

It Is God That Justifieth

by Thomas Bradbury

The sermon emphasizes that justification comes solely from God through faith in Jesus Christ, highlighting His grace and the work of the Holy Spirit in believers' lives.

Scripture: Psalm 139:23, Mark 9:24, John 14:1, Romans 1:7, Romans 3:24, Romans 4:25 - 5:1, Romans 5:9, Romans 5:19, Romans 8:33, 1 Corinthians 6:11, James 2:24

Topics: "Justification By Faith", "Redeeming Love"

Description

Thomas Bradbury preaches about the comprehensive justification provided by God through Jesus Christ, emphasizing the triumph of redeeming love over sin, death, and hell. He highlights the role of the Kinsman-Redeemer, Jesus Christ, who entered heaven to intercede for His people, sending the Holy Spirit to complete the canon of Scripture and comfort believers. The sermon delves into the universal proclamation of the Gospel to gather all objects of God's everlasting love, showcasing the diverse testimonies of believers from different backgrounds coming to bow before Jesus and receive blessings from the covenant of grace.

Transcript

It is God that Justifieth" Romans 8:33

The covenant purposes of Jehovah toward His own elect having been accomplished in their salvation by Jesus Christ, and redeeming love having triumphed over sin, death, and hell, the Kinsman-Redeemer, on the ground of His finished work, entered heaven's highest glory to appear in the presence of the Father to make intercession for those whom He had left in a world of temptation, trial, and tribulation. Faithful to His promise, He sent His blessed Spirit to complete the canon of New Testament Scripture, to make intercession in His people, to comfort the mourners in Zion, and to perform the part of covenant remembrancer in those who lament the treachery of their memories and their forgetfulness in the things of God. Yes, the Holy Ghost was sent and the glorious Gospel of the blessed God was proclaimed to the ends of the earth for the ingathering of all the objects of His everlasting love. Elect ones must come and bow at the feet of their great King-Priest, and receive from His gracious hands those blessings designed for them in the everlasting covenant of grace.

"They shall come" is the testimony of the Spirit throughout the pages of inspiration, and a fact in the experience of every true-born child of God. Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands to God, while out of Egypt, at Jehovah's call, His sons and daughters must come. Arabia's desert-ranger runs with eager delight to

the fountain of living water, while captive souls hail with joy the approach of their great and glorious Deliverer. The elect Jew, weary of the vague mysterious symbols of a burdensome ritual, found sweet relief in the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, which made him free from the law of sin and of death. The schoolmen of Greece found their learning and philosophy tarnished before the advent of Him who is to His saved ones the Wisdom of God. "Strangers of Rome" carried the glad tidings of great joy, the wondrous story of an ascended Saviour's love to the imperial city; and in the land of the Forum, where laws were dispensed for the world's government, the arena where gladiators fought, and bled, and died amid the wild shouts of a Pagan populace, in Rome, "proud Rome," hearts were bowed beneath the gentle sway of Heaven's Anointed King, and acknowledged His sovereignty over all things to His Church. Where ever sinners have been brought into the rich enjoyment of God's love, through the Person, wounds, blood, and righteousness of Jesus Christ, all, with one heart and one voice, ascribed all the honour and glory of their salvation to Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb for ever.

The Scriptures of truth have been given to the Church and people of God, bequeathed to them as their peculiar legacy, and it is their blessed privilege to circulate them broadcast, that by the light of its truths God's hidden ones may be discovered. Yet, the purposes, promises, and performances of Jehovah are only for those to whom the Word is addressed, and whose characters are described therein. Now mark this question: Did Paul write this epistle to the Roman people or nation? I answer, No. Turn with me to Romans 1:7. "To all that be in Rome beloved of God, called saints." Notice the words "to be" are in italics, therefore the words should read as I have quoted them, "called saints." Who called them saints? The Father when He separated them to Himself in the everlasting covenant of grace. Christ owns them as saints, or sanctified ones, because He took them to His loved embrace as the gift of the Father. The Holy Ghost calls them saints when He witnesses in their hearts of the Father's love and of the Son's beauty and grace. The Church of the living God acknowledges them to be saints when the distinguishing grace of God separates them from the service of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Now, as soon as this separation is manifest, the world looks on with reproachful eyes, and with a contemptuous spirit styles the children of God, "Saints." Well, it is our high privilege, with the spirit of the despised Master, to heed them not. Blest with the witness of the Spirit that we are children of God, separated to Himself, and to the enjoyment of covenant blessings made over to us in the Son of His love, we may well sing,

"If on my face, for Thy dear name,

Shame and reproaches be,

All hail reproach, and welcome shame!

If Thou remember me."

Let us now look at the design of the apostle in writing this matchless epistle to the beloved of God at Rome. Mark! Not to the professors, but to the elect at Rome, to the redeemed at Rome, to the justified at Rome, to the called at Rome. He wrote to them to set forth the sovereign, uninfluenced, invincible, immutable grace of God to an innumerable company of Adam's posterity. An elect people loved with an everlasting love, embraced in the arms of a precious Christ, preserved in Him until called, and, after calling, preserved through all the sins, sorrows, and sufferings they are the subjects of, and kept in every temptation, trial, and tribulation to that eternal glory reserved in heaven for them. The apostle wrote that the Church might be taught by the Holy Ghost, through his writing, the total depravity and corruption of human nature, and the utter inability of man to perform a gracious action, to speak a gracious word, or

produce a gracious desire. Read at your leisure the first chapter of Romans, where he describes the Gentile world when it was at its highest state of civilization, refinement, and accomplishment. Such is his description that I would not read it in a mixed assembly; but you must remember that this epistle was written to those of whom he says, "Unto the pure all things are pure" (Titus 1:15). To those to whom God had given a pure mind and understanding, the reading of any portion of God's most Holy Word at which a carnal professor or worldling would laugh, produces a feeling of solemn awe and reverence in the presence of a just and holy God. As I read this first chapter I see all that I can find in myself, every shade of iniquity and abomination lurking beneath this skin of mine, and were it not for the restraining and constraining grace of God keeping me in my proper place, these must break forth before the eyes of the Church and the world. The knowledge and experience of this cause my heart to ache and my head to bow in shame and sorrow before Him, while my almost constant cry is, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Come to the second chapter of Romans, which reveals the humbling truth that the Jew, with all his religion, ceremonies, ordinances, precepts, and commands, without the sovereign grace and power of God, is but a spangled hypocrite at the best. The apostle winds up the chapter with this sweeping declaration: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

An objector now starts up. Mark you, that tribe is not yet dead, for let a man stand up and declare unflinchingly the sovereign purposes of Jehovah in the salvation of a chosen people, whose nature is utterly corrupt, incorrigible, and full of enmity against God, and objectors will abound on every hand. It is certainly humiliating to poor proud nature to be told that universal man, educated or uneducated, rude or refined, plebeian or prince, religious or irreligious, pious or profane, without the grace and indwelling of God the Holy Ghost, has no power or will to perform any gracious act, or to produce anything but what deserves God's eternal wrath and condemnation.

But it is a great mercy to be lifted up above all objectors and objections, as God sweetly whispers to the heart of His taught and sent one: "Thou knowest thy testimony is My truth and what thou declarest are My words, and thou shalt speak My words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear. If they will, let them object, but leave thou them with Me." At the commencement of Romans chapter three, we find an objector: "What advantage then hath the Jew, or what profit is there of circumcision?"

The answer is to the point: "Much in every way: chiefly, because, that unto them were committed the oracles of God." At your leisure read on to the ninth verse, where you read, "What then? Are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." In the margin you see that word "proved" is rendered correctly "charged," for the apostle had not proved that all were under sin. He had laid the charge against them, and them from verses 10-18, inclusive, in a string of quotations from the Psalms, Jeremiah, the Proverbs, and Isaiah, he fully proves his charge.

Now to the law and to the testimony. "As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one." Through the whole range of humanity not one righteous person can be found. Amid all the multitudes of Adam's fallen race not an unsinning one can be seen. After proving that all are guilty before God and subject to His judgment, he says: "Therefore by the deeds of the law there can no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin." How can I be justified before God by my attempting to obey that law which convinces me of sin?

Mark you, sin in every thought of my mind, every desire of my heart, every look of my eye, every word of my lips, and every action of my body as a natural man. The law is God's measuring line which proves me in all things lacking, God's straight edge which proves me in all things crooked and perverse, God's balance which proves me in all things wanting and unjust. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." There are those who tell us we have nothing to do with the Old Testament, but, depend upon it, such persons have precious little to do with the New.

See how Jesus put honour upon the Old Testament Scriptures as the witnesses to the truth of His love, blood, and salvation to His covenant people. Luke 24:27: "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded unto them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself." This is a glorious theme! The manifestation of the righteousness of God in the Person and work of Jesus. "Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ." Precious truth! Who believes it?

"Not by the faith of man, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, the righteousness of God is unto all and upon all them that believe: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." All past transgressions for ever taken away, and the child of God appears justified and accepted, perfect and complete, in the pure and spotless righteousness of a precious Christ. "Where is the boasting them?"

It is excluded." What is that? Put out of doors. Boasting has no place or standing in the living Church of God, or in the Spirit wrought experience of His people. By what law is boasting excluded? "Of works? Nay: but by the law of faith." Is faith then a work to be performed, or produced in order to secure our justification? This fleshly, free-will conclusion is met and answered by the apostle in:

The fourth chapter. Those who will bring legal terms and incorporate them with free grace phraseology, and make faith a work of the creature, or a condition of grace, are here anticipated, met, and confuted. Listen! The holy Ghost by Paul says, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." You see by this that faith is not a work or production of my own, but according to the declaration of Jesus in John 6:29: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom he hath sent." It is the work of the Holy Ghost in me, "the faith of the operation of God" (Col. 2:12). But who are the ungodly mentioned here? They are those for whom Jesus lived and died, on the ground of which they are justified. See Romans 5:6: "Christ died for the ungodly." I do love the glorious grace of that expression, and I equally love that in Romans 3:26: "The Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." A believer is one who sees all righteousness and godliness in Jesus, and nothing but unrighteousness and ungodliness in himself. David and Abraham are brought forth as illustrations of justification by the free grace of God. David's faith and experience as expressed in Psalm 32:1,2: "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord will not impute sin." Abraham, not in his works which were evidences of his faith, but in Gen. 15 and 17: when his spirit was resting upon the word and testimony of the living God, before a single promise was performed in his heart's experience. That was God wrought faith, not the impatient presumption of the graceless free willer.

We now come to Romans chapter 5, where a precious chain of Gospel truths is presented to our enlightened gaze. The apostle states that we are justified in the Person, work, death, and resurrection of Jesus, through whom the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. The parties Christ died for are described as ungodly (verse 6). "God commendeth His love toward us,

in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (verse 8). Enemies are reconciled to God by the death of His Son, and are saved from every sin and sorrow by His interceding life. The headship of Adam and the sin of his whole race, with the headship of Christ and the righteousness of all in Him fill up the rest of the chapter. "For if through the offence of one, many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one Man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many" (verse 15). See! Mr. Objector is panting for an opportunity to deliver himself! Oh, then, if that be true, we may live as we like, and do as we like, for the more we sin and the more God is glorified! Don't you see this at the commencement of Romans chapter 6? "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" Look at the apostle who, by the grace and power of God within him, starts with horror at the propounding of such a question, and exclaims, "God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Throughout this chapter He gives living proof of the purity of God's Gospel and its effects upon the lives of its recipients. In Romans chapter 7, he opens up the experience peculiar to these separated ones, points out the work of the law in a redeemed sinner's soul, and the conflict which is incessantly carried on between the law of God and the law of sin. The eighth chapter most sweetly reveals perfect deliverance in Christ Jesus from all sin, sorrow, death, and condemnation, and give a glorious description of those new covenant blessings which are secured to the Church and people of God in virtue of their eternal union to their ever living and ever loving Head. In the midst of all this, the precious words I have read to you by way of text appear: "It is God that justifieth."

Let us for awhile notice this precious declaration, and may we be blest with the guidance of the Holy Ghost, and the indwelling of the Word of Christ. Col. 3:16: "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom." Were I a legalist or a free will presumer I should read this to you as a precept, exhortation, or entreaty; but I find that sovereign power lies underneath the precious covenant command. If God the Holy Ghost speaks this command in your heart, it will be as certain a reality as was the existence of light when the creative decree went forth, "Let there be light." Just for a moment notice that important expression, "all wisdom," which alludes to the diversity of truth. It directs the mind not so much to the concentration of truth in the Person of Jesus, as to the diffusion of truth among the members of the mystical body. As we rummage with delight the blessed Word of God, and are savingly and intelligently interested in that sameness which makes God's truth and God's salvation insipid and uninteresting to the natural man, we behold that glorious variety and sweet harmony which "none but Zion's children know." Turn to 1 Cor. 12:4-11, where we see the same Spirit, but diversities of gifts; the same Lord, but differences of administrations; the same God, but diversities of operations. "But all these worketh that one and the self same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will." I believe there are what the children of God look upon as regeneration portions, or portions peculiar to their experience of deliverance from sin and trouble. Let me explain what I mean. If it were possible for me to put you under a catechetical examination as to the portions of God's blessed Word with which He first convinced you of sin, or brought pardon, peace, and liberty to your souls, I am almost bold to say that in this congregation we should scarcely find the same portion in two cases. One would say, "He met me with that blessed declaration, 'He loved me and gave Himself for me.'" Another might say with an old French pastor, "He broke into my heart with that precious truth, and the grace of God was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. Not in me! The moment I saw that faith and love were in Christ Jesus for me, my soul bounded into happy liberty." Others may say, "He set my soul at rest with that blessed truth, 'the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin.'" So portion after portion of the Word from living hearts might be produced, thus proving the glorious unity of truth, as well as its blessed diversity. Divine truth is the revelation of Godhead, Three-in-One, and One-in-Three. Here we have a three-fold cord, which can never be broken, and which binds all the election of grace together in one glorious Head. But why expatiate upon this? Because of the

diversity of truth, and the all wisdom of Jehovah which appear in the justification of His elect ones in Christ Jesus.

Now let us notice the words of the text in their connection: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Or, as it may be read without the italics: "What shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? God that justifieth?" There we have a glorious challenge, and a very gracious question. Just you notice the construction of the passage according to the mind of the Holy Ghost. Shall God who justifies His own elect bring any charge against them? No! Look at the prodigal. Has the Father against whom he sinned, and from whose presence he wandered, He who loved him with an everlasting love, and clothed and justified him in His everlasting robe of righteousness, one accusing or upbraiding word for His wandering child? Not one. Let punctilious Pharisees bring a poor fallen sinner into the presence of her Lord and Saviour, saying, "Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act." He writes upon the ground, He speaks, but not a word of accusation against the sinning one. His words and gestures of rebuke were for the accusers of His poor stray one, before which they could not stand; but went out of His presence one by one. He stands, He speaks, "Woman, where are those thine accusers? Hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more." Look at the gracious communications of God the Spirit. No accusation there. He wrought conviction in my soul and brought me to see and feel that everything in me deserved God's wrath and condemnation; but He sweetly whispered words of love to my sorrowing heart and gave me to understand what that meaneth: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

"It is God that justifieth." What are we to understand by this justification? It is the very opposite to condemnation. It is an act of God implying and involving something infinitely more than mere acquittance from Satan's accusations. It is a perfect clearance of my person from all charges that hell, Satan, sin, law, conscience, the world or the Church may bring against me. If I belong to the Lord Jesus Christ and am blest with the sweet witness of His Spirit in my heart, that I am born of God, bought by blood and justified from all things through the Person, love, blood, and righteousness of Jesus, and am brought to acknowledge this before men, the lynx-eyes world and prating professors will combine to find out and enunciate to the people some flaw or other in my character, experience, or confession. Well, it is no small mercy in the midst of all this to be able to sing with confidence and true humility,

"Poor, weak, and worthless though I am,

I have a rich, almighty Friend,

Jesus the Saviour is His name,

He freely loves and without end."

He has not one charge to lay against me, though I can bring a thousand. Let men or devils speak a word against an elect vessel of mercy and Jehovah Jesus will vindicate his character and cause his righteousness to shine as clear as the noon-day. But let us now seek out how God's justification of His people is revealed in the pages of inspiration, and bless and praise Him that He has brought us to stand before Him, not as pardoned criminals, but as justified sons, with all sin put away, all accusers silenced, and enjoying the blessedness of the declaration, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). Turn with me to a few portions of the Word, and may the blessed Spirit thereby throw a little light upon this glorious declaration of God's sovereign right to justify whom He will,

when He will, where He will, how He will, and just because He will.

By Himself, "It is God that justifieth" (Rom. 8:33). By His Grace, "Being justified freely by His grace" (Rom. 3:24; Titus 3:7). By Christ's blood, "Much more then, being now justified by His blood" (Rom. 5:9). By His obedience, "By the obedience of One shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). By His resurrection, "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). By His Spirit, "Ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

By faith, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). By works, "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24). Here we have eight different declarations of God in His most Holy Word concerning the justification, acquittance, and perfection of every child of His in the Son of His love. We will consider how we are, I.) Justified By Himself: "It is God that justifieth." Who else can justify?

Who has the right or power to justify but that God against whom we transgress actually day by day and moment by moment. We confess, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Ps. 51:5). The spiritual worshippers in the establishment of this country approach His sacred Majesty with this confession, "We have offended against Thy holy laws. We have left undone those things which we ought to have done;" there is omission. "And we have done those things which we ought not to have done;" there is commission.

Who can understand his errors? (Ps. 19:12). Who can count up the number of his transgressions as he is brought into the presence of a just and holy God, and sees himself in the light of His glory? Turn with me to Psalm 19., where, after speaking of the law, the testimony, the statutes, the commandment, the fear, and the judgments of the Lord in workings and effects, he says, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults." Know ye anything of such an experience as this?

Sins that the world sees not! Sins that I know not, but which are wrought in my very existence, working in quiescent obedience to the law of sin which is in my members (Rom. 7:23). You may not imagine such a state, but look at Lev. 5:17: "And if a soul sin, and commit any of these things which are forbidden to be done by the commandments of the Lord; though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity." Now then, what about those who by an impression of their own power and will, and the means which they profess God has put into their hands, seek to justify themselves or to do anything in the matter of their justification before God?

Surely we must say of them as Paul said of his brethren after the flesh: "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. 10:3). Such cannot know what sin really is according to God's estimate of it, or according to Paul's experience and description of it: "But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (Rom. 7:13).

Now turn to Psalm 40:12, where we see the Psalmist's judgment as to the number and extent of his iniquities: "For innumerable evils have compassed me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of mine head: therefore my heart faileth me. Be pleased O Lord to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to my help." With such an experience as this the convicted sinner renounces all hope of being justified and accepted of God on the ground of anything in himself. See how this is clearly shown in the case of Job, as recorded throughout the whole of his ninth

chapter, where he declares God's judgment upon everything out of himself. Notice especially these three verses: "If I speak of strength, lo, He is strong: and if of judgment, who shall set me a time to plead? If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse. Though I were perfect, yet would I not know my soul: I would despise my life" (verses 19-21). In this we see Job's mouth stopped, he is guilty before God, subject to His judgment, and fully proves that by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight. God, against whom we have sinned, alone can justify, and this He has eternally done in the Person of His Son Jesus. See Romans 8:30: "Moreover who He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." For this to be experienced in the souls of His elect people, He has made ample and gracious provision in Christ Jesus, as you read in Isa. 45:25 and 53:11. "In the Lord shall the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory. By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities." Oh, how blessed it is to see, know, and feel that in the purpose of the Father, in the person of the Son, by the power of the Holy Ghost, the saints are everlastingly and irrevocably saved and justified.

Now let me ask you, you who have tried, and tugged, and toiled in vain to work out your justification before God, you who have striven the most, and hoped the longest, and prayed the most earnestly in the presence of the Discerner of the thoughts and intents of the hearts, you who have sought, amid the darkness and the gloom, Him whom your soul loveth, and have been blest with sweet glimpses of His beauty, bounty, and blessedness in reading God's most Holy Word, you who have sought and sighed for communion and intercourse with Him in companionship with His tried and tempted people, tell me, what have all your doings aveiled you in the matter of your justification before God? Your answer in, Nothing.

"The best obedience of my hands

Dares not appear before Thy throne;

But faith can answer Thy demands,

By pleading what my Lord has done."

Have you not been brought to occupy in spirit the same spot with the publican? And cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" A sinner in reading your Bible, a sinner in pleading before the mercy-seat, a sinner in company with the saints, a sinner surrounded with mercy, and crowned with lovingkindness. Often times I feel myself not worthy of the notice of the weakest lamb in the fold, and not fit to speak to those from whose anointed lips words of gracious experience flow to humble me in the dust and cause me to feel my nothingness. I find death written upon the promises, instead of enjoying the performance of them, for me and in me, to raise me above myself. Though dead to the law by the body of Christ, yet "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom. 7:4 and 18). In my flesh I find everything to condemn me. In my thoughts, foolishness; in my looks, covetousness; in my desires, selfishness; in my reading of God's Word, negligence; in His worship and service, indifference. In all things I find myself a sinner still. But O how blessed when He takes me by the hand, assures me that I shall be feelingly and experimentally justified, and counsels me by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost thus: God, not means; God, not works; God, not gifts; God, not promises; God, not blessings; God, not communications. He cheers and comforts me with His own sweet words: "Fear thou not, for I am with Thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness" (Isa.

41:10). It is then I can boldly and confidently say, "He is near that justifieth me; who will contend with me? Let us stand together: who is mine adversary? Let him come near to me. Behold, the Lord will help me; who is he that shall condemn me? Lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up" (Isa. 50:8,9).

"It is God that justifieth.: Amen.

I was led this morning to meditate upon the construction and design of this epistle, which was written under the inspiration of God the ever blessed Spirit by the pen of the apostle Paul. We saw in chapter 1.) The utter corruption and depravity of human nature, even when possessing all the advantages of education, philosophy, and refinement. Chapter 2.) Reveals the same, though a God given religion accompanied it. Some may be ready to say, is not a religion from God sufficient? I answer, unhesitatingly, No. Not even the religion which God has revealed through Christ, the Substance, before whom all the shadows flee away, is sufficient. It must be applied by the sovereign power and gracious indwelling of the Holy Ghost, and thus made life and power, to be of any avail or advantage to me. We also looked at other parts of this precious epistle, in which is fully demonstrated that the justification of the child of God cannot be of man, wholly or in part, nor on the ground of words, merits, or desert, but wholly of the free grace of God, through the Person, love, blood, and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. I also endeavoured to speak a few words from the text, proving that God is the Author of our justification, and that He alone can justify. We saw this from the necessity of our sinful case, our perfectly helpless and undone condition, innumerable evils compassing us about, and our sins more in number than the hairs of our heads. Ay, and still further, we are so perplexed with the frequency of them, and our inability to count or confess them, that the cry is heard from our exercised hearts, "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from my secret faults" (Ps. 19:12).

"It is God that justifieth." He is the Author of my justification, the Assertor of my right, the Maintainer of my cause, and the Pronouncer of my sentence of perfect acquittance from all charges and accusations brought against me by Satan, law, or men, therefore I stand before Him eternity justified in the Person of the Son of His love. This brings us to notice,

II.) Justified by His grace: "Being justified freely by His grace" (Rom. 3:24; Titus 3:7). The language is expressive. It is not simple "justified by His grace;" but "justified freely by His grace." What is grace? It is unmerited, uninfluenced favour to the undeserving and hell deserving. In it there is nothing of human power, will, or merit to influence it, nor can any want of these obstruct or hinder it. To suppose either, would be to alter and destroy the very property of grace altogether. See! God of His mere love and sheer favour justifies me for nothing. The very thought of that glorious truth, the uninfluenced grace of God to us in the Son of His love, is so hateful to proud human nature; but human hatred and enmity can never effect a change in it. What is there in me to influence Him, who is of purer eyes than to behold evil, to bless and justify me? As I know my true position before Him by the teaching of His Spirit, I see that every attempt to work out a righteousness of my own deserves hell, and instead of forgiveness, His wrath; instead of justification, condemnation; instead of salvation, damnation; instead of His smile, His frown; instead of the love of His heart, the fury of His arm. As I understand spiritually the truth of that declaration, "There is no difference, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," I know that death, everlasting death, is my only due. But here is the mercy! God, in the riches of His grace before the worlds were framed, gave His elect ones to Jesus, their Husband, Head, and Surety; wrote down their names in His book of life, blessed them with all spiritual blessings, and as He beheld them in the glass of His decrees, in all the glorious perfections of His Son, He pronounced them free from all sin, and everlastingly justified. Blessed

be His holy name, He sees them as He sees His Son, and will thus acknowledge them before assembled worlds when the responsible One stands before Him saying, "Here am I and the children which Thou hast given Me, and of all that Thou hast given Me I have lost none" (Heb. 2:13 and John 6:39). In perfections of the glorious Head the members all shine. In the beauty of the loving Husband the bride appears. In the spotlessness of Jesus' righteousness His saved ones shall stand in the presence of the Father to all eternity.

This justification is wholly irrespective of anything in the persons or acts of the justified, for the decree went forth before any of the members of the mystical body of Christ were born. See Psalm 139:15,16: "My substance was not hid from Thee when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." But to understand our justification aright, we must be taught in our daily experience by the Spirit of God. We may endeavour to gain God's favour by our obedience to the law; but the greater our endeavours the greater the disappointment and experience of condemnation. It was only when I saw that my endeavours and doings were sin, when my mouth was stopped, and I was struck down a guilty sinner before God, at my wits' ends, that the Lord appeared, and made the sweet discovery to my heart that He justified me freely by His grace. That is the way that God has respect to His own, who in themselves are unworthy, hell deserving sinners. As "The God of all Grace" He seeks, finds, saves them; asks them for nothing, and gives them everything. He justifies them in the same manner in which Jesus was hated and condemned. Look at that quotation of His from Psalm 35:19, which you read in John 15:25, "They hated Me without cause." The hatred of the world to our Lord Jesus Christ was without cause, so far as He was concerned, for what was there in Him that was unjust, crooked, or perverse to call forth the hatred or enmity of any mortal? Nothing whatever. So, as we stand before Him in the light of His glory, we see, and know, and feel that God could see nothing in us to cause Him to justify us, yet, that He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus, He justifies us "without money and without price."

This must appear so when we consider what God's elect are by nature and by practice, sinners, ungodly, enemies. Then look at them after He has revealed to them His pardoning, justifying love in regeneration and restoration, for it matters not how rich may be the grace He has bestowed upon them, or the heights of privilege to which He may have brought them, the very moment they see themselves in the light of His glory they are constrained, like Peter in the fishing boat, to confess their sinfulness, or, like John in the Isle of Patmos, to acknowledge their deadness, or, like Daniel in the presence of His glory, to cry, "My comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength" (Dan. 10:8). A child of God all through his wilderness wanderings, though saved from sin, is a sinner still, and when his departure to the realms of glory arrives, the confession of his heart will be with that of Paul, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (1 Tim. 1:15). Chief of sinners, yet, blessed be God, in the ranks of the saved ones. Again, I ask, what is grace? It is favour, rich, full, and free. See Rom. 4:4: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Look again at Romans 11:5,6, where the apostle writes still more explicit: "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." You see then that our justification is received from the hands of God, not because of anything we have done, are doing, or have to do, but purely because of what He has provided for us in the covenant of His grace, and what He has made Himself to us in the Son of His love. "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus

before the world began" (2 Tim. 1:9). Marvellous mercy! He hath so revealed Himself to us who know Him, that we cannot for a moment look out of Himself for any cause, motive, or reason why He should notice or have respect to such ungodly, rebellious wretches as we find ourselves to be. All that we have which is acceptable to Him is but the expression of His grace to us. It is wholly of His rich, full, free, and sovereign grace that we stand justified and approved before Him. But I must pass on to notice,

III.) Justified by Christ's blood: "Much more then being now justified by His blood" (Rom. 5:9). The blood of Christ speaks of the forfeited life of the sinless Surety, and brings to mind a profitable though painful experience. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God," or as we read in the margin, "subject to the judgment of God" (Rom. 3:19). What is the judgment of God?

Under the law. Mouths stopped. Guilty before God. It is one thing to read or repeat these things, and another thing altogether to have them laid by Divine power upon our trembling souls before His judgment throne. Yes, it is one thing for me to recite with fluency the sentence of death pronounced against sinners, but quite different to experience the sickening and crushing anguish of self despair as the voice of the righteous Judge is heard declaring, "The wages of sin is death."

The soul that sinneth it shall die." Not only this, but look at Gal. 3:10: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Such is the experience of every quickened and convicted sinner as he is brought into the presence of his Judge. How can God be just, and at the same time the Justifier of those whom His law curses, condemns, and consigns to death?

How can I stand before Him, cleared from all charges brought against me by law, Satan, and the Holy Ghost? See! By precious God wrought faith I look my Judge in the face and behold in Him the person of my Surety. I see in the Lawgiver, my Lawfulfiller. Instead of frowns and signs of wrath, I see smiles of love and sweet compassion as He opens up to my wondering view the glorious fact that, as my Surety, "He redeemed me from the curse of the law, being made a curse for me, for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

Look at Deut. 21:23: "He that is hanged is accursed of God," or, as we read in the margin, "The curse of God." Think of this! God's Christ, my Kinsman-Redeemer, my Brother and Saviour in Gethsemane's gloomy vale and on Calvary's bloody tree, made the curse of God for me. Well might He cry out in bitterest anguish, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." Well might He groan amid the darkness and convulsions of nature, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?" Ah!

The God-Man bowed His head to receive the consequences of my transgressions. He bowed His head to drink to the dregs that bitter cup of suffering, which otherwise would have been my bitter lot to all eternity. He cried, "It is finished, and gave up the ghost." Every drop of His precious blood was shed for me and for the whole election of grace, for the whole of His chosen flock, for every member of His mystical body, for the whole company of His eternally loved brethren. For all these He travailed in soul, and, blessed be His name, He will see to it that, "He'll not be in glory and leave them behind."

He in whom no sin was, who knew no sin, was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in Him. By His own blood He entered in once into heaven itself, where, on the ground of His perfect atonement and precious blood shedding, He stands before the face of the Father, who sees in Him the everlasting acquittance and eternal justification of all the elect family. With the rich

experience of this, we can confidently sing,

"If Thou hast my discharge procured,

And freely in my room endured

The whole of wrath Divine;

Payment God will not twice demand,

First at my bleeding Sureties hand,

And then again at mine."

IV.) Justified by His obedience: "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). That is, as all in Adam were made sinners, so all in Christ are made made righteous. "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22). Who are made alive? All in Christ. That 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians is a marvellous piece of Divine Logos by the power of the Holy Ghost. Many mistakes are made in reference to this chapter. What is the subject? Not what is called the general resurrection; but the resurrection to life and glory of "Christ the First-fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at His coming." It is the resurrection of Christ the Head from the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea, and that the pledge and assurance of eternal life and glory to all the elect and redeemed members in eternal union with Him. Hence you may understand that mysterious verse which has puzzled thousands from the time it was written until now, "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead" (1 Cor. 15:29)? Heretics in primitive times and in the present day would have us believe that it refers to an order of baptism by proxy. You are ready to ask, whoever believes in such a delusion? I answer, that filthy and pestilential sect, the Mormons, or Latter Day Saints. I am sometimes tempted to say, Latter Day devils. The teaching of this sect in connection with this portion is, if a person dies unbaptized, he is sent to limbo, and must remain there until one of his surviving relatives, as proxy, is baptized for him, when he is immediately admitted to glory. But let us pass away from such pernicious nonsense, and seek for the true interpretation of the text. What is meant by the word "dead?" "Baptized for the dead?" False teachers in the Church at Corinth had declared that there was no such thing as the resurrection and that Christ was not risen from the dead. The apostle is proving throughout this chapter that the Christ he trusted in and preached was a risen, living and reigning Christ, not a dead Christ; but a Christ who represented him in the heavens, and sympathized with him on the earth. Paul contended that he was a baptized member of the mystical body of the Christ of God who ever liveth to make intercession for him. Yes, he was baptized for Him who lived, and died, and rose again, that every member of His body, by the power of His Spirit, should rise with Him to the heights of glory. See! "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain" (verse 14). "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the First-fruits of them that slept" (verse 20). Christ is risen! Christ ever lives for all who are baptized by one Spirit into the death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus to enjoy the glorious liberty of the sons of God and rejoice in the sweet assurance of His love.

But to the subject. All who were in Adam when he sinned died to God. All who were in Christ when He obeyed shall live with Him. Such is the teaching set forth in 1 Cor. 15 and Rom. 5. In the latter the two headships are revealed. Look at verse 19: "For as by one man's obedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous." I speak advisedly when I say there are heretics

abounding who glory in an open Bible and with great plausibility deny in total the obedience or imputed righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ, that glorious truth on which the Church of the living God stands justified, accepted, and perfect before the face of the Father. It is our mercy to know that by the blood shedding of our Surety the gates of glory were thrown wide open to all the election of grace and the gates of hell were for ever barred against them. But where is my right and my title to stand without fear or amazement in the presence of my Father and my God? It is in the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is in the obedience of the One for the many. It is in the right doing of the One Mediator, the One Saviour, the One Husband, the One responsible to present the many sons whom He represented perfect and without spot before the throne of His glory. Impudent heretics and brazen faced professors will taunt by saying: "You cannot find a passage in all the Word where the imputed righteousness of Christ appears." Now turn with me to 2 Peter 1:1: "Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." Now read that last sentence as it is rendered in the margin of your Bibles: "through the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ." Now look at Phil. 2:8: "And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." No mere man of Adam's race could do that, "humble himself," but that mighty Him. Mark well the language of the Holy Ghost, "obedient unto death" not simply obedient in death. Why is it unto death? That it might be a perfect righteousness in which I might stand everlastingly justified in the presence of my God. "Obedient unto death." Righteous and perfect all the way through His earthly pilgrimage to "make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness" (Dan. 9:24).

Some few months ago my heart was made truly glad in the sweet and precious revelation made thereto by the blessed Spirit as I contemplated the obedience of the Holy Child, the sinless Man Christ Jesus. I was once a child, a sinful child; but He was a Child, a Holy Child for me, and the righteousness of His childhood is the joy and rejoicing of my heart. Sometimes memory takes rapid flights and conscience is scared and burdened when the cry ascends, "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to Thy mercy remember Thou me for Thy goodness sake, O Lord" (Ps. 25:7). This is as much as to say, remember the obedience of the Youth of Nazareth for me." I look still further and behold the sins of my manhood, my manifold transgressions, and groan beneath the load of my sins which is intolerable; but, Oh, He tells me that they were all put away from before His face by the precious blood-shedding of Jesus, and that the righteousness of Jesus is mine. Every good thought, holy aspiration, kind look, gracious word, and righteous act of Jesus, all the way from the poor manger at Bethlehem to the cruel cross at Calvary, combined to form that glorious robe of righteousness in which the seed royal of heaven stand righteous before God.

Sometimes it is called "the righteousness of God," because God demanded, planned, and provided it in the Person and work of Jesus. It is also called "the righteousness of the law," because the law required it. It is also called "the righteousness of faith," because God-wrought faith apprehends, embraces, and glories in it and renounces all other. The question may arise in the heart, "How am I to see this righteousness in the walk and conversation of my Surety and Saviour?" Search the Scriptures, and may God the ever-blessed Spirit bless you with a gracious sight of the same.

The Lord of life and glory came into our world with a body like ours, sin excepted. See! "Who knew no sin" (2 Cor. 5:21). "Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth" (1 Peter 2:22). "In Him is no sin" (1 John 3:5). "Jesus Christ the Righteous" (1 John 2:1). He came to do His Father's will, to obey His Father's law, not for Himself but for His people; and

was the only one that ever appeared upon this earth able to perform such a work.

Satan laboured hard to find a weak place in Jesus, but was foiled. Listen to the words of Jesus, "When ye have lifted up the Son of Man, then shall ye know that I AM, and that I do nothing of Myself; but as My Father hath taught Me, I speak these things. And He that sent Me is with Me; the Father hath not left Me alone; for I do always those things that please Him" (John 8:28,29). Again, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me" (John 14:30). None could ever say that but Jesus, and blessed be God, He could, and did.

When we look at ourselves we are filled with shame and confusion of face, but one glimpse of the purity, spotlessness, and innocency of Jesus chases away all sense of doubt, and fear, and shame. Look at the testimony of foes and friends! The devil was a liar from the beginning, but in the sovereign purpose of Jehovah he was bound, contrary to his nature and will, to speak well of God's Christ. Mark 1:24: "I know Thee who Thou art, the Holy One of God." Judas, concerning whom Jesus said, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" (John 6:70); was forced to confess, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood" (Matt. 27:4).

Look at the testimony of His unjust judge, Pilate: He took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person." He asks, "Why, what evil hath He done" (Matt. 27:24)? His wife gives her testimony in the counsel she sent to him, "saying, have thou nothing to do with that just Man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of Him" (Matt. 27:19). The centurion who had the charge of His crucifixion "glorified God, saying, certainly this was a righteous Man" (Luke 23:47).

All nature speaks! The rocks were rent, the earth shook, the heavens gathered blackness, and the sun hid itself when spotless innocency bled and died for lost and ruined sinners like you and me. "It is finished," was the dying cry of Jesus, and the law received what it never had before, a perfect obedience from a perfect Man, who was as well perfect God. In Jesus' life, in Jesus' death, as revealed in the glorious Gospel of the blessed God, we have a glorious righteousness, a spotless righteousness, in which the whole election of grace stand perfect and complete before God, and look forward to meeting Him with boldness and confidence when He shall come again.

Look at this righteousness as it is opened up in the joyful and sorrowful experiences of the family. David's joy in the possession of it was such that he cried out, "My mouth shall show forth Thy righteousness and Thy salvation all the day: for I know not the numbers thereof I will go in the strength of the Lord God: I will make mention of Thy righteousness, even of Thine only" (Ps. 71:15,16). Here the sinner is stripped of the filthy rags of his own righteousness, and stands clothed in the righteousness of Emmanuel, God with us, who magnified the law and made it honourable, and God is well pleased for His righteousness sake (Isa. 42:21). Look at the joy of the Church as its righteousness in the righteousness in Jesus is experience (Isa. 61:10). "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." What a mercy to know that if all the goodness of the saints were set down to my account, I should be filled with shame and sorrow before God; but the righteousness of Jesus my Lord gives me a confidence before Him, and a place in His heart which angels cannot know. But, while we remain in the wilderness, changes and sorrows will attend us; yet, whatever be our lot, this righteousness will prove a prevailing plea. It was so with David. See!

Was he filled with doubt and uncertainty? He cries, "Lead me, O Lord, in Thy righteousness because of mine enemies" (Ps. 5:8).

Was he bowed down beneath the burden of the flesh? He pleads, "Deliver me in Thy righteousness" (Ps. 31:1).

Was he harassed with Satan's accusations and the world's reproaches? He supplicates, "Judge me, O Lord my God, according to Thy righteousness" (Ps. 35:24).

Was he oppressed with a sense of his unfeeling state? He groans, "Quicken me in Thy righteousness" (Ps. 119:40).

Was he waiting and urging his suit at Mercy's door? He sighs, "Answer me in Thy righteousness" (Ps. 143:1).

Was he overwhelmed with ever-accumulating cares and anxieties? He beseeches, "For Thy righteousness sake bring my soul out of trouble" (Ps. 143:11).

Was he burdened with a sense of guilt and condemnation? He prays, "Let my sentence come forth from Thy presence; let Thine eyes behold the things that are equal" (Ps. 17:2). Where are the things that are equal? Not in me, but in the spotless obedience and perfect righteousness of Jesus for me. Thus I find that the righteousness of my God and Saviour is the all-prevailing plea of the child of grace before the mercy-seat. Ah! And that is not all. The child of God will not be satisfied with small things. In fact, it will be satisfied with nothing short of God Himself. You may tell me what Christ has done for me, and that may cheer and comfort me; but I want to know what Christ is in Himself for me, to me, with me, and in me. What is the cry of my heart? Is it "Lord give me Thy righteousness?" Oh, no! It is, Lord, come Thyself, and be Thou my righteousness and my all. See! Jesus in the perfection of His obedience has become the righteousness of God to His people. He is made unto them Righteousness (1 Cor. 1:30). "They are made the Righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). Will that do for you? It will for me and everything short of it is uncertainty and dissatisfaction. We will now notice,

V.) Justified by His Resurrection: "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25). Resurrection life will alone satisfy those who mourn over their deadness, and have been brought to know Christ, as their law-fulfilling righteousness, and the power of His resurrection, (Phil. 3:10). Jesus suffering put all their sins away, Jesus obeying gave them a title to glory, and Jesus risen is Jehovah's pledge for the performance of every promise that infinite wisdom gave them. The resurrection of the Head of the body is the evidence of the Father's approval of His atoning work, perfect obedience, and everlasting salvation, and that on the ground of these, all those whom He represented were accepted in Him. In His resurrection power and life He entered into the presence of God, where He ceaseth not to plead His work once and for ever done for His people, through which every accusation which Satan brings against them falls to the ground. It was not possible for the bands of death to hold Him, and now, as the risen, ascended, and glorified Christ of God, God in my nature, He stands before God for me, and in virtue of this, the whole company of His chosen and redeemed ones shall pass from death unto life, and at last enter into the glory and kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. The atoning work of Jesus appeared as the fine gold of God's providing, but the resurrection stamped it with His image and superscription, by which it appears as the current coin of Emmanuel's kingdom.

Our Kinsman-Redeemer having removed every hindrance out of His people's way to God and to glory, now brings them in His own Person, with all their wants and anxieties, within the veil, where they glory before God in the blessed assurance that in His resurrection, ascension, and intercession, their justification is complete. Isn't it glorious for us to know that Jesus our Redeemer and Righteousness, our Surety and Saviour, our Deliverer and Defender, is the universal King, "Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto Him?" (1 Peter 3:22). As God-Man, the Brother once born to adversity, He reigns, He rules, and orders all things well. "He rose again for our justification" (Rom. 4:25).

VI.) Justified by His Spirit: "Ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1Cor. 6:11). Only a word or two upon this all-important subject. What should we know of Jesus but for His blessed Spirit? See how Jesus speaks of Him: "He shall testify of Me" (John 15:26). "Nevertheless I tell you the truth: It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And when He is come, He will convince the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; of sin, because they believe not on Me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father, and ye see Me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged.Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak, and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me; for He shall receive of Mine and shall show it unto you" (John 16:7-14). The Spirit of God convinces of sin without which there can be no knowledge of the necessity for, or appreciation of, Jesus' righteousness. He reveals to our hearts this righteousness in which we are presented to, and accepted by the Father "holy, unblameable and unproveable in His sight" (Col. 1:22).

VII.) Justified by Faith: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 5:1). Faith is not a volition of the natural mind, nor an act of the human understanding, nor a spiritual act of my own performing. Free-willers make faith a condition of our justification, but this can never be. Mark! I am not justified because of my faith, and yet, without the faith of God's own giving and working, I shall never be experimentally justified.

Just turn with me to Acts 13:38,39: "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins. And by Him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Now, at first sight it appears that we are justified because of our faith; but mark the language well: "By Him all that believe are justified." I cannot be justified by anything out of Him. I believe, yet not I, but Christ that liveth in me.

Look at that precious Scripture (Gal. 2:20): "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me." Christ is my Sacrifice, my Righteousness, my Responsible One, who has promised and who performs all things for me. He once trusted, now I trust because we are one spirit. The faith which I process in union with Him revels and reposes in the glorious truths of His Gospel.

My faith is not a part of the righteousness in which I am justified any more than my mouth is a part of the food which sustains my body. Faith is God's gift (Eph. 2:8). It is the fruit of the Spirit in me, whereby I see, feed upon, and glory in Christ as He is revealed to me and in me. Faith is not a work performed by us in order to be justified; but it is a work of God in us by which we apprehend and glory in our justification. (See John 6:29): "This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." (Rom. 4: 5,6,16): "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt.

But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly;" and, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace." Faith and works find no agreement here. Faith is of the operation of God (Col. 2:12). It is the faith of God's elect (Titus 1:1). It is the faith of Christ (Gal. 2:16). Christ said, "I will put My trust in Him" (Heb. 2:13). He trusted as the Head, and that trust is communicated to each member by the same Spirit. It glories in His righteousness, "Even the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe" (Rom. 3:22).

Look again at (Phil. 3:9): "And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." By this faith we walk in Christ Jesus our Lord, we live in Him we fight in Him, we conquer in Him. Where Jesus is, there those who have obtained this precious faith are found. They are washed in His precious blood, clothed in His perfect righteousness, sheltered in the Rock of Ages, feed on heavenly provision, look on things invisible, wait amid the darkness for His appearing, and fly to the throne to commune with Him there. Jesus is the one Object upon which faith rests. When the Holy Ghost speaks of faith, its Object, Jesus, is included.

VIII.) Justified by Works: "Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only" (James 2:24). Ah! Cries the Papist and merit-monger, didn't we tell you that we are justified by works? Many haters and despisers of God's sovereignty profess to be fond of James, but their dark minds understand him not. James wrote of the fruits which appeared at God's command. He contended for a living faith being demonstrated by living works. But what were these works? According to the world's judgment, one was the act of a madman; the other, the acts of a lying traitress. Yes, and one committed a breach of the sixth commandment of the Decalogue, while the other a breach of the ninth. Abraham killed in intention. Rahab lied in fact. What can human reason do for you in these things? It can lead you into a labyrinth of doubt and despair, ay, into downright infidelity. The Holy Ghost alone can lead and guide into the knowledge and enjoyment of these truths. By them He glorifies Christ in the experience of His people, and produces those good works of which God Himself is the infallible Judge. Let us look at the points where Paul and James appear to disag

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