by his obedience (Rom. 5:19); by his righteousness (ver. 18). This is involved in the whole method of salvation. Christ saves us as a priest; but a priest does not save by making those who come to him good. He does not work in them, but for them. Christ saves us by a sacrifice; but a sacrifice is effectual, not because of its subjective effect upon the offerer, but as an expiation, or satisfaction to justice. Christ is our Redeemer; he gave himself as a ransom for many. But a ransom does not infuse righteousness. It is the payment of a price. It is the satisfaction of the claims of the captor upon the captive. The whole plan of salvation, therefore, as presented in the Bible and as it is the life of the Church, is changed, if the ground of our acceptance with God be transferred from what Christ has done for us, to what is wrought in us or done by us. The Romish theologians do not agree exactly as to whether habitual or actual righteousness is the ground of justification. Bellarmine says it is the former. He says, "*Solam esse habitualem justitiam, per quam formaliter justi nominamur, et*

sumus: justitiam vero actualem, id est, opera vere justa justificare quidem, ut sanctus Jacobus loquitur, cum ait cap. 2 ex operibus hominem justificari, sed meritorie, non formaliter." This he says is clearly the doctrine of the Council of Trent, which teaches,² "Causam formalem justificationis esse justitiam, sive caritatem, quam Deus unicuique propriam infundit, secundum mensuram dispositionum, et quæ in cordibus justificatorum inhæret." This follows also, he argues, from the fact that the sacraments justify, "per modum instrumenti ad infusionem justitiæ habitualis." This, however, only amounts to the distinction, already referred to, between the first and second justification. The infusion of righteousness renders the soul inherently righteous; then good works merit salvation. The one is the formal, the other the meritorious cause of the sinner's justification. But according to the Scriptures, both habitual and actual righteousness, both inherent grace and its fruits are excluded from any share in the ground of our justification.

7. This still further and most decisively appears from the grand objection to his doctrine which Paul was constantly called upon to answer. That objection was, that if our personal goodness or moral excellence is not the ground of our acceptance with God, then all necessity of being good is denied, and all motive to good works is removed. We may continue in sin that grace may abound. This objection has been reiterated a thousand times since it was urged against the Apostles. It seems so unreasonable and so demoralizing to say as Paul says, Romans 3:22, that so far as justification is concerned there is no difference between Jew and Gentile; between a worshipper of the true God and a worshipper of demons; between the greatest sinner and the most moral man in the world, that men have ever felt that they were doing God service in denouncing this doctrine as a soul-destroying heresy. Had Paul taught that men are justified for their good moral works as the Pelagians and Rationalists say; or for their evangelical obedience as the Remonstrants say; or for their inherent righteousness and subsequent good works as the Romanists say, there would have been no room for this formidable objection. Or, if through any misapprehension of his teaching, the

objection had been urged, how easy had it been for the Apostle to set it aside. How obvious would have been the answer, 'I do not deny that really good works are the ground of our acceptance with God. I only say that ritual works have no worth in his sight, that He looks on the heart; or, that works done before regeneration have no real excellence or merit; or, that God is more lenient now than in his dealing with Adam; that He does not demand perfect obedience, but accepts our imperfect, well-meant endeavours to keep his holy commandments.' How reasonable and satisfactory would such an answer have been. Paul, however, does not make it. He adheres to his doctrine, that our own personal moral excellence has nothing to do with our justification; that God justifies the ungodly, that He receives the chief of sinners. He answers the objection indeed, and answers it effectually; but his answer supposes him to teach just what Protestants teach, that we are justified without works, not for our own righteousness, but gratuitously, without money and without price, solely on the ground of what Christ has done for us. His answer is, that so far from its being true that we must be good before we can be justified, we must be justified before we can be good; that so long as we are under the curse of the law we bring forth fruit unto death; that it is not until reconciled unto God by the death of his Son, that we bring forth fruit unto righteousness; that when justified by the righteousness of Christ, we are made partakers of his Spirit; being justified we are sanctified; that union with Christ by faith secures not only the imputation of his righteousness to our justification, but the participation of his life unto our sanctification; so that as surely as He lives and lives unto God, so they that believe on Him shall live unto God; and that none are partakers of the merit of his death who do not become partakers of the power of his life. We do not, therefore, he says, make void the law of God. Yea, we establish the law. We teach the only true way to become holy; although that way appears foolishness unto the wise of this world, whose wisdom is folly in the sight of God.

4. The Righteousness of Christ the Ground of Justification

The imperative question remains, How shall a man be just with God? If our moral excellence be not the ground on which God pronounces us just, what is that ground? The grand reason why such different answers are given to this question is, that it is understood in different senses. The Scriptural and Protestant answer is absurd, if the question means what Romanists and others understand it to mean. If "just" means good, i.e., if the word be taken in its moral, and not in its judicial sense, then it is absurd to say that a man can be good with the goodness of another; or to say that God can pronounce a man to be good who is not good. Bellarmin says an Ethiopian clothed in a white garment is not white. Curcellæus, the Remonstrant, says, "A man can no more be just with the justice of another, than he can be white with the whiteness of another." Moehler says, it is impossible that anything should appear to God other than it really is; that an unjust man should appear to him, or be pronounced by him just. All this is true in the sense intended by these writers, "The judgment of God is according to truth." (Rom. 2:2.) Every man is truly just whom He justifies or declares to be just. It is in vain to dispute until the "status quæstionis" be clearly determined. The word δίκαιος, "righteous," or "just," has two distinct senses, as above stated. It has a moral, and also a legal, forensic, or judicial sense. It sometimes expresses moral character, sometimes simply a relation to law and justice. In one sense to pronounce a man just, is to declare that he is morally good. In another sense, it is to declare that the claims of justice against him are satisfied, and that he is entitled to the reward promised to the righteous. When God justifies the ungodly, he does not declare that he is godly, but that his sins are expiated, and that he has a title founded in justice to eternal life. In this there is no contradiction and no absurdity. If a man under attainder appear before the proper tribunal, and show cause why the attainder should in justice be reversed, and he be declared entitled to his rank, titles, and estates, a decision in his favour would be a justification. It would

declare him just in the eye of the law, but it would declare nothing and effect nothing as to his moral character. In the like manner, when the sinner stands at the bar of God, he can show good reason why he cannot be justly condemned, and why he should be declared entitled to eternal life. Now the question is, "On what ground can God pronounce a sinner just in this legal or forensic sense?" It has been shown that to justify, according to uniform Scriptural usage, is to pronounce just in the sense stated, that it is not merely to pardon, and that it is not to render inherently righteous or holy. It has also been shown to be the doctrine of Scripture, what indeed is intuitively true to the conscience, that our moral excellence, habitual or actual, is not and cannot be the ground of any such judicial declaration. What then is the ground? The Bible and the people of God, with one voice answer, "The righteousness of Christ." The ambiguity of words, the speculations of theologians, and misapprehensions, may cause many of the people of God to deny in words that such is the proper answer, but it is nevertheless the answer rendered by every believer's heart. He relies for his acceptance with God, not on himself but on Christ, not on what he is or has done, but on what Christ is and has done for him.

Meaning of the Terms

By the righteousness of Christ is meant all he became, did, and suffered to satisfy the demands of divine justice, and merit for his people the forgiveness of sin and the gift of eternal life. The righteousness of Christ is commonly represented as including his active and passive obedience. This distinction is, as to the idea, Scriptural. The Bible does teach that Christ obeyed the law in all its precepts, and that he endured its penalty, and that this was done in such sense for his people that they are said to have done it. They died in Him. They were crucified with Him. They were delivered from the curse of the law by his being made a curse for them. He was made under the law that he might redeem those who were under the law. We are freed from the law by the body of Christ. He was made sin that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He is the

end of the law for righteousness to all them that believe. It is by his obedience that many are made righteous. (Rom. 5:19.) We obeyed in Him, according to the teaching of the Apostle, in Romans 5:12–21, in the same sense in which we sinned in Adam. The active and passive obedience of Christ, however, are only different phases or aspects of the same thing. He obeyed in suffering. His highest acts of obedience were rendered in the garden, and upon the cross. Hence this distinction is not so presented in Scripture as though the obedience of Christ answered one purpose, and his sufferings another and a distinct purpose. We are justified by his blood. We are reconciled unto God by his death. We are freed from all the demands of the law by his body (Rom. 7:4), and we are freed from the law by his being made under it and obeying it in our stead. (Gal. 4:4, 5.) Thus the same effect is ascribed to the death or sufferings of Christ, and to his obedience, because both are forms or parts of his obedience or righteousness by which we are justified. In other words the obedience of Christ includes all He did in satisfying the demands of the law.

The Righteousness of Christ is the Righteousness of God

The righteousness of Christ on the ground of which the believer is justified is the righteousness of God. It is so designated in Scripture not only because it was provided and is accepted by Him; it is not only the righteousness which avails before God, but it is the righteousness of a divine person; of God manifest in the flesh. God purchased the Church with his own blood. (Acts 20:28.) It was the Lord of glory who was crucified. (1 Cor. 2:8.) He who was in the form of God and thought it not robbery to be equal with God, became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (Phil. 2:6–8.) He who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person, who upholds all things by the word of his power; whom angels worship; who is called God; who in the beginning laid the foundations of the earth, and of whose hands the heavens are the workmanship; who is eternal and immutable, has, the Apostle teaches, by death destroyed him who has the power of death and

delivered those who through fear of death (i.e., of the wrath of God) were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (Heb. 1, 2) He whom Thomas recognized and avowed to be his Lord and God was the person into whose wounded side he thrust his hand. He whom John says he saw, looked upon, and handled, he declares to be the true God and eternal life. The soul, in which personality resides, does not die when the man dies, yet it is the soul that gives dignity to the man, and which renders his life of unspeakably greater value in the sight of God and man, than the life of any irrational creature. So it was not the divine nature in Christ in which his personality resides, the eternal Logos, that died when Christ died. Nevertheless the hypostatic union between the Logos and the human nature of Christ, makes it true that the righteousness of Christ (his obedience and sufferings) was the righteousness of God. This is the reason why it can avail before God for the salvation of the whole world. This is the reason why the believer, when arrayed in this righteousness, need fear neither death nor hell. This is the reason why Paul challenges the universe to lay anything to the charge of God's elect.

5. Imputation of Righteousness

The righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer for his justification. The word impute is familiar and unambiguous. To impute is to ascribe to, to reckon to, to lay to one's charge. When we say we impute a good or bad motive to a man, or that a good or evil action is imputed to him, no one misunderstands our meaning. Philemon had no doubt what Paul meant when he told him to impute to him the debt of Onesimus. "Let not the king impute anything unto his servant." (1 Sam. 22:15.) "Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me." (2 Sam. 19:19.) "Neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it." (Lev. 7:18.) "Blood shall be imputed unto that man; he hath shed blood." (Lev. 17:4.) "Blessed is the man unto whom the

LORD imputeth not iniquity." (Ps. 32:2.) "Unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." (Rom. 4:6.) God is "in Christ not imputing their trespasses unto them." (2 Cor. 5:19.)

The meaning of these and similar passages of Scripture has never been disputed. Every one understands them. We use the word impute in its simple admitted sense, when we say that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer for his justification.

It seems unnecessary to remark that this does not, and cannot mean that the righteousness of Christ is infused into the believer, or in any way so imparted to him as to change, or constitute his moral character. Imputation never changes the inward, subjective state of the person to whom the imputation is made. When sin is imputed to a man he is not made sinful; when the zeal of Phinehas was imputed to him, he was not made zealous. When you impute theft to a man, you do not make him a thief. When you impute goodness to a man, you do not make him good. So when righteousness is imputed to the believer, he does not thereby become subjectively righteous. If the righteousness be adequate, and if the imputation be made on adequate grounds and by competent authority, the person to whom the imputation is made has the right to be treated as righteous. And, therefore, in the forensic, although not in the moral or subjective sense, the imputation of the righteousness of Christ does make the sinner righteous. That is, it gives him a right to the full pardon of all his sins and a claim in justice to eternal life.

That this is the simple and universally accepted view of the doctrine as held by all Protestants at the Reformation, and by them regarded as the corner-stone of the Gospel, has already been sufficiently proved by extracts from the Lutheran and Reformed Symbols, and has never been disputed by any candid or competent authority. This has continued to be the doctrine of both the great branches of the Protestant Church, so far as they pretend to adhere to their standards. Schmid proves this by a whole catena of quotations so far as the Lutheran Church is concerned. Schweizer² does the same for

the Reformed Church. A few citations, therefore, from authors of a recognized representative character will suffice as to this point. Turretin with his characteristic precision says: "Cum dicimus Christi justitiam ad justificationem nobis imputari, et nos per justitiam illam imputatam justos esse coram Deo, et non per justitiam ullam quæ nobis inhæreat; Nihil aliud volumus, quam obedientiam Christi Deo Patri nomine nostro præstitam, ita nobis a Deo donari, ut vere nostra censatur, eamque esse unicam et solam illam justitiam propter quam, et cujus merito, absolvamur a reatu peccatorum nostrum, et jus ad vitam obtinemus; nec ullam in nobis esse justitiam, aut ulla bona opera, quibus beneficia tanta promereamur, quæ ferre possint severum judicii divini examen, si Deus juxta legis suæ rigorem nobiscum agere vellet; nihil nos illi posse opponere, nisi Christi meritum et satisfactionem, in qua sola, peccatorum conscientia territi, tutum adversus iram divinam per fugium, et animarum nostrarum pacem invenire possumus."

On the following page he refers to Bellarmin, who says, "Si [Protestantes hoc] solum vellent, nobis imputari Christi merita, quia [a Deo] nobis donata sunt, et possumus ea [Deo] Patri offerre pro peccatis nostris, quoniam Christus suscepit super se onus satisfaciendi pro nobis, nosque Deo Patri reconciliandi, recta esset eorum sententia." On this Turretin remarks, "Atqui nihil aliud volumus; Nam quod addit, nos velle 'ita imputari nobis Christi justitiam, ut per eam formaliter justii nominemur et simus,' hoc gratis et falso supponit, ex perversa et præpostera sua hypothesi de justificatione morali. Sed quæritur, Ad quid imputatio ista fiat? An ad justificationem et vitam, ut nos pertendimus, An vero tantum ad gratiæ internæ et justitiæ inhærentis infusionem, ut illi volunt; Id est, an ita imputentur et communicentur nobis merita Christi, ut sint causa meritoria sola nostræ justificationis, nec ulla alia detur justitia propter quam absolvamur in conspectu Dei; quod volumus; An vero ita imputentur, ut sint conditiones causæ formalis, id. justitiæ inhærentis, ut ea homo donari possit, vel causæ extrinsecæ, quæ mereantur infusionem justitiæ, per quam justificatur homo; ut ita non meritum Christi proprie, sed justitia inhærens per meritum

Christi acquisita, sic causa propria et vera, propter quam homo justificatur; quod illi statuunt." It may be remarked in passing that according to the Protestant doctrine there is properly no "formal cause" of justification. The righteousness of Christ is the meritorious, but not the formal cause of the sinner's being pronounced righteous. A formal cause is that which constitutes the inherent, subjective nature of a person or thing. The formal cause of a man's being good, is goodness; of his being holy, holiness; of his being wicked, wickedness. The formal cause of a rose's being red, is redness; and of a wall's being white, is whiteness. As we are not rendered inherently righteous by the righteousness of Christ, it is hardly correct to say that his righteousness is the formal cause of our being righteous. Owen, and other eminent writers do indeed often use the expression referred to, but they take the word "formal" out of its ordinary scholastic sense.

Campegius Vitringa says: "Tenendum est certissimum hoc fundamentum, quod justificare sit vocabulum forense, notetque in ` Scriptura actum judicis, quo causam alicujus in judicio justam esse declarat; sive eum a crimine, cujus postulatus est, absolvat (quæ est genuina, et maxime propria vocis significatio), sive etiam jus ad hanc, vel illam rem ei sententia addicat, et adjudicet."

"17. Per justificationem peccatoris intelligimus actum Dei Patrias, ut judicis, quo peccatorem credentem, natura filium iræ, neque ullum jus ex se habentem bona cœlestia petendi, declarat immunem esse ab omni reatu, et condemnatione, adoptat in filium, et in eum ex gratia confert jus ad suam communionem, cum salute æterna, bonisque omnibus cum ea conjunctis, postulandi."

"27. Teneamus nullam carnem in se posse reperire et ex se producere causam, et fundamentum justificationis. 29. Quærendum igitur id, propter quod peccator justificatur, extra peccatorem in obedientia Filii Dei, quam præstitit Patri in humana natura ad mortem, imo ad mortem crucis, et ad quam præstandam se obstrinxerat in sponsione.

(Rom. 5:19.)" "32. Hæc [obedientia] imputatur peccatori a Deo iudice ex gratia juxta jus sponsionis, de quo ante dictum."

Owen in his elaborate work on justification, proves that the word to justify, "whether the act of God towards men, or of men towards God, or of men among themselves, or of one towards another, be expressed thereby, is always used in a 'forensic' sense, and does not denote a physical operation, transfusion, or transmutation." He thus winds up the discussion: "Wherefore as condemnation is not the infusing of a habit of wickedness into him that is condemned, nor the making of him to be inherently wicked, who was before righteous, but the passing a sentence upon a man with respect to his wickedness; no more is justification 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."²

The ground of this justification in the case of the believing sinner is the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. This is set forth at length. "The judgment of the Reformed Churches herein," he says, "is known to all and must be confessed, unless we intend by vain cavils to increase and perpetuate contentions. Especially the Church of England is in her doctrine express as to the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, both active and passive, as it is usually distinguished. This has been of late so fully manifested out of her authentic writings, that is, the 'Articles of Religion' and 'Books of Homilies,' and other writings publicly authorized, that it is altogether needless to give any further demonstration of it."

President Edwards in his sermon on justification sets forth the Protestant doctrine in all its fulness. "To suppose," he says, "that a man is justified by his own virtue or obedience, derogates from the honour of the Mediator, and ascribes that to man's virtue that belongs only to the righteousness of Christ. It puts man in Christ's stead, and makes him his own saviour, in a respect in which Christ only is the Saviour: and so it is a doctrine contrary to the nature and

design of the Gospel, which is to abase man, and to ascribe all the glory of our salvation to Christ the Redeemer. It is inconsistent with the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which is a gospel doctrine. Here I would (1.) Explain what we mean by the imputation of Christ's righteousness. (2.) Prove the thing intended by it to be true. (3.) Show that this doctrine is utterly inconsistent with the doctrine of our being justified by our own virtue or sincere obedience.

"First. I would explain what we mean by the imputation of Christ's righteousness. Sometimes the expression is taken by our divines in a larger sense, for the imputation of all that Christ did and suffered for our redemption, whereby we are free from guilt, and stand righteous in the sight of God; and so implies the imputation both of Christ's satisfaction and obedience. But here I intend it in a stricter sense, for the imputation of that righteousness or moral goodness that consists in the obedience of Christ. And by that righteousness being imputed to us, is meant no other than this, that that righteousness of Christ is accepted for us, and admitted instead of that perfect inherent righteousness that ought to be in ourselves: Christ's perfect obedience shall be reckoned to our account so that we shall have the benefit of it, as though we had performed it ourselves: and so we suppose that a title to eternal life is given us as the reward of this righteousness." In the same connection, he asks, "Why is there any more absurdity in supposing that Christ's obedience is imputed to us, than that his satisfaction is imputed? If Christ has suffered the penalty of the law for us, and in our stead, then it will follow that his suffering that penalty is imputed to us, i.e., that it is accepted for us, and in our stead, and is reckoned to our account, as though we had suffered it. But why may not his obeying the law of God be as rationally reckoned to our account, as his suffering the penalty of the law." He then goes on to argue that there is the same necessity for the one as for the other.

Dr. Shedd says, "A second difference between the Anselmic and the Protestant soteriology is seen in the formal distinction of Christ's

work into his active and his passive righteousness. By his passive righteousness is meant his expiatory sufferings, by which He satisfied the claims of justice, and by his active righteousness is meant his obedience to the law as a rule of life and conduct. It was contended by those who made this distinction, that the purpose of Christ as the vicarious substitute was to meet the entire demands of the law for the sinner. But the law requires present and perfect obedience, as well as satisfaction for past disobedience. The law is not completely fulfilled by the endurance of penalty only. It must also be obeyed. Christ both endured the penalty due to man for disobedience, and perfectly obeyed the law for him; so that He was a vicarious substitute in reference to both the precept and the penalty of the law. By his active obedience He obeyed the law, and by his passive obedience He endured the penalty. In this way his vicarious work is complete."

The earlier Symbols of the Reformation do not make this distinction. So far as the Lutheran Church is concerned, it first appears in the "Form of Concord" (A.D. 1576). Its statement is as follows: "That righteousness which is imputed to faith, or to believers, of mere grace, is the obedience, suffering, and resurrection of Christ, by which He satisfied the law for us, and expiated our sins. For since Christ was not only man, but truly God and man in one undivided person, He was no more subject to the law than He was to suffering and death (if his person, merely, be taken into account), because He was the Lord of the law. Hence, not only that obedience to God his Father which He exhibited in his passion and death, but also that obedience which He exhibited in voluntarily subjecting Himself to the law and fulfilling it for our sakes, is imputed to us for righteousness, so that God on account of the total obedience which Christ accomplished (*præstitit*) for our sake before his heavenly Father, both in acting and in suffering, in life and in death, may remit our sins to us, regard us as good and righteous, and give us eternal salvation." In this point the Reformed or Calvinistic standards agree.

It has already been remarked that the distinction between the active and passive obedience of Christ is, in one view, unimportant. As Christ obeyed in suffering, his sufferings were as much a part of his obedience as his observance of the precepts of the law. The Scriptures do not expressly make this distinction, as they include everything that Christ did for our redemption under the term righteousness or obedience. The distinction becomes important only when it is denied that his moral obedience is any part of the righteousness for which the believer is justified, or that his whole work in making satisfaction consisted in expiation or bearing the penalty of the law. This is contrary to Scripture, and vitiates the doctrine of justification as presented in the Bible.

6. Proof of the Doctrine

That the Protestant doctrine as above stated is the doctrine of the word of God appears from the following considerations:—

1. The word δικαιῶ, as has been shown, means to declare δικαίος. No one can be truthfully pronounced δικαίος to whom δικαιοσύνη cannot rightfully be ascribed. The sinner (*ex vi verbi*) has no righteousness of his own. God, therefore, imputes to him a righteousness which is not his own. The righteousness thus imputed is declared to be the righteousness of God, of Christ, the righteousness which is by faith. This is almost in so many words the declaration of the Bible on the subject. As the question, What is the method of justification? is a Biblical question, it must be decided exegetically, and not by arguments drawn from assumed principles of reason. We are not at liberty to say that the righteousness of one man cannot be imputed to another; that this would involve a mistake or absurdity; that God's justice does not demand a righteousness such as the law prescribes, as the condition of justification; that He

may pardon and save as a father without any consideration, unless it be that of repentance; that it is inconsistent with his grace that the demands of justice should be met before justification is granted; that this view of justification makes it a sham, a calling a man just, when he is not just, etc. All this amounts to nothing. It all pertains to that wisdom which is foolishness with God. All we have to do is to determine, (1.) What is the meaning of the word to justify as used in Scripture? (2.) On what ground does the Bible affirm that God pronounces the ungodly to be just? If the answer to these questions be what the Church in all ages, and especially the Church of the Reformation has given, then we should rest satisfied. The Apostle in express terms says that God imputes righteousness to the sinner. (Rom. 4:6, 24.) By righteousness every one admits is meant that which makes a man righteous, that which the law demands. It does not consist in the sinner's own obedience, or moral excellence, for it is said to be "without works;" and it is declared that no man can be justified on the ground of his own character or conduct. Neither does this righteousness consist in faith; for it is "of faith," "through faith," "by faith." We are never said to be justified on account of faith. Neither is it a righteousness, or form of moral excellence springing from faith, or of which faith is the source or proximate cause; because it is declared to be the righteousness of God; a righteousness which is revealed; which is offered; which must be accepted as a gift. (Rom. 5:17.) It is declared to be the righteousness of Christ; his obedience. (Rom. 5:19.) It is, therefore, the righteousness of Christ, his perfect obedience in doing and suffering the will of God, which is imputed to the believer, and on the ground of which the believer, although in himself ungodly, is pronounced righteous, and therefore free from the curse of the law and entitled to eternal life.

The Apostle's Argument

2. All the points above stated are not only clearly affirmed by the Apostle but they are also set forth in logical order, and elaborately sustained and vindicated in the Epistle to the Romans. The Apostle begins with the declaration that the Gospel "is the power of God unto

salvation." It is not thus divinely efficacious because of the purity of its moral precepts; nor because it brings immortality to light; nor because it sets before us the perfect example of our Lord Jesus Christ; nor because it assures us of the love of God; nor because of the elevating, sanctifying, life-giving influence by which it is attended. There is something preliminary to all this. The first and indispensable requisite to salvation is that men should be righteous before God. They are under his wrath and curse. Until justice is satisfied, until God is reconciled, there is no possibility of any moral influence being of any avail. Therefore the Apostle says that the power of the Gospel is due to the fact that "therein is the righteousness of God revealed." This cannot mean the goodness of God, for such is not the meaning of the word. It cannot in this connection mean his justice, because it is a righteousness which is "of faith;" because the justice of God is revealed from heaven and to all men; because the revelation of justice terrifies and drives away from God; because what is here called the righteousness of God, is elsewhere contrasted with our "own righteousness" (Rom. 10:3, Phil. 3:9); and because it is declared to be the righteousness of Christ (Rom. 5:18), which is (Rom. 5:19) explained by his "obedience," and in Romans 5:9 and elsewhere declared to be "his blood." This righteousness of Christ is the righteousness of God, because Christ is God; because God has provided, revealed, and offers it; and because it avails before God as a sufficient ground on which He can declare the believing sinner righteous. Herein lies the saving power of the Gospel. The question, How shall man be just with God? had been sounding in the ears of men from the beginning. It never had been answered. Yet it must be answered or there can be no hope of salvation. It is answered in the Gospel, and therefore the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; i.e., to every one, whether Jew or Gentile, bond or free, good or bad, who, instead of going about to establish his own righteousness, submits himself in joyful confidence to the righteousness which his God and Saviour Jesus Christ has wrought out for sinners, and which is freely offered to them in the Gospel without money and without price.

This is Paul's theme, which he proceeds to unfold and establish, as has been already stated under a previous head. He begins by asserting, as indisputably true from the revelation of God in the constitution of our nature, that God is just, that He will punish sin; that He cannot pronounce him righteous who is not righteous. He then shows from experience and from Scripture, first as regards the Gentiles, then as regards the Jews, that there is none righteous, no not one; that the whole world is guilty before God. There is therefore no difference, since all have sinned.

Since the righteousness which the law requires cannot be found in the sinner nor be rendered by him, God has revealed another righteousness (Rom. 3:21); "the righteousness of God," granted to every one who believes. Men are not justified for what they are or for what they do, but for what Christ has done for them. God has set Him forth as a propitiation for sin, in order that He might be just and yet the justifier of them that believe.

The Apostle teaches that such has been the method of justification from the beginning. It was witnessed by the law and the prophets. There had never, since the fall, been any other way of justification possible for men. As God justified Abraham because he believed in the promise of redemption through the Messiah; so He justifies those now who believe in the fulfilment of that promise. (Rom. 4:3, 9, 24.) It was not Abraham's believing state of mind that was taken for righteousness. It is not faith in the believer now; not faith as a virtue, or as a source of a new life, which renders us righteous. It is faith in a specific promise. Righteousness, says the Apostle, is imputed to us, "if we believe on Him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." (Rom. 4:24.) Or, as he expresses it in Romans 10:9, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." The promise which Abraham believed, is the promise which we believe (Gal. 3:14); and the relation of faith to justification, in his case, is precisely what it is in ours. He and we are justified simply because we trust in the Messiah for our salvation. Hence, as the

Apostle says, the Scriptures are full of thanksgiving to God for gratuitous pardon, for free justification, for the imputation of righteousness to those who have no righteousness of their own. This method of justification, he goes on to show, is adapted to all mankind. God is not the God of the Jews only but also of the Gentiles. It secures peace and reconciliation with God. (Rom. 5:1-3.) It renders salvation certain, for if we are saved not by what we are in ourselves, but for what Christ has done for us, we may be sure that if we are "justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him." (Rom. 5:9.) This method of justification, he further shows, and this only, secures sanctification, namely, holiness of heart and life. It is only those who are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, that are "saved by his life." (5:10.) This idea he expands and vindicates in the sixth and seventh chapters of this Epistle.

The Parallel between Adam and Christ

3. Not content with this clear and formal statement of the truth that sinners can be justified only through the imputation of a righteousness not their own; and that the righteousness thus imputed is the righteousness (active and passive if that distinction be insisted upon) of the Lord Jesus Christ; he proceeds to illustrate this doctrine by drawing a parallel between Adam and Christ. The former, he says, was a type of the latter. There is an analogy between our relation to Adam and our relation to Christ. We are so united to Adam that his first transgression was the ground of the sentence of condemnation being passed on all mankind, and on account of that condemnation we derive from him a corrupt nature so that all mankind descending from him by ordinary generation, come into the world in a state of spiritual death. In like manner we are so united to Christ, when we believe, that his obedience is the ground on which a sentence of justification passes upon all thus in Him, and in consequence of that sentence they derive from Him a new, holy, divine, and imperishable principle of spiritual life. These truths are expressed in explicit terms. "The judgment was by one (offence) to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto

justification." (Rom. 5:16.) "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 one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (5:18, 19.) These two great truths, namely, the imputation of Adam's sin and the imputation of Christ's righteousness, have graven themselves on the consciousness of the Church universal. They have been reviled, misrepresented, and denounced by theologians, but they have stood their ground in the faith of God's people, just as the primary truths of reason have ever retained control over the mass of men, in spite of all the speculations of philosophers. It is not meant that the truths just mentioned have always been expressed in the terms just given; but the truths themselves have been, and still are held by the people of God, wherever found, among the Greeks, Latins, or Protestants. The fact that the race fell in Adam; that the evils which come upon us on account of his transgression are penal; and that men are born in a state of sin and condemnation, are outstanding facts of Scripture and experience, and are avowed every time the sacrament of baptism is administered to an infant. No less universal is the conviction of the other great truth. It is implied in every act of saving faith which includes trust in what Christ has done for us as the ground of our acceptance with God, as opposed to anything done by us or wrought in us. As a single proof of the hold which this conviction has on the Christian consciousness, reference may be made to the ancient direction for the visitation of the sick, attributed to Anselm, but of doubtful authorship: "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 unto 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 wholly 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 is angry with thee: say, Lord, I place the death of our Lord Jesus Christ between me and thy anger."

Such being the real and only foundation of a sinner's hope towards God, it is of the last importance that it should not only be practically held by the people, but that it should also be clearly presented and maintained by the clergy. It is not what we do or are, but solely what Christ is and has done that can avail for our justification before the bar of God.

Other Passages teaching the same Doctrine

4. This doctrine of the imputation of the righteousness of Christ; or, in other words, that his righteousness is the judicial ground of the believer's justification, is not only formally and argumentatively presented as in the passages cited, but it is constantly asserted or implied in the word of God. The Apostle argues, in the fourth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, that every assertion or promise of gratuitous forgiveness of sin to be found in the Scriptures involves this doctrine. He proceeds on the assumption that God is just; that He demands a righteousness of those whom He justifies. If they have no righteousness of their own, one on just grounds must be imputed to them. If, therefore, He forgives sin, it must be that sin is covered, that justice has been satisfied. "David, also," he says, "describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works; saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Rom. 4:6–8.) Not to impute sin implies the imputation of righteousness.

In Romans 5:9, we are said to be "justified by his blood." In Romans 3:25, God is said to have set Him forth as a propitiation for sin, that He might be just in justifying the ungodly. As to justify does not mean to pardon, but judicially to pronounce righteous, this passage distinctly asserts that the work of Christ is the ground on which the sentence of justification is passed. In Romans 10:3, 4, he says of the Jews, "They 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 to every one that believeth." It can hardly be questioned that the word (δικαιοσύνη) righteousness must have the same meaning in both members of the first of these verses. If a man's "own righteousness" is that which would render him righteous, then "the righteousness of God," in this connection, must be a justifying righteousness. It is called the righteousness of God, because, as said before, He is its author. It is the righteousness of Christ. It is provided, offered, and accepted of God. Here then are two righteousnesses; the one human, the other divine; the one valueless, the other infinitely meritorious. The folly of the Jews, and of thousands since their day, consists in refusing the latter and trusting to the former. This folly the Apostle makes apparent in the fourth verse. The Jews acted under the assumption that the law as a covenant, that is, as prescribing the conditions of salvation, was still in force, that men were still bound to satisfy its demands by their personal obedience in order to be saved, whereas Christ had made an end of the law. He had abolished it as a covenant, in order that men might be justified by faith. Christ, however, has thus made an end of the law, not by merely setting it aside, but by satisfying its demands. He delivers us from its curse, not by mere pardon, but by being made a curse for us. (Gal. 3:13.) He redeems us from the law by being made under it (Gal. 4:4, 5), and fulfilling all righteousness.

In Philippians 3:8, 9, the Apostle says, he "suffered the loss of all things," that he might be found in Christ, not having his "own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." Here again

one's own righteousness is contrasted with that which is of God. The word must have the same sense in both members. What Paul trusted to, was not his own righteousness, not his own subjective goodness, but a righteousness provided for him and received by faith. De Wette (no Augustinian) on this passage says, the righteousness of God here means, "a righteousness received from God (graciously imputed) on condition of faith" ("die von Gott empfangene (aus Gnaden zugerechnete) Gerechtigkeit um des Glaubenswillen.")

The Apostle says (1 Cor. 1:30), Christ "of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." In this enumeration sanctification and righteousness are distinguished. The one renders us holy; the other renders us just, i.e., satisfies the demands of justice. As Christ is to us the source of inward spiritual life, so He is the giver of that righteousness which secures our justification. Justification is not referred to sanctification as its proximate cause and ground. On the contrary, the gift of righteousness precedes that of sanctification. We are justified in order that we may be sanctified. The point here, however, is that righteousness is distinguished from anything and everything in us which can recommend us to the favour of God. We are accepted, justified, and saved, not for what we are, but for what He has done in our behalf. God "made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Cor. 5:21.) As Christ was not made sin in a moral sense; so we are not (in justification) made righteousness in a moral sense. As He was made sin in that He "bare our sins;" so we are made righteousness in that we bear his righteousness. Our sins were the judicial ground of his humiliation under the law and of all his sufferings; so his righteousness is the judicial ground of our justification. In other words, as our sins were imputed to Him; so his righteousness is imputed to us. If imputation of sin did not render Him morally corrupt; the imputation of righteousness does not make us holy or morally good.

Argument from the General Teachings of the Bible

5. It is unnecessary to dwell upon particular passages in support of a doctrine which pervades the whole Scriptures. The question is, What is the ground of the pardon of sin and of the acceptance of the believer as righteous (in the forensic or judicial sense of the word), in the sight of God? Is it anything we do, anything experienced by us, or wrought in us; or, is it what Christ has done for us? The whole revelation of God concerning the method of salvation shows that it is the latter and not the former. In the first place, this is plain from what the Scriptures teach of the covenant of redemption between the Father and the Son. That there was such covenant cannot be denied if the meaning of the words be once agreed upon. It is plain from Scripture that Christ came into the world to do a certain work, on a certain condition. The promise made to Him was that a multitude whom no man can number, of the fallen race of man, should be saved. This included the promise that they should be justified, sanctified, and made partakers of eternal life. The very nature of this transaction involves the idea of vicarious substitution. It assumes that what He was to do was to be the ground of the justification, sanctification, and salvation of his people.

In the second place this is involved in the nature of the work which He came to perform. He was to assume our nature, to be born of a woman, to take part of flesh and blood with all their infirmities, yet without sin. He was to take his place among sinners; be made subject to the law which they are bound to obey, and to endure the curse which they had incurred. If this be so, then what He did is the ground of our salvation from first to last; of our pardon, of our reconciliation with God, of the acceptance of our persons, of the indwelling of the Spirit, of our being transformed into His image, and of our admission into heaven. "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory," has, therefore, been the spontaneous language of every believer from the beginning until now.

In the third place, the manner in which Christ was to execute the work assigned as described in the prophets, and the way in which it

was actually accomplished as described by Himself and by his Apostles, prove that what He did and suffered is the ground of our salvation. He says that He came "to give his life a ransom for many." (Matt. 20:28.) "There is one God," says the Apostle, "and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave Himself a ransom for all." (1 Tim. 2:5, 6.) The deliverance effected by a ransom has no reference to the character or conduct of the redeemed. Its effects are due exclusively to the ransom paid. It is, therefore, to deny that Christ was a ransom, that we are redeemed by his blood, to affirm that the proximate ground of our deliverance from the curse of the law and of our introduction into the liberty of the sons of God, is anything wrought in us or done by us. Again, from the beginning to the end of the Bible, Christ is represented as a sacrifice. From the first institution of sacrifices in the family of Adam; during the patriarchal period; in all the varied and costly ritual of the Mosaic law; in the predictions of the prophets; in the clear didactic statements of the New Testament, it is taught with a constancy, a solemnity, and an amplitude, which proves it to be a fundamental and vital element of the divine plan of redemption, that the Redeemer was to save his people by offering himself as a sacrifice unto God in their behalf. There is no one characteristic of the plan of salvation more deeply engraven on the hearts of Christians, which more effectually determines their inward spiritual life, which so much pervades their prayers and praises, or which is so directly the foundation of their hopes, as the sacrificial nature of the death of Christ. Strike from the Bible the doctrine of redemption by the blood of Christ, and what have we left? But if Christ saves us as a sacrifice, then it is what He does for us, his objective work, and nothing subjective, nothing in us, which is the ground of our salvation, and of all that salvation includes. For even our sanctification is due to his death. His blood cleanses from all sin. (1 John 1:7.) It cleanses from the guilt of sin by expiation; and secures inward sanctification by securing the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Again, the whole Bible is full of the idea of substitution. Christ took our place. He undertook to do for us what we could not do for

ourselves. This is taught in every possible way. He bore our sins. He died for us and in our place. He was made under the law for us. He was made a curse for us. He was made sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. The chastisement of our peace was laid on Him. Everything, therefore, which the Bible teaches of the method of salvation, is irreconcilable with the doctrine of subjective justification in all its forms. We are always and everywhere referred to something out of ourselves as the ground of our confidence toward God.

In the fourth place, the effects ascribed to the work of Christ, as before remarked, are such as do not flow from anything in the believer himself, but must be referred to what has been done for him. These effects are expiation of sin, propitiation, the gift and indwelling of the life-giving Spirit of God; redemption, or deliverance from all forms of evil; and a title to eternal life and actual participation in the exaltation, glory, and blessedness of the Son of God. It is out of all question that these wonderful effects should be referred to what we personally are; to our merit, to our holiness, to our participation of the life of Christ. In whatever sense these last words may be understood, they refer to what we personally are or become. His life in us is after all a form of our life. It constitutes our character. And it is self-evident to the conscience that our character is not, and cannot be the ground of our pardon, of God's peculiar love, or of our eternal glory and blessedness in heaven.

In the fifth place, the condition on which our participation of the benefits of redemption is suspended, is inconsistent with any form of the doctrine of subjective justification. We are never said to be justified on account of faith, considered either as an act or as a principle, as an exercise or as a permanent state of the mind. Faith is never said to be the ground of justification. Nor are we saved by faith as the source of holiness or of spiritual life in the soul, or as the organ of receiving the infused life of God. We are saved simply "by" faith, by receiving and resting upon Christ alone for salvation. The thing received is something out of ourselves. It is Christ, his righteousness,

his obedience, the merit of his blood or death. We look to Him. We flee to Him. We lay hold on Him. We hide ourselves in Him. We are clothed in his righteousness. The Romanist indeed says, that an Ethiopian in a white robe does not become white. True, but a suit of armor gives security from the sword or spear, and that is what we need before attending to the state of our complexion. We need protection from the wrath of God in the first instance. The inward transformation of the soul into his likeness is provided for by other means.

In the sixth place and finally, the fact that we are saved by grace proves that the ground of salvation is not in ourselves. The grace of God, his love for the unlovely, for the guilty and polluted, is represented in the Bible as the most mysterious of the divine perfections. It was hidden in God. It could not be discovered by reason, neither was it revealed prior to the redemption of man. The specific object of the plan of salvation is the manifestation of this most wonderful, most attractive, and most glorious attribute of the divine nature. Everything connected with our salvation, says the Apostle, is intended for the "praise of the glory of his grace" (Eph. 1:6.) God hath quickened us, he says, and raised us up, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, in order "that in the ages to come, he might show the exceeding riches of his grace, in his kindness toward us, through Christ Jesus."

From their nature, grace and works are antithetical. The one excludes the other. What is of grace, is not of works. And by works in Scripture, in relation to this subject, is meant not individual acts only, but states of mind, anything and everything internal of which moral character can be predicated. When, therefore, it is said that salvation is of grace and not of works, it is thereby said that it is not founded upon anything in the believer himself. It was not any moral excellence in man, that determined God to interpose for his redemption, while He left the apostate angels to their fate. This was a matter of grace. To deny this, and to make the provision of a plan of salvation for man a matter of justice, is in such direct contradiction

to everything in the Bible, that it hardly ever has been openly asserted. The gift of his Son for the redemption of man is ever represented as the most wonderful display of unmerited love. That some and not all men are actually saved, is expressly declared to be not of works, not on account of anything distinguishing favourably the one class from the other, but a matter of pure grace. When a sinner is pardoned and restored to the favour of God, this again is declared to be of grace. If of grace it is not founded upon anything in the sinner himself. Now as the Scriptures not only teach that the plan of salvation is thus gratuitous in its inception, execution, and application, but also insist upon this characteristic of the plan as of vital importance, and even go so far as to teach that unless we consent to be saved by grace, we cannot be saved at all, it of necessity follows that the doctrine of subjective justification is contrary to the whole spirit of the Bible. That doctrine in all its forms teaches that that which secures our acceptance with God, is something in ourselves, something which constitutes character. If so, then salvation is not of grace; and if not of grace, it is unattainable by sinners.

7. The Consequences of the Imputation of Righteousness

It is frequently said that justification consists in the pardon of sin and in the imputation of righteousness. This mode of statement is commonly adopted by Lutheran theologians. This exhibition of the doctrine is founded upon the sharp distinction made in the "Form of Concord" between the passive and active obedience of Christ. To the former is referred the remission of the penalty due to us for sin; to the latter our title to eternal life. The Scriptures, however, do not make this distinction so prominent. Our justification as a whole is sometimes referred to the blood of Christ, and sometimes to his

obedience. This is intelligible because the crowning act of his obedience, and that without which all else had been unavailing, was his laying down his life for us. It is, perhaps, more correct to say that the righteousness of Christ, including all He did and suffered in our stead, is imputed to the believer as the ground of his justification, and that the consequences of this imputation are, first, the remission of sin, and secondly, the acceptance of the believer as righteous. And if righteous, then he is entitled to be so regarded and treated.

By the remission of sin Romanists understand the removal of the pollution of sin. So that their definition of justification as consisting in the remission of sin and infusion of righteousness, is only a statement of the negative and positive aspects of sanctification, i.e., putting off the old man and putting on the new man. The effect of remission is constantly declared to be that nothing of the nature of sin remains in the soul. The Council of Trent says, "Justificatio ... non est sola peccatorum remissio, sed et sanctificatio, et renovatio interioris hominis per voluntariam susceptionem gratiae et donorum.... Quanquam nemo possit esse justus, nisi cui merita passionis Domini nostri Jesu Christi communicantur: id tamen in hac impii justificatione fit, dum ejusdem sanctissimæ passionis merito per Spiritum Sanctum caritas Dei diffunditur in cordibus eorum, qui justificantur, atque ipsis inhæret." "Quibus verbis justificationis impii descriptio insinuat, ut sit translatio ab eo statu, in quo homo nascitur filius primi Adæ, in statum gratiæ et adoptionis filiorum Dei, per secundum Adam Jesum Christum, salvatorem nostrum: quæ quidem translatio post evangelium promulgatum sine lavacro regenerationis, aut ejus voto fieri non potest." By "status gratiæ" in this definition is not meant a state of favour, but a state of subjective grace or holiness; because in other places and most commonly justification is said to consist in the infusion of grace. In this definition, therefore, the pardon of sin in the proper sense of the words is not included. Bellarmine² says this translation into a state of adoption as sons of God, "non potest ... fieri, nisi homo per remissionem peccati desinat esse impius; et per infusionem justitiæ incipiat esse pius. Sed sicut aër cum illustratur a

sole per idem lumen, quod recipit, desinit esse tenebrosus et incipit esse lucidus: sic etiam homo per eandem justitiam sibi a sole justitiæ donatam atque infusam desinit esse injustus, delente videlicet lumine gratiæ tenebras peccatorum." The remission of sin is therefore defined to be the removal of sin. Bellarmin argues in support of this view that guilt is removed by holiness, that guilt is a relation; the relation of sin to justice. When the thing itself is taken away, the relation itself of course ceases. Hence remission of sin, even in the sense of pardon, is effected by the infusion of righteousness, as darkness is banished by the introduction of light. It is thus, as remarked above, that guilt is either ignored, or reduced to a minimum by the Romish theory of justification. There is really no satisfaction of justice in the case. The merits of Christ avail to secure for man the gift of the Holy Ghost, by whose power as exercised in the sacrament of baptism, the soul is made holy, and by the introduction of holiness everything of the nature of sin is banished, and all ground for the infliction of punishment is removed. A scheme so opposed to Scripture, and so inconsistent with even the natural conscience, cannot be practically adopted by the mass of the people. The conviction is too intimate that the desert of punishment is not removed by the reformation, or even by the regeneration of the sinner, to allow the conscience to be satisfied with any scheme of salvation which does not provide for the expiation of the guilt of sin by what really satisfies the justice of God.

In the Bible, therefore, as well as in common life, pardon is not a mere consequence of sanctification. It is exemption from the infliction of the deserved penalty of the law. Whether this exemption is a mere matter of caprice, or unworthy partiality for the offender, or for considerations of expediency, or at the promptings of compassion, or upon the ground of an adequate satisfaction to the demands of justice, makes no difference so far as the nature of pardon is concerned. It is in all cases the remission of a penalty adjudged to be deserved. It is in this sense, therefore, that justification is declared to include the pardon of sins, founded on the imputation to the believing sinner of the perfect righteousness of

Christ. It is this that gives the believer peace. He sees that he is delivered from "the wrath and curse of God" due to him, not by any arbitrary exercise of executive authority, but because God, as a righteous judge, can, in virtue of the propitiation of Christ, be just and yet justify the ungodly.

The sins which are pardoned in justification include all sins, past, present, and future. It does indeed seem to be a solecism that sins should be forgiven before they are committed. Forgiveness involves remission of penalty. But how can a penalty be remitted before it is incurred? This is only an apparent difficulty arising out of the inadequacy of human language. The righteousness of Christ is a perpetual donation. It is a robe which hides, or as the Bible expresses it, covers from the eye of justice the sins of the believer. They are sins; they deserve the wrath and curse of God, but the necessity for the infliction of that curse no longer exists. The believer feels the constant necessity for confession and prayer for pardon, but the ground of pardon is ever present for him to offer and plead. So that it would perhaps be a more correct statement to say that in justification the believer receives the promise that God will not deal with him according to his transgressions, rather than to say that sins are forgiven before they are committed.

This subject is thus presented by the Apostle: believers "are not under the law but under grace." (Rom. 6:14.) They are not under a legal system administered according to the principles of retributive justice, a system which requires perfect obedience as the condition of acceptance with God, and which says, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." They are under grace, that is, under a system in which believers are not dealt with on the principles of justice, but on the principles of undeserved mercy, in which God does not impute "their trespasses unto them." (2 Cor. 5:19.) There is therefore to them no condemnation. They are not condemned for their sins, not because they are not sins and do not deserve condemnation, but because

Christ has already made expiation for their guilt and makes continual intercession for them.

The second consequence attributed to the imputation of Christ's righteousness, is a title to eternal life. This in the older writers is often expressed by the words "adoption and heirship." Being made the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26), they are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ of a heavenly inheritance. (Rom. 8:17.) The mere expiation of guilt confers no title to eternal life. The condition of the covenant under which man was placed was perfect obedience. This, from all that appears in Scripture, the perfection of God requires. As He never pardons sins unless the demands of justice be satisfied, so He never grants eternal life unless perfect obedience be rendered. Heaven is always represented as a purchased possession. In the covenant between the Father and the Son the salvation of his people was promised as the reward of his humiliation, obedience, and death. Having performed the stipulated conditions, He has a claim to the promised recompense. And this claim inures to the benefit of his people. But besides this, as the work of Christ consisted in his doing all that the law of God, or covenant of works requires for the salvation of men, and as that righteousness is freely offered to every one that believes, every such believer has as valid a claim to eternal life as he would have had, had he personally done all that the law demands. Thus broad and firm is the foundation which God has laid for the hopes of his people. It is the rock of ages; Jehovah our righteousness.

8. Relation of Faith to Justification

All who profess to be Christians admit the doctrine of justification by faith. There are different views, however, as to the relation between faith and justification, as has been already intimated.

1. Pelagians and rationalists teach that faith in God's being and perfection, or in the great principles of moral and religious truth, is the source of that moral excellence on account of which we are accepted of God. It is perhaps only a different way of expressing the same idea, to say that God, in the case of Abraham, and, therefore, of other men, accepts the pious state of mind involved in the exercise of faith or confidence in God, in lieu of perfect righteousness.

2. Romanists make faith mere assent. It does not justify as a virtue, or as apprehending the offered righteousness of Christ. It is neither the formal nor the instrumental cause of justification, it is merely the predisposing or occasional cause. A man assents to the truth of Christianity, and to the more special truth that the Church is a divine institution for saving men. He therefore comes to the Church and receives the sacrament of baptism, by which, "ex opere operato," a habit of grace, or spiritual life is infused into the soul, which is the formal cause of justification; i.e., it renders the soul inherently just or holy. In this sense the sinner may be said to be justified by faith. This is the first justification. After the man is thus rendered holy or regenerated, then the exercises of faith have real merit, and enter into the ground of his second justification, by which he becomes entitled to eternal life. But here faith stands on a level with other Christian graces. It is not the only, nor the most important ground of justification. It is in this view inferior to love, from which faith indeed derives all its virtue as a Christian grace. It is then "fides formata," i.e., faith of which love is the essence, the principle which gives it character.

The Romish Doctrine

According to the Romish scheme (1.) God is the efficient cause of justification, as it is by his power or supernatural grace that the soul is made just. (2.) Christ is the meritorious cause, as it is for his sake God grants this saving grace, or influence of the Spirit to the children of men. (3.) Inherent righteousness is the formal cause, since thereby the soul is made really just or holy. (4.) Faith is the occasional and

predisposing cause, as it leads the sinner to seek justification (regeneration), and disposes God to grant the blessing. In this aspect it has the merit of congruity only, not that of condignity. (5.) Baptism is the essential instrumental cause, as it is only through or by baptism that inherent righteousness is infused or justification is effected. So much for the first justification. After this justification, which makes the sinner holy, then, (6.) Good works, all the fruits and exercises of the new life, have real merit and constitute the ground of the Christian's title to eternal life.

The language of the Council of Trent on this subject is as follows: "Hujus justificationis causæ sunt, finalis quidem, gloria Dei et Christi, ac vita æterna; efficiens vero, misericors Deus, qui gratuito abluit et sanctificat, signans et ungens Spiritu promissionis sancto, ... meritoria autem dilectissimus unigenitus suus, Dominus noster, Jesus Christus, qui, cum essemus inimici, propter nimiam caritatem, qua dilexit nos, sua sanctissima passione in ligno crucis nobis justificationem [i.e., regeneration] meruit et pro nobis Deo Patri satiafecit; instrumentalis item, sacramentum baptismi, quod est sacramentum fidei, sine qua nulli unquam contigit justificatio: demum unica formalis causa est justitia Dei, non qua ipse justus est, sed qua nos justos facit: qua videlicet ab eo donati, renovamur spiritu mentis nostræ, et non modo reputamur, sed vere justi nominamur, et sumus, justitiam in nobis recipientes, unusquisque suam secundum mensuram, quam Spiritus Sanctus partitur singulis prout vult, et secundum propriam cujusque dispositionem et cooperationem." Again, it is said: "Quæ enim justitia nostra dicitur, quia per eam nobis inhærentem justificamur; illa eadem Dei est, quia a Deo nobis infunditur per Christi meritum." All this relates to the first justification, or regeneration, in which the soul passes from spiritual death to spiritual life. Of the second justification, which gives a title to eternal life, Bellarmin says,² "Habet communis catholicorum omnium sententia, opera bona justorum vere, ac proprie esse merita, et merita non cujuscunque premii, sed ipsius vitæ æternæ." The thirty-second canon of the Tridentine Council at this sixth session anathematizes any one who teaches a different

doctrine. "Si quis dixerit, hominis justificati bona opera ita esse dona Dei, ut non sint etiam bona ipsius justificati merita; aut ipsum justificatum bonis operibus, quæ ab eo per Dei gratiam et Jesu Christi meritum, cujus vivum membrum est, fiunt, non vere mereri augmentum gratiæ, vitam æternam, et ipsius vitæ æternæ, si tamen in gratia decesserit, consecutionem, atque etiam gloriæ augmentum; anathema sit." It appears from all this that, according to the doctrine of the Church of Rome, faith has no special or direct connection with justification, and that "justification by faith" in that Church means something entirely different from what is intended by those words in the lips of evangelical Christians.

Remonstrant View

3. According to the Remonstrants or Arminians, faith is the ground of justification. Under the Gospel God accepts our imperfect obedience including faith and springing from it, in place of the perfect obedience demanded by the law originally given to Adam. There is one passage in the Bible, or rather one form of expression, which occurs in several places, which seems to favour this view of the subject. In Romans 4:3, it is said, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness;" and again in ver. 22 of that chapter, and in Galatians 3:6. If this phrase be interpreted according to the analogy of such passages as Romans 2:26, "Shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?" it does mean that faith is taken or accepted for righteousness. The Bible, however, is the word of God and therefore self-consistent. Consequently if a passage admits of one interpretation inconsistent with the teaching of the Bible in other places, and of another interpretation consistent with that teaching, we are bound to accept the latter. This rule, simple and obvious as it is, is frequently violated, not only by those who deny the inspiration of the Scriptures, but even by men professing to recognize their infallible authority. They seem to regard it as a proof of independence to make each passage mean simply what its grammatical structure and logical connection indicate, without the least regard to the analogy of Scripture. This is unreasonable. In

Genesis 15 we are told that Abraham lamented before the Lord that he was childless, and that one born in his house was to be his heir. And God said unto him, "This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels, shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them. And he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and He counted it to him for righteousness." Taking this passage by itself, it is inferred that the object of Abraham's faith was the promise of a numerous posterity. Supposing this to be true, which it certainly is not, what right has any one to assume that Abraham's faith's being imputed to him for righteousness, means anything more than when it is said that the zeal of Phinehas was imputed for righteousness (Ps. 106:31); or when in Deuteronomy 24:13, it is said that to return a poor man's pledge "shall be righteousness unto thee before the LORD thy God." No one supposes that one manifestation of zeal, or one act of benevolence, is taken for complete obedience to the law. All that the phrase "to impute for righteousness" by itself means, according to Old Testament usage, is, to esteem as right, to approve. The zeal of Phinehas was right. Returning a poor man's pledge was right. These were acts which God approved. And so He approved of Abraham's faith. He gained the favour of God by believing. Now while this is true, far more, as the Apostle teaches, is true. He teaches, first, that the great promise made to Abraham, and faith in which secured his justification, was not that his natural descendants should be as numerous as the stars of heaven, but that in his seed all the nations of the earth should be blessed; secondly, that the seed intended was not a multitude, but one person, and that that one person was Christ (Gal. 3:16); and, thirdly, that the blessing which the seed of Abraham was to secure for the world was redemption. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: ... that the blessing of Abraham (i.e., the promise made to Abraham) might come on" us. The promise made to Abraham, therefore, was redemption through Christ. Hence those who are Christ's, the Apostle teaches, are Abraham's seed and heirs of his promise. What, therefore, Abraham believed, was that the seed of the woman, the

Shiloh, the promised Redeemer of the world, was to be born of him. He believed in Christ, as his Saviour, as his righteousness, and deliverer, and therefore it was that he was accepted as righteous, not for the merit of his faith, and not on the ground of faith, or by taking faith in lieu of righteousness, but because he received and rested on Christ alone for his salvation.

Unless such be the meaning of the Apostle, it is hard to see how there is any coherence or force in his arguments. His object is to prove that men are justified, not by works, but gratuitously; not for what they are or do, but for what is done for them. They are saved by a ransom; by a sacrifice. But it is absurd to say that trust in a ransom redeems, or is taken in place of the ransom; or that faith in a sacrifice, and not the sacrifice itself, is the ground of acceptance. To prove that such is the Scriptural method of justification, Paul appeals to the case of Abraham. He was not justified for his works, but by faith in a Redeemer. He expected to be justified as ungodly. (Rom. 4:5.) This, he tells us, is what we must do. We have no righteousness of our own. We must take Christ for our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption. In the immediately preceding chapter the Apostle had said we are justified by faith in the blood of Christ, as a propitiation for sin; and for him to prove this from the fact that Abraham was justified on account of his confiding, trusting state of mind, which led him to believe that, although a hundred years old, he should be the father of a numerous posterity, would be a contradiction.

Besides, it is to be remembered, not only that the Scriptures never say that we are justified "on account" of faith (διὰ πίστιν), but always "by," or "through" faith (διὰ or ἐκ πίστεως, or πίστει); but also that it is not by faith as such; not by faith in God, nor in the Scriptures; and not by faith in a specific divine promise such as that made to Abraham of a numerous posterity, or of the possession of the land of Canaan; but only by faith in one particular promise, namely, that of salvation through Christ. It is, therefore, not on account of the state of mind, of which faith is the evidence, nor of the good works which

are its fruits, but only by faith as an act of trust in Christ, that we are justified. This of necessity supposes that He, and not our faith, is the ground of our justification. He, and not our faith, is the ground of our confidence. How can any Christian wish it to be otherwise? What comparison is there between the absolutely perfect and the infinitely meritorious righteousness of Christ, and our own imperfect evangelical obedience as a ground of confidence and peace!

This doctrine is moreover dishonouring to the Gospel. It supposes the Gospel to be less holy than the law. The law required perfect obedience; the Gospel is satisfied with imperfect obedience. And how imperfect and insufficient our best obedience is, the conscience of every believer certifies. If it does not satisfy us, how can it satisfy God?

The grand objection, however, to this Remonstrant doctrine as to the relation between faith and justification, is that it is in direct contradiction to the plain and pervading teachings of the Word of God. The Bible teaches that we are not justified by works. This doctrine affirms that we are justified by works. The Bible teaches that we are justified by the blood of Christ; that it is for his obedience that the sentence of justification is passed on men. This doctrine affirms that God pronounces us righteous because of our own righteousness. The Bible from first to last teaches that the whole ground of our salvation or of our justification is objective, what Christ as our Redeemer, our ransom, our sacrifice, our surety, has done for us. This doctrine teaches us to look within, to what we are and to what we do, as the ground of our acceptance with God. It may safely be said that this is altogether unsatisfactory to the awakened conscience. The sinner cannot rely on anything in himself. He instinctively looks to Christ, to his work done for us as the ground of confidence and peace. This in the last resort is the hope of all believers, whatever their theory of justification may be. Whether Papist, Remonstrant, or Augustinian, they all cast their dying eyes on Christ. "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."

Protestant Doctrine

4. The common doctrine of Protestants on this subject is that faith is merely the instrumental cause of justification. It is the act of receiving and resting upon Christ, and has no other relation to the end than any other act by which a proffered good is accepted. This is clearly the doctrine of Scripture, (1.) Because we are constantly said to be justified by, or through faith. (2.) Because the faith which justifies is described as a looking, as a receiving, as a coming, as a fleeing for refuge, as a laying hold of, and as a calling upon. (3.) Because the ground to which our justification is referred, and that on which the sinner's trust is placed, is declared to be the blood, the death, the righteousness, the obedience of Christ. (4.) Because the fact that Christ is a ransom, a sacrifice, and as such effects our salvation, of necessity supposes that the faith which interests us in the merit of his work is a simple act of trust. (5.) Because any other view of the case is inconsistent with the gratuitous nature of justification, with the honour of Christ, and with the comfort and confidence of the believer.

9. Objections to the Protestant Doctrine of Justification

It is said to lead to Licentiousness

1. The first, most obvious, and most persistently urged objection against the doctrine of gratuitous justification through the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, has already been incidentally considered. That objection is that the doctrine leads to

license; that if good works are not necessary to justification, they are not necessary at all; that if God accepts the chief of sinners as readily as the most moral of men, on the simple condition of faith in Christ, then what profit is there in circumcision? in Judaism? in being in the Church? in being good in any form? Why not live in sin that grace may abound? This objection having been urged against the Apostle, it needs no other answer than that which he himself gave it. That answer is found in the sixth and seventh chapters of his Epistle to the Romans, and is substantially as follows:

First, the objection involves a contradiction. To speak of salvation in sin is as great an absurdity as to speak of life in death. Salvation is deliverance from sin. How then can men be delivered from sin in order that they may live in it. Or, as Paul expresses it, "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

Secondly, the very act of faith which secures our justification, secures also our sanctification. It cannot secure the one without securing also the other. This is not only the intention and the desire of the believer, but it is the ordinance of God; a necessary feature of the plan of salvation, and secured by its nature. We take Christ as our Redeemer from sin, from its power as well as from its guilt. And the imputation of his righteousness consequent on faith secures the indwelling of the Holy Spirit as certainly, and for the very same reasons (the covenant stipulations), that it secures the pardon of our sins. And, therefore, if we are partakers of his death, we are partakers of his life. If we die with Him, we rise with Him. If we are justified, we are sanctified. He, therefore, who lives in sin, proclaims himself an unbeliever. He has neither part nor lot in the redemption of Him who came to save his people from their sins.

Thirdly, our condition, the Apostle says, is analogous to that of a slave, belonging first to one master, then to another. So long as he belonged to one man, he was not under the authority of another. But if freed from the one and made the slave of the other, then he comes under an influence which constrains obedience to the latter. So we

were the slaves of sin, but now, freed from that hard master, we have become the servants of righteousness. For a believer, therefore, to live in sin, is just as impossible as for the slave of one man to be at the same time the slave of another. We are indeed free; but not free to sin. We are only free from the bondage of the devil and introduced into the pure, exalted, and glorious liberty of the sons of God.

Fourthly, the objection as made against the Apostle and as constantly repeated since, is urged in the interests of morality and of common sense. Reason itself, it is said, teaches that a man must be good before he can be restored to the favour of God; and if we teach that the number and heinousness of a man's sins are no barrier to his justification, and his good works are no reason why he should be justified rather than the chief of sinners, we upset the very foundations of morality. This is the wisdom of men. The wisdom of God, as revealed in the Scriptures, is very different. According to the Bible the favour of God is the life of the soul. The light of his countenance is to rational creatures what the light of the sun is to the earth, the source of all that is beautiful and good. So long, therefore, as a soul is under his curse, there is no life-giving or life-sustaining intercourse between it and God. In this state it can only, as the Apostle expresses it, "bring forth fruit unto death." As soon, however, as it exercises faith, it receives the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, God's justice is thereby satisfied, and the Spirit comes and takes up his dwelling in the believer as the source of all holy living. There can therefore be no holiness until there is reconciliation with God, and no reconciliation with God except through the righteousness imputed to us and received by faith alone. Then follow the indwelling of the Spirit, progressive sanctification, and all the fruits of holy living.

It may be said that this scheme involves an inconsistency. There can be no holiness until there is reconciliation, and no reconciliation (so far as adults are concerned) until there is faith. But faith is a fruit of the Spirit, and an act of the renewed soul. Then there is and must be, after all, holy action before there is reconciliation. It might be enough

to say in answer to this objection, that logical order and chronological succession are different things; or that the order of nature and order of time are not to be confounded. Many things are contemporaneous or co-instantaneous which nevertheless stand in a certain logical, and even causal relation to each other. Christ commanded the man with a withered arm to stretch forth his hand. He immediately obeyed, but not before he received strength. He called to Lazarus to come forth from the grave; and he came forth. But this presupposes a restoration of life. So God commands the sinner to believe in Christ; and he thereupon receives Him as his Saviour; though this supposes supernatural power or grace.

Our Lord, however, gives another answer to this objection. He says, as recorded in John 17:9, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." The intercession of Christ secures for those given to Him by the Father the renewing of the Holy Ghost. The first act of the renewed heart is faith; as the first act of a restored eye is to see. Whether this satisfies the understanding or not, it remains clear as the doctrine of the Bible that good works are the fruits and consequences of reconciliation with God, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Inconsistent with the Grace of the Gospel

2. It is objected that the Protestant doctrine destroys the gratuitous nature of justification. If justice be satisfied; if all the demands of the law are met, there can, it is said, be no grace in the salvation of the sinner. If a man owes a debt, and some one pays it for him, the creditor shows no grace in giving an acquittal. This objection is familiar, and so also is the answer. The work of Christ is not of the nature of a commercial transaction. It is not analogous to a pecuniary satisfaction except in one point. It secures the deliverance of those for whom it is offered and by whom it is accepted. In the case of guilt the demand of justice is upon the person of the offender. He, and he alone is bound to answer at the bar of justice. No one can take his place, unless with the consent of the representative of justice

and of the substitute, as well as of the sinner himself. Among men, substitution in the case of crime and its penalty is rarely, if ever admissible, because no man has the right over his own life or liberty; he cannot give them up at pleasure; and because no human magistrate has the right to relieve the offender or to inflict the legal penalty on another. But Christ had power, i.e., the right (ἐξουσία) to lay down his life and "power to take it again." And God, as absolute judge and sovereign, the LORD of the conscience, and the proprietor of all his creatures, was at full liberty to accept a substitute for sinners. This is proved beyond contradiction by what God has actually done. Under the old dispensation every sacrifice appointed by the law was a substitute for him in whose behalf it was offered. In the clearest terms it was predicted that the Messiah was to be the substitute of his people; that the chastisement of their sins was to be laid on Him, and that He was to make his soul an offering for sin. He was hailed as He entered on his ministry as the Lamb of God who was to bear the sins of the world. He died the just for the unjust. He redeemed us from the curse of the law by being made a curse for us. This is what is meant by being a substitute. To deny this is to deny the central idea of the Scriptural doctrine of redemption. To explain it away, is to absorb as with a sponge the life-blood of the Gospel.

It is the glory, the power, and the preciousness of the Protestant doctrine that it makes the salvation of sinners a matter of grace from the beginning to the end. On the part of the eternal Father it was of grace, i.e., of unmerited, mysterious, and immeasurable love that He provided a substitute for sinners, and that He spared not his own Son, but freely gave Him up for us all. It was a matter of grace, i.e., of love to sinners, to the ungodly, to his enemies, that the eternal Son of God became man, assumed the burden of our sins, fulfilled all righteousness, obeying and suffering even unto death, that we might not perish but have eternal life. It is of grace that the Spirit applies to men the redemption purchased by Christ; that He renews the heart; that He overcomes the opposition of sinners, making them willing in the day of his power; that He bears with all their ingratitude, disobedience, and resistance, and never leaves them until his work is

consummated in glory. In all this the sinner is not treated according to his character and conduct. He has no claim to any one in this long catalogue of mercies. Everything to him is a matter of unmerited grace. Merited grace, indeed, is a solecism. And so is merited salvation in the case of sinners.

Grace does not cease to be grace because it is not exercised in violation of order, propriety, and justice. It is not the weak fondness of a doting parent. It is the love of a holy God, who in order to reveal that love and manifest the exceeding glory of that attribute when exercised towards the unworthy, did what was necessary to render its exercise consistent with the other perfections of the divine nature. It was indispensable that God should be just in justifying the ungodly, but He does not thereby cease to be gracious, inasmuch as it was He who provided the ransom by which the objects of his love are redeemed from the curse of the law and the power of sin.

God cannot declare the Unjust to be Just

3. Another standing objection to the Protestant doctrine has been so often met, that nothing but its constant repetition justifies a repetition of the answer. It is said to be absurd that one man should be righteous with the righteousness of another; that for God to pronounce the unjust just is a contradiction. This is a mere play on words. It is, however, very serious play; for it is caricaturing truth. It is indeed certain that the subjective, inherent quality of one person or thing cannot by imputation become the inherent characteristic of any other person or thing. Wax cannot become hard by the imputation of the hardness of a stone; nor can a brute become rational by the imputation of the intelligence of a man; nor the wicked become good by the imputation of the goodness of other men. But what has this to do with one man's assuming the responsibility of another man? If among men the bankrupt can become solvent by a rich man's assuming his responsibilities, why in the court of God may not the guilty become righteous by the Son of God's assuming their responsibilities? If He was made sin for us, why may we not be

made the righteousness of God in Him? The objection assumes that the word "just" or "righteous" in this connection, expresses moral character; whereas in the Bible, when used in relation to this subject, it is always used in a judicial sense, i.e., it expresses the relation of the person spoken of to justice. Δίκαιος is antithetical to ὑπόδικος. The man with regard to whom justice is unsatisfied, is ὑπόδικος, "guilty." He with regard to whom justice is satisfied, is δίκαιος, "righteous." To declare righteous, therefore, is not to declare holy; and to impute righteousness is not to impute goodness; but simply to regard and pronounce those who receive the gift of Christ's righteousness, free from condemnation and entitled to eternal life for his sake. Some philosophical theologians seem to think that there is real antagonism between love and justice in the divine nature, or that these attributes are incompatible or inharmonious. This is not so in man; why then should it be so in God? The highest form of moral excellence includes these attributes as essential elements of its perfection. And the Scriptures represent them as mysteriously blended in the salvation of man. The gospel is a revelation to principalities and powers in heaven of the πολυποίκιλος σοφία τοῦ Θεοῦ, because therein He shows that He can be just and yet justify, love, sanctify, and glorify the chief of sinners. For which all sinners should render Him everlasting thanksgiving and praise.

Christ's Righteousness due for Himself

4. It was natural that Socinus, who regarded Christ as a mere man, should object to the doctrine of the imputation of his righteousness to the believer, that Christ was under the same obligation to obey the law and to take his share of human suffering as other men, and therefore that his righteousness being due for Himself, could not be imputed to others. This objection is substantially urged by some who admit the divinity of Christ. In doing so, however, they virtually assume the Nestorian, or dualistic view of Christ's person. They argue on the assumption that He was a human person, and that he stood, in virtue of his assumption of our nature, in the same relation to the law as other men. It is admitted, however, that the Son, who

became incarnate, was from eternity the second person in the Godhead. If, therefore, humanity as assumed by him was a person, then we have two persons,—two Christs,—the one human, the other divine. But if Christ be only one person, and if that person be the eternal Son of God, the same in substance, and equal in power and glory with the Father, then the whole foundation of the objection is gone. Christ sustained no other relation to the law, except so far as voluntarily assumed, than that which God himself sustains. But God is not under the law. He is Himself the primal, immutable, and infinitely perfect law to all rational creatures. Christ's subjection to the law therefore, was as voluntary as his submitting to the death of the cross. As He did not die for Himself, so neither did He obey for Himself. In both forms of his obedience He acted for us, as our representative and substitute, that through his righteousness many might be made righteous.

As to the other form of this objection, it has the same foundation and admits of the same answer. It is said that the obedience and sufferings of Christ, being the obedience and sufferings of a mere man, or at best of only the human element in the constitution of his person, could have only a human, and, therefore, only a finite value, and consequently could be no adequate satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. Our Lord told his disciples, "Ye are of more value than many sparrows." If, then, in the sight of God a man is of far greater value than irrational creatures, why should it be thought incredible that the blood of the eternal Son of God should cleanse from all sin? What a man does with his hands, the man does; and what Christ through his human nature did, in the execution of his mediatorial work, the Son of God did. Therefore, men who spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit did not hesitate to say, that the Lord of glory was crucified (1 Cor. 2:8), and that God purchased the Church "with his own blood." (Acts 20:28.) If, then, the obedience rendered, and the sufferings endured, were those of a divine person, we can only shut our mouths and bow down before God in adoring wonder, with the full assurance that the merit of that obedience and

of those sufferings, must be abundantly sufficient for the justification of every sinner upon earth, in the past, the present, or the future.

Believers continue Guilty, and liable to Punishment

5. It is sometimes objected to the Protestant doctrine on this subject, that believers not only recognize themselves as justly exposed to condemnation for their present shortcomings and transgressions, but that the Scriptures so represent them, and constantly speak of God as punishing his people for their sins. How is this to be reconciled with the doctrine that they are not under condemnation; that, as regards them, justice has been fully satisfied, and that no one can justly lay anything to the charge of God's elect.

It must be admitted, or rather it is fully acknowledged that every believer feels himself unworthy of the least of God's mercies. He knows that if God were to deal with him according to his character and conduct, he must inevitably be condemned. This sense of ill-desert or demerit, is indelible. It is a righteous judgment which the sinner passes, and cannot but pass upon himself. But the ground of his justification is not in himself. The believer acknowledges that in himself he deserves nothing but indignation and wrath, not only for what he has been, but for what he now is. This is what he feels when he looks at himself. Nevertheless, he knows that there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus; that Christ has assumed the responsibility of answering for him at the bar of God; that He constantly pleads his own perfect righteousness, as a reason why the deserved penalty should not be inflicted. If punishment were not deserved, pardon would not be gratuitous; and if not felt to be deserved, deliverance could not be received as a favour. The continued sense of ill-desert, on the part of the believer, is in no wise inconsistent with the Scriptural doctrine that the claims of justice in regard to him have been satisfied by his substitute and advocate. There is a great difference, as often remarked, between demerit and guilt. The latter is the liability in justice to the penalty of the law. The former is personal ill-desert. A criminal who has suffered the legal

punishment of his crime, is no longer justly exposed to punishment for that offence. He however thinks of himself no better than he did before. He knows he cannot be subjected to further punishment; but his sense of demerit is not thereby lessened. And so it is with the believer; he knows that, because of what Christ has done for him, he cannot be justly condemned, but he feels and admits that in himself he is as hell-deserving as he was from the beginning. The heart of the believer solves many difficulties which the speculative understanding finds it hard to unravel. And it need not inordinately trouble him, if the latter be dissatisfied with the solution, provided he is sure that he is under the guidance of the Spirit by the word.

This Theory concerns only the Outward

6. Modern theologians in many instances object to the Protestant doctrine of justification, that it is outward; concerns only legal relations; disregards the true nature of the mystical union; and represents Christ and his righteousness as purely objective, instead of looking upon Christ as giving Himself, his life to become the life of the believer, and with his life conveying its merits and its power. We are not concerned at present with the theory on which this objection is founded, but simply with the objection itself. What is urged as an objection to the doctrine is true. It does concern what is outward and objective; what is done for the sinner rather than what is done within him. But then it is to be considered, first, that this is what the sinner needs. He requires not only that his nature should be renewed and that a new principle of spiritual or divine life should be communicated to him; but also that his guilt should be removed, his sins expiated, and justice satisfied, as the preliminary condition of his enjoying this new life, and being restored to the favour of God. And secondly, that such is the constant representation of Scripture, our only trustworthy guide in matters of religious doctrine. The Bible makes quite as prominent what Christ does for us, as what He does in us. It says as much of his objective, expiatory work, as of the communication of a higher spiritual life to believers. It is only by ignoring this objective work of Christ, or by merging justification into

inward renovation, that this objection has force or even plausibility. Protestants do not depreciate the value and necessity of the new life derived from Christ, because, in obedience to the Scriptures, they insist so strenuously upon the satisfaction which He has rendered by his perfect righteousness to the justice of God. Without the latter, the former is impossible.

10. Departures from the Protestant Doctrine

Osiander

During the lifetime of the Reformers, a very earnest controversy began in the Lutheran Church on the nature of justification. This arose from the views of Andreas Osiander, a man of distinguished learning and of a speculative turn of mind; eminent first as a preacher, and afterwards as a professor in the university of Königsberg. His principal work is entitled "De Unico Mediatore Jesu Christo et Justificatione Fidei. Confessio Andreae Osiandri." His difference of opinion from the other Reformers is clearly indicated in the following words, in which he denounces the errors which he means to oppose: "Omnes horribiliter errant. Primo, quia verbum justificare tantum pro justum reputare et pronunciare intelligunt, atque interpretantur, et non pro eo, quod est, reipsa et in veritate justum efficere. Deinde etiam in hoc, quod nullam differentiam tenent inter redemptionem et justificationem, quum tamen magna differentia sit, sicut vel inde intelligi sit, quod homines furem a suspendio redimere possunt, bonum et justum efficere non possunt. Porro etiam in hoc, quod nihil certe statuere possunt, quid tandem justitia Christi sit, quam per fidem in nobis esse, nobisque imputari oporteat. Ac postremo errant omnium rudissime etiam in hoc, quod divinam naturam Christi a justificatione separant, et Christum

dividunt atque solvunt, in quod haud dubie execrandi Satanæ opus est."

Osiander taught, (1.) That Christ has redeemed us by the satisfaction which He rendered to divine justice. (2.) But he denied that this was any part of our justification. (3.) He maintained that to justify does not mean to declare just, or to render righteous in a judicial or forensic sense, but to render inherently or subjectively just and holy. (4.) That the righteousness of Christ by which the believer is justified, and which he receives by faith, and which is imputed to him in the judgment of God, is not, as the Protestants taught, the work of Christ, consisting in what He did and suffered as the substitute of sinners, nor is it, as Romanists teach, the work of the Holy Spirit consisting in the infusion of a holy nature or of new habits of grace, but it is the "essential righteousness of God," "the divine essence," "God Himself." (5.) That consequently the proximate and real ground of our acceptance with God, and of our reception into heaven, is what we are, or what we become, in virtue of this indwelling of God in the soul.

The speculations of Osiander as to the nature of God and his relation to man, might have led him under any circumstances to adopt the peculiar views above stated, but the proximate cause was no doubt the reaction from the too exclusive prominence given at that time to the objective work of Christ. This is not to be wondered at, and perhaps was not to be blamed. The Romanists, with whom the Protestants had to contend, did not deny the necessity of an inward change in the nature of fallen man. But they made this almost all of Christ's redeeming work. What He did for the expiation of sin and for meeting the demands of justice, was only to open the way for God's giving renewing and sanctifying grace to sinners. Men were themselves to merit eternal life. It was unavoidable therefore, that the Reformers should strenuously insist upon what Christ did for us and that they should protest against confounding justification with sanctification. Osiander's cast of mind made him revolt at this, and carried him completely over to the Romish side, so far as the nature

of justification is concerned. He said that the Protestant doctrine of justification is "colder than ice." It is as though a man should pay the ransom of a Turkish slave, and leave him and his children in bondage. Still more violent is his denunciation of the doctrine that Christ's righteousness, of which we partake through faith, consists of his obedience and sufferings. What good can they do us? Christ obeyed and suffered centuries ago; we cannot appropriate what He then did and make it our own. Imputing it to us does not alter the case. It does not make us better. Speculative as well as Biblical reasons, however, prevented Osiander from accepting the Romish solution of the difficulty. What we are said to receive is "the righteousness of Christ," "the righteousness of God;" but sanctifying grace is never called the righteousness of God. If, therefore, that righteousness by which the believer is constituted righteous, be neither the obedience of Christ, nor infused grace, what can it be other than the essential righteousness of God, the divine essence itself? Calvin, who in his "Institutes" earnestly combats the theory of Osiander, says that he invented "*monstrum nescio quod essentialis justitiæ.*" "*Dilucide exprimit, se non ea justitia contentum, quæ nobis obedientia et sacrificio mortis Christi parta est, fingere nos substantialiter in Deo justos esse tam essentia quam qualitate infusa... Substantialem mixtionem ingerit, qua Deus se in nos transfundens, quasi partem sui faciat. Nam virtute Spiritus sancti fieri, ut coalescamus cum Christo, nobisque sit caput et nos ejus membra, fere pro nihilo ducit, nisi ejus essentia nobis misceatur.*"

But what theory of the nature of God and of his relation to man did Osiander hold, which admitted of this doctrine of the infusion of the divine essence into the soul? His views on this point were not clearly brought out, but the primary idea which underlies his speculation is the old doctrine of the oneness of God and man. Man is God in at least one form of his existence. He held that Christ is the image, the representative, the realized ideal of the Godhead, not as Logos or Son, but as Godman, the Theanthropos. As from its nature or from the nature of God this idea must be realized, this manifestation of God in his true idea must occur, and therefore the incarnation would

have taken place had man never sinned. The fall of Adam only modified the circumstances attending the incarnation, determining that it should involve suffering and death. But the incarnation itself, the appearance of God in fashion as a man arose from a law of the divine nature. Adam was created not after the image of God as such, but after the image of Christ; in some sort, a Godman. The affinity of this theory with the modern pantheistic speculations is apparent. Baur, therefore, is doubtless right when he says, at the close of his apologetic notice of Osiander's doctrine, that his idea of the relation between the divine and human "is that which at last found its adequate scientific expression by Schleiermacher and Hegel, that Christ as Redeemer is the perfected creation of human nature; or, that the divine nature is the truth of humanity, and human nature the reality, or existenceform (die Wirklichkeit) of the divine nature."

Stancarus

Stancarus, a contemporary and opponent of Osiander, went to the extreme of asserting that the righteousness of Christ was the work of his human nature exclusively. This doctrine was however repudiated by the Romanists as well as by Protestants. If it was Christ's human nature as such (and not the divine person) who obeyed, then the human nature in Christ was a distinct subsistence, and thus the unity of his person is destroyed. Besides, if it was not a divine person in his human nature who obeyed and suffered, then we have but a human Saviour, and a righteousness of no higher than a human value. We know from Scripture that it was the Lord of glory who was crucified, the Son of God who, being born of a woman, was made under the law.

Piscator

The first conspicuous departure from the Protestant doctrine of justification among the Reformed, was on the part of Piscator, whose denial of the imputation of the active obedience of Christ to the believer, excited for some years a good deal of discussion, but it

passed away without leaving any distinct trace in the theology of the Reformation. Baur, indeed, assigns to it more importance, as he regards it as the first step in the downfall of the whole doctrine of the satisfaction of Christ, over which he rejoices. Piscator was a native of Strasburg, and a member of the Lutheran Church, to whose service his first ministerial and professional labors were devoted. It coming to the knowledge of the ecclesiastical authorities that in his exposition of the Epistle to the Philippians he denied the ubiquity of the human nature of Christ, and taught the doctrine of predestination, he was deprived of his position in the Lutheran Church and passed over to the Reformed. He was soon appointed one of the professors of the new Institution of Hebron founded by the Duke of Nassau. He remained in connection with that institution from 1584 until his death in 1625, in the seventy-ninth year of his age. He was a prolific writer. Besides a new translation of the Bible, he wrote numerous commentaries on books of the Old and New Testaments, and conducted many controversies with Lutherans and Romanists, before he embroiled himself with the theologians of his own church. He took the ground that the "imputatio justitiæ" and "remissio peccatorum" are identical; the former means nothing more than the latter; and consequently that Christ's work consists simply in the expiation of sin. His active obedience to the divine law constitutes no part of the righteousness by which the believer is justified before God. He admits that Christ rendered a twofold obedience,—the one to the law of God as a rule of duty; the other to the special command given to Him as Mediator. He came to accomplish a certain work; to do the will of the Father, which was to make satisfaction for sin. In this we are interested; but his obedience to the moral law was for Himself, and was the necessary condition of his satisfaction. He could not have made atonement for others had He not been Himself holy. "Tribuitur morti," he says,² "quod ei tribuendum, nimirum, quod sit plenissima satisfactio pro peccatis nostris: sic etiam vitæ obedientiæ tribuitur, quod scriptura ei tribuendum perhibet, nimirum, quod sit causa, sine qua non potuerat Christus idoneus esse mediator inter Deum et hominem." Although Piscator made some effort to prove exegetically that pardon

and justification, the remission of sin and imputation of righteousness, are identical, yet his arguments against the received doctrine, that the obedience of Christ is part of our justifying righteousness, are not Biblical. The question before his mind was not simply, What do the Scriptures teach? but, What is true, logical, and symmetrical? He saw objections to the imputation of the active obedience of Christ, which seemed to him fatal, and on the ground of those objections he rejected the doctrine. Thus, for example, he argues that Christ's obedience to the law was due from Himself as a man, and therefore not imputable to others. He argues thus, "Qui Christum dicunt ubique ut hominem, Christum dieunt non hominem, dum enim dico ubique, dico Deum, qui solus est in coelo et in terra. Similiter cum dico subjectum legi, dico hominem. Qui ergo Christum subjectum legi negant, negant ipsum esse hominem." Every man as such in virtue of being a man is individually bound to obey the moral law. Christ was a man; therefore He was bound to obey the law for Himself. He did not perceive, or was not willing to admit, that the word "man" is taken in different senses in the different members of this syllogism, and therefore, the conclusion is vitiated. In the first clause, "man" means a human person; in the second clause, it means human nature. Christ was not a human person, although He assumed human nature. He was a man in the sense in which we are dust and ashes. But because we are dust, it does not follow that all that may be predicated of dust, may be predicated of us; e.g., that we have no life, no reason, no immortality. In like manner, although the eternal Son of God took upon Himself a true body and a reasonable soul, yet as He was a divine person, it does not follow that everything that is true of human persons must be true of Him. Piscator also argues that the law binds either to punishment or to obedience, but not to both at once. Therefore, if Christ's obedience is imputed to us, there was no necessity that He should die for us. On the other hand, if He died for us, there was no necessity that He should obey for us. The principle here assumed may be true with regard to unfallen man. But where sin has been committed there is need of expiation as well as of obedience, and of obedience as well as expiation, if the reward of perfect obedience is

to be conferred. Again, he says, if Christ has fulfilled the law for us, we are not bound to keep it. This is the old objection of the Jews; if justified by grace we may live in sin. But Christ has fulfilled the law for us only as a covenant of works. In that sense, says the Apostle, we are not under the law, but it does not thence follow that we are free from all moral obligation arising from our relation to God, as rational creatures. It may be true as Baur, himself a thorough skeptic in the English and American sense of that word, thinks, that this innovation of Piscator prepared the way for the rejection of the whole Scriptural doctrine of satisfaction. Certain it is that both Lutherans and Reformed united, with scarcely a dissenting voice, in the condemnation of Piscator's doctrine. It was judicially repudiated by the national Synod of France on several different occasions; first in 1603, again at La Rochelle in 1607, and afterwards in 1612 and 1613. The Swiss churches in the "Formula Consensus Helvetica," which received symbolical authority in Switzerland, pronounced clearly in favour of the old doctrine. This matter was soon lost sight of in consequence of the rise of Arminianism of far more historical importance.

The Arminian Doctrine

Jacobus Arminius, a man of learning, talents, attractive accomplishments, and exemplary character, was born in Holland 1560, and died professor in the University of Leyden, in 1609, having filled the chair of theology since 1603. His departures from the Reformed doctrines in which he had been educated were far less serious than those of his successors, although involving them, apparently, by a logical necessity. His great difficulty was with the doctrine of predestination or the sovereignty of God in election. He could not, however, get rid of that doctrine without denying the entire inability of man to do what is spiritually good. He, therefore, taught that although mankind fell in Adam and are born in a state of sin and condemnation, and are of themselves entirely unable to turn from sin to holiness, yet that they are able to cooperate with the grace of the Holy Spirit given to all men, especially to all who hear

the Gospel, in sufficient measure to enable them to repent and believe, and to persevere in holy living unto the end. But whether any man does thus repent and believe, or, having believed, perseveres in a holy life, depends on himself and not on God. The purpose of election, therefore, is not a purpose to save, and to that end to give faith and repentance to a definite number of individuals, but a purpose to save those who repent, believe, and persevere in faith until the end. The work of Christ has, therefore, an equal reference to all men. He made full satisfaction to God for the sins of all and every man, so that God can now consistently offer salvation to all men on the conditions laid down in the Gospel.

This is a self-consistent scheme. One part implies, or necessitates the admission of the others. The above statement includes all the doctrines presented by the followers of Arminius, after his death, to the authorities in the form of a Remonstrance, as a justification of their views. Hence the Arminians were called Remonstrants. The document just mentioned contains the five points on which its authors and their associates differed from the Reformed faith. The first relates to predestination, which is explained as the purpose "*illos in Christo, propter Christum et per Christum servare, qui Spiritus Sancti gratia, in eundem ejus filium credunt, et in ea, fideique obedientia, per eandem gratiam in finem perseverant: contra vero eos, qui non convertentur et infideles, in peccato et iræ subjectos relinquere, et condemnare, secundum illud Evang. Joann. 3:36.*"

The second relates to the work of Christ, as to which it is said, "*Proinde Jesum Christum mundi servatorem pro omnibus et singulis mortuum esse, atque ita quidem, ut omnibus per mortem Christi reconciliationem et peccatorum remissionem impetravit: ea tamen conditione, ut nemo illa remissione peccatorum re ipsa fruatur, præter hominem fidelem, et hoc quoque secundum Evang. Joann. 3:16, et 1 Joann. 2:2.*"

The third, concerning the sinner's ability, declares, "Hominem vero salutarem fidem a se ipso non habere, nec vi liberi sui arbitrii, quandoquidem in statu defectionis et peccati nihil boni, quandoquidem vere bonum est, quale quid est fides salutaris, ex se possit cogitare, vel facere: sed necessarium esse eum a Deo in Christo per Spiritum Sanctum regni et renovari mente, affectibus, seu voluntate et omnibus facultatibus, ut aliquid boni possit intelligere, cogitare, velle et perficere. Ev. Joann. 15:5." No Augustinian, whether Lutheran or Calvinist, can say more than that, or desire more to be said by others.

The fourth article, concerning grace, however, shows the point of departure: "Hanc Dei gratiam esse initium, progressum ac perfectionem omnis boni, atque id eo quidem usque ut ipse homo regenitus absque hac præcedentia, seu adventitia excitante, consequente et cooperante gratia, neque boni quid cogitare, velle, aut facere possit, neque etiam ulli malæ tentatione resistere; adeo quidem ut omnia bona opera, quæ excogitare possumus, Dei gratiæ in Christo tribuenda sint; quod vero modum operationis illius gratiæ, illa non irresistibilis; de multis enim dicitur eos Spiritui Sancto resistere, Act. 7:51 et alibi multis locis." It was not to be expected, in a brief exposition of principles designed for the justification of those who hold them, as members of a Reformed or Calvinistic church, that doubtful terms should be explained. It is beyond controversy, however, and, it is to be believed, is not controverted, that irresistible is here used in the sense of certainly efficacious. The Holy Spirit operates on the hearts of all men. Some are thereby renewed and brought to faith and repentance; others are not. This difference, according to the Remonstrants, is not to be referred to the nature of the influence exerted, but to the fact that some yield to this grace and cooperate with it; while others reject and resist it.

The fifth article refers to the perseverance of the saints, and is indefinite. It admits that the Spirit furnishes grace abundantly sufficient to enable the believer to persevere in holiness: "Sed an illi ipsi negligentia sua initium sui esse in Christo deserere non possint,

et praesentem mundum iterum amplecti, a sancta doctrina ipsis semel tradita deficere, conscientiae naufragium facere, a gratia excidere; penitus ex sacra Scriptura esset expendum, antequam illud cum plena animi tranquillitate et πληροφορία docere possent." Of course no man who believed the doctrine could write thus, and this doubtful mode of expression was soon laid aside, and "falling from grace," in the common sense of the phrase, was admitted to be an Arminian doctrine.

It will be observed that the doctrine of justification is not embraced in the five points in the Remonstrance as presented to the authorities in Holland, and as made the basis of the decisions of the Synod of Dort. The aberration of the Arminians, however, from the faith of the Reformed churches, extended to all the doctrines connected with the plan of salvation. Arminius himself, at least, held far higher and more Scriptural views on original sin, inability, and the necessity of supernatural grace, than those which have since become so prevalent even among the Reformed or Calvinistic churches themselves. In matters concerning the method of salvation, especially as to the nature of Christ's work and its application to the believer, they at first adhered closely to the language of the Reformed confessions. Thus they did not hesitate to say that Christ made full satisfaction for the sins of men; that He was a ransom, a sacrifice, a propitiation; that He made expiation for sin; that his righteousness or obedience is the ground of our acceptance with God; that the faith which saves is not mere assent to truth, or pious confidence in God, but specifically faith in Christ as the Saviour of men; and that justification is an act of God pronouncing the sinner just, or in which He pardons sin and accepts the sinner as righteous. All this is satisfactory to the ear. Language, however, admits of different interpretations; and it soon became apparent and avowed that the Remonstrants intended something very different from what the Reformed Church meant to express by the same terms.

1. They said that Christ's work was a satisfaction to divine justice. But they did not mean by satisfaction, either a "solutio," a real value

rendered for what was due; nor even an "acceptio," taking one thing for another as an equivalent; but an "acceptilatio," a gracious acceptance as a satisfaction of that which in its own nature was no equivalent; as though God should accept the life of a brute for that of a man; or faith for perfect obedience. Neither did the Remonstrants mean by justice the attribute which requires the righteous distribution of rewards and punishments, and which renders it necessary that the penalty of the law should be executed in case of transgression.

With regard to this latter point (the nature of justice) the language of Grotius, and of the great body of the Remonstrant or Arminian theologians, is perfectly explicit. Grotius says: "Poenas infligere, aut a pœnis aliquem liberare, quem punire possis, quod justificare vocat Scriptura, non est nisi rectoris, qua talis primo et per se: ut, puta, in familia patris; in republica regis, in universo Dei... Unde sequitur, omnino hic Deum considerandum, ut rectorem." Again,² "Ratio [cur rectori relaxare legem talem non liceat, nisi causa aliqua accedat, si non necessaria, certe sufficiens'] ... est, quod actus ferendi aut relaxandi legem non sit actus absoluti dominii, sed actus imperii, qui tendere debeat ad boni ordinis conservationem." "Pœna enim omnis propositum habet bonum commune." "Prudentia quoque hoc nomine rectorem ad poenam incitat. Augetur præterea causa puniendi, ubi lex aliqua publicata est, quæ poenam minatur. Nam tunc omissio pœnæ ferme aliquid detrahit de legis autoritate apud subditos."⁴

Here everything is purely governmental. It is not justice, in the proper and ordinary sense of the word, that is satisfied, but God's wise and benevolent regard to the interests of his moral government. This changes everything. If God's justice be not satisfied guilt is not removed, and sin is not expiated. And therefore conscience is not appeased; nor can the real authority and honour of the law be upheld.

As to the other point, the nature of the satisfaction rendered; it was not a real equivalent, which by its intrinsic value met the obligations of the sinner, but it was something graciously accepted as such. Although Grotius rejects the use of the word "acceptilatio," and endeavours to show that it does not express his meaning, nevertheless, though he repudiates the word, he retains the idea. He says, "Ea est pretii natura, ut sui valore aut æstimatione alterum moveat ad concedendam rem, aut jus aliquod, puta impunitatem." This amounts to the principle of Duns Scotus that a thing avails (is worth) for what God pleases to take it. Although Grotius does not carry out the principle to the length to which the Schoolmen carried it, and say that God might have accepted the death of one man as a satisfaction for the sins of the world, or the blood of bulls or of goats as a real expiation, nevertheless, he teaches that God graciously accepted "aliquid pro aliquo," the death of Christ for the death for all the world, not because of its being a real equivalent in itself, but because as ruler, having the right to remit sin without any satisfaction, He saw that the interests of his government could thereby be promoted. Still more clearly is this idea expressed by Limborch:2 "In eo errant quam maxime, quod velint redemptionis pretium per omnia equivalens esse debere miseræ illi, e qua redemptio fit: redemptionis pretium enim constitui solet pro libera æstimatione illius, qui captivum detinet, non autem solvi pro captivi merito.... Ita pretium, quod Christus persolvit, juxta Dei Patris æstimatione persolutum est."

According to Grotius, Christ died as an example, "exemplum pœnæ." The whole efficacy of his work was its moral impression on the universe. It was not an expiation or satisfaction for past sins, but a means of deterring from the commission of sin in the future. This, as Baur and Strauss⁴ remark, is the point in which the theory of Grotius and that of Socinus coincide. They both refer the efficacy of Christ's work to the moral impression which it makes on the minds of intelligent creatures. They refer that moral influence, indeed, to different causes, but moral impression is all the efficacy it has. Although the word satisfaction is retained by Grotius, the idea

attached to it by the Church is rejected. The leading Remonstrant or Arminian theologians, as Episcopius, Curcellæus, and Limborch, differ from Grotius in their mode of presenting this subject. Instead of regarding the work of Christ as an example of punishment, designed to deter from the commission of sin, they adhere to the Scriptural mode of regarding Him as a ransom and sacrifice. The difference however is more in form than in reality. They admit that Christ redeems us by giving Himself as a ransom for many. But a ransom, as Curcellæus says, is not an equivalent; it is anything the holder of the captive sees fit to accept. It is admitted, also, that Christ gave Himself as a sacrifice for our salvation; but a sacrifice is said not to be a satisfaction to justice, but simply the condition on which pardon is granted. Under the Old Testament God pardoned sin on the occasion of the sacrifice of irrational animals; under the New Testament, on the occasion of the sacrifice of Christ. "Sacrificia," says Limborch, "non sunt solutiones debitorum, neque plenariæ pro peccatis satisfactiones: sed illis peractis conceditur gratuita peccati remissio." "Redemptionis pretium constitui solet pro libera æstimatione illius, qui captivum detinet." We know, however, from Scripture that a sacrifice was not merely an arbitrarily appointed antecedent of gratuitous forgiveness; it was not simply an acknowledgment of guilt. We know also that the blood of bulls and of goats under the Old Testament could not take away sin; it availed only to the purifying of the flesh, or the remission of ceremonial penalties. The only efficacy of the Old Testament sacrifices, so far as sin committed against God is concerned, was sacramental; that is, they signified, sealed, and applied the benefits of the only real and effectual expiation for sin, to those who believed. As the victim symbolically bore the penalty due to the offender, so the eternal Son of God really bore our sins, really became a curse for us, and thus made a true and perfect satisfaction to God for our offences.

2. As the Remonstrants denied that Christ's work was a real satisfaction for sin, they of necessity denied any real justification of the sinner. Justification with them is merely pardon. This is asserted by Grotius in the passage above cited; and even the Rev. Richard

Watson, whose excellent system of theology, or "Theological Institutes," which is deservedly in high repute among the Wesleyan Methodists, not only over and over defines justification as pardon, but elaborately argues the question. "The first point," he says, "which we find established by the language of the New Testament is, that justification, the pardon and remission of sins, the non-imputation of sin, and the imputation of righteousness, are terms and phrases of the same import." He then goes on to establish that position.

If therefore, pardon and justification are distinct things, the one the executive act of a ruler, the other a judicial act; the one setting aside the demands of justice, the other a declaration that justice is satisfied; then those who reduce justification to mere pardon, deny the doctrine of justification as understood and professed by the Lutheran and Reformed churches. It of course is not intended that these Remonstrant or Arminian theologians do not hold what they call justification; nor is it denied that they at times, at least, express their doctrine in the very language of the Symbols of the Protestant churches. Thus the Remonstrants say, "*Justificatio est actio Dei, quam Deus pure puto in sua ipsius mente efficit, quia nihil aliud est, quam volitio aut decretum, quo peccata remittere, et justitiam imputare aliquando vult iis, qui credunt, id est, quo vult pœnas, peccatis eorum promeritas, iis non infligere, eosque tanquam justos tractare et premio afficere.*" Nevertheless they tell us that they mean by this only pardon. Protestants, when they say justification includes pardon "and" the imputation of righteousness, mean two distinct things by pardon and imputation of righteousness. The Remonstrants regard them as identical, and, therefore, can use the very language of Protestants, while rejecting their doctrine. As every one feels and knows that when a criminal is pardoned by the executive, and allowed to resume his rights of property and right of voting, he is not thereby justified; so every candid mind must admit that there is an immense difference between the Remonstrant or Arminian doctrine of justification and that held as the cardinal principle of the Reformation by both Lutherans and Reformed.

3. This difference becomes still more apparent when we consider what the Remonstrants make the ground of justification. As they deny that Christ made any real satisfaction to divine justice (as distinguished from benevolence), so they deny that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the believer as the ground of his justification. On this point, Limborch says, "Hæc autem, quæ nobis imputatur, non est Christi justitia; nusquam enim Scriptura docet, Christi justitiam nobis imputari; sed tantum fidem nobis imputari in justitiam, et quidem propter Christum." And Curcellæus³ says, "Nullibi docet Scriptura justitiam Christi nobis imputari. Et id absurdum est. Nemo enim in se injustus aliena justitia potest esse formaliter justus, non magis, quam aliena albedine Æthiops esse albus."

As the righteousness of Christ is not imputed to the believer, the ground of his justification, that which is accepted as righteousness, is faith and its fruits, or faith and evangelical obedience. On this subject Limborch says, that under the new covenant God demands "obedientiam fidei, hoc est, non rigidam et omnibus æqualem, prout exigebat lex; sed tantam, quantam fides, id est, certa de divinis promissionibus persuasio, in unoquoque efficere potest; in qua etiam Deus multas imperfectiones et lapsus condonat, modo animo sincero præceptorum ipsius observationi incumbamus, et continuo in eadem proficere studeamus."

And again, "Deus non judicat hominum justitiam esse perfectam, imo eam judicat esse imperfectam; sed justitiam, quam imperfectam judicat, gratiose accipit ac si perfecta esset." He, therefore,³ thus defines justification, "Est gratiosa æstimatio, seu potius acceptatio justitiæ nostræ imperfectæ (quæ, si Deus rigide nobiscum agere vellet, in judicio Dei nequaquam consistere posset) pro perfecta, propter Jesum Christum."

The same view is presented when he speaks of faith in its relation to justification. Faith is said to be imputed for righteousness; but Limborch says, "Sciendum, quando dicimus, nos fide justificari, nos

non excludere opera, quæ fides exigit et tanquam fœcunda mater producit; sed ea includere." Again,⁵ "Fides est conditio in nobis et a nobis requisita, ut justificationem consequamur. Est itaque talis actus, qui, licet in se spectatus perfectus nequaquam sit, sed in multis deficiens, tamen a Deo gratiosa et liberrima voluntate pro pleno et perfecto acceptatur et propter quem Deus homini gratiose remissionem peccatorum et vitæ æternæ præmium conferre vult."

Fletcher says, "With respect to the Christless law of paradisaical obedience, we entirely disclaim sinless perfection." "We shall not be judged by that law; but by a law adapted to our present state and circumstances, a milder law, called the law of Christ." "Our Heavenly Father never expects of us, in our debilitated state, the obedience of immortal Adam in paradise."

Dr. Peck says, "The standard of character set up in the Gospel must be such as is practicable by man, fallen as he is. Coming up to this standard is what we call Christian perfection."

Under the covenant of works as made with Adam, perfect obedience was the condition of acceptance with God and of eternal life; under the Gospel, for Christ's sake, imperfect, or evangelical obedience, is the ground of justification, i.e., it is that (propter quam) on account of which God graciously grants us the remission of sin and the reward of eternal life.

We have then the three great systems. First, that of the Romanists, which teaches that on account of the work of Christ God grants, through Christian baptism, an infusion of divine grace, by which all sin is purged from the soul and all ground for the infliction of the penalty is removed and the sinner rendered inherently just or holy. This is the first justification. Then in virtue of the new principle of spiritual life thus imparted, the baptized or regenerated are enabled to perform good works, which are really meritorious and on account of which they are admitted to heaven.

Secondly, the Arminian theory, that on account of what Christ has done, God is pleased to grant sufficient grace to all men, and to accept the imperfect obedience which the believer is thus enabled to render in lieu of the perfect obedience required under the covenant made with Adam, and on account of that imperfect obedience, eternal life is graciously bestowed.

Thirdly, the Protestant doctrine that Christ, as the representative and substitute of sinners or of his people, takes their place under the law, and in their name and in their behalf fulfils all righteousness, thereby making a real, perfect, and infinitely meritorious satisfaction to the law and justice of God, which righteousness is imputed, or set to the account of the believer, who is thereupon and on that account freely pardoned and pronounced righteous in the sight of God, and entitled not only to the remission of sin but also to eternal life. Being united to Christ by faith, the believer becomes partaker of his life, so that it is not he that lives but Christ that liveth in him, and the life which the believer now lives in the flesh is by faith of the Son of God, who loved him, and gave Himself for him.

Comparison of the Different Doctrines

The first remark which suggests itself on the comparison of these several schemes is, that the relation between the believer and Christ is far more close, peculiar, and constant on the Protestant scheme than on any other. He is dependent on Him every hour; for the imputation of his righteousness; for the supplies of the Spirit of life; and for his care, guidance, and intercession. He must look to Him continually; and continually exercise faith in Him as an ever present Saviour in order to live. According to the other schemes, Christ has merely made the salvation of all men possible. There his work ended. According to Romanists, He has made it possible that God should give sanctifying grace in baptism; according to the Remonstrants, He has rendered it possible for Him to give sufficient grace to all men whereby to sanctify and save themselves. We are well aware that this is theory; that the true people of God, whether Romanists or

Remonstrants, do not look on Christ thus as a Saviour afar off. They doubtless have the same exercises towards Him that their fellow believers have; nevertheless, such is the theory. The theory places a great gulf between the soul and Christ.

Secondly, it hardly admits of question that the Protestant view conforms to the Scriptural mode of presenting the plan of salvation. Christ in the Bible is declared to be the head of his people, their representative; they were in Him in such a sense that they died in Him; they are raised with Him, and sit with Him in heavenly places. They were in Him as the race was in Adam, and as branches are in the vine. They individually receive the sprinkling of that blood which cleanses from all sin. They are constituted righteous by his obedience. As He was made sin for them, so are they made the righteousness of God in Him. He is not only an example of punishment as Grotius represents, a mere governmental device, but a sacrifice substituted for us, on whose head every believer must lay his hand and to whom he must transfer the burden of his sins.

Thirdly, what is included indeed in the above, but is so important and decisive as to require distinct and repeated mention; all schemes, other than the Protestant, refer the proximate ground of our acceptance with God to our own subjective character. It is because of our own goodness that we are regarded and treated as righteous. Whereas conscience demands, the Scriptures reveal, and the believer instinctively seeks something better than that. His own goodness is badness. It cannot satisfy his own bleared vision; how then can it appear before the eyes of God? It matters not how the Romanist may exalt his "inward habits of grace;" or how the Arminian may sublimate his evangelical obedience to perfection; neither can satisfy either the conscience or God.

Fourthly, the Protestant doctrine is the only one on which the soul can live. This has been urged before when speaking of the work of Christ. It is fair to appeal from theology to hymnology; from the head to the heart; from what man thinks to what God makes men feel. It is

enough to say on this point, that Lutheran and Reformed Christians can find nowhere, out of the Bible, more clear, definite, soul-satisfying expression of their doctrinal views upon this subject, than are to be found in many of the hymns of the Latin and Arminian churches. As a single example may be cited the following stanzas from John Wesley's "Hymns and Spiritual Songs":—

"Join, earth and heaven to bless
The Lord our Righteousness.
The mystery of redemption this,
This the Saviour's strange design—
Man's offence was counted his.
Ours his righteousness divine.
"In Him complete we shine;
His death, his life, is mine;
Fully am I justified,
Free from sin, and more than free,
Guiltless, since for me He died;
Righteous, since He lived for me."

11. Modern Views on Justification

Rationalistic Theories

These cannot be given in detail. Certain classes of opinions can be referred to only in the briefest manner. The Rationalists were divided into two classes; first, those who regarded the Scriptures as a supernatural revelation of natural religion, or of the truths of reason; and secondly, those who denied the supernatural origin of the Scriptures altogether, assigning to them no higher authority than belongs to the writings of good and wise men.

The former class came to agree very nearly with the latter as to what the Bible actually teaches, or, at least, as to what is by us to be regarded and received as true. Those who admitted the divine origin of the Scriptures got rid of its distinctive doctrines by the adoption of a low theory of inspiration, and by the application of arbitrary principles of interpretation. Inspiration was, in the first instance, confined to the religious teachings of the Bible, then to the ideas or truths, but not to the form in which they were presented, nor to the arguments by which they were supported. The fact that Christ saves men in some way was admitted, but not as a sacrifice nor as a ransom, nor by being a substitute for sinners. The miracles of Christ were acknowledged as historical facts, but they were explained as mere natural events distorted by the imaginations of spectators and historians. It was granted by some that Christ and the Apostles did teach the Church doctrines, but this, it was said, was done only by way of accommodation to the prejudices, superstitions, or modes of thought of the men of that generation. The first step in this process was the denial of all distinction between the prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices of Christ. In this way a wet sponge was passed over all the doctrines of redemption, and their outlines obliterated. This unnatural process could not be long continued, and, therefore, the majority of Rationalists soon threw off all regard to the normal authority of the Bible, and avowed their faith in nothing which did not commend itself to their own understanding as true, and for that reason alone.

As to the doctrine of justification, the whole tendency of the efforts during this period was, as Baur correctly says, to make the

reconciliation of man to God the work of the man himself. "A man was entitled to regard himself as reconciled with God as soon as he determined to repent and to reform." God was regarded as a father. A father is displeased with a son only so long as he is disobedient. The only end of any chastisement he may inflict, is the reformation of his child. If that be accomplished, all necessity and all propriety of punishment cease. Wegscheider, a representative of this class of theologians, says,² "Quicumque e vita turpi, qua pœnas sibi contraxit, ad virtutem emerit, is eadem proportione, qua jam in virtutis studio progressus fuerit, in gratiam cum Deo reversus, ab eodem præmiis dignus judicabitur."

Philosophical Theories

The philosophical theories on this subject were as different as the systems on which they were founded. Some of these systems were theistic, others pantheistic, and others monistic, i.e., founded on the oneness of God and man, without denying the distinct personality of either.

The influence of Kant's philosophy upon theology, for a time at least, was very great, and in some aspects salutary. As he exalted the power of the pure reason, making it give law to the outward, subordinating, as his disciples say, the objective to the subjective, so in the sphere of religion and morality he exalted the power and authority of the practical reason. Everything was subordinate to moral excellence. Happiness was not the end. It was only a means of promoting and rewarding what is morally good. The attainment of the highest amount of moral excellence requires perfect harmony between happiness and goodness, that is, that rational creatures should be happy in exact proportion to their goodness, and miserable in proportion as they are wicked. The punishment of sin is therefore inevitable. It is determined by the immutable moral order of the universe, which can no more be changed or set aside than any physical law on which the existence or order of the external world depends.

From these principles some of the Kantian theologians inferred that the pardon of sin is impossible. Misery is as inseparable from sin as pain is from the laceration of the body. If the only punishment of sin, however, be its natural consequences, then the removal of sin effects the removal of punishment. This determines the view which many of the disciples of Kant take of the nature of redemption. It is purely subjective. Men are delivered from sin and thereby from its punishment.

To others, however, this view was unsatisfactory, (1.) Because the punishment of sin is not purely or exclusively natural. It is not so even in this world, as is proved by the deluge, by the destruction of the cities of the plain, and by a thousand other instances. Much less is it true with regard to the future world. Conscience is not the only worm that never dies, or remorse the only fire which is never quenched. (2.) Because this theory reverses the natural order of events. It makes reformation precede pardon, whereas pardon must precede reformation. On this point Bretschneider quotes even Ewald² as saying, "It is as unpsychological as it is unchristian so to present Christian reformation, that a man must become better before he is forgiven. It is precisely through the love of God anticipating our reformation, by which the man morally dead is quickened, that the elements of all religion, gratitude, trust, and love are called into exercise." This is certainly Paul's doctrine. (3.) The theory in question overlooks guilt, responsibility to justice for sins already committed. (4.) The ends of punishment (according to the Kantians) are, first, the satisfaction of the moral excellence of God, who by necessity of his moral perfection must punish sin; secondly, the improvement of the offender; and thirdly, the upholding the moral order of the universe. The two former of these ends, Bretschneider says, may be answered by the reformation of the sinner. When a man ceases to sin, he ceases to be opposed to God, and God ceases to be opposed to him. But the third end of punishment, namely, preserving the moral order of the universe, is not answered by the sinner's reformation. He is not the only person to be considered. The interests of morality would suffer, if he were rendered happy

notwithstanding his past transgression. The question then is, is there any way in which the authority of the moral law can be sustained, and yet the sinner be forgiven and rendered blessed? The Church answer to this question, the disciples of Kant reject as contrary to reason; but reason, says Bretschneider, has nothing to object to the doctrine stated generally that God can consistently pardon sin for Christ's sake. He sums up under the following heads, what reason may accept in regard to this whole subject. (1.) That the divine nature of Christ rendered his sufferings more important for the spiritual world and more available for man than they otherwise would have been. (2.) We cannot properly say that He suffered the penalty of the law, or the punishment of our sins, but that He endured his unmerited sufferings for the good of the world. (3.) That He did not make satisfaction for sin, but rendered secure the moral order of the universe. (4.) Although He did not make satisfaction, He procured or mediated our pardon. He is not our sponsor, but our "mediator salutis." (5.) The expression "the merit of Christ" does not mean any good imputed to us, or any title belonging to us, but simply the claim of Christ that his sufferings shall avail to the good of men. (6.) The word "reconciliation" is anthropopathic. It does not express any change in God; but either objectively the possibility of pardon, or subjectively the hope of pardon. (7.) "To impute the merit of Christ" does not mean that God regards Christ's obedience as our obedience, or his sufferings as our punishment, but simply that, through love, God has determined to render his sufferings available for the good of men. (8.) That Christ's death was vicarious in so far that in consequence thereof sin may be pardoned in the renewed. (9.) Justification is the application to individuals of the general declaration of God that He will save all who strive to reform. This is the highest form in which theologians regarded as rationalistic are willing to receive the doctrines of atonement and justification.

Speculative Theologians

The views of the speculative theologians on these points have already been presented in the chapters on the person of Christ and on his

work, as fully as is proper in such a work as this.

However much this class of theologians may differ as to their philosophical principles, or as to the length to which they carry those principles in their explanation of Christian doctrine, they agree, first, in rejecting the Church view of the plan of salvation; they deny that Christ obeyed the law and bore its penalty vicariously, or as the substitute of sinners; they deny that his righteousness is imputed to the believer as the ground of his justification; they deny that saving faith consists in receiving and resting on the righteousness of Christ as something objective; they deny that justification is a forensic or judicial act in which God pronounces the sinner just, not on the ground of his subjective state or character, but on the ground of what Christ has done for him. All this they pronounce mechanical, external, magical, unreal, and unsatisfactory. On the other hand, they agree in representing justification as an act by which the sinner is made inherently or subjectively just; and consequently that his acceptance with God, and his title to eternal life, are founded on what he is; they agree in regarding faith as that state of mind which renders the sinner receptive of the infusion of whatever it is that renders him thus subjectively righteous in the sight of God. What that is, is the main point on which their representations differ. Those who regard man as only a form of the manifestation of God, say that one man's being justified and not another, means that God is more fully developed in the one than in the other; or that the one realizes more truly the idea of man than the other; and this, after all, consists in one's coming to the consciousness of his oneness with God, which others have not attained. "The most universal and essential idea of redemption and reconciliation is man's becoming one with God. The necessary objective assumption, on which alone the individual can be one with God, or redeemed and reconciled, is the truth, that man as such is one with God (dass der Mensch an sich mit Gott Eins ist)." This, according to one view, is an eternal process; God is ever becoming man, and man is ever returning into God. According to Schleiermacher, as already repeatedly stated, this manifestation of God in man was hindered and could never become perfect by a

process of natural development; and, therefore, by a new creative act Christ was produced, in whom the idea of man was fully realized, or in whom the oneness of God and man was clearly exhibited, and from Him a new process of development commenced as perfectly natural as the process before his advent, and the redemption of man consists in the communication of the sinlessness and blessedness of Christ to the individual. This is expressed commonly by saying that the life of Christ,—not the Holy Spirit as derived from Him; not his divine nature; not his humanity; but his divine-human life,—is communicated to the Church and to all its members. In other words, as Christ is God in human form, so is every believer. The incarnation goes forward in the Church. In the language of the older mystics, what is communicated is "the essential righteousness of God," or "the essence of God," the life of God, or God Himself.

According to this view the objective work of Christ, what He did and suffered is of no avail for us; it is not that which makes us righteous, or by which we are redeemed. Redemption and reconciliation are a purely subjective process; something which takes place in the sinner's own soul, and not something which was done for him. It matters little whether there was a historical Christ or not; or, at least, whether the facts recorded of Him be true or untrue; whether the Gospels are historical or mythical.

According to another view, the work of Christ was in no sense a satisfaction to divine justice; neither his obedience nor his suffering was designed to be set over to his people with its merit, as the ground of their justification. The Word became flesh. He assumed our fallen humanity into personal union with Himself. This necessitated conflict and suffering as the only way in which the new life could triumph over the law of sin and death which belonged to our fallen humanity. This was the atonement of Christ, the triumph of health over disease. This was the victory of Christ over sin and hell. Thus He becomes the author of salvation to men. Humanity in Christ suffered and died, and rose again. That humanity is our nature. It is that which constitutes us what we are. By union with the Church, which is

the body of Christ animated by his theanthropic nature or life, we become one with Him. What is communicated to us is not his merit, nor his Spirit, but his essence, his substance, his life. There is no dualism between the soul and body. They are one life. The soul externalizes itself in the body, they are one. So there is no dualism in Christ; not a divine and human substance; not a divine and human life; but one life which is simply and purely human and yet divine; for God and man are one; and humanity reaches its completion only when thus identified with the divine. This divine-human life passes over from Christ to the Church; and this takes place in the way of history, growth, and development. Partaking thus of the life of Christ, we partake of its righteousness, its holiness, and its glory. Thus redemption is purely subjective. It is wrought in us, although the source is without us. As we partake of Adam's sin and condemnation, because we partake of his nature; so we partake of Christ's righteousness and holiness because we partake of his divine-human life, or of humanity as healed and exalted in Him.

Ebrard of Erlangen

There is an important class of modern theological writers, of whom Dr. J. H. A. Ebrard of Erlangen may be taken as a representative, who consider themselves faithful to the doctrines of the Reformation, while developing them into new forms. As Ebrard represents this class of writers among the Reformed, so Delitzsch does the same for the Lutheran theologians. These writers are abundantly orthodox in their exposition of the nature of Christ's work. This is especially true of Delitzsch in his admirable treatise on "The Vicarious Satisfaction of Christ." As these writers identify regeneration and justification, their views may be found briefly stated in the chapter on regeneration.

Christ, it is admitted, made expiation for sin and satisfied the justice of God as our substitute by his vicarious obedience and sufferings. This righteousness, however, becomes ours not by being received by faith and imputed to us by the just judgment of God, but by

regeneration, whereby we become partakers of the life, substance, or essence, however it may be designated, of Christ. On this subject Ebrard says: "Regeneration is the substantial objective ground both of the transient act of justification, and of the progressive work of sanctification; whereas conversion (repentance and faith) is the subjective condition of both. And justification as the act of the Father, is a forensic judicial act; as the act of Christ, it is identical with regeneration, i.e., with the real implantation of Christ in us and of us in Christ." Both propositions, therefore, he says, are equally true, namely, "Christ justifies us; and faith justifies us." In explaining this, he says: "Δίκαιος before God is one who does not merit punishment; who is free from guilt in the sight of God's eternal law, either because he is absolutely sinless, or holy, never having contracted guilt, as in the case of Christ; or because his guilt has been expiated, and his lack of the righteousness demanded by the law is covered. Δικαιοῦν means either to acknowledge as δίκαιος one who is δίκαιος; or to make δίκαιος one who is not δίκαιος." The latter is its sense when used in reference to sinners. In their case, "The act of δικαίωσις consists, (1.) In the gift of the expiation (Sühne) made by Christ without the sinner's coöperation; and (2.) In the gift of the absolute righteousness of Christ, in such sense that God does not regard the sinner as he is by nature, and by self-development, but as he is as implanted in Christ." There is, therefore, a clear distinction to be made between the appropriation of righteousness, and the procuring of righteousness. "Christ has procured and merited (erworben hat) righteousness by his historical life and sufferings; it is applied by Christ's being born in us." "The Scriptures," he says, "do not speak of Christ's righteousness being imputed to us. They teach that it comes upon us (Rom. 5:18), and becomes our own. It is our own, however, because the person of Christ becomes ours in the strictest possible (allerrealsten, the most literal) sense of the terms." What Ebrard contends for is (die substantielle Lebenseinheit mit der Person Christi), the substantial oneness of life with Christ; or, as he often elsewhere expresses it, "the mysterious, mystical communication of the substance of Christ to the central substance of man."² Dr. Alexander Schweizer of Zürich, although differing much

in other points from Ebrard, agrees with him in this. The essential element in the work of Christ, he says, "is the founding and upholding a community animated or pervaded by his theanthropic life (gottmenschlichen Lebenspotenz). Dr. Nevin⁴ says, "Our nature reaches after a true and real union with the nature of God, as the necessary complement and consummation of its own life. The idea which it embodies can never be fully actualized, under any other form. The incarnation is the proper completion of humanity. Christ is the true ideal man." "The incarnation was no mere theophany; no transient wonder; no illusion exhibited to the senses... The Word became flesh; not a single man only, as one among many; but 'flesh,' or humanity in its universal conception. How else could He be the principle of a general life, the origin of a new order of existence for the human world as such? How else could the value of his mediatorial work be made over to us in a real way, by a true imputation, and not a legal fiction only?" "Christianity is a life, not only as revealed at first in Christ, but as continued also in the Church. It flows over from Christ to his people, always in this form. They do not simply bear his name and acknowledge his doctrine. They are so united to Him as to have part in the substance of his life itself."² He had before said, that "by the hypostatical union of the two natures in the person of Jesus Christ, our humanity as fallen in Adam was exalted again to a new and imperishable divine life." "The object of the incarnation was to couple the human nature in real union with the Logos, as a permanent source of life." Again,⁴ "the new life of which Christ is the source and organic principle, is in all respects a true human life; ... not a new humanity, wholly dissevered from that of Adam; but the humanity of Adam itself, only raised to a higher character, and filled with new meaning and power, by its union with the divine nature.... Christ's life, as now described, rests not in his separate person, but passes over to his people; thus constituting the Church, which is his body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all." "Christ communicates his own life substantially to the soul on which He acts, causing it to grow into his very nature. This is the mystical union; the basis of our whole salvation; the only medium by which it is possible for us to have an interest in the grace

of Christ under any other view." With his substance, his life, his divine-human nature thus communicated to the soul come his merit, his holiness, his power, his glory. These are predicates of the nature which becomes ours, constituting our personal life and character. Even the resurrection is to be effected, not by the power of Christ operating "ab extra," as when He raised Lazarus from the dead, but by "a new divine element, introduced into our nature by the incarnation."⁶

Objections to these Theories

In opposition to these views it may be said very briefly in the way of recapitulation of what has been more fully said in the chapters above referred to,—

1. That this is a philosophy. The scheme has its entire basis in a philosophical theory as to the nature of man and his relation to God. This is undeniable, and is hardly denied. Dr. Nevin states three "scientific principles," ignorance of which led the Reformers to a misapprehension and imperfect representation of Christianity, and the recognition of which and of their application to theology, enables the modern theologian to set forth the nature and plan of salvation in a much more satisfactory light. Those principles are, (1.) The true import of organic law. The Reformers did not make a clear distinction, he says, "between the idea of the organic law which constitutes the proper identity of a human body, and the material volume it is found to embrace as exhibited to the senses." There may be, therefore, a real communication of Christ and even of his body to his people without a communication of his flesh. (2.) The absolute unity involved in personality. In the case of Christ, body, soul, and divinity are united in "a single indivisible life," so that where the one is, all are. To communicate Christ to the soul is therefore to communicate that indivisible life, including in it as an organizing, organic principle, body, soul, and divinity. (3.) The distinction between individual and generic life. "In every sphere of life," it is said, "the individual and the general are found closely united in the

same subject." The acorn, in one view, is only a single existence; but it includes the force of a life capable of reaching far beyond itself. The life of a forest of oaks is only the expansion of the life of the original acorn, "and the whole general existence thus produced is bound together, inwardly and organically, by as true and close a unity as that which holds in any of the single existences embraced in it, separately considered." Thus also Adam, in one view, was a man; in another, he was the man. A whole world of separate personalities lay involved in his life, as a generic principle or root. "Adam lives in his posterity as truly as he has ever lived in his own person." In like manner, although in a higher form, the life of Christ is to be viewed under the same twofold aspect. In one view the Saviour was a man; but in another, He was the man, "the Son of man, in whose person stood revealed the true idea of humanity, under its ultimate and most comprehensive form. Without any loss or change of character in the first view, his life is carried over in this last view continually into the persons of his people. He lives in Himself, and yet lives in them really and truly at the same time." As we participate in Adam's whole nature, soul and body, so the people of Christ participate in his whole nature, body, soul, and divinity. These are one indivisible life; and that one theanthropic life is communicated to believers and constitutes them Christians. In this is included all their participation in the righteousness, merit, and glory of their Redeemer.

Behind and under these three scientific principles there is another without which the three mentioned amount to nothing; namely, the unity of God and man. Man in his highest form; the ideal or perfect man; He in whom the idea of humanity is fully realized, is God. What does it amount to, if we admit that "organic law" constitutes identity, as in the case of man; or that personality includes the idea of "one indivisible life;" that in man there is not one life of the body and another of the soul, that these are only different manifestations of one and the same life; that the soul can no more be without the body than the body without the soul; and that in Christ there is not one life of the divinity and another of his humanity? Suppose we deny what the Church in all ages has affirmed, that there are two ἐνέργειαι in

Christ, what does this amount to? Or what does it avail to admit the realistic doctrine of a generic life; if that life (one and indivisible) be merely human, Adamic? How can it redeem us? It is only on the assumption that the human and the divine are one, that this unity, fully realized in Christ, constitutes the "one indivisible life" which passes over to us; that it has any redeeming power; and that it exalts man from his degradation, and brings him back to conscious as well as real unity with God.

This theory as presented by Schleiermacher, its author in modern times, was undeniably pantheistic; as held by many of his disciples, it is, in their apprehension, theistic. In either form the leading idea of the identity of God and man is retained. Christ is the ideal man. In Him the idea of humanity is fully realized; and therefore He is God. The manifestation of God in the form of man, belongs to the divine nature. The incarnation is entirely independent of the fall of man; or, admitting that the failure of the race to reach its true ideal in the first instance was the occasion of a new, special, and supernatural intervention, yet the whole end of that intervention was to realize the original idea of humanity as God made flesh.

The watchword of this whole system is, in the language of Dr. Ullmann, "The life of Christ is Christianity;" i.e., the one indivisible life of Christ; the life of God in the form of humanity. And that life as communicated to men brings them to this real, substantial life union with God. "What," asks Dr. Ullmann, "is that in the personality of Christ by which He is constituted a perfect Saviour in the way of atonement and redemption? We reply generally, his own substantial nature, at once human and divine; his life filled with all the attributes of God, and representing at the same time the highest conception of nature and man; complete and self-sufficient in its own fulness, and yet by this fulness itself the free principle of a new corresponding life-process, in the way of self-communication, for the human world. This life itself, however, has again its central heart, to which especially we must look for the peculiar being of Christ. Here the whole theology of the present time, in all its different tendencies,

may be said to have but one voice. That which constitutes the special being of Christ, makes Him to be what He is and gives Him thus his highest significance for the world, is the absolute unity of the divine and human in his nature. Deity and manhood in Him come fully together and are made one. This is the last ground of Christianity. Here above all we are to look for its distinctive character." He goes on to show that on this point all are agreed. God and man are one. The difference is between the pantheistic and the Christian view which acknowledges a personal God and a positive revelation. "For the whole apprehension of Christianity, we may say, not only that much, but that all depends on the question, which of these views shall be adopted; whether this central fact shall be regarded as a general 'unity of the divine and human' realizing itself in the consciousness of the race as such, or be conceived of as a concrete 'union of God and man,' that actualizes itself from a definite point and only under certain moral conditions." That is, whether God is incarnate in the race or in the Church. According to the latter view, the life of Christ, his human life, "filled with all the attributes of God," passes over to his people, by a process of natural development. As we are fallen men by partaking of the nature or generic life of Adam, we are God-men, and therefore redeemed by partaking of the divine human nature or generic life of Christ.

That the oneness of God and man is the ultimate principle on which this ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον rests, is obvious not only from the general character of the philosophy from which it is derived, but also from the fact that everything is made to depend upon the life of Christ becoming the life of his people, not by his controlling their life by his Spirit dwelling in them, but by a substantial union and identification of their life with his, of them with Him. We can measurably understand what is meant by life, by organic life, by a life principle or force which develops itself, and communicates and transmits itself in a given form. We know what is meant when it is said that the life of the acorn is developed into an oak, and communicated to other acorns, and thus to other oaks in endless succession and boundless multiplication. But here the essential idea is the unity and sameness

of the life transmitted. You cannot combine the "organic law," or life, of the apple with that of the acorn, so that the life transmitted should be "an acorn-apple-life." Much less can you combine the organic life principle of an animal with that of the acorn, so as to produce an "acorn-bovine," or, "an acorn-equine life." Least of all can you combine the intellectual life of man with that of the oak, so as to have a "human-oak-life." Therefore if the life of God and the life of man be so combined as to constitute one life and that a divine-human life, then God and man must be one; i.e., one substance, one life differently manifested. Those who press the modern doctrine of the correlation of forces to the extreme of making thought and gravity identical, may accept these conclusions. With them the universe and all it contains, all its physical, mental, æsthetic, moral, and religious phenomena are to be referred to one and the same force variously modified. The same force modified by the brain produces all the phenomena of mind; as modified by animal tissues, all the phenomena of animal life; and as modified by vegetable organisms all the phenomena of vegetable life,—a theory which has been annihilated as by a bolt from heaven by the single question: Where is the brain which elaborated the mind, which framed the universe?

It may indeed be said, and is said by modern theologians, that God became man, and therefore man may become God. God and man, they say, were so united as to become one nature or life in the person of Christ. But this is contrary to Scripture and to the faith of the Church universal. There is not a historical Church on earth, and never has been, whose creed does not teach that in the person of Christ two distinct natures or substances are united; that He was born, not merely "per," but "ex matre sua Maria," of her substance; that He is as man consubstantial with men, as God consubstantial with the Father; or as the Apostle expresses it, κατὰ σαρκά He is the son of David, κατὰ πνεῦμα the Son of God. Humanity and divinity in Him are no more identified or reduced to one life, than soul and body in man are identified or reduced to one life.

This whole modern theory of the Gospel rests, therefore, ultimately on the idea of the identity of God and man; that man is a "modus existendi" of God.

The grand objection to this scheme is that it is a philosophy. It is a product of the human mind. It is the wisdom of the world. It is the recent philosophy of the speculative school of Germany, clothed in Biblical forms and phrases. The reason why the Reformers did not present the plan of salvation in this form, is declared to be that they were ignorant of modern philosophy. It is because Hegel thought that the Gospel admitted of being cast into the mould of his philosophy that he pronounced Christianity to be the absolute religion. All, therefore, that the Bible says of the "wisdom of the wise," "of the wisdom of men," of "the wisdom of the world," of "philosophy as a vain deceit," applies, and was intended to apply to this scheme and to all of like nature. "To the poor the gospel is preached." The Gospel is designed for babes and sucklings. He that runs may read and understand it. This system not one man in ten thousand can understand.

These Theories Unscriptural

2. The second great objection to this scheme is that it is unscriptural. The Bible tells us that Christ saves us as a priest. This a child can understand. He knows that a priest takes the place of those for whom he acts; that he approaches God in their behalf; that he makes expiation for sin; that he does what satisfies the demands of God's justice against the sinner, so that He can be just and yet justify the ungodly. He knows that a priest saves, not by what he does in us, not by imparting his life to us, but by what he does for us; by an objective, and not by a subjective work. What there is of an inward work, and that is much and absolutely necessary, is not the work of a priest, under which aspect the work of Christ is so prominently presented in the Scriptures. Again, Christ saves us as a sacrifice; but a sacrifice is a substitute; it bears the sins of the offender; dies in his stead, and by its vicarious death delivers the offerer from the penalty

which he had incurred. A sacrifice is not a symbol of an inward conflict between good and evil; its proximate design is not to effect a subjective change in the sinner; it does not produce or communicate a new principle of life, much less its own generic life to the offerer by which his real redemption is effected.

In like manner the Bible teaches that Christ gave Himself as a ransom for many. But a ransom is a price paid. Those delivered by it are bought. They are delivered by purchase. A ransom meets and satisfies the claims of a third party. This is its essential idea, and cannot be omitted without rejecting the very truth, which the Scriptures, in the use of the term, design to teach. This again is an objective work. It is something which the person redeemed neither does, nor inwardly experiences; but which is done for him and without him and not in him.

Moreover, the whole idea of redemption, the primary truth taught in setting forth Christ as a Redeemer, is that He delivers his people not by power, not by instruction, not by moral influence, not by any subjective change wrought in them, and not by any new form of life imparted to them, but by purchase. This is the signification and the meaning of the word. The words ἀπολύτρωσις, λυτροῦν, ἀγοράζειν, ἐξαγοράζειν, are never used in Scripture in reference to the work of Christ in any other sense than that of deliverance by purchase or payment of a ransom; and to substitute any other mode of deliverance, is to put man's thoughts in the place of God's truth; it is to substitute the human for the divine; the worthless for the priceless.

Moreover, Christ is constantly represented as a rock, a refuge, a hiding place. The duty required of sinners is trust; relying on Him and his work, as something out of themselves on which to place their hope toward God.

These Theories lead Men to trust to themselves

3. This introduces the third great objection to this scheme. It makes redemption subjective. It is what we are; what we become; it is the Christ within us; the new heart, the new nature, the new life, the divine-human life of Christ, or whatever else it may be called, which is at once the ground of our justification and the source of sanctification. This is utterly inconsistent with the Bible, and with the experience of the people of God in all ages and under all dispensations. In no instance are believers represented as trusting to what is within them, but to what is without them. The Protestant doctrine, as we have seen, makes full provision for an inward work of deliverance from the power of sin, as well as for redemption from the curse of the law; for sanctification as well as for justification. But it does not confound the two, neither does it refer either or both to the new principle of life, the new seed or leaven implanted or inserted which works as "an organic law," and by a regular process of development, as natural as the operation of any other law. The whole work of the Spirit is ignored in this new theory of redemption. What in the Bible is referred to the Spirit of God is, by the theologians of this class, referred to the "divine-human" nature of Christ. The latter, and not the former, is the proximate and efficient source of holiness of heart and life. "Christ," says Dr. Nevin, "does dwell in us, by his Spirit; but only as his Spirit constitutes the very form and power of his own presence as the incarnate and everlasting Word." That is, the Spirit is the power of the incarnate Word, i.e., of the divine-human life of Christ. "The life," he adds, "thus wrought in our souls by his agency, is not a production out of nothing, but the very life of Jesus Himself organically continued in this way over into our persons." "It is with the mediatorial life of Christ that the Christian salvation, in the form now contemplated, is concerned. In this is comprehended the entire new creation revealed by the Gospel; the righteousness of Christ, and all the benefits He has procured for his people. But the mediatorial life, by the communication of which only all this grace is made to pass over to men, is one and undivided;" and this life, as he goes on to show, includes his body, soul, and divinity. To the same effect, it is said, "That the whole spiritual life of the Christian, including the resurrection of his body, is thus organically connected

with the mediatorial life of the Lord Jesus, might seem to be too plainly taught in the New Testament to admit of any question; and yet we find many slow to allow the mystery, notwithstanding. A very common view appears to be, that the whole salvation of the Gospel is accomplished in a more or less outward and mechanical way, by supernatural might and power, rather than by the Spirit of the Lord as a revelation of a new historical life in the person of the believer Himself. So we have an outward imputation of righteousness to begin with; a process of sanctification carried forward by the help of proper spiritual machinery brought to bear on the soul, including perhaps, as its basis, the notion of an abrupt creation 'de novo,' by the fiat of the Holy Ghost; and finally, to crown all, a sudden unprepared refabrication of the body, to be superadded to the life of the spirit already complete in its state of glory." The doctrines of justification by the imputation of the righteousness of Christ; of the regeneration and sanctification of the soul by the supernatural power of the Spirit, and the resurrection of the body by the power of God at the last day, are rejected and despised; and the doctrine substituted for them is, that the divine-human life of Christ, as a new organic law, develops itself in the Church, just as the life of the acorn develops itself in the oak and in the forest, by a natural, historical process, so that the members of the Church, in virtue of their participation of this life, are justified and sanctified, and their bodies (since the life of Christ is a human life actualizing itself outwardly in a body as well as inwardly in a soul), ultimately raised from the dead, are fashioned after the glorious body of Christ. The resurrection of the body is as much a natural process as the development of a seed into a flower, or of a grub into a butterfly. This is Dr. Nevin's own illustration: "The birth of the butterfly, as it mounts in the air on wings of light, is comparatively sudden, too; but this is the revelation only of a life which had been gradually formed for this efflorescence before, under cover of the vile, unsightly larve." "The new creation," he says, "is indeed supernatural; but as such it is strictly conformable to the general order and constitution of life. It is a new creation in Christ Jesus, not by Him in the way of mere outward power. The subjects of it are saved, only by being brought within the sphere of

his life, as a regular, historical, divine-human process, in the Church. The new nature implanted in them at their regeneration, is not a higher order of existence framed for them at the moment out of nothing by the fiat of God, but truly and strictly a continuation of Christ's life over in their persons."

This is the modern view of Christianity introduced by Schleiermacher, modified more or less by his disciples, and which has passed over into England and into this country. Humanity as revealed in Adam as a generic life was too feeble. Its development failed and would have ever failed to reach the ideal. Therefore God interposed and interrupted the process of natural development by the production of a new ideal man containing in himself a generic life, a seed, a principle, an organic law, which develops itself in the Church by a historical process, just as the life of Adam developed itself in his posterity. We, therefore, are justified, not by what Christ did, but by his life in us, which is as truly and properly our life, as the life we derived from Adam is our own life. We must stand before God to be justified or condemned, accepted or rejected, on the ground of what we are. We have nothing to offer but our own subjective, inherent character such as it is. The man is to be pitied who dares to do this. It is surely better to agree with Paul, who renounced his own righteousness, his own goodness, everything pertaining to himself, everything subjective, and trusted only and confidently to the righteousness of Christ received by faith.

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