

THE  
DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION

IS DANGEROUSLY CORRUPTED IN THE ROMAN CHURCH.<sup>a</sup>

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ROMANS iii. 24.

“BEING JUSTIFIED FREELY BY HIS GRACE THROUGH THE REDEMPTION THAT IS  
IN CHRIST JESUS.”

THE apostle, in these words and the following, gives an exact account of the doctrine of justification, dictated to him by the Spirit of truth. And this will be the best ground we can proceed on, to discover the errors by which it is corrupted. That is our present business, to which I hasten ; only first opening the words by a brief touch upon them.

*Being justified.*—To be justified, is to be freely accepted of God as righteous, so as to have pardon and title to life upon the account of Christ's righteousness. We cannot be accepted as righteous, till we be acquitted from guilt. The apostle describes justification by remission of sins. (Rom. iv. 5, 6.) And being accepted as righteous, we are accepted to life : the apostle calls it “justification of life.” (Rom. v. 17, 18, 21.) This is upon the account of Christ's righteousness. We cannot be justified upon our own account ; for so we are condemned, and cannot but be so : nor upon other account but Christ and his righteousness ; for there is no justification without righteousness, and none sufficient but that of

<sup>a</sup> The fourth course of “Morning Exercises” in the order of time, though placed last in Mr. Nichols' uniform edition, is entitled, “The Morning Exercise against Popery : or, the Principal Errors of the Church of Rome detected and confuted, in a Morning Lecture preached lately in Southwark, by several Ministers of the Gospel in or near London, MDCCLXXV.” This course originated with Mr. Nathaniel Vincent, one of the ejected ministers, 1662, who had a large congregation at a meeting-house near the Maese, or Maze, in the parish of St. Olave, Southwark, where the discourses were delivered. Mr. Vincent edited the volume, and in his address “To the Reader,” he says, “I exceedingly rejoice that *my pulpit* was so much honoured by my fathers and brethren when they preached in it, and that ever such a project against popery *came into my mind*.” This discourse on Justification, by Mr. Clarkson, is the twelfth in the numerical order, but is the *fifteenth* in the logical arrangement, as is shown by Mr. Nichols from the “Table of Theses.”—Morning Exercises, vol. v. pp. 543—546.

Christ ; which the apostle includes in "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

*Freely by his grace.*—The Lord justifies by his grace, and this acts freely. That which moves him is called, in Titus iii. 4, *χρηστότης καὶ φιλανθρώπια*, "kindness and love ;" which in verse 7 is "grace :—" "That being justified," *τῇ ἐκείνου χάριτι*, "by his grace." So justification is *τὸ χάρισμα*, "the free gift ;" (Rom. v. 16 ;) *ἡ δῶρεα ἐν χάριτι*, "the gift by grace." (verse 15.) This grace, as it is free mercy, so it acts like itself, *δῶρεαν*, "freely ;" (the word used in Matt. x. 8 : *Δῶρεαν ἔλαβετε*, "Freely ye have received" it ;) he gives it freely to those who have no merit to deserve it : there is none in us ; what there was, was in Christ. It is

*Through the redemption.*—Redemption is deliverance by a price, or valuable consideration. This price was the blood of Christ, (Rom. iii. 25 ; v. 9 ; Eph. i. 6, 7,) his death, (Rom. viii. 33, 34,) his obedience, (Rom. v. 19,) his righteousness, (verse 18.)

We may view the text distinctly in three parts :—

I. *Believers are "justified."*

II. *"Freely by his grace."*

III. *"Through the redemption that is in Christ."*

Against each of these the Papists have advanced several errors of pernicious consequence, and thereby dangerously corrupted the whole doctrine of justification.

I. That a sinner may be saved, the Scriptures declare that he must be both justified and sanctified : the Romanists, as if one of those were but requisite, call that "justification," which in Scripture is "sanctification ;" and that which in Scripture is "justification," they admit not, as distinct from inherent righteousness.

The apostle Paul, who most insists upon the doctrine of justification, delivers these two as distinct things. (1 Cor. vi. 11, and elsewhere.) He ascribes justification commonly to the blood of Christ ; (as in the text, and Rom. v. 8, 9 ;) sanctification to the Spirit of Christ. (Titus iii. 5.)

However, the Papists' promiscuous use of the words might be tolerated, if they did not confound the things, and contend that we are formally justified by that which is the form and essence of sanctification, namely, inherent righteousness. The danger is that which the apostle would have the Jews avoid, when he expresseth his hearty desire that they might be saved : "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." (Rom. x. 3.) The Papists trust to their own righteousness for acceptance and life, and will be justified in the sight of God by that which indeed is imperfect and culpable, and, so, liable to be condemned ; and being convinced that they

cannot be justified by an imperfect righteousness, therefore they will have their inherent righteousness to be perfect : not so perfect as it will be in heaven ;<sup>a</sup> but so as to be free from sin, and to answer the demands of the law,<sup>b</sup> since they know, otherwise, it would not justify them. And this fancy of a sinless perfection runs them into many absurd and pernicious conceits.

First. For they are hereby obliged to maintain, that no corruption in their natures after baptism, no aversion from God, no inclination to evil, though habitual and fixed, has anything of sin in it ; no, nor any vicious habits acquired by frequent acts of sin :<sup>c</sup> all is sinless that is in the soul when grace or charity is once therein. And so there is no need of mortification, no possibility of it ; for there is nothing of sin in them to be mortified, no habit or disposition, natural or accessory, upon which the charge of sin can be truly fixed. And as they leave no need of, no place for mortification, so after they have discarded the Scripture justification, to make way for a sanctification to justify them, they deal no better with that neither ; whether it be taken for the first rise of holiness, which is properly regeneration ; or for the growth and increase of it, which is the sanctification that the Scripture calls for commonly under this notion ;—they will have it to be a second justification. As for the first sanctification, by their principles, it excludes all sin, and is, so far, perfect, or nothing ; and so indeed is a mere chimera, such a thing as God never gave, never promised, as no mere man on earth ever had. (1 John i. 8.) Yet this and nothing else must justify them, and make them worthy of eternal life : and thus they will be justified and saved by a mere fancy, or nothing.

As for growth and increase in holiness, which is the sanctification that the Scripture makes so necessary, and calls for with so much importunity, this they make superfluous and unnecessary. No man needs design or endeavour it ; for what needs he look after more of that which he hath already in perfection ? They have it in such perfection, as [that]

<sup>a</sup> Quod dicebamus, justitiam et charitatem in hâc vitâ non esse perfectam, comparatione duntaxat ad illam patriæ reputandum est. Dominicus a Soto De Nat. et Grat. lib. iii. cap. iv. p. 134.

<sup>b</sup> The council of Trent calls it justitiam candidam et immaculatam, ["white and spotless justice."] Sess. v. cap. lxvii. In the Trent catechism it is divina qualitas in animâ inharens, quæ animarum vestrarum omnes maculas delet, "A divine quality, inherent in the soul, which takes away all stains and spots from your souls." Ea (charitas) siquidem est verissima, plenissima, perfectissima justitia, "Since it (grace) is a most true, full, and perfect righteousness." Bellarminus De Justif. lib. ii. cap. xvi. p. 806.

<sup>c</sup> Habitus justitiæ contrarius est habitui injustitiæ ; quia non est peccatum, sed vitium, ex malis actibus contractum ; quale etiam in justificatis reperiri potest, "A habit contrary to righteousness is a habit of unrighteousness : for it is not a sin, but a vice, contracted from evil acts ; such as may be found even in justified persons." Ibid. p. 805. Dispositio vel habitus acquisitus vitium est, non peccatum, "A disposition or acquired habit is a vice, not a sin." De Amiss. Grat. lib. v. cap. xix. p. 337. Omnes siquidem leges præcipiunt vel prohibent actus, non habitus, "Since all laws command or prohibit acts, not habits." Melchior Canus De Pœnit. p. 870.

there is no culpable defect in it.<sup>a</sup> It is no sin to have no more ; (else it would not be sufficient to their justification ; ) and what necessity is there to labour for that which it is no sin to want ? Their doctrine of justification by a righteousness of their own inculpably perfect, obliges them to hold, that what grace they receive at first, though in the very lowest degree, is all that God commands and makes necessary. If he commanded more, the want of more would be culpable. So that every degree of holiness or charity above the least of all, is only *sub consilio*, “mere matter of counsel ;”<sup>b</sup> which they may neglect without contracting so much as the guilt of a venial fault.<sup>c</sup>

Thus all progress in holiness is hereby superseded : after the first step they sin not, though they never make another. And all the degrees of holiness above the lowest are unnecessary : they may be without all of them, safely and inculpably. In short : if the want of all other degrees but the least of all, be a sin ; if the lowest degree of all be not righteousness in perfection ; by their principles, they are not justified, and cannot be saved. And so the main stress of their salvation lies upon a gross and palpable delusion, that such a righteousness is perfect as is furthest of all from perfection, and in a degree next to nothing.

Secondly. They seem to include remission of sins in justification ; but it is not that pardon which the Gospel offers, but another thing under the disguise of the same word ; and particularly, such as lies cross to every part of the text. Their pardon is not an act of God, absolving a guilty person upon the account of satisfaction given ; but an act or consequent of infused grace or charity within us, abolishing sin, and not otherwise taking away the guilt but by taking away the being of it.<sup>d</sup>

The best account I can give of it, in brief, is this, collected out of their chief authors. They observe in sin the fault and the guilt : and the guilt, either as it is the desert of sin, and the offender worthy of punishment ; or as it is an obligation to punishment, and the sinner bound to suffer it. The former is, with them, *reatus culpæ* ; the latter,

\* Nulla enim est charitas simpliciter imperfecta : sufficit autem quilibet gradus charitatis, ut quis servet verbum, id est, præcepta, Domini, “ For no grace is simply imperfect : but any degree of grace is sufficient for any one, in order to his keeping the word, that is, the precepts, of the Lord.” Bellarminus De Purgat. lib. xxii. cap. iii. p. 1381.

<sup>b</sup> Si non pecco (ex sententiâ S. Thomæ) si amem Deum nisi uno gradu amoris, certè non teneor in rigore ampliùs amare : implicat enim contradictionem, quòd non peccem, non faciendo quod facere teneor : ergò, si addam alterum gradum amoris, amo plùs quàm teneor, atque eo modo facio actum supererogationis et consilii. Idem De Monach. lib. ii. cap. xiii. p. 1162.

<sup>c</sup> Nec ullæ (leges) divinæ consultoriæ etiam ad veniale obligent. Navarri Manuale, cap. xxiii. n. xlix. p. 564 ; et cap. xxi. n. xliii. ; Sylvestri Summa, in verb. Inobedientia, sect. ii.

<sup>d</sup> Charitas culpam delet per actum suum proprium : poenam autem tollit per opera satisfactoria quæ ipsa charitas imperat, “ Grace destroys the guilt by its own proper act : but it removes the punishment by the works of satisfaction which grace itself commands.” Bellarminus De Purgat. lib. ii. cap. iii. p. 1381.

*reatus pœnæ*; <sup>a</sup> and all this is taken away by charity, or infused grace. The fault in sin is the aversion, or the soul's turning away from God : but charity, or inherent grace, brings it back again, and joins it to him ; and thereby the fault is remitted. <sup>b</sup> Now the fault being gone by virtue of inherent grace, the guilt must vanish too : for where there is no fault, there is no desert of punishment ; and where there is no desert of it, there can be no obligation to it. So that, infused grace having left sin no being, by necessary consequence the guilt is taken away together with it. <sup>c</sup> Accordingly Bellarmine shows particularly how this charity takes away all that belongs to sin,—the aversion from God, the stain of sin, the desert of punishment, and the obligation to it. And the sum of all is this : The formal effect of habitual charity is the abolishing of sin : <sup>d</sup> and, with him and others, remission of sins, and infusion of grace, are but one and the same motion ; whereof these are the two terms ; as it is in the diffusion of light, and the dispelling of darkness. <sup>e</sup>

So that this doctrine leaves sinners no hope of pardon in this life, or for ever: for hereby sin is not pardoned, till by inherent charity it be quite expelled, which is not in this life; or till the sinner be rendered not worthy of punishment, merely by virtue of such charity, which will never be.

However, those who understand what pardon is, by the light of Scripture, will soon discover that this is not the gospel-pardon. To go no farther than the text, it clashes, as I said, with every part of it. For, First, by their account, pardon is by a physical or super-physical act of charity within us ; whereas the first word in the text, *δικαιούμενοι*, shows that pardon in justification is a judicial act of God toward us. The perpetual use of the word in Scripture assures us of this : it implies a judicial proceeding ; and is set opposite to condemning or accusing. For a judge to acquit one at the bar, accused in order to condemnation, is not to qualify him ; (that would be to prevent misdemeanours for the future ; ) but to discharge him from what he is accused of, as past : nor can they give any instances in Scripture of such use of the word as will bear their

<sup>a</sup> *Reatus culpæ, qui est dignitas odii, indignitas gratiæ, et meritum pœnæ : reatus pœnæ ;—id est, ordinatio sive obligatio ad luendam pœnam.* Idem De Amiss. Grat. lib. v. cap. xix. p. 337.

<sup>b</sup> Quando per gratiam remittitur culpa, tollitur aversio animæ a Deo, in quantum per gratiam anima Deo conjungitur. Aquinas, Tertia, Quæst. lxxxv. art. iv. Ideò ex hoc dicitur culpa mortalis remitti, quòd per gratiam tollitur aversio mentis a Deo. Idem, ad Primam, artic. iv. Quæst. lxxxv.

<sup>c</sup> Per consequens simul tollitur reatus pœnæ. Idem, ibid. Non possunt non tolli, si donum illud præcesserit, says Bellarmine of the guilt and offence of sin, "They cannot be otherwise than taken away, if that gift has preceded." De Justific. lib. xii. cap. xvi p. 806.

<sup>d</sup> Habemus primum effectum formalem justitiæ, id est, charitatis habitualis, divinitus infusæ esse, de medio tollere ac delere peccatum. Idem, ibid.

<sup>e</sup> Idem, ibid. lib. ii. cap. ii. p. 766 ; and Soto (after Aquinas) De Nat. et Grat. lib. ii. cap. xviii. p. 110.

notion. Indeed, it is against the usage of the world and common sense, that a man should be said to pardon one, by enduing him with good qualities. Secondly. The pardon in justification is free ; a gift of undeserved grace, as the next words express it. But their pardon is not free, neither in itself, nor in that which they make the rise of it,—inherent charity. They deface the freeness of it in both, by a conceit of their own merit ; and so transform it into another thing than the pardon of the Gospel is ; which shall be made apparent when we come to the second part of the text. Thirdly. The gospel-pardon is entirely through the redemption that is in Christ, as the next words represent it ; but their pardon excludes this redemption, or leaves it but a minute and remote influence into<sup>a</sup> it, if any at all.

The Lord, by Christ's undertaking, is moved to show mercy to sinners : he shows it by infusing charity into their hearts. This takes away the fault or being of sin ; and, that being gone, the desert of punishment vanisheth, and, by consequence, the obligation to it. So we must pass several stages before we can discover what the redemption of Christ hath to do in the pardon of a sinner ; and when we have gone so far, may be at a loss too, as they order the matter. But that will better be showed in the last proposal.

Moreover, though they will have their pardon do more than mere remission can do, yet they make it fall short of that which is most proper for pardon to do. It quite dissolves not the obligation to punishment ; but leaves the sinner, when he is said to be pardoned, to suffer, as if he were condemned. He must, for all his pardon, be damned to a temporary hell ; (for such is their purgatory ;) and there he must be punished in the severest manner and measure : with the greatest suffering of all, *as to loss*,—the want of the vision and fruition of God ; and the most exquisite tortures, *as to sense*,<sup>b</sup>—such as are equivalent to the torments of hell :<sup>c</sup> and all this, it may be, for a hundred or a thousand years, they know not how long. All the pardoning mercies of God, and

<sup>a</sup> upon.

<sup>b</sup> *Pœna damni est maxima pœnarum. Omnis qui in purgatorio degit, cruciatur saltem hâc pœnâ damni, quæ est omnium maxima, "The punishment of loss is the greatest of all punishments. Every one who dwells in purgatory is tormented at least with this punishment of loss, which is the greatest of all."* Aquinas in Quartum, Dist. xx. xli. art. ii. *Si ibi est verus ignis, erit omninò acerrimus ; cum ad hoc solum sit institutus, ut sit instrumentum justitiæ Divinæ : si non sit ignis verus, erit aliquid horribilius, quale Deus parare potuit, qui potentiam suam in hoc ostendere voluit, "If there be in purgatory a real fire, it will assuredly be most fierce and sharp ; since it was ordained solely to the end that it might be an instrument of the Divine justice : if there be not a real fire, there will be some punishment yet more horrible ; such as God can prepare, who wills in this to show his power."* Vide Bellarminum De Purgat. lib. ii. cap. xiv. p. 1400.

<sup>c</sup> Nam, ut rectè explicat cardinalis Cajetanus, pœna illa quæ luenda restat post culpæ remissionem est illa ipsa pœna sensûs quam in gehennâ pati debuisset peccator, remotâ solùm æternitate. "For, as cardinal Cajetan rightly expounds it, that punishment which remains to be endured after the remission of guilt, is the very same punishment of sense which the sinner ought to have suffered in hell, eternity alone being excluded from the account." Idem De Pœnit.

the redemption of Christ, cannot secure him from this.<sup>a</sup> Surely this pardon looks nothing so like remission as condemnation.

Thirdly. What we said last, respects those sins which they call “mortal;” but there is with them another sort of sins which go under the notion of “venials,” and which in number exceed the other vastly and incomparably. And these sins, by their doctrine, are not pardoned, or need no pardon; and so justification, the free grace of God, and the redemption of Christ, are excluded hereby, as needless, and unconcerned in them.

The pardon in justification frees the sinner from eternal punishment; but they teach, that these sins (all of them together) deserve not eternal punishment: God cannot justly inflict it for them; it is not due to them. If the guilt of all the sins in the world of this sort were charged upon one man, or if there were no covenant or promise of God for pardon, says their great cardinal, (that is, if there were no Gospel, no Christ,) yet a sinner could not be punished for them eternally:<sup>b</sup> so that there is no place for, no need of, the pardon of the Gospel as to these sins. Then for the temporal punishment of them, the sinner either *must* or *may* suffer it himself, and so satisfy for it: if he *may* satisfy for it, there is no need of pardon; if he *do* satisfy for it, there is no place for pardon. He that suffers what punishment the law will have inflicted for his offence, neither is nor can be said to be pardoned.<sup>c</sup> So that plainly, by their doctrine, venial sins have not, or need not, pardon of any sort, either in respect of eternal or temporal punishment.

And yet these venial sins, which need no pardon, are many of them, *for their quality*, great and heinous; *for their number*, far the greatest of all.

*As to their quality*, their casuists, who are dictators in this business, make what sins they list to be venial. Whereas, by their common reckoning, there are seven mortal sins; even divers of these, by their handling, are shrunk into small faults. They make covetousness and

<sup>a</sup> The pope (surely his holiness has no mercy left him) can do it when he list: Si quaratur utrū possit spoliare purgatorium pro libito suo, dico quod non voluntate suā precisē, sed mediante illo infinito thesauro, “If it be asked whether the pope can despoil purgatory at his pleasure, I answer that he cannot do so by his own will precisely, but by means of that infinite treasury.” Sylvestri Summa, in verb. Papa, Quæst. vi. But he is wise, however; and considers, [that] if he should spoil purgatory, he would spoil something else, which is more regarded at Rome than another world.

<sup>b</sup> Negamus posse Deum justē punire peccatum quodlibet, etiam veniale, pœnā omnium gravis-simā, quæ est mors æterna. Bellarminus De Amiss. Grat. lib. i. cap. xiv. p. 92. Etiam si omnia peccata venialia simul colligerentur in unum, nunquam efficerent id quod facit unum lethale. Idem, ibid. cap. xiii. p. 91. Etiam si nullum esset pactum Dei nobiscum de remissione pœnæ adhuc, tamen perspicuum esset, peccatum veniale ex suā naturā non inducere reatum pœnæ sem-piternæ. Idem, ibid. cap. x. iv. p. 95.

<sup>c</sup> Non enim remittitur quod totaliter punitur. Bellarminus De Purgat. lib. i. cap. vii. p. 1359.

prodigality too,<sup>a</sup> ambition,<sup>b</sup> vain-glory,<sup>c</sup> gluttony,<sup>d</sup> and drunkenness,<sup>e</sup> (if it do but half brutify a man,) the neglect of the public worship of God,<sup>f</sup> of all worship indeed which can be truly called so, and the neglect of charity and mercy to men,<sup>g</sup> except in such cases which rarely or never fall out,—also common swearing,<sup>h</sup> great irreverence to the Divine Majesty,<sup>i</sup> abhorring of divine things,<sup>k</sup> yea, divers sorts of blasphemy<sup>l</sup> and perjury,<sup>m</sup> murder,<sup>n</sup> with others of like nature,—to be but venial faults. They assign several ways wherein the highest impieties against God, and greatest outrages to men, may pass under this gentle notion, and so need no pardon. This might be clearly showed out of the writings of the leading men amongst them, of several orders, and such as have the chief conduct of their consciences, though the Jesuits were left out; but it requires a large discourse, and I must not here digress a little.

And as these sort of sins are great otherwise, so that they are *the greatest of all for number*, is no question. Their church enjoins but confession once a year; and presumes that any wicked person may give an account, in a little while, to his confessor of the mortal sins he commits in a whole year; but of venial sins no account can be given, being so numerous, that they are beyond remembrance or notice. So that by their doctrine there are very few sins, in comparison, that need pardon; and so, few that need either the free grace of God, or the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. These corruptions are dangerous and evidently damnable. I have insisted the longer thereon, because in this point, about pardon, the Romanists are conceived to come nearer the truth and us than I fear they do indeed.

II. Proceed we now to the second part of the text, “Freely by his grace.” When the Lord justifies a sinner, he does it most freely: it is an act of mere grace; it is no way due to us before he vouchsafe it. He owes it not, but gives it, when he is no way pre-engaged by any desert in us: merit in us is utterly inconsistent with this gracious act. These two are opposite in their nature; and the apostle plainly expresses the opposition in Rom. xi. 6, and iv. 4. If it be due by virtue of any act or work of ours, it is debt; if it be debt, it is not grace, the grace of God

<sup>a</sup> Aquinas, *Secunda Secundæ*, Quæst. cxviii. art. iv.; Navarri *Enchir.* cap. xxiii. n. xviii.

<sup>b</sup> Cajetani *Summa*, in verb. *Ambitio*.

<sup>c</sup> Aquinas, *ibid.* Quæst. cxxxii. art. iii.

<sup>d</sup> Cajetanus, *ibid.* in verb. *Gula*, et *Emunditia*.

<sup>e</sup> Navarrus, *ibid.* cap. xiii. n. ii.; et cap. xxi. n. i.

<sup>f</sup> Cajetanus, *ibid.* in verb. *Eleemosyna*.      <sup>g</sup> *Idem*, cap. xxiv. n. v.

<sup>h</sup> Lopez, *Instruct. Conc.* cap. xlii. p. 227; et Sylvestri *Summa*, in verb. *Juramentum*, ii. 48.

<sup>i</sup> Jacob de Graff, *Deeis. Aur. lib. ii.* cap. lii. n. x.

<sup>k</sup> Sylvester, *ibid.* in verb. *Malitia*, p. 170.

<sup>l</sup> *Idem*, *ibid.* in verb. *Blasphemia*, Quæst. iii. 4.

<sup>m</sup> Dominicus a Soto *De Just. et Jur. lib. viii.* Quæst. ii. art. iii. pp. 269, 270.

<sup>n</sup> *Idem*, *ibid.* lib. v. Quæst. i. art. viii.

herein is no grace : “ If by grace, then it is no more of works : otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace : otherwise work is no more work.” “ Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.” The apostle’s discourse cannot be answered with reason, nor evaded with any conscience:“ and yet the Papists will presumptuously crowd merits of all sorts into justification. And by this means, too, they corrupt this doctrine dangerously and intolerably. They do it against all evidence of Scripture ; they do it to the foul defacing of the glory of free grace, and the redemption of Christ ; they do it with great hazard to their own souls. For if they will not be justified freely, if they will stay till they deserve it, they are likely to be condemned. Yet they will venture and stick not to ascribe all that they include in their several justifications to some sort of merit : —inherent grace, and pardon of sin, to congruous merit ; title to glory, and increase of grace, (which they make a second justification,) to merit of condignity.

Inherent, which they call “ justifying” grace, and count it (after the council of Trent<sup>b</sup>) unanimously the formal cause of justification, by their doctrine, falls under merit. They mince it, indeed, calling it “ merit of congruity ;” but it is big enough, how small soever they would have it seem, to bid defiance to the grace of God in the text.

There are some preparatory works which, they say, must go before justification,<sup>c</sup> (as, dogmatical faith, some sorrow for sin, fear, hope, &c.,) to which justifying grace is due in congruity, though not in justice ; and this dueness they express in the definition of “ congruous merit.” “ It is,” says Navarrus, (after Aquinas, and their common gloss,) “ a good human act of one without the grace of God, to which spiritual or temporal reward is in some respect and congruity due.”<sup>d</sup> Now if justifying grace be due on our account, before the Lord vouchsafe it, he gives it not freely, but only pays what he owes, and is before obliged by us to let us have ; and Bellarmine says, this merit is not founded on the promise of God, but in the worth and dignity of the work.<sup>e</sup>

This sort of merit is generally owned by the Romanists. Soto tells

<sup>a</sup> Nec esset gratia, si non daretur gratuita, sed debita redderetur, “ Nor would it be grace, if it were not bestowed gratuitously, but were rendered as due.” Augustini Epist. cv. Aquinas himself [says] : Manifestum est quòd omne meritum repugnat gratiæ, quia, ut apostolus, Rom. “ It is clear that all merit is repugnant to grace, because, as the apostle says, Rom. xi.,” &c. Prima Secundæ, Quæst. iv. art. lvi.

<sup>b</sup> Sess. vi. cap. vii.

<sup>c</sup> Vide Concil. Trident. Sess. vi. cap. vi.

<sup>d</sup> Est actus humanus bonus factus ab aliquo extra gratiam Dei existente, cui de quâdam congruitate et secundùm quid debetur aliqua merces spiritualis vel temporalis, ut sentit glossa. Enchirid. Prælud. vii. n. iii. p. 40.

<sup>e</sup> Quod objiciebatur, meritum de congruo non fundari in dignitate operis sed solâ promissione Dei ; respondemus, contrarium esse verum. And a little after : Nos existimamus potius fundari meritum de congruo in aliquâ dignitate operis, quàm in promissione. De Justific. lib. i. cap. xxi. p. 733.

us,<sup>a</sup> it is asserted by Scotus, Durandus, Adrian, and, in a manner, all the school-doctors whom they call "Nominals;" and this is one division of their schools. He says also,<sup>b</sup> that Aquinas, the leader of the other division, following the common opinion, affirms it likewise; though he would have us think that he afterwards retracted it. But Bellarmine, not acknowledging any such retractation, together with Aquinas, reckons up to us by name the chief of the schoolmen as of this persuasion.<sup>c</sup>

It is true, there is some difference among them about the name: some would not have it called "congruous merit;" but all, as Bellarmine,<sup>d</sup> Vega,<sup>e</sup> and after him Sancta Clara,<sup>f</sup> tells us, agree in the thing. And it is the thing, not the word, that is so injurious to the grace of God, and wherein the corruption and the danger lie; and therein they conspire.

I need bring no particular testimonies to show, that by their doctrine pardon of sins falls under this sort of merit: for pardon and inherent grace are by them involved together, and made one and the same motion. And I have stayed the longer on that which is evidence for both, because some question, whether this congruous merit be commonly owned by their writers. I think it might as well be questioned whether the proper merit of condignity be their common doctrine; for there are some among them who dislike this, and scarcely more the other, so far as I can compute the numbers.

As for the other particulars, title to glory, included in the *first*, and increase of grace, which they call a *second* justification, the council of Trent has made it an article of their faith, that good works are truly meritorious of both; and denounceth those accursed who deny it: and their writers unanimously since understand it to be merit of condignity, as Aquinas expressed it before.<sup>g</sup> So that these things are due from God upon the account of their good works in strict justice, and not

<sup>a</sup> De Naturâ et Gratiâ, lib. ii. cap. iii. p. 65; et Medina, in Primam Secundæ, Quæst. cix.

<sup>b</sup> Cùm S. Thomas, (Secunda Sent. Dist. xxvii. xxviii.) opinionem communem insequutus, affirmasset tum quòd homo ex naturalibus posset se disponere ad gratiam, tum quòd dispositio illa esset meritum de congruo. Soto, ibid. p. 66.

<sup>c</sup> Magister Sententiarum, ["the Master of the Sentences,"] St. Thomas, Bonaventure, Scotus, Durandus, Gabriel, and others. De Pœnitentiâ, lib. ii. cap. xii. p. 945. Sancta Clara tells us, it is certè communis et recepta sententia scholarum, "It is certainly the common and received opinion of the schools." De Naturâ et Grat. problem xxi. p. 125.

<sup>d</sup> Quod attinet ad catholicos, quæstio videtur esse ferè de solo nomine meriti, &c. De Justif. lib. i. cap. xxi. p. 752.

<sup>e</sup> Rectè advertit Vega de re, Non est inter doctores catholicos quæstio.

<sup>f</sup> Itaque de nomine solum est quæstio, an ea debeant vocari meritum de congruo. Sancta Clara, ibid. p. 129.

<sup>g</sup> Quùm justus homo per opera sua bona, quatenus movente Deo facta sunt, vitam æternam de condigno mereatur, ipsum etiam gratiæ et charitatis augmentum mereri dicendum est, "Since a just man, by his own good works, so far as they have been done by divine impulse, procures eternal life through merit of condignity, it must also be said that he merits an increase of grace and charity." Prima Secundæ, Quæst. exiv. art. lxxxvi.

alone in congruity. It is not my business to argue against their doctrine of merit ; only let me suggest this which the text leads me to.

Their opinion of merit makes the special grace and mercy of God needless. For if a man by what he doeth can make heaven due from God in point of justice, he needs not his mercy to save him ; so long as he is sure the Lord will not be unjust, he is not concerned to regard whether or not he be gracious and merciful. As in a like case, when a man's cause requires nothing but justice, if he be sure the judge will do him justice, there is no need at all to be beholden to him for his mercy. Thus grace and mercy being excluded as needless and superfluous, all obligations<sup>a</sup> to love and gratitude, to all ingenuous obedience and worship, are taken off, and all sense of religion likely to be razed out of the souls of men. I may forbear telling you that this is of dangerous tendency.

III. Come we to the third part of the text. The justification of a sinner is "through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." That doctrine quite overthrows the justification of a sinner which removes from it this redemption : but so doth the Popish doctrine, and thereby tends to make Christ of none effect. For without that redemption, he is not, he cannot be, the Saviour of any man. Their errors here strike deep, and tend to undermine the foundation of Christianity. Let me give you an account hereof in respect of *the satisfaction, the merit, and the application of this redemption.*

1. *The satisfaction of Christ is unnecessary, by their doctrine ; there is no need of it for the justifying of a sinner ; he may be pardoned and freed from eternal punishment without it.*—For if the pardon of sin be the abolishing and utter extinguishing of it, as they teach,<sup>b</sup> and [if] it be by infused grace or charity that sin is thus abolished ; (as darkness by the approach of light, and one contrary by natural consequence at the presence of another ; which is their doctrine,<sup>c</sup> if I understand it ; ) then there was no more requisite to free a sinner from guilt and liableness to eternal punishment, but only that Christ should purchase for him habitual grace. Now, to purchase this, his merit would serve, and there would be no need of satisfaction.<sup>d</sup> And there are those who seem to acknowledge the former, when they deny the latter.

<sup>a</sup> Obligations.

<sup>b</sup> Bellarminus De Justif. lib. ii. cap. vii. p. 783, initio. Dicere Deum peccata remittere, non tamen prorsus tollere, hominis est vocem remissionis ignorantis. Soto De Nat. et Grat. lib. ii. cap. xix. p. 111. Ominò idem planè valet, peccata esse tecta, atque sublata esse et nulla prorsus relictà. Pererius in Rom. iv. Disput. iii. Admonemus (peccata) dimitti esse, non solùm non imputari, non solùm non puniri ; sed penitus etiam tolli, penitus celari. Maldonatus in Matt. vi. 12. p. 145.

<sup>c</sup> Quo fit ut gratia gratum faciens ex diametro opponitur peccato, atque adeò formaliter per modum contrarietatis expellat ipsum ; ut author est S. Thomas, Prima Secunda, Quæst. exiii. art. ii. ; Soto, ibid. p. 109 ; Bellarminus, ibid. cap. ii. p. 766.

<sup>d</sup> Aliquod meritum est sine satisfactione et e contrariò, "There is some merit without satisfaction, and on the contrary." Idem De Purgat. lib. i. cap. x. p. 1370.

Then as to the temporal punishment, they leave no place at all for Christ's satisfaction ; this is quite excluded here, though this punishment be no less in their account than the torments of hell, eternity excepted : the sinner must or may satisfy for himself ; and therefore Christ did not satisfy. Otherwise, the Lord would take payment twice for one debt, and require double satisfaction for every sin, and punish it *ultra demeritum*, "more than it deserves," which would be cruelty ; yea, he would not be satisfied when he had satisfaction, which would be unreasonable. Nor is this my inference only ; they do as good as acknowledge it. For they grant that Christ did not satisfy for temporal punishment, but mediately, by procuring grace for sinners, that they might satisfy for themselves.<sup>a</sup> And if he satisfied no otherwise, he satisfied not at all ; no more than I can be said to travel a hundred miles, when I do not stir out of doors, because I help another to a horse, who performs such a journey.

Thus by their doctrine of justification and pardon, the redemption of Christ, as to satisfaction made thereby, is reduced in a manner to nothing. For venial sins, to which, they say, temporal punishment only is due, they cannot with any reason pretend that satisfaction by him is necessary. For mortal sins, (a small parcel of the infinite multitude, venials considered,) habitual grace (which Christ might merit, though he did not satisfy) is sufficient to abolish fault and guilt, and so to procure remission as to eternal suffering.

Or if habitual grace were not sufficient for this, yet still they make the redemption of Christ insufficient, and so no satisfaction. For notwithstanding all that he hath done and suffered, the Lord is not appeased to those that believe ; he will punish, he will inflict the torment of hell, for a time at least ; how long, none of them can tell ; but, without question, they say, till his justice be satisfied, till that be done by themselves or others, which Christ alone can do ; and that will be long indeed, and not end but with eternity. So that it is plain by their principles, that the Lord is not yet satisfied by the redemption of Christ : it was not as much as justice required, it was not enough, and so could not be satisfaction. And therefore Bellarmine concludes, suitably enough to their principles, that, of the several opinions which are amongst them concerning Christ's satisfaction and man's, "this is the most probable,—that there is no actual satisfaction but one only, and this is ours."<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Satisfacit mediâtè pro pœnâ etiam temporali, quatenus gratiam præbet per quam ipsi nos Domino satisfacimus. Bellarminus De Pœnitentiâ, lib. iv. cap. xv. p. 1676 ; et De Purgat. lib. i. cap. x : Non quòd immediâtè ipsa ejus satisfactio tollet pœnam temporalem nobis debitam, sed quòd mediâtè eam tollat ; quatenus, videlicet, ab eâ gratiam habemus, sine quâ nihil valeret nostra satisfactio. p. 1369.

<sup>b</sup> Tertius tamen modus videtur probabilior,—quòd una tantùm sit actualis satisfactio, et ea sit nostra De Purgat. lib. i. cap. x. p. 1669.

2. *The merit of this redemption is also by their doctrine made unnecessary for the purchasing of eternal life, to which we are accepted in justification.*—For they teach that men may (and must, if they will have it) merit it for themselves. Now there is no need of the merit of redemption, if men can and do merit heaven : for merit is the worth of what it is said to deserve ; it must be, by their computation, equal or proportionable in value to it.<sup>a</sup> Now if Christ bring the worth of heaven, and we must bring the worth of it too, the Lord lets none have heaven till he have double the value of it, till he receive twice as much for it as it is worth. So that heaven, upon this account, will be a very hard bargain, however the Lord declares it to be a gift.

There is no avoiding this, but either by making the merit of Christ needless, or the merits of men. The Papists in this case choose rather to make the merit of redemption unnecessary. And indeed, when they think it advisable to speak out, they say expressly, that there is no need of the merit of Christ, that we may get eternal life. Thus Vasquez, one of their most eminent writers. “Seeing the merits of a just man,” saith he, “do condignly merit eternal life, as an equal recompence and reward ; there is no need that any other condign merit, such as is the merit of Christ, should intervene, that eternal life may be had.”<sup>b</sup> But how then must we understand them, when they tell us that Christ did merit eternal life for us ? They inform us by their doctrine of satisfaction,—as Christ satisfied for the temporal punishment due to sin mediately, by procuring grace to satisfy for it ourselves ; so he purchased life for us mediately, in that he was worthy to obtain grace for us, whereby we merit life ourselves.<sup>c</sup> But by this account he did not merit life for us at all, no more than he can be said to confess or repent of our sins, because he obtained grace for us to confess and repent thereof ourselves. This is but to own the merit of redemption as Pelagius owned the grace of God, when he said [that] it was grace for Him to form us with wills able to act sufficiently, and perform the office of grace, without it.<sup>d</sup>

<sup>a</sup> In opere bono ex gratiâ procedente sit quedam proportio et æqualitas ad præmium vitæ æternæ. Bellarminus De Justific. lib. v. cap. xvii. Æqualem valorem condignitatis habent. Vasquez.

<sup>b</sup> Cùm opera justî mereantur vitam æternam tanquam æqualem mercedem et præmium, non opus est interventu alterius meriti condigni, quale est meritum Christi, ut eis reddatur vita æterna. In Primam Secundæ, Quæst. exiv. Disput. cccxii. cap. iii. n. xxx.

<sup>c</sup> Nunquam petimus a Deo per merita Christi ut nostris dignis operibus et meritoriis reddatur merces æternæ vitæ ; sed ut per Christum detur nobis gratia, quâ possemus dignè hanc mercedem promereri. Idem, ibid. They use this illustration :—A farm being given to a son, he may, by the commodities reaped out of that farm, buy anything that it shall please his father to set to sale. Dr. Bishop in Abbot “Of Merits,” p. 640.

<sup>d</sup> The Pelagians said, (as Augustine represents them,) Posse sufficere naturam humanam, quæ condita est cum libero arbitrio ; eamque esse Dei gratiam, quia sic conditi sumus, ut hoc voluntate possimus. De Gestis, contra Pelag. cap. xxxv. And Jerome : Ita Dei gratiam ponunt, ut non, per singula opera, ejus nitamur et regamur auxilio ; sed ad liberum referunt arbitrium ; ut in eo Deo referendæ sint gratiæ, quod tales nos condiderit, qui nostro arbitrio possimus et eligere bona et

Besides, secondly, their principles do not allow them to say, that we have inherent grace by the merit of Christ. And that being with them the formal cause of justification, if it was not procured for us by his redemption, this is quite excluded from being interested in justifying us. And indeed all the interest of Christ's redemption in our justification, and salvation too, is reduced by them to this one point,—his purchasing inherent grace for us, as appears by the premises. So that if this be disclaimed, there will be nothing ascribed to Christ.

Now it cannot be expected, that while they profess themselves Christians, they should, in plain terms, make Christ a cipher; but they do it by consequence too plainly. The other principles render Christ's meriting inherent grace for us to be needless: and surely he would not do and suffer so much for a needless thing. By their doctrine of congruous merit, a man destitute of inherent (or, as they call it, "justifying") grace may do that which will make it due to him from God. Now that which a man can make due to himself needs not at all the merit of Christ to make it due. The Lord will certainly let him have his due without the mediation of any other merit.

Yea, if we should bate the word "merit," and *debitum*, or "dueness," too, as Soto would have it, yet if a man can do that upon which justifying grace will necessarily and infallibly follow, there is no need that Christ should purchase it; for it is altogether unnecessary that Christ should merit that for us which we can make sure to ourselves, so as to have it necessarily and infallibly. Now that a man can do thus much, to make such grace sure to him, the Dominicans (the best friends that the grace of God can find amongst the Romanists) do affirm. Dominicus a Soto, a principal and the leading man amongst them, asserts it, and that upon the express testimony of Aquinas, whose conduct they are wont in their divinity to follow as "angelical:" "Out of necessity, not that of constraint, but that of infallibility, grace is given to him that prepares himself for it by some help of God."<sup>a</sup> They hold, that when a man doth

vitare mala: et non intelligunt, ista dicentes, quòd peros eorum intolerabilem blasphemiam diabolus sibilet, "They so define the grace of God, as that, in each of our works, we do not depend upon, nor are we governed by, its aid: but they refer them to free-will: so that therefore thanks are to be returned to God, because he has so made us, that we can by our own will both choose the good, and avoid the evil: and, whilst uttering these sentiments, they do not perceive that the devil, by their mouth, is hissing forth intolerable blasphemy." Ad Ctesiphontem, p. 253.

<sup>a</sup> Quòd ex necessitate, non quidem coactionis, sed tamen infallibilitatis, detur gratia se per auxilium Dei preparanti. De Nat. et Grat. lib. iii. cap. xiii. p. 165. And this divine assistance, others of them say, a graceless person may merit: Profectò longè probabiliùs diceretur, per opera bona moralia, quibus aliquis ante acceptam gratiam faceret quod moraliter potest, eatenus primam gratiam ex congruo illum mereri, quatenus conveniens et congruum est ut, eùm talis facit quantum in illo statu moraliter potest, Deus etiam præstet id quod suarum est partium; hoc est, ei homini auxilia actualia augeat, quibus adjutus possit faciliùs gratiam consequi, atque adeò consequatur, si sibi non desit, "With much more probability, indeed, might it be said that, by the moral good works in which, before the reception of grace, any one exercises what moral power he possesses, he merits through congruity primary grace, since it is fitting and congruous that—when, being such

his endeavour, God will not deny him grace ; (there is their congruous merit ;)<sup>a</sup> and think they salve all, by saying [that] this endeavour must be from Divine assistance. But Pelagius acknowledged that, no less than they ; and Augustine, with other his opposers, take notice of it : yet because he would have grace to be given according to merits, (though by merits was understood, not that which deserved it, but anything done by a sinner in respect of which grace is given, as Bellarmine confesseth,)<sup>b</sup> they condemned him, as evacuating the redemption of Christ, and the grace of God.

In fine : if a man by their principles could not merit justifying grace for himself, yet still, by their doctrine, there would be no need of Christ's merits ; for they teach that any other just man may merit it for him *de congruo*, ["with merit of congruity,"]<sup>c</sup> and do so much on his behalf as [that] it would be indecent<sup>d</sup> and incongruous to the bounty of God to deny him grace. And this is enough to make him sure of it infallibly ; seeing the Lord is as far from acting undecently<sup>e</sup> or incongruously, as he is from dealing unjustly.

I need not tell you, these errors are dangerous ; unless you need be told, that there is danger in making Christ signify little or nothing in the justifying of sinners.

3. The last thing propounded is *the application of this redemption*, that is, of the blood of Christ, or his obedience, or his righteousness ; for those are used by the apostle as terms of the same import. If we be accepted as righteous, it must be upon the account of some righteousness. We have none of our own that can acquit us before the Lord's tribunal ; that of ours will neither satisfy for what is past, nor serve us for the future ; it cannot of itself be a good title to life, *which* has in it just ground for condemnation. The righteousness of Christ is all-sufficient for

as he is, he does as much as in that state he morally can—God also should perform *his* part ; that is, increase to that man his actual aids, by the assistance of which he may be enabled the more easily to acquire grace, and so may actually acquire it, if he be not wanting to himself." Gregorii De Valentia liber de Grat. Divin. pars iv. cap. ult.

\* Peccator per bona opera facta extra charitatem meretur de congruo primam gratiam : ibi est enim quædam congruitas, quia facit quod in se est. Bonaventura in Secundam, Dist. xxviii. n. xxxix.

<sup>b</sup> Gratiam autem secundum merita nostra dari intelligunt patres, cum aliquid fit propriis viribus, ratione cujus detur gratia, etiamsi non sit illum meritum de condigno. De Gratia et libero Arbitrio, lib. vi. cap. v. p. 659.

<sup>c</sup> Merito congrui potest aliquis alteri mereri primam gratiam. Aquinas, Prima Secundæ, Quæst. cxiv. art. Bellarmine will have this past all doubt : Sicut certum est, non posse unum alteri ex condigno gratiam promereri ; ita non dubium est, posse id ex congruo fieri. De Justificat. lib. v. cap. xxi. p. 969. Bonaventure will have this to be meritum digni ["merit of worthiness"]. In Primam, Dist. xli. n. viii. Est dignitas cum indignitate, sicut cum vir justus meretur peccatori primam gratiam : dignitas enim ex parte viri justi, "There is worthiness with unworthiness, as when a just man merits primary grace for a sinner : for the worthiness is on the part of the just man." In Secundam, Dist. xxvii. n. xxxix.

<sup>d</sup> unseemly.

<sup>e</sup> unbecomingly.

all the exigencies of our condition. But, that it may be our justification, it must be our righteousness, (Rom. v. 18 :) and how can that be? We need no other man to tell us than Bellarmine himself. "The sin of Adam," says he, "is communicated in such a manner as that which is past can be communicated; that is, by imputation."<sup>a</sup> If the cardinal had not been a mere servant to his hypothesis, he would have followed this so far as the reason of it leads him; and then it would have brought him to acknowledge no less of the righteousness of the Second Adam than of the sin of the first: both are past; and [there is] no other way to communicate what is past but by imputation.

This imputation is it which they will deny, and yet cannot but confess. And in their great champion we may see manifestly the evidence of truth struggling with the power of interest and prejudice; and prevailing so far as to force from him three or four acknowledgments of this imputation, in that dispute where he sets himself with all his might to oppose it.<sup>b</sup>

There are these severals<sup>c</sup> considerable,<sup>d</sup> about the imputing [of] this righteousness: First, *substitution*: Christ satisfied in our stead; that is, he tendered that which was due from us. Secondly, *acceptance*: the Father accepted what Christ performed in our stead as performed on our behalf. Thirdly, *participation*: we have the fruits and advantages of his undertaking no less than if we ourselves had satisfied. Now the first of these the Romanists assert; the third they acknowledge; and the second they cannot deny, unless they will deny that the Father accepted Christ's perfect performance on the behalf of those for whom he undertook it by his own appointment. And as this performance, so stated, is that we mean by "Christ's righteousness;" so this acceptance, as declared in the Gospel in reference to those that believe, includes all that we mean by "imputation." Nor need we contend for more than they cannot, without something like blasphemy, deny; namely, God's acceptance of Christ's satisfaction.

Then doth God impute the righteousness of Christ to a believer, when he accepts what Christ performed for him, as if he had performed it; as we say, then a creditor imputes the payment of the debt to the debtor, when he accepts of what the surety pays for him, as if himself had paid

<sup>a</sup> Nobis verò communicatur per generationem eo modo quo communicari potest id quod transiit; nimirum, per imputationem. De Amiss. Grat. lib. v. cap. xvii. p. 332.

<sup>b</sup> Et hoc modo non esset absurdum, si quis nobis diceret, nobis imputari Christi justitiam et merita, cum nobis donentur et applicentur, ac si nos ipsi Deo satisfecissemus, "And in this manner it would not be absurd, if any one should say to us that the righteousness and merits of Christ are imputed to us, since they are bestowed upon and applied to us just as if we ourselves had satisfied God." De Justific. lib. ii. cap. xvii. p. 785: Ss. Quarto refellitur. Et cap. x. pp. 793, 794: Ss. Respondeo et Ss. Hac igitur falsa, &c.

<sup>c</sup> Particulars.

<sup>d</sup> worthy consideration.

it. There is ground enough in Scripture to use this for illustration at least; (Heb. vii. 22; Matt. vi. 12;) and by the light hereof, a mean capacity may see a clear answer to the greatest objections made by the Papists against Christ's righteousness imputed.<sup>a</sup>

OBJECTION I. "If Christ's righteousness be truly imputed unto us, then we might be called and accounted 'redeemers of the world.'"

ANSWER. He might as reasonably say, "The debtor may be called and accounted the surety, because the surety's payment is accepted for him."

OBJECT. II. "If Christ's righteousness be imputed to us as if it were ours, then we ought to be accounted as righteous as Christ."

ANSWER. He might as well argue, [that] the debtor is as rich as the surety, because the surety pays his debt.

OBJECT. III. "If by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, we may be said to be truly righteous; then Christ, by our unrighteousness imputed to him, may be truly called 'sinner.'"

ANSWER. Which is just as if he should say, "If the acceptance of the surety's payment acquit the debtor, then the surety, because the debt is charged on him, though he contracted it not, is as bad a husband and as much a bankrupt as the debtor."

I need bring no particular arguments for this. All the Scriptures, where there is mention of Christ's dying for us, his sufferings, cleansing us with his blood, his obedience to death, &c., (since it cannot be denied but all this was well-pleasing to God, and accepted by him, as it was performed on the behalf of believers,) are undeniable proofs, that his righteousness is imputed.

And it is a wonder to me, that any who acknowledge the satisfaction of Christ should have the confidence to say, there is no evidence for this imputation in the sense expressed; but their causeless prejudice against the word makes them, it seems, so sullen, that they will not take notice of the things we mean, though they meet with it everywhere in Scripture.

In short (I fear I have transgressed already, and must omit much of what I intended): If Christ's righteousness be not imputed, it is not accepted; if it be not accepted, it is not performed; and so there will be no satisfaction, no redemption in Jesus Christ. This is Bellarmine's own inference when he is disputing against Osiander,—to deny God's accepting Christ's righteousness for us, which is, by the premises, his imputing it to us, is to "overthrow the whole mystery of man's redemption and reconciliation."<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup> Without lessening the difference betwixt debts and punishments, a surety as to either will serve our purpose.

<sup>b</sup> From his opinion, says he, certè sequitur, ut Christi justitiam Deus non acceptet; which cannot

## USE. FOR APPLICATION.

Let me admonish you, as you tender the honour of Christ and the comfort and happiness of your souls, to receive and preserve the doctrine of justification pure and untainted as the apostle delivered it. Beware especially of the Popish corruptions, whereby they have adulterated and wherewith they have overwhelmed it. Whereas it is, as delivered in Scripture, the foundation of our hopes, and the spring of our comforts; they have made it a sink into which a great part of their other corruptions do run and settle, or the source from which they rise and are fed. I might make this good by an account of particulars; but those I have touched already are too many. They tell you, to be justified is to be sanctified, and so sanctified as to need no further sanctification after the first infusion; no growth in grace, no increase of holiness, no progress therein, nor mortification neither; no need of, no reason for, it. Their principles are so indulgent, as to free you from such trouble. But then you must not take notice of the many commands of God which enjoin these, and make them necessary, nor of the hazards that attend such neglects: they will assure you, there is none under the notion [under] which they represent them.

They tell you, you must be justified by your own righteousness, and that a perfect righteousness within you; that is it you must trust to. And if you think much to be justified as never any sinner in the world was, and know not how to compass a righteousness absolutely perfect within you, they will inform you, that any degree of charity, the least, the weakest, is righteousness in perfection. Thus you may be justified in their way, if you will but have patience till your inherent righteousness in this world be perfect and spotless, or till the lowest degree of it be absolute perfection. If you think it impossible to be justified upon such terms, they will tell you there is nothing more easy: any of their sacraments will help you to it; for they all confer justifying grace, and that by the mere external act. You may have it, though you never mind what you are a-doing, when you are at sacrament, to get it. An easy way to heaven indeed, if it were as easy to be saved as deluded!

They will have you believe that their doctrine of justification is that which we must approve, since it includes pardon; and yet they have no pardon by their doctrine while there is one speck of sin in their souls, and so not in this world; and the other is no world for it. And though they fancy, that fault, and stain, and desert, and the very being of sin, is abolished when they have so full pardon; and will have none that is not lawful; yet are they not pardoned for all that, but plainly condemned,

and into infernal fires they must go, and be there tortured, after they are so fully pardoned, till themselves have fully satisfied, and paid the utmost farthing, or others for them. And if they cannot do that which Christ only can do, namely, satisfy the justice of God for all sorts of sins, as to part of the punishment due to some, and the whole punishment due to others, their purgatory will prove hell, everlastingness not abated; and *they* will find themselves damned eternally, and cast into hell, *who*, by their doctrine, were betrayed into that state, under a pretence of being punished there a while, in order to salvation. And if the demerit of sins which they call "venial" prove greater than they believe, (without and against Scripture,) they are in hell while they dream they are but in purgatory; for the partition between hell and purgatory is but the distinction made in their fancies betwixt mortal and venial sins, as to their demerit.

Thus are they in danger to be pardoned: and no wonder, since there is not one sin in five hundred which, by their doctrine, needs Christ or his blood for its pardon: there is no need of "the blood of sprinkling" (Heb. xii. 24) for the infinite numbers of their venials; they have a sprinkling of their own [that] will serve, a holy water, conjured into such Divine powers, as to wash away a world of sins, fault, and punishment both.\* This is the "fountain" one of them (which themselves have "opened for sin and uncleanness;" Zech. xiii. 1;) and the other, opened by Christ, may be shut up, unless there may be some use of it for another sort of sins, but those very few in comparison.

Indeed, it is the intolerable injury they offer to Christ, his redemption, and the free grace of God, which makes their doctrine of justification most intolerable. To strip the redemption which is in Jesus Christ of its merit or satisfaction, without which it is no redemption; to make the mercy of God needless, or the free exercise of it impossible, and his grace to be no grace; is the way not to be justified, but condemned. This is to seek pardon of former offences by new crimes, as if one would not receive a pardon without interlining it with something of treasonable import against him who offers it. Yea, it seems an attempt to blot out of the pardon all that is pardoning; and to affront and deface that upon which all the hopes of a condemned sinner depend, and without which no flesh can be justified. Whenever the Lord justifies any, he doth it "freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ:" they that will not be justified, are in danger to be condemned.

\* *Remissio venialium, qui est effectus aquæ benedictæ, sine collatione gratiæ et sanctitatis confertur. Non pœnas culparum modò, sed, id quod mihi probabilius est, culpas quoque veniales, remittet, "The remission of venial sins, which is the effect of the blessed water, is conferred without the communication of grace and holiness. It will remit, not merely the punishment of sins, but, as seems to me more probable, even venial sins themselves also."* Melchior Canus, *De Sacris*, pars i. p. 751.