

*N. H. Makenzie*

The NOTIONS of the  
METHODISTS

Fully disprov'd, by setting the

DOCTRINE

OF THE

CHURCH of ENGLAND,

CONCERNING

Justification *and* Regeneration,

In a True Light.

In Answer to their EARNEST APPEAL, &c.

WITH A

Vindication of the Clergy of the Church of  
*England* from their Aspersions.

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In TWO LETTERS

To the Reverend Mr. JOHN WESLEY.

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ACTS XX. 30.

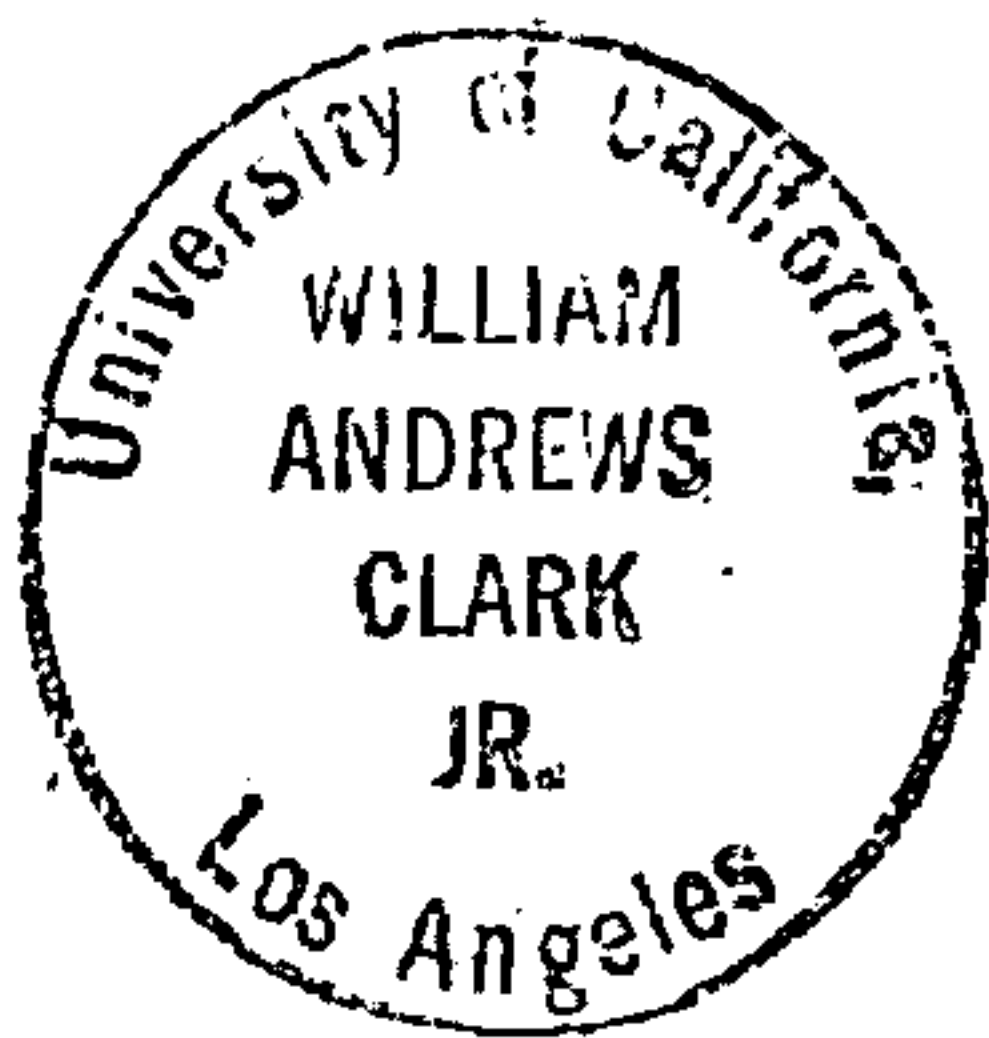
*Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*

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# Advertisement

T O T H E

CHRISTIAN READER.

**T**H E two following Letters to Mr. *John Wesley*, were first printed at *Newcastle*; and having, through the good Providence of God, been attended with some good Effects there, we trust through the Mercy of the same good Providence, they will not be productive of fewer good ones here, where (God knows) it cannot be said they are less wanted, if we do but reflect on the great Numbers of poor well-meaning People which have been unhappily led astray by those conceited vain Boasters call'd *Methodists*. To obviate then the pernicious Effects of their corrupt Doctrine, the candid Reader will here find their Delusions evidently detected, their Notions fully disproved, and the Church of *England* in her Homilies and Offices thoroughly

thoroughly

thoroughly vindicated from the Perversions and Misrepresentations of those ignorant, giddy, presumptuous Enthusiasts. May God in his Mercy take off the Scales from their Eyes, and encline their Hearts unto Wisdom through Jesus Christ. *Amen.*



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T H E  
N O T I O N S  
O F T H E  
M E T H O D I S T S fully Disprov'd, &c.

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L E T T E R I.

*Reverend Sir,*

**I** Am heartily sorry there is occasion to find fault with a person of your strict life, and, in all appearance, mortified temper, from whom one might reasonably expect a suitable conduct, and the setting a bright example of modesty and humility. But so it is, that your compassing sea and land to gain profelytes; your making unwarrantable dissensions in the Church; your prejudicing the people, wherever you come, against your brethren of the Clergy, and the doctrine which they teach; your zealous and importunate preaching of opinions, doubtful at least, if not dangerous to the souls of men, as I'm verily persuaded they are, make it too evident you are not altogether that spiritual and regenerate man, you and your colleagues would induce the world to believe, and yourself seem to imagine you feel and experience yourselves to be; and that, under this veil of piety and self-denial, there lye hid some passions not yet sufficiently mortified, and yet they do not so lye hid, but that they are open and expos'd enough to the discernment of

men of sense and penetration, although your common admirers mayn't be yet so fortunate as to discover them. You have taken much pains to gain and improve yourself in christian knowledge: you have roam'd about your native country, to discourse with people you suppose experienc'd in it; and not content with that, you have travell'd to *America* and *Germany*, to preach the Gospel, and in search of truth: and after all, 'tis uncertain whether you have yet found this precious treasure; and your notions about it, not only very materially contradict those of some of your fellows, but likewise seem yet so unfix'd and inconsistent, that it is a great question whether you ever will. However, you think the age is so degenerate, ill-principled, and ignorant of faith in Christ and Justification; and the Clergy have, it seems, so much departed from the doctrine of the reformation, in these points of so great concernment, that there lyes a necessity upon you, and your associates, to convert the nation a-new, lest not only some grievous temporal calamity should overwhelm it, but the souls of men also should utterly perish. And you proclaim loudly enough, that you are the only true watchmen, while the rest of the Clergy are in a lethargic state; that light is in your dwellings alone, while in other assemblies (alas for them!) there is the thickest darkness. Possess'd with this charitable opinion, you pass through all the parts of the land; you have preach'd in *London*, *Bristol*, &c. in fields and commons, drawing great numbers after you, many out of curiosity and novelty, many as having itching ears, and carried about with every wind of doctrine. At last you arrive at *Newcastle*, upon the aforesaid candid supposition, that the Clergy there are men of unorthodox principles, and pervert the flock; and so, in kind compassion to the souls of the people, you are come to give them more wholesom instructions,

structions, and awaken them out of that deep sleep into which their ministers had unhappily cast them. But give me leave to inform you, if you don't know it already by your own experience, that they are (without offence be it spoken) much more orthodox than yourself; are as diligent in the exercise of their office, as any in the kingdom; and are persons of such learning and abilities, that they have no occasion at all for your assistance. But they need not mine or any other's commendation; and, methinks, you should consider their candour, and the modesty of their behaviour towards you, as a sharp, though silent, reproof of your boldness. But to come close to the matter: you are, or pretend to be, a Clergyman of our Church, and, I suppose, you would be thought to maintain her doctrine, to which you have subscrib'd. I therefore, partly to undeceive those you have misled, and partly, if possible, to set you right, as I heartily wish I may, have drawn up in few words what I firmly believe the Church's true doctrine of Justification and Regeneration; and beg, for your own sake, and that of your hearers, you will conscientiously compare your opinions with what I have deliver'd, as those of the Church: and if, on the comparison, you find yourself or me mistaken, either be so kind to yourself as to correct your own, or so charitable to me, as to convict me of my errors.

### Of JUSTIFICATION.

**J**ustification means pardon of our sins, God's accounting us as righteous, receiving us into favour and friendship with himself, and giving us thereupon a right to everlasting happiness. The free grace and mercy of God is the principal cause of our Justification. The sacrifice which Christ once offer'd upon the cross for the sins of the whole world is the sole meritorious cause of it.

God freely made a covenant with fall'n man (which covenant was ratify'd and confirm'd by the shedding of Christ's blood) that he would justify him in the sense above specify'd, upon his performing the condition prescrib'd in the Gospel: which condition is faith, which includes obedience.

Where we are said to be justified by faith, and not by works; we are to understand either works commanded by the law of *Moses*, or works of sinless obedience, which it is impossible for fall'n man to perform; or works done upon a notion, that we thereby properly deserve the favour of God and eternal salvation, as being the meritorious cause thereof; and not evangelical works, which are perform'd in, and join'd with faith in Christ.

Justifying faith is operative, practical, and obediential faith: such was *Abraham's* faith, and therefore that of all Christians must be of the same nature.

When our Church says, we are justify'd by faith alone, or intends only to exclude all merit from our good works, and to declare we ought solely to depend upon the merits of Christ, and embrace the gratuitous or free mercy of God promis'd to us through him; and she does not exclude our virtues, graces, and good works, which, not as meritorious, but as conditions of the Gospel commanded by Christ, we are bound to exercise and do: for she in many places of her authentic books affirms, that we receive remission of sins, and consequently are justified, upon condition of repentance as well as of faith.

We are truly said to be justified freely by God, since all our graces and virtues are infused into us by his holy Spirit; and all our outward good works are the fruits of these spiritual graces; and we are reconcil'd to God, not by any deserts of our own, but by God's mercy, and through the sole merits of Christ. For when we have done all we can,  
 God



God is no way tied to give us any thing, but only on account of his most gracious promise.

They who teach, that we are justified by the single virtue of faith alone, do by consequence affirm, that repentance is not necessary for the obtaining pardon of sin, since pardon of sin is a considerable part of Justification. God, in this life, undoubtedly pardons sincere and faithful penitents: but no man can, without a particular revelation, have an absolute assurance, that he in particular is pardon'd, though in reality he be sincere; because he cannot be absolutely sure of his sincerity, and of his perseverance in a regenerate state. Every man ought to have an assurance, that if he unfeignedly believes and repents, God does justify him. He that believes the Gospel, is infallibly sure God performs his promise of justifying penitents upon their performance of the condition: but God has nowhere promis'd ordinarily to assure particular men they are truly penitent, having reserv'd that to be declared at the last judgment. There have been, God knows, too many, who have had a very high confidence of their being in a state of salvation, who were yet very far from being so; and did but flatter themselves into a dangerous security, while at the same time they remain'd still in their sins. Such a pharisaical assurance, and undoubted persuasion, would be a great presumption even in the best men, since all are to work out their salvation with fear and trembling. And therefore it is best and safest for Christians to think soberly and modestly of themselves, as to their spiritual concerns and Justification: and it is generally more commendable to lean to the side of humble fear, than of arrogant self-flattery; to be too lowly rather than too presumptuous, which yet is not at all inconsistent with a well-settled and comfortable hope. For the more we truly fear God, the readier we shall be to keep his commandments,

ments, and the firmer ground we have to hope we are, and shall be, in his favour.

Justification is not an instantaneous act, fully completed at one and the same moment; but it is a continued act, then at length perfect and consummate, when a person has to the very end of his life fulfill'd the condition of the covenant by which he is justified.

We are not justified, by having Christ's righteousness imputed to us, so as that it truly becomes ours; since it cannot be said, that when Christ perform'd it, we perform'd it in him. For if that were the case, this absurdity would follow, that we have no need to do any thing ourselves, and there would be no occasion for repentance and pardon, Christ's righteousness, 'by the imputation of which we are supposed to be accounted just, being so complete in itself, that nothing else would be at all requisite. But our own faith, made perfect by love, is imputed to us for righteousness, through the merits of Christ's righteousness and satisfaction. Hence it is evident, that Christ's righteousness is the cause which merited universally for all men a right to be justified, or accounted righteous, on performing a certain condition; and any one's performing that condition, *viz.* believing and obeying the Gospel, applies to him in particular, upon the terms of the Gospel-Covenant, that right to be justified which Christ merited for all.

### Of R E G E N E R A T I O N.

**R**Egeneration or Sanctification goes before Justification in the order of nature, though perhaps there may not be always a priority in respect of time. For we are accounted righteous by God, when we are become new creatures, or changed from a state of sin to a state of purity and holiness. And if we make a continual progress in goodness and the  
spiritual

spiritual life, we shall be still the more justified in the sight of God, till we arrive at length at our final Justification, or at the highest pitch of acceptance with God in the kingdom of heaven.

Regeneration is an inward change and alteration of the mind, the purifying of our corrupt nature, and the renewal of the image of God in us; and this is wrought by a divine power influencing our faculties, whereby we are made members of Christ, and the children of God by adoption. This first commences at our Baptism, we being then born again both of water and of the Spirit, as both the holy Scriptures, and their best interpreters, the primitive Church and our own, clearly teach. And if we resist not the grace of God continually cleansing and sanctifying us both in body and soul, but will husband our talent with care and industry; if we pray for daily increase of it, attend diligently to the means of grace, and cheerfully obey the motions of God's holy Spirit, he will mercifully bestow upon us more grace, and we shall go on to improve in it, and persevere in a regenerate state, to the end of our lives. Our obedience and good actions must evidence the change of our minds and tempers; and no man must dare to think himself in this regenerate state, if he is disobedient, and his works are sinful.

The holy Ghost is the principal author, or the efficient cause; the bishops and other ministers of God are the ministerial; God's word and the blessed sacraments are the instrumental causes of Regeneration; and we ourselves co-operate with all these in this great work. But the glory of it is only due to God; without whose grace all subordinate means would be ineffectual.

I have said, that Regeneration is the renewal of the image of God in us. By which I mean, that we receive again something we once had, but lost.

*Adam* at his first creation, and while he continued in the state of integrity, had in him something more than barely natural faculties in great perfection: he was also endow'd with the divine principle of the Spirit, or with supernatural grace and strength in order to supernatural and eternal happiness. In this divine principle the image of God in him chiefly consisted, which by his fall he forfeited both for himself and us. And this image is again renew'd in us when we are born again, when *we put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which is created in knowledge, after the image of him that created him.* See Bishop Bull's *Discourse upon the state of man before the fall*, Vol. 3.

Infants are regenerated by their baptism, or then enter into a regenerate state, as I have explain'd above. And having thus receiv'd a divine principle, and ghostly strength, to perform the condition of the Gospel-Covenant, so long as in their thoughts, intents and actions, they make a right use of it, they continue in a regenerate state. Adult persons, suppose Heathens not yet baptiz'd, although by the prevalency of the divine aid giving efficacy to the word preach'd, and to the arguments used for their conviction, they are persuaded of the necessity of faith and repentance, and are willing and desirous to embrace the christian religion, yet till they are baptiz'd, they don't receive that fullness of grace by which they are regenerated. They are candidates for it, but are not, strictly speaking, possess'd of it. Indeed, if they should chance to die before baptism, there is great reason to hope God will in mercy accept the will for the deed, and give a suitable reward to that imperfect grace which he has been pleas'd to bestow upon them.

In order to our further Regeneration, God puts no violence upon our faculties, but affords such a power and ability to them, as will be sufficient to enable

enable us, if we honestly do our parts, to bring this work to greater perfection. The grace is not so forcible as cannot be oppos'd, but competent for the purpose, and will be abundantly effectual, if through our own perverseness we don't thwart and reject it. When we are really in a regenerate state, the grace is so far from being irresistible, that it may actually fail. For as our Church clearly teaches in her XVIth Article, we may willingly commit deadly or mortal sin after baptism; and they are to be condemn'd which say, they can no more sin as long as they live. The article indeed affirms, that by the grace of God we *may* arise and amend our lives. But this is manifestly a contingent, not a necessary thing. What may be, may not be; and, consequently, men may both totally and finally fall from grace.

It is also clear, we are not merely passive in the whole work of Regeneration. I grant, infants at their baptism are merely passive, when this work first begins, what is then done being only the operation of God. But when they come to the use of reason, and are able to employ their faculties, they are bound to exert their own endeavours, and to co-operate with God, in order to preserve and improve the grace given, and do their utmost to cultivate this spiritual seed, that it may grow up into a plentiful harvest. As they grow in years, they must use diligence to increase in virtue and holiness, that the image of God, which is renew'd in them, may not be defac'd, but be render'd still more bright and illustrious. In short, as our excellent Catechism teaches, when they come to age, themselves are bound to perform the conditions of the Gospel-Covenant; and they are to endeavour all they can, by the frequent use of the means of grace, and all other fit ways, to be daily more and more the children of God. As to the adult, it is evident, as I hinted

before, they are to concur with God's grace both before, at, and after their baptism; and whoever does not, at least after his baptism, cannot be truly said to be born of God, or of the divine Spirit.

It is likewise manifest, that the act or work of Regeneration is not momentaneous, but progressive. For though the grace given by God, when we are first regenerated, is infus'd at some particular time, yet men are gradually prepar'd and dispos'd for it by the divine assistance, invigorating their endeavours; and they must, if adult persons, be willing to accept, and heartily pray for, obtaining the grace at the time of receiving it, and must labour to keep, and by degrees advance it afterwards. And by this means they will become more regenerate: for *unto every one that bath, that is, has well employ'd the talent of grace entrusted with him, shall be given, and he shall have more abundance.* So then the act or work of Regeneration has it's beginning, as well as all other acts have, at some instant of time; but it is carrying on, and perfecting, all our lives, God continually working in us, and our own acts and endeavours being excited, and made effectual, by grace preventing, assisting and following them. For as long as a man is a child of God, so long the work of Regeneration lasts, and that is as long as the faithful have the world, the flesh, and the devil, to wrestle with, as long as we are in this state of trial; after which is over, the Regeneration is come to a degree of perfection, and will be finally consummated at the resurrection of the just. For, as I conceive, *St. Matthew (xix. 28.)* by the *Regeneration* is to be understood of that.

When we are, by Regeneration, enter'd upon the state of purity and holiness, then it is that the holy Spirit is more strictly, and intimately, and fully united to us, and, as it were, fixes his abode in our souls, never to depart thence, unless driven  
out

out by the committing of some very grievous sin; and then willing to return, if we amend our lives, by a serious and timely repentance. Together with the holy Ghost, Christ, and God the Father, take possession of our hearts; for though the three persons of the ever blessed Trinity are distinct, yet they are never separated. St. John saith, *The Spirit of truth dwelleth with you, and shall be in you: and, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.* Now let us consider the manner of the holy Ghost's dwelling in us. 'Tis certain it is not by an hypostatical or personal union, nor merely by the presence of his essence and power, for so he is with all his creatures; but by the presence also of his salutary gifts and graces, whereby he purifies our souls, pardons our sins, and gives us strength to perform our whole christian duty. Thus it is, and no otherwise, that we are the temples of the holy Ghost; and by these spiritual graces we are made one with Christ, and Christ with us. And whoever means any thing more by Christ's *being form'd in them*, and such like expressions, are, I'm afraid, under a very great mistake.

In this manner, and no other, the holy Ghost ordinarily dwells in all the faithful, who sincerely believe the Gospel, who heartily love and fear God, and keep his commandments. And there is no promise in the holy scriptures whereon to ground any extraordinary or infallible suggestions, inspirations or illuminations. And though it be true, that God infuses into, or by his Spirit inspires us with his gifts and graces, and is continually moving us both to think and do always such things as be right-ful, yet there is not within ourselves any infallible certainty or knowledge, that we have receiv'd them. If we are always thankful, that God never ceases to bestow his sanctifying graces upon us, and take

care effectually to employ them, we may be sufficiently, though not infallibly, assur'd we have them, because our minds, by their gracious effects, may be sensible they are govern'd and directed by them, and may perceive the happy and saving influence they have upon our lives. I say, we are not infallibly assur'd, because, as some may be truly possess'd of these graces, who, through a melancholy temper, are little or not at all sensible of them; so many warm men may have a strong conceit they have them, and yet be very carnal all the while, abounding, for instance, in pride, faction, singularity, ambition, vain-glory, and holding many erroneous and damnable doctrines, contrary to the faith and purity of the Gospel. I might instance in Mr. *Whitfield*, whose doctrine seems to me to be altogether *Antinomian*, at least by clear and direct consequence. However, we see the *Quakers*, and many other the like enthusiasts, pretend to this infallible feeling of the Spirit within them; but they can assign no ground in God's word for this delusion, and their errors evidently demonstrate the light they assume to themselves is mere darkness. And it is somewhat remarkable, that when men of heated imaginations do, in their pathetic discourses, strongly inculcate upon their hearers this gross notion of feeling the Spirit, it has a very surprizing effect upon people of troubled minds, and gloomy dispositions, who finding nothing of this sensibility in themselves, are hence persuaded they are in an unregenerate and lost estate, and fall into frightful tremblings and convulsions, which their teachers fondly call the *forming of Christ in them*, and the *pangs of the new birth*, whereas they are really nothing else but the fumes of melancholy.

But if these gentlemen would please to think and talk reasonably of the sense and perception men have of the inward graces of God's Spirit; if they would



would consider, that God deals with us as with rational creatures, they would, I conceive, chuse to explain this doctrine in some such manner as this: That we, by both outward means, (to wit, hearing and reading God's word and the like) and by divine assistance accompanying the means, being come to a sincere resolution of believing and obeying the Gospel, and having thereupon an earnest desire, and heartily praying to receive the graces of the Spirit, God, in his infinite goodness, vouchsafes to plant them in our souls; and if we honestly study to cultivate and improve them, then by the blessed effects of them upon our lives, we have great, though not indubitable, reason to be persuaded, that we have these graces, and, consequently, that so we are united to the Spirit, and to Christ. Thus we may have a high, though not the highest degree of certainty, that the holy Ghost, though not substantially, yet effectually dwelleth in us; and that, by receiving the divine grace, we are partakers of the divine nature. We come to this knowledge by argumentation, not by revelation; not in an infallible, but in a rational way. And this seems the just way of arguing: I find, upon a strict examination of my heart, that I have full purpose to do God's will in all respects, with regard to God, my neighbour, and myself; and that I sincerely endeavour to perform it to the utmost, not trusting at all in the merit of my own righteousness, but only in Christ's merits: and therefore I have sufficient ground to be persuaded, that God has bounteously confer'd his graces upon me; for that without them I should not be able either to will or to do any thing to purpose, which concerns my salvation. But now, since the hearts of men are very deceitful, and we are too apt to over-rate our own goodness, this confidence ought to have a great mixture of fear, if we would think of ourselves with sobriety; and therefore

therefore he takes the safest side, who, when he has done all that is commanded him, casts himself upon God's mercy through Christ, and rather chuses with the Publican to say, *Lord be merciful to me a sinner*, than to justify himself after the manner of the proud Pharisee, and arrogantly to boast he has arriv'd at sinless perfection. And this fear of offending so good a God, will be a spur to our duty; and by that means we shall attain to a well-grounded hope and comfortable expectation of God's pardon here, and glory hereafter. And thus it is apparent we can ordinarily have only a rational, not an absolute assurance, that we are the children of God. 'Tis plain, our knowledge in this affair cannot go beyond its grounds. All that can be said is, that if we unfeignedly walk in the love and fear of God; if we have really a conscience void of offence towards God, and towards man; if we have this testimony within ourselves, (which we can't have infallibly without a particular revelation) that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, we have our conversation in the world, then we shall know sufficiently, that the holy Spirit has given us his grace, and the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, and our spirit with him, that we are in a regenerate state. No more than this can, without manifest violence, be concluded from scripture, and from the doctrine of our Church, about the indwelling of God's Spirit, and our perception of it.

I therefore would intreat those, who claim this high privilege of absolute assurance to themselves, in the words of the apostle, *Not to think more highly of themselves than they ought to think, but to think soberly; neither to be too wise in their own conceits; and to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

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And I beseech them to remember, that they who want charity, which all do, who without just cause disturb the peace of the Church, let them be never such eloquent and powerful preachers, though they speak with the tongues even of angels, they are *as sounding brass and tinkling cymbals*; nay, though *they have all faith*, which you so strenuously and justly contend for, yet if *they have not charity*, which forms and consummates it, and *which vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, it profiteth them nothing*.

Having given you, sir, a short sketch of the true doctrine of our Church, both you and the reader will easily discern the wide difference between yours and it. Let me now beseech you seriously to lay to heart the solemn promise you made at your ordination, which you seem entirely to have forgot. You then declar'd, in the presence of God, that you would give your faithful diligence always to minister the doctrine of the Church, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Church and realm has receiv'd the same. Now since your preaching upon these points is plainly contrary to the doctrine of this Church, I charge it upon you in this publick manner, that you have broke this promise, and leave you to make the best defence you can.

You then also declared, the Lord being your helper, that you would reverently obey your ordinary, and other chief ministers, unto whom is committed the charge and government over you, following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions, and submitting yourself to their godly judgments. Now the bishops and chief ministers of this Church, the bishop of *London*, especially in his excellent *Pastoral Letter*, have publickly declared themselves against your doctrines and practices, and yet you stiffly disobey their directions, and with unparallel'd obstinacy withstand and reject all their admonitions;

admonitions; you avowedly transgress the laws both of the Church and State, and violate the canons which were made, and are now executed by those who have the chief authority; and thus you are manifestly guilty both of schism and rebellion, which are two very grievous and damnable sins.

You likewise then vow'd, you would maintain and set forward, as much as lieth in you, quietness, peace and love among all christian people; but notwithstanding this, you are the sower and ringleader of dissention, endeavouring with unwearied assiduity to set the flock at variance with their ministers and each other, and spreading abroad through the nation this vile calumny against your brethren, that they have apostatiz'd from the principles of the reformation, and are teachers of erroneous and strange doctrines. Now this I must tell you is untrue, and I am sure you cannot lay this to the charge of the Clergy of *Newcastle*, therefore you have not the least pretence to raise disturbances there. And please to lay your hand upon your heart and consider, whether the abusive character you give of the Clergy don't suit yourself best. They preach nothing but what is agreeable to the doctrine contain'd in the Church's authentick books upon these points, but your unhappy conduct is quite otherwise.

You know very well you have no authority to exercise your ministry in any congregation without a licence from the bishop. Have you any licence from the learned bishop of the diocese where you now reside? The world knows he is a person of more wisdom than to authorize any such irregular practices; but the disorderly spirit which governs you, disdains to proceed in the peaceable way; it is not the author of peace, but of confusion, and therefore no wonder it acts against the due subordination of presbyters to their ecclesiastical superiors; and yet you pretend to be the only spiritual

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and gifted men, never once reflecting upon what St. Paul says, *That the works of the flesh are manifest, some of which are these, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, and that they who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God, and that these are opposite to the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness: and never recollecting the precepts of obeying those, who have the rule over you in the Lord, and admonishing you; and the apostle's exhortation, that if you, as you pretend, live in the Spirit, you should also walk in the Spirit, and not be desirous of vain-glory; provoking one another, envying one another. Can you, who would be esteem'd so mighty in the Scriptures, be so ignorant, that the same apostle reproving the Corinthians for their schisms and factions, evidently condemns your present practice? Please to apply these words to yourselves, as you justly may: Ye are yet carnal; for whereas there are among you envyings, and strife and divisions; are ye not carnal, and walk as men? You assume to yourself great wisdom and high attainments in all spiritual knowledge; but it requires no depth of understanding to judge, whether your character and conduct suits that of the spiritually or carnally wise man in St. James, *Who is a wise man, and endued with knowledge among you? Let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom: but if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not and lie not against the truth: this wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, and devilish; for where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work: but the wisdom that is from above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality or wrangling, and without hypocrisy; and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace**

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*of them that make peace.* Here is a glass, in which, if you look carefully, you will clearly see to the very bottom of your heart. Examine it therefore with all diligence, and if you discern something you don't like, amend it presently. But now, if you are really sensual and carnal, as you have too great reason to fear; have not you the strongest evidence that, notwithstanding your boasting, you really want the Spirit of God, that without great care and watchfulness, you may easily mistake something else for it, and that it is in vain to talk that men may be absolutely and infallibly sure they have the divine consciousness, that witness of God, which is more and greater than ten thousand human witnesses, as your warm brother vehemently asserts?

You say, and I wish it were true, that you love God with all your heart; if you do, then certainly you must love Christ: but how can that be, when you make such scandalous divisions in his mystical body? Can a man love Christ, who don't love his members? And do not they hate his members, who revile and slander them, and set them one against another? Besure he that breaks the peace of Christ's Church, is at enmity with Christ; and he that tears out the bowels of the Church, his mother, can't have God for his father. And you may talk of the new birth as long as you please, but if you are a rebellious son of this mother, your having been born again in her, will only tend to your condemnation.

And now, sir, what is this, which your zeal, *but not according to knowledge*, prompts you to make this huge bustle about? If the Church and Clergy did indeed teach false and damnable doctrine, then you might justly say, *woe is me! if I preach not the Gospel!* But you cannot prove any such thing, nay, indeed you manifestly confute yourself: for you constantly communicate with this Church and Clergy, whom you scruple not to accuse of al-  
most

most universally teaching of devilish doctrine, of being deceitful workers, of denying the whole Scriptures, the whole truth and promise, and testimony of God. If this heavy charge were true, *Come ye out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord,* would be your rule and duty. But, thanks be to God, you have not made good your accusation. You are displeas'd, because they will not embrace your tenets. A great crime indeed! they will not puzzle the heads of the people with points so hard to be understood, but preach to them the plain and saving truths of the Gospel, which is food much more fit for their weak stomachs. You cannot be ignorant what bitter contentions and fatal divisions these controversies about Justification by faith alone, and the like, when not rightly stated and handled with great discretion and caution, have occasion'd in the Church; and the quarrel among yourselves about them may teach you, they are not the most fit to be so much pressed upon vulgar capacities. However, since you have made it in some measure necessary, by your erroneous account of these doctrines, to set them in a right light for their better instruction, and thereby to convince them they have no cause to leave their proper guides, to follow you, who, both without necessity, and to their apparent danger thrust yourselves upon them, I have taken this small pains to undeceive them; and hope they will now be able to see through your sheep's clothing, and for the future study to be quiet and mind their own business, which will be a far wiser course than rambling after you, whithersoever you shall lead them. And I trust it will be no small prejudice against you, when it is duly consider'd by them, that you are not sent by any authority in the Church upon this errand, and cannot pretend any ordinary commission for it. And unless you can shew

some extraordinary authority, supported by miracles for your doings, however you may now boast of your conversions, you will in the end render yourselves the ridicule of mankind. Please therefore, for your own sakes, to leave off these vain practices, endeavour to amend your gross enormities, and study all you can to convert those you have deluded, back again to truth and peace, and to their wits, so will you in some degree repair the ill you have done, and the unhappy breaches you have made; and 'tis to be hop'd God will then mercifully forgive you, and make you again a useful member in the Church, which is the hearty prayer of,

*Reverend Sir,*

*Your humble Servant,*



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## L E T T E R II.

*Reverend Sir,*

**W**HEN your *Earnest Appeal*, &c. came to my hands, I was in hopes to have found in it something either to confirm or contradict the doctrine contain'd in my Letter to you; wherein I drew up, in as short a compass as I could, what I take to be the doctrine of our Church concerning those points, about which you have been pleas'd of late most unhappily to disturb it's peace, and the heads of your hearers. I expected, from a person who had for so many years employ'd all his thoughts in attaining clear conceptions of these things, and the greatest part of his time in zealously propagating them, and who is withal (in his own fancy at least) bless'd with such extraordinary illuminations, that I should have reap'd great benefit by my correspondence with you; and that, by your wise instructions, my poor understanding would have been much enlighten'd.

But to my great surprize, and (I have some reason to think) to the admiration of many others, you have not vouchsafed to take the least notice of what I have advanc'd with regard to the points of doctrine; only in general by way of contempt, it may be suppos'd, of so mean a writer, you in profound humility inform the world, *I am unacquainted with the merits of the cause, and not only perfectly a stranger to your life, preaching and writings, but also to the word of God, and to the Articles and Homilies of our Church.*

'Tis true, I never had the curiosity to hear you preach, neither do I ever design it, so long as you  
continue

continue in your present disorderly course; but as to your writings, I am not so great a stranger to them as you would suggest, having perus'd several of your discourses, and been strangely shock'd at the amazing accounts you give of yourself and others in your Journals. And I am apt to think, upon a more careful and considerate reading of my Letter, you will find several particulars of it diametrically opposite to what you teach; so that it is in vain to pretend I have not touch'd the merits of the cause. Nay, you as good as confess I have come pretty close to the matter in debate, by your affirming, in such a candid and christian manner, that I am so perfect a stranger to the word of God, and to the Articles and Homilies of the Church of *England*; by which you can mean nothing else, but that the doctrine I have deliver'd is contrary to that which you imagine you have prov'd from thence.

But whatever opinion you may allow yourself to entertain of my ignorance, perhaps there are others, at least as knowing in these matters as yourself, who will not altogether agree with you in so harsh a censure, and will rather look upon this your behaviour, as a fresh mark of your despising your brethren, and a spice of something yet unmortified in you.

I willingly acknowledge myself far inferior to one of your high attainments, who esteem yourself abundantly qualified to take upon you the care of all the Churches, and therefore no doubt justly entitle yourself to look down with a scornful pity upon men of lower endowments. But for all that, I shall not think myself bound to submit to your authority, to what high pitch soever you may exalt it, unless you prove your doctrine much more strongly than you have already done, to be agreeable to the Scriptures, and the determinations of our Church, and mine to be repugnant to them.

But

But I now begin to despair of your making such an attempt, since it is easy enough to discover your talent does not so much lie in close arguing as in a loose way of haranguing, and thereby working upon the passions of the ignorant, which does not require a cool head, but only a warm imagination.

Thus it is you draw disciples after you, and this is the method all other sectaries take to delude the people. They make a fair shew in the flesh; they take what care they can to secure the form of godliness; they make their appeals to the world, that they are not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, and the like; and in the words of the spotless Lamb himself, they solemnly demand, *which of you now convinces us of sin, or can personally convict us of any ungodliness, or unholiness of conversation?* And lastly, with good words, and fair speeches, they deceive the hearts of the people.

But what signify all these specious pretences, since the manifest end of them is deceit, and since those who use them, teach new doctrines, and in order to make them spread the farther, cause factions and divisions in the Church? And that you are justly chargeable with this sin, I shall now endeavour to convince you, in hopes of working your amendment, which God grant.

In your second Journal you give us a large account of your travels into *Germany*, of your conversing with those holy men (as you call them) the *Moravians*, (but who seem to me no better than a company of illiterate enthusiasts) and of the doctrine which they taught, and you approve of as sound and orthodox. But this I need not stay to confute, the Rev. Mr. *Tucker*, in his excellent Book, intitled, *A Brief History of the Principles of the Methodists*, having substantially done it to my hand, by shewing, in a clear and convincing manner, the many absurdities and inconsistencies of it. And I

must needs say, that till you have made a solid reply to that piece, all considering men must admire at your behaviour, and many will believe themselves to have evident proof you are obstinate in error, and condemn'd by the judgment even of your own conscience.

In page 81 of your third Journal, you tell us in what points you differ from a part of the Clergy of the Church of *England*, by which, as appears from other places of your writings, you mean the much greatest part, who, as you slanderously affirm, dissent from the Church's doctrine.

“ First (*you say*) they speak of Justification, either as the same thing with Sanctification, or as something consequent upon it. You believe Justification to be wholly distinct from Sanctification, and necessarily antecedent to it.” To this I answer, that here you are not positive they confound Justification and Sanctification, or make them one and the same thing. If therefore you had not bore some ill will to your brethren, and had a strong inclination to blacken them, one may reasonably suppose you would have omitted such an insinuation.

'Tis very true they do assert, and upon good grounds, that Justification is in it's nature something consequent upon Sanctification; for this is agreeable to the whole tenor of the Scriptures. Our blessed Saviour gives his disciples a commission to *teach*, or make disciples of, *all nations by baptizing* them, and in order to this, *by teaching them to observe all things whatsoever he has commanded them*, as St. *Matthew* informs us. St. *Mark* informs us, that our Lord enjoin'd them *to go into all the world, and to preach the Gospel to every creature*, and told them, *that he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; and he that believeth not, shall be damn'd*. And to shew that repentance is included in believing, St. *Luke*

*Luke* declares our Saviour order'd them to *preach repentance and remission of sins, in his name, among all nations.*

Accordingly we find *St. Peter* directing his countrymen, who desired to know of him what they must do to free themselves from the guilt of crucifying our Saviour, *to repent and be baptized every one of them in the name of Jesus Christ for the Remission of sins; and to repent and be converted, that their sins might be blotted out.* And *St. Paul* also assures us, that, in order to their conversion, he testified both to the Jews and Greeks *Repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.* And in his Epistle to the *Hebrews*, he calls *Repentance from dead works, and faith towards God*, a part of the *first principles* or rudiments of christianity, in which men were instructed before baptism, and which were to precede it. And to shew that Sanctification is previous to Justification, he says expressly, that *by one offering be hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified*; that is, through the expiation upon the cross, all penitent sinners, made holy by the grace of God, are freed from the guilt and punishment of their sins.

And to the *Corinthians*, *But ye are wash'd,* (says he) *but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified;* where the two latter are manifestly explanatory of the former. By *wash'd* is meant their baptism, and by their baptism is meant, first their Sanctification, and then their Justification, to shew that God in baptism remits the sins of only penitent believers, and gives them a right to everlasting bliss. *St. Peter* also, writing to the dispers'd *Jews*, calls them the *Elect* on two accounts; first, through the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, when they were call'd by the preaching of the Gospel, and then through the sprinkling of the blood of *Jesus*, which clearly denotes their Justification or

E remission

remission of sins in baptism. Agreeably to this, the same Apostle affirms, that *baptism doth save us* or justify us, which does not only consist of the outward ceremony, *the putting away the filth of the flesh*, but also contains in it *the answer of a good conscience towards God*, whereby men beforehand declare their faith and repentance, and resolution to live as becomes those who enter into the christian Covenant.

I have, I presume, said enough to satisfy any reasonable person, that at least some degree of Sanctification goes before Justification, and that the hearts of all adult persons must be purified by faith and repentance wrought in them by God's grace, before God will justify or pardon them in baptism. This then is the process of God's justifying adult persons, for I now speak of no other. By the preaching of the word, and the explanatory instructions of those who are God's Embassadors, to whom he hath committed the word of reconciliation, men are call'd upon to believe the truths of the Gospel, both speculative and practical, and also it's promises and threatenings, and to repent of their sins with full purpose of heart to forsake them, and amend their lives for the future.

God accompanies his word and his ministry with his grace, by the virtue and power of which they obey the heavenly call, and being sufficiently instructed in the Christian Religion, they are admitted to baptism, when first they covenant to renounce the devil, the world and the flesh, to believe all the articles of the christian faith, and to keep God's holy will and commandments, and to walk in the same all the days of their life. Then the Minister, representing the person of God, baptizes them, and thereby pardons them who with hearty repentance and true faith have turn'd unto him, and gives them the complete grace of Regeneration; that

that is, more fully sanctifies them, by conferring on them a larger measure of God's holy Spirit, that they may persevere in their justified state to the end of their lives.

And thus Justification always supposes Sanctification antecedent to it: For as without holiness no man can see the Lord, or receive the reward of true believers; so neither can un sanctified persons be reconciled to God, or be in a state of salvation, which is the same thing as to be justified.

And that Sanctification precedes Justification at baptism, is plain also from the universal testimony and consent of the primitive Church. Indeed, in the apostolical age, at the first plantation of christianity, as appears from the Acts of the Apostles, catechising was not long before baptism, which the infant state of the Church, and the zeal of the converts, required. But in after-ages, upon the conversion of the heathens, it was found necessary to lengthen this time of trial, lest the Church should be fill'd with vicious men. For this reason they appointed several orders and degrees of catechumens, who, for some considerable time before baptism, were instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion, in the nature of repentance, and the terms of the Gospel-covenant, and prepared themselves for this holy sacrament by prayers and abstinence.

And this appears from the account which *Justin Martyr* gives us: "As many (*says he*) as believe  
 " the things to be true which we teach, and pro-  
 " mise to conform their lives to the laws of our  
 " religion, they first of all learn to ask pardon  
 " of God for their sins past, by prayers and fast-  
 " ings, we joining our prayers and fastings with  
 " theirs. Then they are brought by us to a place  
 " where there is water; and they are regenerated  
 " after the same manner of regeneration by which  
 " we ourselves were regenerated. We have receiv'd

“ this account of this affair from the apostles. Since  
 “ we, being ignorant of our first birth, were ac-  
 “ custom’d to evil, and educated in wickedness;  
 “ that we might not remain the children of ne-  
 “ cessity and ignorance, but of choice and know-  
 “ ledge, and might obtain the remission of our  
 “ sins which we had before committed, there is  
 “ named upon him who hath chosen to be rege-  
 “ nerated, and hath repented of his sins, the name  
 “ of the Father, &c.”

By this account the catechumens were sanctified by faith and repentance, and the exercises of prayer and fasting, before they receiv’d the baptismal remission. And that they were to shew they had not receiv’d the grace of conversion in vain, and were to give evidence of their sincere repentance and piety, is farther manifest from hence, that ecclesiastical censures were inflicted on them if they laps’d into gross and scandalous offences.

Thus it was decreed by the great council of *Nice, can. 14.* that “ if any of the catechumens,  
 “ by whom they more especially mean the highest  
 “ rank of them, had laps’d, they should be de-  
 “ graded to the class of hearers for three years,  
 “ and after that be admitted to pray with the cate-  
 “ chumens again,” Now I hope the judgment of this first General Council, whose authority was always held in the greatest veneration, will have more regard paid to it by all orthodox Christians, than the idle preachments of the crazy *Moravians*, or any of their fanatical disciples.

Let us next see what is the sense of our own Church in this point. Now does not she, in her Catechism, require of persons to be baptiz’d, *Repentance, whereby they forsake sin*, and consequently become holy and are sanctified, as well as Faith? Does not she, in her office for the baptism of adults, prescribe, that due care may be taken for  
 their



their examination, whether they be sufficiently instructed in the principles of the Christian Religion, and that they may be exhorted to prepare themselves with prayers and fastings for the receiving of this holy sacrament? Does she not there declare, that God will favourably receive these present persons, *truly repenting*, and coming unto him by faith, and grant them remission of their sins, and bestow upon them the holy Ghost? And does not she make them openly profess their repentance, and their pious resolutions of keeping God's holy will and commandments, and walking in the same continually?

Besides, in many places both in her Homilies and Liturgy, too long to enumerate, she affirms conversion and repentance to be necessary for remission of sins, and reconciliation with God, which is the same thing as Justification, particularly in the Confession and Absolution in the Daily Service and Communion Office, and in the Commination, and in the Homily of Repentance. So that the Clergy of our Church are fully vindicated, who teach, that some degree of Sanctification, wrought in us by the grace of God, goes before the first Justification; which Sanctification receives a great increase in baptism, when men are endow'd with a more ample measure of it, are more fully renew'd in the spirit of their minds, and more completely regenerated by the holy Ghost, that they may be enabled to continue and preserve their Justification, till they are finally acquitted at the day of Judgment.

In short, the true doctrine of our Church is, that men are imperfectly sanctified before the baptismal Justification; and to deny this, is to calumniate her in the grossest manner, and make her contradict the scriptures.

To say that no Sanctification precedes Justification, is to say, that God, in direct opposition to  
his

his own attributes of wisdom, holiness and justice, remits the sins of impenitent sinners, and puts them into a state of salvation; and if so, then the clear consequence is, that he will actually save them: for it cannot admit of the least doubt, but that God will save those to whom he has given a right to salvation. Now you own he gives impenitent or un sanctified sinners a right to salvation, therefore it follows that he will save them. And thus if no sort of Sanctification is necessary before, neither can it be necessary after Justification, which is manifestly the very dregs of *Antinomianism*.

I have the charity to believe, indeed, you are not sensible of this wretched consequence; but that your doctrine here is agreeable with it, is but too evident. Indeed, in your sermon on *Salvation by Faith*, you seem to speak more consistently with truth: but this only shews the inconsistency of your notions, and that you can easily digest palpable contradictions.

2. You say, “They (meaning the Clergy) speak  
 “ of our own holiness, or good works, as the  
 “ cause of our Justification; or that *for the sake*  
 “ *of which, on account of which* we are justified  
 “ before God. You believe, neither our own ho-  
 “ liness, nor good works, are any part of the  
 “ cause of our Justification; but that the death and  
 “ righteousness of Christ are the whole and sole  
 “ cause of it; or that for the sake of which, on ac-  
 “ count of which we are justified before God.”

Now here you would intimate, the Clergy generally assert, that our own holiness, or good works, are in part the *meritorious* cause of our Justification. But this, I take leave to say, is a mere slander, which you can never prove. If any have less accurately said, that our own holiness is the *cause* of our Justification, they mean undoubtedly no more, than that it is the condition or the cause without  
 which

which God will not justify us. And if they have farther asserted, that for the sake of our holiness, or on account of it, we are justified before God, which are expressions not so proper and exact as they should be; no one can fairly interpret them to signify, that we are justified through the merit of our holiness, but only through it as part of the condition to be perform'd by us for the obtaining Justification.

You yourself acknowledge, we are justified or saved through faith; and suppose you had less cautiously express'd yourself, and said, that we are sav'd for the sake of, on account of, our faith, wouldn't you have thought yourself very injuriously dealt with, if any one had charg'd you with preaching up the *merit* of faith? Undoubtedly you would, and with reason. You are therefore too hasty in judging your brethren, who utterly disclaim this doctrine as much as you do.

They believe, as well as you, that neither our holiness, nor our good works, are any part of the *meritorious* cause of our Justification, and that the active and passive righteousness of Christ is wholly and solely it. But they likewise believe, and that rightly, that our inward holiness, and those inward good works of faith, repentance, hope and charity, and the like, to which we are excited by the preventing and assisting grace of God working in us, are necessarily requir'd to our Justification; which is more than you believe, who will allow no degree of Sanctification previous to Justification, in contradiction both to truth, and to your own doctrine in other places.

3. You affirm, " They speak of good works, " as a condition of Justification, necessarily previous to it. You believe no good work can be " previous to Justification, nor consequently a condition of it; but that we are justified (because

“ till that hour ungodly, and therefore incapable of  
 “ doing any good work) by faith alone, faith  
 “ without works, faith, though producing all,  
 “ yet including no good works.”

Here you assert, they speak of good works as a condition of Justification, which is manifestly inconsistent with your assertion, that they speak of them, as part of the meritorious cause of them; and consequently by your own confession you charged them falsely before. But you believe no good work can be previous to Justification, nor consequently a condition of it. But, God be prais'd, this is no part of our Church's belief, who has no where deliver'd such abominable doctrine. On the contrary, I have shewn before, that she teaches repentance as well as faith is previous to Justification.

And you clearly acknowledge the truth of this doctrine, in p. 10. of your sermon on *salvation by faith*: “ In the same hour, *say you*, that *Paul* and  
 “ *Silas* began to preach, the jailor *repented, be-*  
 “ *liev'd and was baptiz'd*: as were three thousand  
 “ by *St. Peter*, on the day of *Pentecost*, who all  
 “ *repented and believed* at his first preaching.” If you will not hearken to the Church, of which you reckon yourself a member, have some regard at least to your own words, and no longer deceive both yourself and your unhappy followers.

But you assign a reason, why no good work can be previous to Justification, nor consequently a condition, to wit, because we are justified, being till that hour ungodly, and therefore incapable of doing any good work. But pray are not the acts of faith, which men are moved to do by the divine grace, good works? Are not the several acts contain'd under the notion of repentance, good works? You own in this very place that faith is the condition of Justification. And you own likewise in the passage I have just now cited from your own sermon, that  
 repentance

repentance is so too. With what Face then can you lay down that little less than blasphemous position, that the ungodly as such, that is, who neither heartily believe nor repent, (otherwise they are not properly ungodly, or incapable of doing any good work) are justified?

This is contrary to the plain words of scripture, where it is said, *Exod. xxiv. 7.* that God *will by no means clear the guilty*: And *Prov. xvii. 15.* *He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, they both are an abomination to the Lord.* And surely if God detests men, who thus confound good and evil, it is most impious to imagine that God patronizes such a vile practice by his own example. It contradicts those innumerable places of scripture, where repentance is made part of the condition for obtaining forgiveness of sins. It is repugnant to the divine justice and holiness, since it implies that God remits the sins of them, and consequently gives them a right to eternal life, who are not cleans'd from their vices, and in some sense made partakers of the divine nature.

These one would think are absurdities enough to overset this scandalous position, which you might have learnt of the *Antinomians* at home, without giving yourself the fatigue of travelling to *Moravia*, to have an opportunity of talking with the nonsensical christian *David*, the carpenter, and of enjoying the blessing of hearing him preach, and vent these same wretched crudities, See *2d Journal, p. 54.*

The text you found this your doctrine upon is, I suppose, *Rom. iv. 5.* “To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that *justifieth the ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousness.” But this is nothing to your purpose, the meaning of it being briefly this: If a reward was due to him that worketh by his own natural powers, without

the assistance of the divine grace, then he might claim the reward not as coming from God's grace and goodness, but as strictly due to him: But in the case of *Abraham* it was not so. God in his calling and justifying him, who was ungodly, having been guilty of idolatry particularly, which was a very grievous crime, had no regard to any works of his done by his own strength; but to him not working in this manner, but believing on him that justifieth the sinner, who upon such belief repents and reforms his life, and obeys the divine will, his faith was accounted to him for righteousness.

Here then all sort of works are not excluded, but only pretended meritorious works, which exact the reward from God as a debt; and not such works as are perform'd in the strength of faith, which itself is the gift of God, and supposes that all good gifts come from God through the alone merits of Christ, and has an eye to grace, by virtue of which all works done in faith likewise must be effected. This faith which implies obedience without merit, was accounted to *Abraham* for strict and meritorious righteousness. And so likewise is the faith of all true believers, who walk in the steps of that faith of our father *Abraham*.

In the next place it appears, God does not justify the ungodly, continuing such as he was before his call; but he justifies the ungodly or sinner, having first believ'd, and thereupon repented and obey'd, as *Abraham* did. In short, God does not justify sinners absolutely, but such sinners, as our Church expresses it, who truly repent and unfeignedly believe his holy Gospel, such sinners as our blessed Saviour came into the world to save; and if he will not save those hereafter who are impenitent, undoubtedly neither will he pardon and absolve them here. Every child that has learnt his catechism in our Church, knows the terms of the Gospel-

Gospel-covenant, and I am sure ungodliness is no part of them; and I am sorry you should be so unhappy as to teach such doctrine.

But as good luck would have it, you in this very place do in some measure contradict yourself. “ We are justified, *say you*, by faith alone, faith without works, faith (though producing all, yet) including no good work.” I confess indeed this is very crudely express’d, and seems to contradict itself, as well as what you had before asserted. But first let me observe, that you grant we are justified by faith producing all good works. It then follows, that faith producing all good works is the condition of Justification, even in your own sense. If so, then it must before Justification produce all inward good works at least, such as repentance, charity, &c. God mainly regarding the obedience of the heart, and requiring outward works only as there is opportunity for them.

To this description of justifying faith, which you have here given us, let me add what you say in p. 8. of your sermon on *salvation by faith*. There you tell us, in answer to an objection, “ That to preach Salvation or Justification by faith only, is to preach against holiness and good works: It would indeed be so if we spake, as some do, of a faith which was *separate* from these. But we speak of a faith which is not so, but necessarily productive of all good works, and all holiness.”

In your own opinion then, the faith by which we are justified, is a faith which necessarily produces holiness, and is not separate from it. If so, then it is not the single virtue of faith, but a complex thing made up of faith, consider’d distinctly, and holiness together, since holiness is part of the very idea and definition of it. Another consequence is, that holiness, and therefore Sanctification, must necessarily precede Justification, let it be only for a few mo-

ments, because the faith which must precede Justification, cannot possibly be separate from it.

It follows thirdly, that holiness or good works must be a part of the condition of Justification, necessarily previous to it, for the same reason. And lastly it follows, that no ungodly person, incapable of doing any good work, is justified; but only such ungodly persons, or sinners, who are penitent, and sanctified by that faith from which holiness or good works are inseparable. Thus you see how consistent your scheme of principles are, and what clear instructions your poor hearers are to expect from you.

But the most glaring contradiction of all is couch'd in these very words themselves, " We are justified by faith alone, faith without works, faith, though producing all, yet including no good work," as thus: These two propositions are plainly contradictory, " We are justified by faith alone, faith without works," and " We are justified by faith producing all good works;" for certainly faith producing all good works, is not faith alone, or faith without or separate from good works. It is likewise much the same contradiction to say, that *justifying faith produces all, and yet includes no good work*. Now if it necessarily produces all good works, and they cannot be separated from it, as you allow, then it can't subsist without good works, and consequently they belong to the very essence of it, and must be included in it's very definition.

And thus, Sir, I have very plainly prov'd, that you have both many ways contradicted your own doctrine, and have likewise manifestly overturn'd it: and while you would, to gain a party, persuade your followers the Clergy teach false doctrine, you in the upshot teach the very same.

What a ridiculous thing then is it in you to go from one end of the nation to the other, lamenting



ing the heresies of your brethren, and instilling into the minds of the people, that they are led into errors by their pastors; when the truth is, you are either perverting them with *Solifidian* and *Antinomian* blasphemies, to which some of your principles have an apparent tendency, or else involve the doctrines of Faith and Justification in such obscure and unintelligible terms, that it would conduce much more both to their instruction and salvation, if they would adhere to their own Guides, who explain their duty to them clearly, and without any ambiguity, and leave you to ruminate upon these nice points, till you can speak and write more distinctly and accurately about them? But if you will neither forbear to preach, nor they to hear you, may not this sentence be applied to you, that you are *a blind leader of the blind*.

But you confidently appeal to the judgment of the Church in her Articles and Homilies, and claim to yourselves that venerable authority. Now we as willingly subscribe to her doctrine as you possibly could do, and have the greatest reverence for her authority; and being fully convinc'd she has clearly determin'd on our side, I will endeavour to shew, that if you are not a stranger to her words, yet you are entirely so to the sense of them, which is quite opposite to what you would put upon them. Her XIth Article is, "We are accounted righteous before  
 " God, only for the merits of our Lord and Saviour  
 " Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works  
 " or *deservings*. Wherefore that we are justified by  
 " *faith only*, is a most wholesom doctrine, and very  
 " full of comfort, as more largely is express'd in the  
 " Homily of Justification."

To this Homily then let us go for the true interpretation of this Article. And first, let us see what sort of faith that is, which every man must have as requisite to Justification. Why, the Homily expressly

pressly says, p. 13. (*Ed. Oxon. 1683*) that it is a true and lively faith, and that this faith does not shut out repentance, hope, love, dread, and the fear of God, to be join'd with faith in every man that is justified. Here then it is evident, that repentance, &c. are to be join'd with that faith which justifies, and consequently holiness precedes Justification.

In p. 15. there are these words: “ Nevertheless  
 “ this sentence, that we be justified by faith only,  
 “ is not so meant of them, that the said justifying  
 “ faith is alone in man without true repentance,  
 “ hope, charity, dread, and the fear of God, at  
 “ any time and season.” ’Tis plain, that such a  
 faith as justifies, comprehends all these; and if adult persons have not this faith, they shall not be justified in baptism; neither if any fall into sin after baptism shall they obtain God’s grace and remission, unless they believe so as truly to repent and turn unfeignedly to him. Now this clearly contradicts your doctrine which I have been already confuting.

But you will say, if this be the case, how are we justified by *faith only*, as the Article expresses it? To this I answer, in the very words of the Homily, “ that we be justified by faith only, freely, and without works, is spoken to take away  
 “ clearly all *merit* of our works, as being unable  
 “ to deserve our Justification at God’s hands.—  
 “ And because no man should err, by mistaking  
 “ of this doctrine, I shall plainly and shortly declare the understanding of the same.—First you  
 “ shall understand, that in our Justification by  
 “ Christ, it is not all one thing, the office of God  
 “ unto man, and the office of man unto God.  
 “ Justification is not the office of man, but of  
 “ God; for man cannot make himself righteous  
 “ by his own works, neither in part nor in whole.  
 “ —But Justification is the office of God only,

“ and is not a thing which we render unto him,  
 “ but which we receive of him; not which we  
 “ give to him, but which we take of him, by his  
 “ free mercy, and by the *only merits* of his most  
 “ dearly beloved Son.

“ So that the true understanding of this doctrine,  
 “ *We be justified truly by faith without works, or*  
 “ *that we be justified by faith in Christ only,* is not  
 “ that this our own act to believe in Christ, or  
 “ this our faith in Christ, which is within us, doth  
 “ justify us, and *deserve* our Justification unto us  
 “ (for that were to count ourselves to be justified  
 “ by some act or virtue that is within ourselves)  
 “ but the true understanding and meaning thereof  
 “ is, that although we hear God’s word and believe  
 “ it, although we have faith, hope, charity, repen-  
 “ tance, dread and fear of God within us, and do  
 “ never so many good works thereunto: yet we must  
 “ renounce the *merit* of all our said virtues of  
 “ faith, hope, charity, and all other virtues and  
 “ good deeds, which we either have done, shall do,  
 “ or can do, as things that are far too weak and  
 “ insufficient, and imperfect, to *deserve* remission  
 “ of our sins and our Justification; and therefore  
 “ we must trust only in God’s mercy, and that  
 “ Sacrifice, which our High-Priest and Saviour  
 “ Jesus Christ, the Son of God, once offered for us  
 “ upon the Cross, to obtain thereby (to wit, by  
 “ *that sacrifice*) God’s grace and remission, as well  
 “ of our original sin in Baptism, as of actual sin  
 “ committed by us after our Baptism, if we truly  
 “ repent and turn unfeignedly to him again.

“ So that—as great and as goodly a virtue as  
 “ the lively faith is, yet it putteth us from itself,  
 “ and remitteth or appointeth us to Christ, for to  
 “ have only by him remission of sins, or Justifica-  
 “ tion. So that our faith in Christ as it were,  
 “ faith unto us thus, It is not I that take away  
 “ your

“ your sins, but it is Christ only, and to him only  
 “ I send you for that purpose, forsaking therein all  
 “ your good virtues, words, thoughts, and works,  
 “ and only putting your trust in Christ.”

And p. 17. “ Truth it is, that our own works  
 “ don't justify us, to *speak properly* of our Justifi-  
 “ cation, that is to say, our works do not *merit* or  
 “ *deserve* remission of our sins, and make us, of  
 “ unjust, just before God: but God, of his own  
 “ mercy, through the merits and deservings of his  
 “ Son Jesus Christ, doth justify us. Nevertheless,  
 “ because faith doth directly send us to Christ for  
 “ remission of our sins, and that by faith given  
 “ us of God we embrace the promise of God's  
 “ mercy, and of the remission of our sins, (which  
 “ thing none other of our virtues or works pro-  
 “ perly doth) therefore the Scripture useth to say,  
 “ that faith without works doth justify.—And be-  
 “ cause all this is brought to pass through the only  
 “ *merits* and *deservings* of our Saviour Christ, and  
 “ not through our merits, or through the *me-*  
 “ *rits* of any virtue that we have within us, or any  
 “ work that cometh from us; therefore in that re-  
 “ spect of *merit* and *deserving*, we forsake as it  
 “ were altogether again faith, works, and all other  
 “ virtues.”

From which words these things following may  
 clearly be gather'd: that it is the office of God  
 only to justify through his free grace and mercy:  
 that Christ's sacrifice, once offer'd upon the cross  
 for us, is the only meritorious cause of our Justi-  
 fication: that though faith, join'd with repentance,  
 charity, &c. are requisite on our parts, in order  
 to our pardon and salvation, yet they are too mean  
 and imperfect to deserve any thing at God's hand,  
 and therefore we are to ascribe the merit of our  
 Justification to Christ only, and renounce the merit  
 of our faith, and all other graces united with it:  
 that

that we are said to be justified by *faith only*, not that faith, more than any other grace, is a mean or condition of our Justification, for they must all be join'd in that respect; but purely because faith alone, among all the other graces and virtues, directly points, and has respect to the merits of Christ's sacrifice, by which alone we deserve all the promises of the Gospel: that therefore to say we are justified by *faith alone*, is, properly speaking, the same thing in effect as to say, we are justified by the alone merits of Christ, to whom faith directly sends us for the remission of our sins: that consequently this expression, *We are justified by faith alone*, is not proper but figurative, being a metonymy, where the act of faith is put for the object about which it is conversant, to wit, the free grace and mercy of God promis'd thro' the merits of Christ: that, lastly, it is very fit to retain this form of speaking, because it hinders all human merits from having any share in the matter of Justification; and *we use it*, as our Church speaks, *in the humbling of ourselves to God, and to give all the glory to our Saviour Christ, who is best worthy to have it.*

This is the sum of our Church's doctrine, design'd to overturn the Popish doctrine of the merit of good works; but by no means intended to oppose the necessity of them, as a condition requir'd of those who shall be justified, or to countenance the *Solifidian* error, which you seem too much to lean to, when you assert, that we are justified by the single virtue of faith alone, not including any good work; a doctrine of very dangerous consequence, which all your exhortations to piety and a good life, can never sanctify or correct.

If this be the doctrine you blame us for opposing, you may assure yourself we will do it with all our might; we will leave no stone unturn'd as far as arguments will go, to vindicate the doctrine

trine of our Church from misinterpretations, and ourselves, who have the honour to defend it, from calumnies: and while you make your utmost efforts to poison the flock, it is our indispensable duty, by God's assistance, to provide a suitable antidote. Justification by faith then means no more than our being justified by the grace of God thro' the alone merits of Christ; which grace and mercy is apprehended by faith, and applied to us by virtue of God's promise, upon our performing the condition requir'd.

It is plain from the Homily, this phrase does not exclude the condition prescrib'd in the Gospel-covenant, which is such a faith as is made effectual by love, or such a faith as comprehends the obedience of the heart; for if it did, it would exclude even faith itself, which is manifestly absurd. Now this expression of Justification by faith only, being by many much misunderstood, and having been the unhappy occasion of endless controversies, though when rightly applied against the doctrine of merit, it is a way of speaking very proper, and so is easy to be defended in the good sense in which the Church uses it; yet our divines have commonly refus'd it, on account of the bad meaning in which the *Antinomians*, and the like sectaries, have understood it, and have chose to explain the same doctrine in other plainer and less exceptionable terms.

This is the case; and from hence it is, that the *Methodists* have taken an unjust occasion to vilify us, and to assert, with so much confidence and falsehood, we have deserted the principles of the reformation. But after all your tragical outcries, I fear it will at length be found you are the men that have really done so, having imposed a sense upon the Articles and Homilies, which is directly contrary to their true meaning, as I hope I have clearly shewn.

4. You say, the Clergy speak of Sanctification or holiness as an outward thing. This, I must tell you, is a mere slander. They plead as much for inward holiness, as any body of men whatever: and moreover they contend for it, (which is more than you do) as previous to the first Justification; and likewise urge, that it ought to be continued in, and augmented by our diligently using all the means of grace, and co-operating with the grace of God, and the influences of his holy Spirit, to the end of our lives, in order to preserve our Justification till God shall finally pardon our souls at our departure hence, and consummate our remission at the resurrection of the just, which is our second Justification. And if, during our continuance in this world, we fall into deadly sin after baptism, they teach, that we must inwardly believe and repent, that God, upon our prayer to him, and the receiving of the blessed sacrament, may renew our Justification, in the same manner as he bestow'd it upon us at first. This is the doctrine they universally inculcate, and which, tho' you would never so fain, you cannot oppose, without contradicting the Scriptures, and the judgment of our Church.

5. You say, they speak of the new birth as an outward thing, as if it were no more than baptism, by which you must mean outward baptism only. This likewise is absolutely false, as I have shewn in my former letter: and indeed you must look upon the clergy as the merest dolts in nature, who neither understand the very catechetical doctrine they learnt in their infancy, nor the Church's office of baptism, which they so frequently use.

Consider then, Sir, how wicked and abominable in the sight of God it is for you to misrepresent your brethren to the people, in this scandalous manner. Reflect at length, if upon this account your

conscience never check'd you before, that they do indeed speak the truth, as it is in Jesus, much more than you do; and that, to use your own words, since they do so, you are *found a false witness before God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee; for I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.*

In your late *Earnest Appeal, &c.* you endeavour to set off your principles and practices to the best advantage. And I confess it is very well calculated to work upon and move the affections of the people; but all your strongest persuasives to the love of God, and to inward religion, will not blanch over the deformity of that doctrine, which assures men they may be justified or pardon'd without being at all sanctified, or by faith alone, which is exclusive of charity and obedience. Unless you publickly recant this horrid doctrine, your faith is vain, and your preaching not only fruitless, but dangerous, and which all pious Christians are bound to detest.

And if you will vouchsafe to purge out this venomous part of your principles, in which the *wide, essential, fundamental, irreconcilable difference*, as you very justly term it, mainly consists; then there will be found so far no disagreement between you and the Clergy of the Church of *England*. You will in this respect preach the very same doctrines; but then, which will be hard for a man of your high spirit to submit to, you must return to your former private station, and no longer make such a figure and bustle in the world; since there will be no farther occasion for you to travel about preaching these saving truths, for that the people may, if they please, be fully instructed in them by their own pastors, who in their discourses insist upon inward piety and holiness, and the duties of

of



of a Christian correspondent thereto, as much as you do.

But the mischief is, the giddy multitude, like the *Athenians*, love to *spend their time in nothing else but hearing some new thing*. They are tired with the solid, plain and rational way of preaching they have been accustom'd to in the Church, and think it dry and insipid in comparison of the powerful charms of that ecstasick eloquence, those high-flown metaphors, those pretty rhymes, those taking actions and gestures, with which you tickle and bewitch them. These things play upon and affect their fancy a little for the present, but their minds are not a whit more convinc'd by the evidence of any truth, than if they heard it press'd upon them by their proper teachers, when hearken'd to with that meekness, humility, and obedience, which is due from the people to their spiritual guides.

To several things which you have strongly enforc'd in your *Appeal*, I have nothing to object, only the disorderly and uncharitable manner of doing it, and the inconsistency of them with some of your principles. We all contend, and God forbid we should not, as much as you do, for inward vital Religion, and endeavour to persuade men, as much as in us lies, that no outward acts of devotion whatever avail any thing without it; and to labour with all their might, as far as the imperfection of their nature will permit, to keep all the commandments of God, and strive to attain the utmost perfection.

This we all agree with you in, and frequently urge with the most powerful arguments upon the minds and consciences of our hearers. And if you affirm we do not, what else can be said, but that you are a false accuser? We have therefore no need of your assistance upon this account; and

and you have nothing left to do, but to ask God pardon for all the grievous slanders you have cast upon us, to go back to your college, and study to be quiet and mind your own business. But though I gladly commend some parts of your book, yet there are others which require some animadversions.

1. You are much delighted with gay figures, which, without explaining them, are too obscure for vulgar readers to apprehend; and you are, I dare say, as much a barbarian to them, as if you wrote in an unknown tongue. I don't believe every tenth person in your congregation understands (for instance) what you say in your 17th page about *internal sensation*.

All you can mean by it is, that using all the means of instruction, such as reading the Scriptures, and hearing them explain'd, and the like, will not be sufficient to make them understand the meaning of faith, and rightly apprehend the several things to which they are to give their assent; such as, the person of Christ; the design of his coming into the world, which was to establish and confirm a new covenant, that man, upon gracious conditions, may be reconcil'd to God, and brought to eternal happiness; the merit of his obedience and suffering; the infinite blessings procur'd for us by his resurrection and intercession in heaven; the precepts which he and his apostles have deliver'd to the world, which we are to observe as the condition of the Gospel-covenant; the promises we are firmly to rely upon in the performance of our duty; and the punishments which will be inflicted, if we neglect or violate it: I say, the using all the means which we have naturally in our power, will be insufficient to make us to understand these things, so as that they shall be effectual to our salvation, unless God, by his special

special grace preventing us, does prepare and dispose our minds to have a right and just notion of them, and continually assist our wills in performing those matters of practice to which we assent.

For who doubts, but that *we are not sufficient of ourselves* so much as to think any thing as of ourselves, and that *our sufficiency is of God*; and that *the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*? It is the sole work of grace to correct the perverseness of our natural and carnal reason, and to enlighten our minds to make us capable of clearly understanding the arguments the Gospel produces for persuading us to embrace the faith, and to have a true perception of all the objects of it express'd in the Scriptures, and of the strict obligation it lays us under to repent and obey all the precepts of Christ. This is all can be understood by what you term internal sensation; and if you mean any thing else, if you mean especially, as some do, a perception caus'd by some extraordinary gift of the holy Ghost, suppose, by immediate revelation, I can only say you are miserably mistaken.

2. You say, p. 30. it is urg'd as an objection, that you preach salvation by faith alone. To which you answer, And does not St. Paul do the same? To which it may be replied, and does not St. James tell us, *It does not profit, though a man say he hath faith, and hath not works, and faith cannot save him: faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone*? Now if St. Paul is seemingly for you, 'tis manifest St. James is plainly on our side. How then are these two inspir'd writers to be reconciled? Not surely by saying, that the word *faith* in St. Paul means the single grace of faith consider'd barely in contradistinction to all other virtues

virtues and good works, as it does in *St. James*; but that it contains and implies all other virtues, which spring from it as their root, and does not exclude all other holy duties, but only the merit of them, by evidencing that as itself is the gift of God, so are they too; and therefore there is no ground for boasting.

*St. Paul's* is a *faith made perfect by love*, which is the same thing as *St. James's faith made perfect by works*. It is a faith then consider'd in the most intense and consummate degree, and not barely consider'd with regard to the solitary essence of it. In this way the two apostles don't jar with each other; any other method makes *St. Paul* contradict not only the other apostles, but even himself, and consequently cannot be right.

That he would contradict himself, I have in part shewn already; and that obedience of heart and life to the commands of the Gospel, as well as an assent of the understanding to the truth of the Gospel-revelation, and a trusting and relying upon the merits of Christ, is included in his notion of faith, will farther appear to any one who will consider these texts. *Rom. i. 5. By whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name*; where the belief of the Gospel is call'd the *obedience of faith*. *Rom. x. 16. But they have not all obeyed the Gospel, for Isaiah saith, Lord who hath believed our report?* But if faith doth not include obedience, how could he prove there were some that did not obey the Gospel, because *Isaiah* said, *There were some that did not believe it?*

And so likewise by comparing *1 Tim. iv. 10*, where our Lord is said to be *the Saviour of them that believe*; with *Heb. v. 9*. where he is said to be the *author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him*. And also by comparing *Gal. v. 6*. where

it is said, *For in Jesus Christ, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love*; with 1 Cor. vii. 12. *Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God.* It were easy to shew, that both in St. Paul, and in other Scriptures there are several texts, where unbelief and disobedience are equivalently us'd. But this may suffice to demonstrate the apostle's true meaning.

Well, but St. Paul says, *By grace ye are saved through faith.* True, but then *faith* does not mean here that grace especially so called, but includes also the obedience which grows from it, as from the beginning and the root thereof. This lively, practical faith is *the gift of God*, we have it *not of ourselves*, for *in us dwelleth naturally no good thing*, and God and his grace does all; *neither is it of works*, which we do by our natural strength, exclusive of the divine grace. Every good thing we have is owing to this, *lest any man should boast of the merit of his holiness*, ascribing that, which belongs only to grace, to our own will.

But there is not the least room for glorying: For, as the apostle goes on, *We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that we should walk in them.* We are formed anew by God in Christ, and therefore we have no being, life, subsistence, or motion towards that which is good, but only in him, and by his Spirit and grace. We are brought by God out of a state of perfect inability, from which he alone can remove us, and from which we cannot possibly deserve to be remov'd, that we may be enabled to do those good works which always accompany a perfect faith, to which he hath before prepar'd us by his pure mercy, and which he continually does in us by his mighty power.

It is plain then that the *good works which we are created unto in Christ, that we should walk in them,* are always in *St. Paul's* judgment join'd with faith. And therefore we are not saved by faith alone, taken in a sense exclusive of good works, as you falsely teach. The merit of good works is excluded, but not themselves. *Can any words be more express —against you?* You cite another text altogether as impertinent as this: *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, Acts xvi. 31.* For here the word, *believe,* does not signify the grace, or the acts of faith only, but is a metonymy, where the cause is named, but wherein also the genuine effect and natural consequence is comprehended. A firm and solid faith necessarily produces charity and repentance, and therefore these in the word, *believe,* are by no means excluded from it, but express'd by it, and implied in it.

In Scripture sometimes faith, which is the cause of all other graces, sometimes charity, sometimes repentance, which is the effect of faith, is only mention'd; but each of these words are not always to be understood of that one single virtue, but must frequently so be interpreted as to contain the whole duty of a Christian. Thus *St. Paul* to the *Jews* at *Antioch,* — *Be it known unto you therefore, that through this man is preach'd 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.* Here believing cannot signify faith exclusive of repentance, but such a faith as includes it, as necessary for the obtaining Justification, or the forgiveness of sins; it being unquestionable, that God only justifies or forgives penitent believers. And *St. Paul* declares, that repentance is a necessary qualification of a true convert, as well as faith: *He shew'd first unto them at Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout*

out all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance: And Christ sent him to open their Eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith which is in me.

You see here they are previously sanctified before they are justified, by faith effectual to work repentance, and to free men from infidelity and sin, and slavery, under the dominion of the devil, and no other faith, not mere solitary faith, as you would have it, can be a condition of Justification, or of forgiveness of sins, and having a right by God's goodness to the heavenly inheritance.

Thus it is plain *Acts* xvi. 31. is of no service to you. *Believe*, says *St. Paul* to the jailor, that is, believe and repent, and thou shalt be saved. Then *Paul* and *Silas* spake unto him the word of the Lord, open'd to him the terms of the Gospel, convinc'd him of the necessity of believing in Christ, and forsaking his sins. Then the man, to shew that he did so, and that his faith was made perfect by charity, like a true convert to the religion of love, kindly took them the same hour of the night, and wash'd their stripes; and thus prepar'd, he and all his were baptiz'd straitway, and so were justified, or, by the ministration of that blessed sacrament, receiv'd remission of sins. Hence it is likewise manifest, that not only faith and repentance, but baptism also, when it may be had, is necessary for Justification and Salvation: which is notoriously the doctrine of the Church of *England*, but I cannot perceive it is yours.

You admit of no conditional cause of Justification, but faith alone, not repentance, not charity or any other grace, not the profession of christianity which we made at our baptism, although *St. Peter*

ascribes our salvation to it, and *St. Paul* says, that not only *with the heart a man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth also confession is made unto salvation, viz.* a publick and voluntary confession, that they all resolv'd to live and die Christians, and to take up the cross, and forego all worldly advantages for the sake of the Gospel: such a penitential confession as *many that believed* made, who coming to *St. Paul*, confess'd and shew'd *their deeds*; such also as many of them made, who us'd *curious arts, and bringing their books together, burnt them before all men; and they counted the price of them, and found it no less than fifty thousand pieces of silver.*

But you exclude every thing of this sort, as seals and proofs of true conversion; they cannot, as you contend, be any part of the conditional cause of our Justification; and you strenuously affirm, that we are sav'd from our sins *only* by a confidence in the love of God. But let me ask you, Does this precede, or follow, Justification? If the latter, then it is not a condition of Justification at all, much less the only one: then too we are justified without any previous condition; for if it is not so, and in your opinion nothing else can be, our sins are forgiven without our performing any thing to obtain forgiveness, which is the highest absurdity. If it precedes Justification, then how can it be, as you in many places declare, such a sure trust as a man hath in God, that his sins *are* forgiven, or that he is already justified?

This, good sir, give me leave to say, is the greatest nonsense and contradiction possible. According to you, it is a condition, and no condition; it is any thing, or nothing, as you please. In short, it is impossible you can understand this jargon yourself, and therefore you labour in vain to make it intelligible to others. You *soar aloft on Eagle's wings,*



wings, and leave the poor people to gape and stare after you.

Your hypothesis is, that first our sins are forgiven; that God is first reconcil'd to us; and then, that we have this sure trust and confidence in the love of God. But where pray are we taught, either in holy Scriptures, or by our common mother the Church of *England*, that we are justified or pardon'd, and made inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, before we are first converted, and sanctified by faith and repentance, and make a publick profession thereof? I have look'd as narrowly as I could, and cannot find it. Nay, is it not contrary to plain Scripture, and to the Church's authentick monuments, to assert, that God pardons and saves unbelieving and impenitent sinners? Is it not indeed the foulest error, I had almost said, the highest blasphemy?

In the next place, if we are sav'd *only* by a confidence in the love and mercy of God, how will you distinguish this sole confidence of yours from that of the *Antinomian* hereticks, who make as high pretences to it as you can possibly do? Will you say, that the love of God, and all christian graces, are necessarily join'd to this confidence? That cannot be, because then we are not sav'd *only* by such a confidence: then we are sav'd by other graces and good works, as well as by that, which is directly contrary to your hypothesis, unless to be sav'd only, and not only, by that, be the same thing.

In order to prove we are pardon'd first, and then we have this confidence, by which alone we are sav'd from our sins, you tack two sentences of St. *John's* 1st Epistle together, which I cannot understand how they are at all to your purpose.

The first sentence is, *Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestow'd upon us*, to which you should

should have added, *that we should be called the sons of God*, 1 *John* iii. 1. He bids us attentively, and with grateful hearts, consider the great love and mercy of God in calling us to be his sons, and bestowing upon us the privileges belonging to such. What then? Does it follow we are made the sons of God without a previous conversion to him by faith and repentance, and that our sins are first forgiven without any condition, and that then we must have a sole trust and confidence in his love? A man must be an *Œdipus*, who can find out such a riddle in this text.

The other sentence is: *We must love him, because he first loved us*; that is, though we were sinners, and God's enemies, yet out of mercy to us, and a preventing love, God sent his only Son into the world to suffer and die as a victim for all mankind, and to redeem us from sin, by purchasing for us grace and salvation, though we did not deserve it at his hands. By which grace we are turn'd to God through faith and repentance, and have our sins pardon'd, and are enabled to persevere in our justified state. And therefore we are bound to return the tribute of our love and gratitude, and to obey him faithfully as long as we live.

Now how this makes for you, and against us, is past my skill to imagine. Does it hence follow that we are not to love God before our Justification, as well as after we are in that happy state? Or that we are sav'd from our sins only by a confidence in the love of God, and not also by charity and obedience, which are the blessed effects of his grace and love?

In good truth, Sir, your sole condition of our being justified is not prov'd from hence, but the contrary. *St. John* frequently urges keeping God's commandments and obedience, as our christian duty; but all we are oblig'd to according to your  
 absurd

absurd notion is, to fix strongly in our fancy a firm and undoubted assurance that God has actually given us a pardon, though we are yet in our sins, and without any act of ours to obtain it.

This alone is the state of salvation you would preach the world into: And all your other exhortations to piety and a good life are altogether unnecessary upon your grounds. For if faith and repentance are not necessary before Justification, it can never be prov'd, they are afterwards so. I am afraid many of your hearers, if they don't already, will see this consequence plainly enough, and therefore it is very fit it should be clearly laid open, and the principle from which it naturally follows, fully confuted; and this I hope I have sufficiently done.

Your brethren indeed, whom you seem so heartily to pity, but in truth most uncharitably despise, are wont to tell their people from the pulpit, that before we can be justified, and be in a state of salvation, we must first firmly assent to all the truths revealed in the Gospel; from this assent follows a trust in God's promises: and if this trust be made effectual in us by the grace of God, then we must seriously apply ourselves to perform the condition of those promises, by repenting of our sins, by a firm purpose of obedience, by devoting ourselves entirely to Christ; lastly, by performing the condition we have a solid ground to hope for the thing promised, our Justification and Salvation.

Thus our trust and hope are a spring of industry and good endeavours, push us eagerly on to do our duty, and make us vigorously resolve to procure thereby, what is not to be got without it, being sensible, that God never intends to reward an unactive and careless confidence, but such only as is industrious and obedient. This is very intelligible and true, and far different from your inexplicable and dangerous

gerous notion. Now this is not an absolute confidence in the mercy and promises of God, but a conditional one, by which a man trusts, that according to the promises of the Gospel he will attain pardon and salvation through Christ, if he performs the condition of obtaining remission prescrib'd in the Scriptures.

This goes before Justification, and does not only follow it as your's does. This is efficacious towards the amendment of our lives, but your's does not necessarily conduce to that great end. This contains and implies obedience in its undoubted consequence, your's has no real connexion with it. You endeavour indeed to piece them together with untemper'd mortar, but a careful eye can easily discern the one has no strict coherence with the other.

For your sure trust and confidence is plac'd after Justification, and before all obedience, which is a very impious doctrine, because it supposes not only that we are pardon'd, although impenitent, but also that we are fav'd before we have fulfilled the terms of salvation. *We must first, say you, have an absolute assurance that we are pardon'd and put into a state of salvation, and then we love God and our neighbour, &c.* that is, perform the condition of our being in a state of salvation afterwards, which is plainly ridiculous and absurd.

You would gladly father your doctrine upon our Church; and have strangely misapplied some passages in the Homilies to make them favour your purpose, but you only wrest these as you do the Scriptures to your own destruction. But before I prove this, let me correct a point of chronology, wherein you are a little mistaken. You say it appears more than probable, that the very design of the council of *Trent*, in its sixth session, (in which alone there is any thing relating to this matter) was to anathematize the doctrine of the Church of *Eng-land*

*land* contain in her Homilies. But this is impossible: For the decrees of the sixth session were publish'd on the 13th of *January* 1547, which was a little before King *Edward* the sixth came to the crown.

Now every body knows, that knows any thing of history, that the first book of Homilies was not compos'd till after that King began his reign, and was not publish'd by the King's Visitors till about *August* 1547. I may likewise observe, that you affirm the council of *Trent* has decreed, "If any man hold (*fiduciam*) trust, confidence, or assurance of pardon to be essential to faith, let him be accurs'd." Now I don't find any such words in the canons of that council. These indeed are the words of its twelfth canon, in the said sixth session; "If any man shall say, that justifying faith is nothing else but a confidence in the divine mercy remitting sins for Christ's sake, or that this confidence is, that alone, by which we are justified, let him be accurs'd."

This, Sir, I am sure is true doctrine, whoever say it, and is perfectly agreeable to the doctrine of our Church, which does not make Justification consist in this confidence alone, exclusive of other virtues and good works as you do; but according to her this trust and confidence must be join'd and accompany'd with all other graces, otherwise it is not a lively faith, and we are not justified by it at all. And so you are not only anathematiz'd by the council of *Trent*, but also condemn'd by our own Church. I have made this observation, because it shews how unaccurate you are in your citations and remarks, and what little reason your people have to rely upon you.

But to come to the doctrine of the Homilies. I have shewn already, that the Church's phrase, *we are justified by faith only*, is not to be understood

to exclude all other graces from being the condition of Justification, as you, manifestly perverting the Church's words in her Homily of Salvation, vehemently contend. I shall now endeavour to shew the true meaning of some words towards the end of the third part of that Homily, which you misconstrue in a most strange manner. In this place it teaches what is the duty of Christians *after we are baptiz'd or justified*, and what we are to do to preserve our Justification, and so in the end obtain everlasting life.

Now it does not instruct us, that we must save ourselves from sin, or from the guilt and punishment, and power, of it, *only* by a confidence in the love of God, which is your absurd doctrine. It teaches us no such idle ineffective confidence, which many most reprobate sinners think they have, and congratulating themselves in it, continue in a wicked and damnable state, and even die in their iniquity, still dreaming that they are sav'd from their sins in the way you prescribe, and thus greedily embracing the promises, and having no regard to the precepts of the Gospel.

But our Church holds no such scandalous and disgraceful opinion. She asserts, that as we are justified or pardon'd upon our having a lively faith, which is not without hope and trust in God, not without the love of God, and of our neighbours, nor without the fear of God, nor without the desire to hear God's word, and to follow the same in eschewing evil, and doing gladly all good works, as opportunity offers: So in order to preserve ourselves in a justified state, we are not only to believe that holy Scripture, and all the articles of the christian faith, are true, “ but also to have a sure  
 “ trust and confidence in God's merciful promi-  
 “ ses, to be sav'd from everlasting damnation by  
 “ Christ, whereof doth follow a loving heart to  
 “ obey

“ obey his commandments. And this true christian faith neither any devil hath, nor yet any man, which — seemeth to be a christian man, and yet in his living and deeds sheweth the contrary.

“ For how can a man have *this* true faith, *this* sure trust and confidence, that through the merits of Christ his sins be forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God, and to be partaker of the kingdom of heaven by Christ, *when he liveth ungodlily, and denieth Christ in his deeds?* Surely no such ungodly man can have *this* faith and trust in God. For as they know Christ to be the only Saviour of the world; so they know also that wicked men shall not enjoy the kingdom of God.” So that we are not to have only the sure trust and confidence in God’s mercy, you speak of, but also such a sure trust as is attended with all other virtues, and all holy conversation and godliness of life.

A man may have all you require, to wit, a *sole* confidence in the merits of Christ, and yet be a very wicked man; but he can’t have such a trust, as the Church requires, which is not a solitary, but a complex thing, not only composed of a firm trust in God’s promises, but also of all other graces and good works, which are included in it, as the necessary effects thereof. Such a faith or trust is not faith alone, but obedience too, and this will undoubtedly continue us in God’s favour, and make us at length partakers of the kingdom of heaven. But too many, God knows, have gone into eternal misery, who have follow’d your rule of depending only on God’s mercy, without doing what he commands in order to obtain it.

According to the Church, it is impossible any man can have the true faith and trust in God she recommends, who has not also a loving heart to obey his commandments, and unless he has this

entire complex thing, and not only a bare exclusive confidence ; unless he has *this* true faith, *this* sure trust and confidence in God's universal promise, that by the merits of Christ who hath satisfied for all men, his sins also in particular are satisfied for, he will never be partaker of the kingdom of heaven. 'Tis evident therefore this is not a confidence that any particular man's sins are actually forgiven, and he reconciled to God, but only as the 17th article expresses it, a receiving or trusting in God's promises in such wise as they be *generally* set forth in holy Scripture, and withal a practising answerably thereto.

The Homily then is thus to be understood, “ We  
 “ must have a sure trust and confidence in God's  
 “ general promises of grace and mercy, that Christ  
 “ by the sacrifice of his death has redeemed all  
 “ mankind, and consequently every man in parti-  
 “ cular, and has pardoned and reconciled every one  
 “ to God, or by his merits purchas'd pardon and  
 “ reconciliation for him, who lives up to the pre-  
 “ cepts of the Gospel. This trust must be attended  
 “ with charity and obedience, and this no wicked  
 “ man can have, so as to have any comfort or be-  
 “ nefit by it, without fulfilling the practical part  
 “ of it.” This is the meaning, and this alone, of  
 our Church's affirming, that no wicked man can  
*have* this sure trust and confidence : For no one can  
 be interpreted to *have* this faith, which is made the  
 condition of our acceptance, but he who is acted by  
 it, and his works are obedient.

It is not a faith or trust merely seated in the understanding, but also effectually works upon our will and affections, and under the influences of divine grace is the very fundamental cause and natural spring of all our christian service and obedience : And though a wicked man may have the speculative part of this trust *really* in the mind,  
 yet



yet he has it not in a *moral* and *salutary* sense, and consequently cannot be said to have it in a true christian sense at all. For no confidence in God's mercy can be said to avail us to bliss, but that which affects and produces the amendment of our lives.

And that it is a lively, vigorous, and effective trust in God's general promise of pardon and reconciliation through Christ, and not an absolute confidence in God's special mercy, by which a man believes that pardon is already granted to him in particular, is plain from what follows in the Homily, where Christ is said to be the only Saviour of the world; and where the universal benefits procured to all men by Christ's sacrifice are enumerated: and where it is said, that these great and merciful benefits of God, if they be well consider'd — move us to render ourselves unto God wholly—to serve him in all good deeds, obeying his commandments during our lives, &c.

And thus you have no ground from these sentences partially cited out of the Homily of *Salvation* to affirm, that the true christian faith is a sure confidence which a man hath in God, that through the merits of Christ his sins in particular are actually forgiven, and he reconciled to the favour of God. 'Tis true, it is here meant, every particular man's sins are forgiven as to the atonement and satisfaction made for them by Christ, and he is so far reconcil'd to the favour of God; but there is no intention to express the special application of the atonement to any person, as I have fully shewn. This then is not the object of our trust or faith, and nothing else here is so but God's general promise of universal redemption through Christ, which every good and faithful Christian must receive and confide in, and if he do so heartily, will do his utmost to share in,

You

You say, we are fav'd from the power of our sins only by a confidence in the love of God. But we can't be so fav'd only by such a confidence; for this confidence alone, and by itself, without a loving heart to obey God's commandments, will not save us either from the guilt or power of sin. And if you say, you don't mean *only* by such a confidence, then 'tis plain you are turn'd aside to vain jangling, desiring to be a teacher, and yet understanding neither what you say, nor whereof you affirm. In short, you seem to me to be wonderfully perplex'd, and got into an inextricable labyrinth. But now the trust or confidence the Church speaks of, has no difficulty or obscurity in it; it is clearly an operative trust, and being join'd with charity, will undoubtedly save us from our sins, by freeing us from the dominion of them.

This is the doctrine which your despised brethren preach. But this you are not content with, and nothing will go down with you, or please the spiritual palate of your hearers, but what has no sense or reason in it. The more profound and intricate your notions are, the more you admire yourself, and are admir'd by them.

To make it still the more apparent, that the Church means, by a sure trust in God's merciful promises, a confidence in the general promises, and not a persuasion that any special mercy is granted absolutely to a particular person, I shall add her own words in the first part of the sermon *of faith*, p. 21. “ The very sure and lively christian faith  
 “ is, not only to believe all things of God which  
 “ are contain'd in holy Scripture, but also is an  
 “ earnest trust and confidence in God, that he  
 “ doth regard us, that he is careful over us, as  
 “ the father is over the child whom he doth love,  
 “ and that he will be merciful unto us for his  
 “ only

“ only Son’s sake, and that we have our Saviour  
 “ Christ our perpetual advocate and priest, in  
 “ whose only merits, oblation and suffering, we  
 “ do trust that our offences be continually wash’d  
 “ and purg’d, whensoever we, repenting truly, do  
 “ return to him with our whole heart, stedfastly  
 “ determining with ourselves, through his grace,  
 “ to obey and serve him in keeping his command-  
 “ ments, and never to turn back again to sin.

“ Such is the true faith that the Scripture doth  
 “ so much commend; the which when it seeth  
 “ and considereth what God hath done for us, is  
 “ also mov’d through continual assistance of the  
 “ Spirit of God, to serve and please him, to keep  
 “ his favour, to fear his displeasure, to continue  
 “ his obedient children, shewing thankfulness a-  
 “ gain, by keeping his commandments, and that  
 “ freely, for true love chiefly, and not for dread  
 “ of punishment, or love of temporal reward,  
 “ considering how clearly, and without deservings,  
 “ we have receiv’d his mercy and pardon freely.”

’Tis evident this is a faith or trust in the gene-  
 ral promises of pardon and salvation through the  
 merits of Christ, whose sacrifice offer’d, and in-  
 tercession made for all, will be available to those  
 who come up to the terms prescrib’d in the Gos-  
 pel. But this is not a confidence or absolute as-  
 surance, that Christ has actually pardon’d any par-  
 ticular person. ’Tis only a confidence in God,  
 that every man’s sins are pardon’d, and he will be  
 finally sav’d, if he has liv’d, and shall live, accord-  
 ing to his christian profession. ’Tis a confidence,  
 that, by the merits of Christ, and what he hath  
 done for us, God doth save all penitent and obe-  
 dient Christians; and not that any particular man  
 is absolutely in a state of salvation, for he can  
 only be conditionally in that state, viz. if he re-  
 pent and obey: and none can be infallibly sure he  
 does

does so, unless by immediate revelation; therefore the special mercy granted to any man, can be no object of faith.

I have shewn in my former letter, how a man may arrive at a comfortable assurance, that he is in a justified state, *viz.* by carefully examining his conscience, whether he is really possess'd of all spiritual graces, and studiously endeavouring to keep all the commandments of God, and praying to him for his aid, and using all the means God has appointed to further him in his christian course.

If a man thus brings forth fruits meet for repentance, then he will attain to a sufficient certainty that he is in a good condition; then his heart will not condemn him, and he will have confidence towards God. But at the same time that he confides in God, and has not any distrust in his mercy, if he acts up to his duty; yet it is no fault at all to mistrust himself, and to fear that the best services he can perform, are mean and imperfect. We must take care not, in the least degree, to imagine that any thing we can do, *deserves* God's favour. There is no merit at all in our good works and graces; and they are not otherwise acceptable to God, but through the merits of Christ. But though there is no merit in them, yet since they are the effects of divine grace, and upon that account are acceptable to God, we must know by them whether we have the right faith or no.

In order to come to some knowledge and certainty of our faith, we must try it by our living, look upon the fruits that come of it, mark the increase of love and charity by it towards God and our neighbour, and so shall we perceive it to be a true lively faith. If we feel and perceive such a faith in us, we may rejoice in it, and must be diligent to maintain and keep it still in us, and strive that it may daily increase more and more  
by

by well doing; and so we shall be sufficiently, though not infallibly, sure that we shall please God by this faith, and at length, when his will is, receive the final reward of it, even the salvation of our souls.

This is the utmost certainty we can ordinarily arrive at in this life, and we are to look for no other; all other kind of assurance is mere fancy and enthusiasm. The fruits of the Spirit are not so manifest, but that a man who has not his senses very well exercis'd to the discerning of good and evil, may be easily deceiv'd therein. Hypocrisy is spun oftentimes of a very fine thread; and the heart of man abounding with so much hypocrisy as it doth, and so much self-love and uncharitableness withal, is the most deceitful thing, yea and the most deceivable too, of any thing in the world.

There are on the one side so many mock-graces and specious counterfeits, that carry a semblance of spiritual fruit, but are not the things they seem to be; and on the other side, inordinate love of ourselves partly, and partly want of charity to our brethren, have so dispos'd us to a capacity of being deceiv'd, that it is no wonder, if in passing our judgment, we be very much and very often mistaken: It might rather be a wonder, if we should not at least be sometimes so.

As most errors claim to be a little akin to some truths, so most vices challenge a kind of affinity to some virtues; not so much from any proper, intrinsical, true resemblance they have with such virtues, as by reason of the common opposition they both have to the same contrary vice. Now deception arises from the appearance of some similitude, when things that are like, but not the same, are taken for the same, because they are like.

They that have given us marks of sincerity for the trial of our graces, have not been able to give any infallible characters, whereby to try the sincerity of those marks, so as to remove all possibility of erring. Whence I may infer, that the certainty of man's present standing in grace, but much more then of his eternal future salvation, (although I doubt not but by

the mercy of God it may be attainable in this life, in such a measure as may sustain the soul of an honest Christian with comfort) is not yet either so absolutely necessary, nor so void of fears and doubtings, as you seem to imagine.

Not so necessary, but that a man may be sav'd without it. Many a good soul, no question, there is in the world, that out of the experience of the falseness of his own heart, and the fear of self-deceit, and the sense of his own unworthiness, could never yet attain to be so well persuaded of the sincerity of his own repentance, faith and obedience, as to think God would approve and accept it. The censure were very hard, and a great violation of charity it would be, and of truth also, to pronounce such a man to be out of the state of salvation; or to call such his dispersement by the name of despair, and under that name to condemn it.

Despair is quite another thing. When a man thinks himself so incapable of God's pardon, that he grows regardless of all duties, and never endeavours to seek God's favour, as believing it in vain; this is properly the sin of despair. But when the fear that God has not yet pardon'd him prompts him to better resolutions, and excites him to a greater care of repentance and newness of life, and makes him more solicitous in the performance of all holy duties, that so he may be the more capable of pardon, it is so far from being any way prejudicial to his salvation, that it is the readiest way to secure it.

But where the greatest certainty is, that can be attain'd to in this life by ordinary means, it is not ordinarily, unless perhaps to some few persons at the very hour of death, so perfect as to exclude all doubtings. The fruits of the Spirit, where they are true and sincere, being but imperfect in this life; and the truth and sincerity of them being not always so manifest, but that a man may sometimes be deceiv'd in his judgment about it: it can hardly be but that the assurance, which is wholly grounded thereupon, and can therefore have no more strength than they can give it, must be subject to some fears and doubtings.

I speak

I speak not this to shake any man's comfort (God forbid) but to stir up every man's care to abound and increase so much the more in godliness, and in the fruits of the Spirit; giving all diligence by walking in the Spirit, and subduing the lusts of the flesh, to make his calling and election sure; sure in itself, that he fail not of salvation in the end; and sure to him also, as far as he can, that his comfort in the mean time may be greater and sounder.

This is the assurance the Church teaches, and no other; it no where informs us, as you do, that our sins are forgiven, and then that we must have a trust and confidence that they are, which trust implies an assurance of the thing, otherwise we want that faith by which we must be saved. I have shewn already that the passages you cite from her Homily are nothing to the purpose. And she every where holds, that faith, and trust, and repentance must be had first, and then we are pardoned; and these graces which comprehend the whole duty of a Christian, must be preserved in us during our whole lives, in order to sustain our justified state, and we can have no assurance we are in it, but so far as we are sure these graces remain in us, and are daily augmented by persevering in doing the good works which naturally flow from them.

There is no body doubts, but that a confidence in a pardoning God is essential to true faith; but this is no argument, that a confidence of our own particular pardon is in like manner essential. It would be a denial of christianity to say, that God does not pardon penitent sinners; but still a man may be a very good Christian, that has not an absolute assurance of his own pardon. These are manifestly very different things, and that man must needs pass a very rash sentence, who condemns a person that can't perfectly persuade himself he is in a state of grace, although at the same time he surely trusts God pardons all those, and him among the rest, who sincerely and entirely turn to him.

St. *Paul* methinks has fully determin'd this point, *1 Cor. iv. 4.* "I know nothing by myself, *says he,* (my-

“ conscience does not reproach me with any thing) yet  
 “ I am not hereby justified, but he that judgeth me  
 “ is the Lord.” Let us believe the testimony of our  
 conscience more than that of men; but let us have re-  
 gard to the testimony of God more than that of our  
 own conscience. For also in this case, *God is greater  
 than our hearts, and knoweth all things.* And if an a-  
 postle so illuminated don't think himself justified,  
 though his conscience reprove him with nothing, how  
 much ought we of so inferior a rank to dread the judg-  
 ment of him, who in order to judge us will consult  
 only his truth and our duties, his graces and our life.

Your confidence and assurance does not imply, that  
 men are pardoned or justified upon the preceding con-  
 dition of faith and repentance. But supposes that God  
 has pardon'd or justified impenitent sinners, and that  
 they are absolutely sure of this, before they are pos-  
 sess'd of any one grace besides, and before they have  
 done any good work. But the Church maintains the  
 quite contrary, that men are justified upon the aforesaid  
 condition, and that they are competently sure of their  
 Justification by having perform'd and continuing to  
 perform it during their whole christian warfare. She  
 instructs men to try their faith by their works, and so to  
 attain a comfortable assurance of their present state, and  
 a good hope of their future.

You tell them to get this assurance first of all, and  
 then all graces and good works are to follow afterwards.  
 But certainly if once men are fully assured of their par-  
 don, there can be no necessity of any thing else. They  
 are confident God's mercy has done all for them al-  
 ready, and if they can but keep this unconditional as-  
 surance strongly fixt in their fancies, nothing more can  
 be requisite. And if this alone saves us from our past  
 sins, why should it not also save us from our future?  
 At the most according to your doctrine we are only  
 bound out of mere gratitude to keep God's command-  
 ments for his having already sav'd us, and not out of  
 duty that we in the end may attain everlasting life.

You plainly go upon the *Antinomian* scheme, though  
 I believe



I believe you are not sensible of it. They don't allow repentance to be necessary to obtain remission of sins; they likewise hold men are saved only by a recumbency on God's mercy and Christ's merits; and lastly they hold as a consequence of these principles, and a very natural one it is, that let them do what they will, if they do but hold fast this recumbency, they are safe. Now if you can clear your principles from this unhappy consequence, pray do; otherwise never boast of your conversions: for they are built upon the sand, and cannot be lasting.

You endeavour to prove your doctrine of assurance from Scripture. "Hear believing *Job* (*say you*) declaring his faith: *I know that my Redeemer liveth.*" Well, but doth it appear from this text, that *Job* had his sins pardon'd first without doing any thing towards it, and that then he had such an assurance, as you suppose, of his salvation, although he had not repented of his sins? That he had this assurance first, and obey'd and serv'd God afterwards? I am sure nothing of this kind can be concluded from this text: on the contrary, it is manifest he had first a true trust and confidence in the mercy of God, and a stedfast hope of all good to be receiv'd at his hand, and therefore became perfect and upright, and one that fear'd God, and eschew'd evil, and therefore no doubt God accepted and justified him.

And yet it does not appear he had for some time an absolute assurance of this; for though there was none like him upon earth, and he excell'd in all virtues; though he endured the greatest calamities and afflictions with the most exemplary patience, and, notwithstanding the most painful torments, he still held fast his integrity, and firmly relied on the divine providence, and therefore God undoubtedly continued him in his justified state; yet he had great fears, that God had not pardon'd him, and upon that account loaded him with his heavy displeasure.

"I have sinned, (*says he*) what shall I do unto thee,  
 " what satisfaction shall I make to thee, O thou observer  
 " of men? Why dost thou not pardon my transgressions,  
 " and take away mine iniquity? I am afraid of all my  
 " sorrows, I know that thou wilt not hold me innocent;  
 " if

“ if I be wicked, why then labour I in vain,” in the vindication of my innocence.—And again: “ If I should justify myself, mine own mouth would condemn me; “ if I say I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse.”

Is there any appearance that *Job* had no scruples about his being in a state of salvation? or that he had an absolute assurance of his being forgiven? Methinks 'tis evident he had not, although it can't be in the least doubted but that he had an entire trust in a pardoning God; and that God had actually forgiven him, though he had no great certainty of it. The necessary consequence of this is, that a sure trust in God's merciful promises does not imply an assurance they are applied to any particular person, and that such an assurance can't be an object of faith. Afterwards indeed God was pleas'd to bestow upon him a strong assurance of his favour towards him, and to inspire him with a prophecy of the resurrection at the last day, and that he, among other holy men, should have a share in it.

“ I know (*says he*) that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin, worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another.”—Many learned men have interpreted this place of a temporal deliverance, but it seems to me more natural to interpret it of the resurrection, as our Church does.

Now nothing more can be prov'd from hence, than that *Job*, who was tried in a very extraordinary manner, had as extraordinary a degree of light to support him in the conflict; but this by no means argues, that every good Christian shall have the same degree of illumination. *Job* was immediately inspir'd by God with a prophecy of his future bliss, therefore (*say you*) it is the privilege of every one, who surely trusts in God, that he shall have an absolute assurance of his present salvation. I must confess, I can't but admire at this consequence.—There needs no more to be said to this passage.

You go on: “ Hear *Thomas*, when having seen he believ'd, crying out, *My Lord and my God.*” The meaning

meaning of which is, that *St. Thomas*, who before was so incredulous, that he would not believe the indisputable testimony of others who had seen the Lord, being now convinc'd of the truth, and of his fault, by his own experience, makes a ready, perfect, and fervent confession, both of his faith and repentance. " I acknowledge, *says he*, that thou art indeed my Lord, whom I have hitherto serv'd; and that thou, by raising thyself up from the dead, hast clearly shew'd thyself to be my God too: O thou, that art both my Lord and my God, forgive the weakness of my faith, and fully sanctify me by thy grace and Spirit." Then Christ pardon'd him, as is sufficiently intimated in the next verse: for he accounts him blessed, who by seeing him had believ'd, although he declares them more blessed who have not seen and yet have believ'd, their faith being more perfect than his. Now in *St. Thomas's* confession there is not implied any assurance of pardon, as you pretend, but only an ardent desire of it, upon his faith and repentance. And if it did imply such an assurance, he might well have it, since he had an immediate revelation of it from God himself, which men can't now claim as their privilege.

You next desire us to hear *St. Paul* clearly describing the nature of his faith, *The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.* That is, I live no longer the life of a Jew, expecting Justification by legal performances; but I now live as becomes a Christian, believing and practising those things which the Son of God requires of me by his Gospel, and this I think myself bound to by all the ties of love and duty, since he who lov'd and died for all, consequently lov'd me, and gave himself for me. Now all that can, with the utmost screwing, be gather'd from hence is, that as far as *St. Paul* could be sensible of the unfeignedness of his own faith and the fruits of it, so far he could have an assurance of his Justification. And no question a person endow'd with such extraordinary gifts, might arrive at a very eminent degree of assurance; but  
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it will not follow that every true believer can attain this high degree, much less the highest degree of it.

You lastly cite *Col. i. 12.* where you say, “ all the  
 “ believers, who were with *St. Paul*, bear witness:  
 “ We give thanks to the Father—who hath deliver’d  
 “ us from the power of darkness, and translated us into  
 “ the kingdom of his dear Son; in whom we have re-  
 “ demption through his blood, even the forgiveness of  
 “ our sins.” Here you manifestly pervert the text. It  
 is not, *We give thanks*; and these words don’t relate  
 to *Paul* and *Timothy* who wrote the epistle, but to the  
*Colossians* to whom they wrote, as appears from the con-  
 text. “ For this cause (*says the apostle, v. 9, &c.*) we  
 “ also—don’t cease to pray for you,—that *ye* might be  
 “ fill’d with the knowledge of his will—that *ye* might  
 “ walk worthy of the Lord—strengthen’d with all  
 “ might—giving thanks unto the Father, &c.”

Here *St. Paul* prays, among other things, that the  
*Colossians* might acknowledge with all gratitude the great  
 mercy of God, and the infinite benefits which Christ has  
 purchas’d for us, that is, for all Christians, by his blood,  
 and by his death; and these are:—That he hath made  
 us (meaning the *Colossians* as well as himself) meet to be  
 inheritors of the kingdom of heaven, by calling us to  
 believe the Gospel, and repent of our sins, and by being  
 willing to accept of our imperfect obedience; that he  
 hath deliver’d us from the power of darkness, those of us  
 who were *Jews* from the slavery of sin, and those of us  
 who were *Gentiles*, as the *Colossians* were, from ignorance  
 and heathenism, and hath given us a right to everlasting  
 glory, Christ having merited for us redemption, by pro-  
 curing of God the pardon of our sins, if we persevere in  
 our duty.

This is the condition must be always implied, as plain-  
 ly appears from *ver. xxi. &c.* “ You that were some-  
 “ what alienated, and enemies in your mind, by wick-  
 “ ed works, yet now hath he reconciled, in the body of  
 “ his flesh through death, to present you holy and un-  
 “ blameable, and unreprieveable in his sight: *if ye con-*  
 “ *tinue* in the faith grounded and settled, and be not  
 “ moved

“ moved away from the hope of the Gospel.” Now I would ask, Is it certain that all the *Colossians* had an absolute assurance they had receiv’d these benefits? No, most undoubtedly. All then that can be meant here is, that we are to give thanks to the Father, for that he and Christ have, in great mercy and love to mankind, done their parts to redeem and save us, and that we must take diligent care to employ the grace they have given us, in working out our own salvation.

Now this implies nothing of the assurance you speak of; and all that can possibly be concluded from hence is, an assurance we do and shall obtain all good things from God, if we do what God requires of us; but not an assurance of our salvation *only* by a confidence in the love of God, without doing any thing at all. It is, in short, a conditional, not an absolute assurance, that may be inferr’d from hence. And thus your proofs for this point are manifestly impertinent; and at your rate of citing Scripture, the most whimsical person in the world may demonstrate what he pleases from it.

You assert, that if we read the Acts of the Apostles, we shall find, that all those who believ’d, receiv’d the faith in a moment. Now I can’t perceive this, I must confess. They did indeed receive it very soon, but not instantaneously. We read that the Apostles, in their discourses to the people, prov’d by many arguments that Jesus was the true Messiah, and that salvation was not to be attain’d but through faith and repentance, upon the profession of which they were baptiz’d. The grace of God powerfully accompanied the words by them deliver’d, and excited the minds of the hearers first to apprehend the true meaning of them, then to give their assent to them, then to have a sure confidence in those gracious promises to the truth of which they assented, and lastly to attain a good degree of love to God, which naturally produces all other graces. And by these steps a lively and saving faith is form’d.

Now these several acts must necessarily follow one another, let the distance of time be never so small: and consequently it does not appear, that there is any such

thing as an instantaneous infusion of faith, as you suppose. This faith made perfect by love, and other graces, is the condition, as I have said, of our Justification. This you deny; on the contrary you affirm, that no faith is to be had before Justification, but we are first justified or pardon'd, and then the habit of faith is instantaneously infus'd, to wit, such a faith as implies an assurance, that we are actually pardon'd.

For this absurd doctrine I affirm you have not the least foundation either in the Acts of the Apostles, or any where else. And what you say of your own experience of those who now receive your imaginary heavenly gifts, is all folly and madness: It is but a mock faith, which you can neither understand yourself, nor explain to others; and I heartily pity the poor people, who are thus miserably deluded by you, speaking lies to them in the name of the Lord, subverting their souls by your intemperate zeal in the unwearied propagation of your dangerous errors.

I have now, I trust, fully confuted the doctrines you lay the greatest stress upon, I shall next but just take notice of some other mistakes in your *Appeal*. And

1. Your notion of a visible Church is far from true. According to our Church it is “ a congregation of faithful men, in the which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments be duly administer'd.” Now by *faithful men*, you understand only inwardly true believers. And you say the visible Church is a congregation of such faithful men visibly join'd together to hear God's word, and partake of his supper. But how can men invisibly or inwardly faithful be visibly joined together? This seems to be a contradiction in terms. By *faithful men*, the Church understands men visibly or outwardly professing the true faith, as plainly appears from her XXVIth Article, where she declares, *that in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good*; and so long as they continue only invisibly evil, she looks upon them as visibly faithful.

2. You insinuate, that the sacraments are only requisite to the well being of a visible Church; whereas

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the Church declares, that the due administration of them is an essential property thereof, so that there cannot be a visible Church without it.—I suppose you hinted this to gratify your loving disciples, the *Quakers*.

3. Let me observe, that there can be no due administration of the sacraments, and consequently no visible Church, where there are no bishops, and priests lawfully ordain'd by them. This is a matter, I am afraid, you make no account of; for you talk of the *Moravian* Church, and of sacraments there administer'd, although they have no episcopal ordination among them. This, let me tell you, is contrary to the XXIII<sup>d</sup> and XXV<sup>th</sup> Articles, and to the ordinal of our Church; therefore in these points also you widely differ from her doctrine which you have subscrib'd, with what conscience you best can tell.

4. You affirm, that the canons of the Church of *England* were never legally establish'd by the Church; by which you shew how little you are vers'd in our ecclesiastical history. If you will please to consult Archbishop *Wake's State of the Church*, he will testify, p. 507, that the canons were pass'd in the convocation of the province of *Canterbury*, an. 1603. and in that of *York*, an. 1605. p. 508. But no wonder you dislike the canons, since there are so many things in them to condemn your disorderly proceedings: and never pretend to vindicate yourself, from several of the Clergy's bare neglect to observe some of them; for there is a wide difference between this, and your contemptuous violation of them, in direct opposition to the authority of your superiors.

You are angry at me for putting you in mind of your breaking the solemn promise you made at your ordination, to obey the governors of the Church, and submit yourselves to all their godly admonitions and injunctions. You would come off by saying, their admonitions are ungodly, and their injunctions contrary to the word of God. But if you are mistaken, as you undoubtedly are, this pretence will never excuse you.

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You glory much in your conversions. You insist upon the fact, Christ is preach'd, and sinners are converted unto God. This I utterly deny, how great a madman soever you may take me to be. If your doctrines be false, 'tis plain Christ is not preach'd. And if several be induc'd not to commit some scandalous crimes; yet if you have perverted them to pride, censoriousness, strife, bitter zeal, heresy, despising their lawful pastors, and those who adhere to them; if they are notoriously guilty of these, and the like damnable sins, let them have what pretended imaginary faith they will, they are no more converted than yourself who lead them into them both by your preaching and example. For let me tell you, these are much more dangerous and devilish sins, than those which it may be they have left.

You give a deplorable account of the debt you have contracted by the building of your meeting-houses. I commiserate your case, if true. But you are the less to be pitied, unless you can bring better proof, than you have hitherto done, of the necessity there is to give yourself all this trouble and expence. And till you do that, all wise and considerate men, without any breach of charity, will look upon procuring subscriptions for carrying on your designs, as little less than picking the poor people's pockets, and robbing them of that which should maintain their families. I have nothing more at present to add, but to beseech God, both for your own and your hearers sake, to give you a right sense of your errors; and to subscribe myself,

*J. J.*

*Reverend Sir,*

*Your humble Servant.*