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THE SERMONS OF JOHN BRINE

The Glory of the Gospel Considered:

by John Brine

(London: George Keith, 1762)

*Thou hast given a standard to them that fear thee;
that it may be displayed because of the truth
— Psa. 60: 4*



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SERMON 35

THE GLORY OF THE GOSPEL, CONSIDERED:

IN A SERMON PREACHED AT KETTERING IN
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1TI. 1: 2

According to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God.

THE Law, of which the Apostle before speaks, is to be considered as a Prescription of Duty, or as a Covenant having a penal Sanction annexed. As such, it is *not made for the righteous Man*. For him who is made righteous by the Obedience of CHRIST; and is imprincipled with Holiness, and also taught, by divine Grace to *live soberly, and righteously, and godly, in this present World; such a Person is not under the Law, as a Covenant, but he is under it as a Prescription of Duty, being not without Law to God; but under the Law to Christ: according to the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. In my Text three Things are to be observed.*

- I. GOD is blessed.
- II. The Gospel is His.
- III. It is glorious.

I. GOD is blessed.

1. He is blessed in himself. GOD is essentially and infinitely happy. His Happiness cannot be increased by the Obedience and Praises of his Creatures, nor can it be diminished by their Disobedience. Eternal, invariable, and immense Delight, the supreme Being hath in his infinitely glorious Perfections, which it is impossible should ever vary, increase, or

decline in Glory. He is GOD *All-sufficient*. *The same from Everlasting to Everlasting, without Variableness and Shadow of Turning*. None can *profit* him, nor can any *injure* him in his essential Glory.

2. GOD is the Fountain of Blessedness to Angels and Saints. The Felicity of an intelligent Creature consists in the Knowledge and Adoration of the Perfections of GOD, in the Enjoyment of a Sense of his Favour, and in a Conformity to his holy Will. The Angels owe their invariable Happiness unto the sovereign and free Favour of GOD towards them; which resolved upon their eternal Fruition of himself: in Consequence of which gracious Decree, they are rendered *impeccable* and immutably happy for evermore. And the Saints are recovered from Ruin, and advanced to a State of inconceivable Blessedness in his immediate Presence, as the pure Effect of his sovereign Kindness, Grace and Mercy to them. He set them *apart for himself*; therefore, they shall be for ever with him. Perfectly know him, humbly adore him; be like him, and enjoy a ravishing Sense of his Favour unto Eternity. *In his Presence is Fulness of Joy, and at his right Hand are Pleasures forevermore.*

II. *The Gospel is His. It is not a human Contrivance, but of divine Original. Which might be evinced by many Considerations. I shall mention two only.*

1. The Gospel is a Mystery. It is *the Wisdom of God in a Mystery* (1Co. 2: 7.). *A great Mystery* (1Ti. 3:16.). And there are *Riches of Glory* in that *Mystery*. (Col. 1:26.). Now no Man can invent a proper Mystery. That is above the Capacity, not only of Men, but of Angels also. It is impossible that any created Mind should coin a Mystery. Absurdities may be invented; but Mysteries cannot, by any created Being whatsoever. Finite Intelligence may discover that there are some mysterious Truths, which respect the Nature of GOD; but such as result from his Will, are absolutely undiscoverable by the Light of Nature. And all evangelical Truths are of that Kind. For the Gospel is a System of Truths which *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, and which have not entered into the Heart of Man* (1Co. 2: 9.) Hence it is evident, that the Gospel is from Heaven, and not of Men. It could never have been known without supernatural Revelation.

2. No natural Man in the World approves Of the Gospel. For *the natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, they are Foolishness to him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

The Prophets and Apostles therefore were not the Inventors of the evangelical Scheme. It is most unreasonable to imagine, that Men in their Wits, would unite In a Design to frame and propagate a Set of Doctrines, which they knew would be displeasing to the whole World; and thereby expose themselves to Ridicule, Contempt, and the Hatred of all Classes of Persons, Rulers and Subjects, high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. The Deists are very Fools, if they really think, that the Gospel is the Invention of those who published it to Mankind. For they will never be able to advance any Thing, which may in the least degree render it probable, that the Publishers of the Gospel agreed in palming a Forgery upon Men. If any Number of Persons were to conspire in framing a Set of Doctrines, doubtless they would be such as they thought might meet with Approbation in those to whom they intended to publish them, and not such as they knew would be distasteful to Men universally. Now, as the Prophets and Apostles were sure that the Doctrines, which they were determined to publish, would not please, but irritate; would not ingratiate them into Favour, but draw upon them the keen Resentment of the Generality of those to whom they recommended those Doctrines; it is Madness to conceit, that they were the Framers of them. This Consideration with the former sufficiently evince, that the Gospel is of GOD, and not of human Invention. Being of GOD, it most justly demands our reverential Regard.

III. *It is glorious. I know but little of its Glory.*

Something of it will most clearly appear by a just Definition of it. And I think it may be defined thus: *The Gospel is the Revelation of a gracious, holy, righteous, effectual, and wise Provision of Salvation, made by God for some of the human Race.* Because it is the Revelation of a Provision of Salvation, it is called the *Gospel of our Salvation*. That there is a Design in GOD to pardon Sin, and save Sinners, cannot be known but by the Gospel. Nothing in Nature nor in Providence can furnish guilty Men, with a Ground of Hope of being pardoned and saved. Supernatural Revelation only can supply us with a Foundation of Hope, as we are Creatures guilty, sinful, miserable and helpless.

1. It is a gracious Provision which GOD has made for the Salvation of Sinners. Salvation is wholly of Grace. By which is meant not the Benevolence and Goodness of GOD as Creator, who is *good to all, and his tender Mercies are over all his Works*. Salvation springs not from thence Absolutely free and sovereign Favour is intended by Grace, from which

the Salvation of Sinners takes its Rise, *By Grace are ye saved. Not of Works, lest any Man should boast* (Eph. 2: 8, 9.).

No Subject of Salvation will have it to say, that it was fit GOD should pardon and save him, because of good Dispositions in him, and obediential Acts performed by him. — Election to Salvation was of the free Favour of GOD. *Even so then, at this present Time also there is a Remnant, according to the Election of Grace. — And if it be by Grace, then it is no more of Works, otherwise Grace is no more Grace. But if it be of Works, then it is no more Grace; otherwise Work is no more Work* (Rom. 11: 6, 7.). Grace and Works are Opposites in the Business of Salvation. They cannot be blended together as con-Causes thereof. Nor is it partly of Grace and partly of Works. It is of Grace, unto the utter Exclusion of Works, as a Cause thereof, that none may have Ground for Boasting. The Choice of Men unto Salvation must be an Act of pure Favour, without any Motive, in them; because Faith and all its Fruits, in them are the Effects of that Choice. For they were *chosen to Salvation, through Sanctification of the Spirit, and the Belief of the Truth* (2Th. 2:13.). GOD chose them that *they might be holy* (Eph. 1: 4.), and not because he foresaw they so would be. Holiness therefore, being the Fruit of Election, it could not be a Reason or Motive with GOD to form such a Decree in Favour of its Objects. But it must be an Act of mere Good-will and undeserved Goodness towards them. Again, Remission of Sin is of pure Grace. There is a meritorious Cause of Pardon, *viz.* the Blood of CHRIST. But the Cause of that Cause is the rich Grace of GOD, and therefore, divine Grace is the Origin from which the Pardon of Sin springs. A meritorious Cause in another, detracts not in the least from the Glory of the Grace of GOD, as the Cause of what is merited, by reason, that meritorious Cause is caused by his Grace. *In whom we have Redemption, through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sin, according to the Riches of his Grace* (Eph. 1: 7.). The Grace of the Father, and the Merit of CHRIST'S Blood, both have Place in our Remission; and are perfectly consistent. The Merit of the Blood of CHRIST is founded in the Grace of the Father towards himself, as Man; and towards us, for whom it was shed; and therefore, the Father's Grace is the Origin from which our Pardon springs, though it was properly merited by his Blood. I must say, that I am ashamed to find any think, that Grace in GOD, and proper Merit in CHRIST, are inconsistent; and therefore, take the Liberty to deny the Merit of a dear Redeemer. I cannot refrain from saying, that such are very unskilful in divine Things, at least in this Instance. Besides, the

Justification of our Persons is of the Grace of GOD. Infinite Love and immense Wisdom provided the infinitely valuable Righteousness of CHRIST for us, whereby we are constituted righteous. *Being justified by his Grace.* It is of GOD that we are in CHRIST, as a Head, by reason whereof his Obedience to the Law becomes ours of Right, and so it is a Gift by Grace unto us consequently, our Justification through the Righteousness of CHRIST is wholly of divine Grace.

Farther, GOD in infinite Goodness provided for our Regeneration and Sanctification. We are *saved and called with a holy Calling, not according to our Works; but according to his own Purpose and Grace, which was given us in Christ, before the World began* (2Ti. 1: 9.). It is of *his abundant Mercy that he begets us again to a lively, Hope* (1 Peter 1: 3.). *Having loved us with an everlasting Love, therefore, with Loving-kindness he draws us* (Jer. 31: 3.). *Our Vivification when dead in Trespasses and Sins is the mere Effect of his rich Mercy and great Love.* (Eph. 2: 4, 5.). He doth not operate upon us to make us holy and *meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, because of a Pliableness in our Wills to concur with him in his Operations: For, *our carnal Mind is Enmity against God, it is not subject to his Law, neither indeed can be* (Rom. 8: 7.) Wherefore, *it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth; but of God, that sheweth Mercy* (Rom. 9:16.). I add, our Preservation and safe Conduct through this imperfect and militant State, is wholly owing to the Grace of GOD. As he begins the good Work in our Souls, he maintains and carries it on in us, otherwise we could not possibly persevere in Holiness. Such is the Power of Sin in our Hearts which lusts against, and opposes the spiritual Part. And such are the Craft, Fury and Violence of Satan our unwearied Enemy, also such are the Oppositions we meet with in our Christian Course from the World. It is by divine *Power the Saints are kept through Faith unto Salvation.*

Once more: Future Blessedness is the Provision of infinite Love and Grace. The Kingdom of eternal Glory is the *Gift of God's good Pleasure* (Luk. 12:32.). It bears the Denomination, of Grace, because it as the Effect thereof. *And hope to the End, for the Grace that shall be brought unto you at the Revelation of Jesus Christ* (1Pe. 1:13.). A Title to Heaven through the Righteousness of CHRIST is of sovereign Grace, a Meetness for it is the Effect of divine Grace, and our Preservation unto that blissful State, must be attributed wholly to the Grace of GOD.

He calls us unto his eternal Glory, in the Character of the GOD OF ALL GRACE (1Pe. 5:10.), and in that Character, he conducts us to it, and puts us into the actual Possession of it. Eternal Life is a free-Grace Gift to all who enjoy it.

2. It is a holy Provision. The infinite Holiness of GOD shines forth most gloriously in all the Parts of our Salvation.

(1.) In our Pardon. Divine Mercy is manifested in the Remission of Sin. But if GOD's Displeasure against our Sins is not discovered, in order to our Impunity, Pardon cannot be an Act of Holiness. Divine Purity, in relation to moral Evil, is only seen in Resentment and Indignation against it, not in the Act itself of remitting it to the Transgressor. Wherefore, *it became him, for whom are all Things, and by whom are all Things, in bringing many Sons to Glory, to make the Captain of their Salvation perfect through Sufferings* (Heb. 2:10.). If GOD had pardoned guilty Men, without discovering his Displeasure in this Way against their Crimes, it would have been at the Expense of the Glory of his Holiness. For, to pardon of absolute Mercy, is not an Act of Holiness. But to remit Sin, on the Foundation of a Discovery of proper Resentment against it, is both an Act of Mercy and Holiness.

(2.) In the Constitution of our Persons, righteous GOD of his infinite Mercy hath provided for us a Righteousness, which is commensurate to the Law. CHRIST was made under the Law on our Account, and perfectly obeyed it in all its Precepts. And of the divine Father, we are in *Christ Jesus, in Consequence of which, he is of God made Righteousness to us* (1Co. 1:30.). And therefore, it is agreeable to divine Purity and Holiness to accept of and justify us. But the Act of Justification, without a Righteousness answerable to the Requirements of the Law, would not have been an Act of Holiness; on the contrary, it would have been an unholy Act, and inconsistent with the infinite Purity of GOD.

(3.) The Holiness of GOD is manifested in our Regeneration and Sanctification. Our new Creation is an eminent Display of divine Purity. We are *the Workmanship of Cod, created in Christ Jesus unto good Works* (Eph. 2:10.). The Communication of Holiness to an Unholy Creature, is an Act of Holiness. And therefore, GOD in making us holy, displays his own Holiness. And as he doth this in order to our future Enjoyment of Himself, it is a full Evidence, that Holiness is necessarily prerequisite to future

Happiness: That *without Holiness, no Man shall see the Lord* (Heb. 12:14.).

(4.) GOD manifests his Holiness in our Preservation to the heavenly State. As the Creation of a Principle of Holiness in us was a holy Act, so all divine Influences upon us to maintain; and increase the Vigor of that Principle, are Acts of Holiness. Spiritual Supplies of Grace, to Uphold and confirm our Souls in the Practice of our Duty, in this militant State, are Effects of rich Grace, and also glorious Displays of the Purity and Holiness of the GOD of all Grace. Who will not fail of giving us more Grace, until we arrive to Glory. *He will give Grace, and Glory, and no good Thing will he withhold from us* (Psa. 84:11.).

(5.) GOD eternally manifests his Holiness in our Glorification. Divine Purity shines forth in the gracious Decree, concerning our final and complete Happiness, For, in that Decree, GOD determined to make us *meet* for the Enjoyment of himself, by the sanctifying Influences of his Spirit. And our Happiness hereafter will very much consist in the Perfection of our Holiness. GOD chose us, that we might be *holy before himself in Love* as to be *without Blame* (Eph. 1: 4.); that is, all Cause of Censure, and that for ever. Now; divine Holiness is gloriously displayed in making unholy Creatures perfectly holy, and immutably so. As the Impeccability of a Creature is the Effect of sovereign Goodness; so it is an eminent, Display of the infinite Purity of GOD.

3. It is a righteous Provision of Salvation. The Justice of GOD is therein most gloriously manifested.

(1.) Sin is punished. GOD is infinitely merciful to our Persons. He spares us; but not our Sins. Sin he resolved not to spare; but to take full Vengeance, on it. With this View he decreed, that CHRIST should bear our Guilt, and suffer the Penalty it demerited. Unto which the blessed JESUS readily and fully consented. And on that Foundation, the Father *laid on* CHRIST, or made to meet in him, *the Iniquities of us all* (Isa. 53: 6.). *He made him to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin* (1Co. 5:21.). And CHRIST *bore our Sins, in his own Body, on the Tree* (1Pe. 3:24.). Our Offenses being imputed to him, he thereupon, was made *a Curse* (Gal. 3:13.). And the Father awaked the Sword of Justice against him, and sheathed it in his Bowels. Thus the Father spared him not, but *delivered him up for us all*, though he was *his own Son, his only begotten Son* (Rom. 8:32.); and was infinitely beloved by him: Yet he would not deal tenderly with him, nor

abate any thing of that Penalty, which the Mass of Guilt that was charged on, him did demerit. Thus the *Soul of Christ was made an Offering for Sin* (Isa. 53:10.). Oh what an amazing Display of divine Justice is in this Transaction! Greater Love to our Persons is not discovered, than Vengeance against our Sins. The infinite Dignity of CHRIST'S Person, put an infinite Value upon what he suffered; but the immense Greatness of his Person did not cause the Father to make any Abatement of that Punishment, which Justice directed to the Infliction of, for the Sins which he bore.

(2.) The Law is magnified. CHRIST, who is GOD and Man united, became subject to it. He was made under the Law, and punctually obeyed all the Precepts of it. He likewise suffered its *Curse* (Gal. 3:23.). An infinite Honour was done to the legal Constitution, by the Obedience and Sufferings of the great Redeemer. And because thereof, the Father is well pleased. *The Lord is well pleased for his Righteousness Sake, he will magnify the Law, and make it honorable* (Isa. 42:21.). This Provision for the Honour of the Law, is an eminent Branch of the Glory of the Gospel. The evangelical Constitution, far exceeds in Glory the legal; but it is a Scheme calculated to render that Constitution far more glorious, than it could have been without it. The Obedience and Sufferings of the son of GOD, are an infinite Exaltation of the Glory of the divine Law.

(3.) The Justice of GOD is therein exercised, and all its Demands are fully answered. Divine Justice righteously acted its Part, in requiring perfect Obedience of the Sinner's Surety, and *tremendously* in the Infliction of Punishment upon him, in order, to our Pardon, Justification, and eternal Salvation. *GOD set forth his Son to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood, to declare his Righteousness for the Remission of Sins that are past, through the Forbearance of God. To declare, at this Time his Righteousness: that he might be just, and the Justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.* (Rom. 3:24-26.) *Rigorous* Justice and boundless Grace meet in this adorable Contrivance: Our Pardon is an Act of Righteousness, as, well as an Act of Mercy. Our Justification is an Act of Justice, as well as an Act of Grace, through the Obedience and Sacrifice of CHRIST.

4. That Provision which GOD hath made for our Salvation, is effectual.

(1.) The Pardon of Sin is certain and sure. CHRIST by his Sufferings and Death *obtained eternal Redemption*. The Benefit itself he obtained, whatever is intended by it, or included in it. Not an Offer, or a Proposal

thereof. For, obtaining an Offer, or a Benefit, or a Proposal of Terms, on which a Benefit may be enjoyed, is not obtaining the Thing itself. This is so evident, that it is needless to attempt its Proof. Now Redemption, which CHRIST obtained, is the Remission of Sin *In whom we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sins* (Eph. 1: 7.). If it is not granted, that Redemption is the Forgiveness of Sins, I will never contend with any about its Extent, whether it respects all, or some Men only. For it is not a Matter of such Moment, as may justly require Debate, if that is denied. It is of trifling Consideration, whether it is limited, or of universal Extent, if it includes not the Pardon of Sin. Clear, indeed, it is, that if Redemption does include the Pardon of Sin, it cannot be of universal Extent, because Men universally are not pardoned, but some only. Those, therefore, who are of Opinion, that Redemption is unlimited, are Obligated to deny that the Pardon of Sin, or a Right to Impunity, was obtained by the Death of CHRIST.

An Offer of Pardon, or a Proposal of Forgiveness, on certain Terms, was obtained by the Sufferings of CHRIST; but Pardon itself they think was not. A Right to Impunity they will not allow to be the proper Effect of CHRIST'S Death. Whereby they overthrow the Doctrine of his Satisfaction, and consequentially reflect on the Justice of GOD. For they suppose that GOD put his Son to Death for the Crimes of Delinquents, and yet inflicts the Punishment of eternal Death upon, such for whose Offenses CHRIST suffered Death as a Penalty, because they do not perform Conditions on which an Offer of Pardon was made to them. It will, I think, be very difficult to reconcile this with divine Justice. Can it consist with Justice to put an innocent Person to Death, as the Substitute of an Offender, and put him to Death also for that Crime, or those Crimes on Account whereof his Substitute suffered Death? Can Justice direct to punish one who is innocent, in the Room and Stead of a guilty Person, and to inflict Punishment on him likewise for the same Crimes? If it cannot, GOD, who is infinitely just, will not inflict proper, everlasting Punishment on any of those upon whose Account and in whose Stead he most dreadfully punished his own Son, that they might escape with Impunity. The Doctrine of the limited Extent of Redemption is now become very displeasing to many Professors, and therefore it is to be feared that some who believe it, are shy of letting it be known that they do believe it, lest they should give Umbrage to some Persons who cannot bear with an explicit Mention of it, nor with such a Way of stating the momentous Doctrine of Atonement, as necessarily supposes it. Hence too many

superficial Discourses are delivered on that important Subject; though we are told that CHRIST, in suffering, was the Substitute of Sinners, and that he suffered Punishment for their Crimes, it cannot be collected from what the Preacher saith, whether he believes, or does not believe, that proper and full Satisfaction was made for Sin by CHRIST'S Death. Why is such Caution used on this weighty Point? I fear it is because the Preacher is unwilling to offend such who espouse the Opinion of the unlimited Extent of CHRIST'S Death, or universal Redemption, which cannot possibly be that Redemption whereof the Gospel is a Discovery: For that Redemption is the Forgiveness of Sins. As therefore the Sins of some Men are not forgiven, Men universally are not the Subjects of that Redemption which the Gospel reveals. Why are we not plainly told, that CHRIST really *put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself? that he finished Transgression and end of Sin*, as to its Guilt, by being *cut off but not for himself*; that he made *Reconciliation for Iniquity*; that GOD is *pacified, towards us for all that we have done*; and that *when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son*; that *we are justified by the Blood of Christ, and shall be saved from Wrath through him*; that *he redeemed us from the Curse of the Law, being made a Curse for us*; that *the Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and by his Stripes we are healed*; that *Peace was made for us by the Blood of his Cross*? And why are we not plainly told that these strong Expressions, concerning the Effects of the Death of CHRIST, cannot *dwindle* into an Offer of Pardon, Or a Proposal of Terms of Peace and Reconciliation, between GOD and our Souls? If the Preacher really believes that JESUS CHRIST made proper and full Atonement for Sin, by his Sufferings and Death, let him tell us so, and that therefore a Right to Impunity is a certain Effect thereof, and wholly arises therefrom, and is not suspended on Conditions to be performed by us. This Doctrine formerly was cordially embraced, and zealously contended for, by reformed Divines, but alas! a very melancholy Change hath taken Place amongst us.

(2.) Effectual Provision is made for the Justification of Sinners before GOD. For in the LORD we have Righteousness. CHRIST is of GOD made unto us Righteousness, as a Benefit distinct from Sanctification. And therefore, Righteousness is not included in Sanctification, nor is Sanctification included in Righteousness. If Righteousness was included in Sanctification, CHRIST in being made Righteousness to us, he would be made Sanctification to us therein; and if Sanctification was included in Righteousness, in being made Righteousness to us, he would be made

Sanctification to us therein. In that Case, Righteousness and Sanctification would not be distinct Benefits, but one and the same; which it is evident they are not, because the Apostle speaks of them as distinct Benefits. Hence also it is clear, that whatever is included in Righteousness is no Part of our Sanctification; and that whatever is included in our Sanctification is no Part of our Righteousness; consequently our Faith, Repentance, and Obedience, enter not into our Righteousness, which CHRIST is of GOD made unto us. Our internal and external Holiness taken together, are not that Righteousness. Nothing whereof we are the Subjects, nor any Thing which we perform, can be that Righteousness, or included in it. Our gracious Dispositions and holy Actions cannot be that Righteousness, if it is a Benefit distinct from Sanctification. The Righteousness of CHRIST is imputed to us in order to our Justification, and Grace is conveyed to us from him in order to our Sanctification. So that CHRIST is made Sanctification to us by a Communication of Grace from him but he is made Righteousness by the Imputation of his Righteousness to our Persons, who is the LORD our Righteousness. And as our Sanctification is not included in, nor any Part of that Righteousness which CHRIST is made of GOD unto us, he is made Righteousness to us in order to our Justification, and not in order to our Sanctification.

Now let us consider whether this Provision of the Obedience or Righteousness of CHRIST, in order to our Justification, is effectual or not. I cannot but apprehend, that it is effectual for the Reasons following.

[1.] CHRIST'S Righteousness is absolutely perfect. He was as holy in his Nature, and as unblemished in his Conduct, as the Law required he should be, under which he was made upon our Account. He *was holy, harmless, and undefiled. A Lamb without Blemish, and without Spot. He did no Sin, nor was Guile found in his Mouth.* Will not Righteousness, which in all Respects is commensurated to the Law in its Requirements, be effectual of itself unto the Justification of those Persons for whom it was wrought out, and unto whom it is imputed for that End? A complete Righteousness needs not any Thing to be added to it, or connected with it, to answer the important Purpose of Justification. Let us, therefore, never think of joining our imperfect Righteousness, with the perfect Righteousness of CHRIST, in the Business of our Justification before GOD. Nor imagine that our imperfect Obedience will be available to the Acceptation of our Persons with GOD, because of, or through the perfect Obedience of CHRIST. For, the Perfection of his Obedience adds nothing to the Worth and Value of

ours. Its Nature is not changed by the Obedience of CHRIST. And therefore, if GOD can justify us, on the Foundation of our own Obedience, consistent with his Truth, Holiness and Justice, CHRIST'S Obedience to the Law for us was not necessary to our Justification in his Sight.

[2.] The Duration of CHRIST'S Righteousness, is an Evidence of its Sufficiency and Efficacy unto our invariable and endless Justification. That which depends upon, and is in Virtue of a never-ceasing Cause, will for ever continue. The Righteousness of CHRIST, on which our Justification depends, and in Virtue whereof it is, will never alter or cease. And therefore, our Justification must be invariable and endless. For an Effect cannot be variable and uncertain, as to the Continuance of its Existence, which springs from an invariable and perpetual Cause. Such is the Righteousness of CHRIST. It is *everlasting*, can never change, nor possibly cease: Consequently everlasting Justification is effectually secured by it.

[3.] The Value of CHRIST'S Obedience can never be lessened. Its Value is infinite, by Reason of the immense Dignity of his Person. And if it really is infinitely valuable, because he is GOD and Man united, then surely it must be eternally available to our Justification. Can any sober Man think that it became the Wisdom of GOD to provide a Righteousness for us, of inconceivable Worth and Value, in order to our Justification before him, and yet notwithstanding that Provision, our Justification in his Sight is a Matter uncertain and precarious, or that which may be or may not be? Such an Imagination is absurd.

[4.] Eternal Life is through the Righteousness of CHRIST as a meritorious Cause. *Grace reigns through Righteousness unto eternal Life*. The Reign of Death is through Sin, as a procuring Cause; and the Reign of Grace unto eternal Life is through Righteousness, as a procuring Cause. For as the Reign of Sin was unto Death, because it properly demerited it; so the Reign of Grace through Righteousness is unto eternal Life, because that properly merited it. The Apostle, agreeable to the Scope of his Discourse, in the Place, considers Sin as a procuring Cause of Death, and Righteousness as a procuring Cause of eternal Life. The Reign of Grace unto eternal Life cannot be through the Justice or Righteousness of the Nature of GOD, without the Subsistence of a Righteousness properly deserving or meritorious of eternal Life. And therefore, I cannot but conceive that we are to understand by Righteousness the Obedience of CHRIST, as that through which Grace reigns, unto eternal Life. If any

should say, that the Term *Merit* is not extant in Scripture, I would answer, as *Pareus* does. *Although the Word Merit is never extant, because neither the Hebrews nor the Greeks, have any which properly answers to the Term Merit. — Yet the Word Περιποιησεως, Acquisition, comes up to the Sense of Merit; and the Word πειποιεισθαι, to acquire, which Scripture frequently uses about the Work of Salvation.*^{f1} That which renders the Obedience of CHRIST meritorious, is the Subsistence of his human Nature in his divine Person. For, as *Witsius* says, *Whereas this is not the Obedience of a mere Man, but of Christ God-Man, an, infinite Person, itself also is of infinite Dignity or Worth; consequently, hath a just Proportion unto the greatest Glory answerable to it, and so there is Merit in it, which they call Merit of Condignity, such can agree unto no mere Creature*^{f2} which is a farther Evidence that this Provision for our Justification is effectual. A Righteousness, which is proportionate unto the greatest Glory, will doubtless be for ever available to our Acceptance with GOD

(3) Effectual Provision is made for our Sanctification. *Grace was given us in Christ before the World began* in order to our holy Vocation. It was the eternal Purpose of GOD to call us with a *holy Calling*. Either he is able to make us holy, or he is not able. If he is not able, then he purposed to do what he could not effect. To suppose which, is an Impeachment of his Wisdom. The Purposes of a wise Agent exceed not his Capacity. And can any Man persuade himself to think that the Designs of GOD, who is infinitely wise, are above his Power? If GOD is able to make us holy, and in Fact he does not, then he must have changed his Purpose if he once designed it. To imagine which necessarily supposes that he is mutable. Hence it is clear, that GOD never intended to regenerate, convert, and sanctify those who are not regenerated, converted, and sanctified. On this important Point we too often hear very superficial Discourses from such, who, if they believe the Efficacy of divine Grace in its Operations on the Souls of Men, are not free it should be known that they do believe it. For it cannot be inferred from What they say, that GOD creates, infuses, or implants a Principle of Holiness in Men, without which no Man whatever can become holy. Operations and Influences on the *carnal Mind*, which is *Enmity against God*, will never cause it to love him, nor bring it into *Subjection to the Law*. The Grace of GOD effects not this in the Regenerate, how should it therefore effect this in those who are not regenerated? I will not say that Sanctification is precarious, a Thing which may be or may not be; but that it is impossible unless a holy Principle is

created or infused into the Heart. No Operations, no Influences will ever make us holy, without the Communication of a Principle of Holiness. No Excitations, no Impulses, no Aids will ever cause the *Flesh*, which *serves the Law of Sin, to serve the Law of God*. A Disposition in us to serve the Law is habitual Holiness, and serving of the Law is practical Holiness. The former is produced in us by the Power and Grace of GOD, in an instantaneous Manner, without the Concurrence of our Will or Opposition in it thereunto. Divine Grace influences us unto the latter, upon the Production of the former. And therefore, *GOD works in us not only to will, but also to do, of his good Pleasure*. Consequently he fails not of effecting that in us which he graciously purposes to effect.

(4) The Perseverance of the Saints is effectually provided for. *They shall be holden up, for God is able to make them stand*. They are in the Hands of CHRIST, *Who is able to keep them from falling*. He is the Fountain of their spiritual Life; and therefore it cannot become extinct. *Because he lives, they shall live also*. Their Life is said *to be hid with Christ in God*; which denotes both its Secrecy and Security. His *Grace is sufficient for them*, and he will not fail to supply them in all their Exigences. He declares, that it is his *Father's Will, that of all which he hath given him, he should lose nothing*. And he certainly will execute the Father's Will in this Matter, if all the Power and Grace which he hath are sufficient to carry it into Execution. Let us heedfully attend to what he saith in relation to this Thing. And he speaks thus: *My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them; and they follow me: I give to them eternal Life, and they shall never perish; neither shall any pluck them out of my Hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hand* (Joh. 10:27-29.). These blessed Words afford such clear, full, and strong Evidence in Favour of the Security and Certainty of the final Perseverance of the Saints, as cannot be obscured by all the Wit and Sophistry of those who disbelieve that precious Truth. *Limborch says: The Meaning of the Lord is not, that those who are his Sheep, through their own Faith may not cease to be his Sheep: But that no Man, so long as they are and continue his Sheep, can pluck them out of his Hand, and by Force hinder their Salvations.*^{f3} That is to say, if through their own Faith they do not become Apostates, but by Care and Diligence preserve themselves from Apostasy, and persevere to the End, they shall be safe. What a wretched Perversion of the Text is this? The Love and Care, the Grace and Power of CHRIST and of the Father, will effectually prevent their Apostasy. They remain not in the Hand of CHRIST, because they continue

to believe; but because they remain in his Hand, therefore they continue to believe, and certainly shall be saved; not perish, but enjoy eternal Life. This leads me to observe,

(5) Effectual Provision is made for our future Blessedness. I think it is not necessary to enlarge on this Particular, For if the Truth of the preceding Particulars is established, which I hope it is, the Glorification of Believers cannot be precarious; that which may be or may not be, it is impossible that any Link, in the golden Chain of Salvation, should be broken.

Moreover, whom God did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. Vocation, Justification, and Glorification, are certain Effects of divine Predestination, through the Grace, Blood and Righteousness of JESUS CHRIST.

5 It is an infinitely wise Provision which GOD hath made for our Salvation. This in some measure appears from what is already said. If it is a Provision *gracious, holy, righteous and effectual*, the highest Wisdom illustriously shines forth thereto: And it is a Contrivance most worthy of GOD. But if it is not such, there is no Wisdom in it. If the Grace of GOD is not magnified; if his Holiness is not displayed; if his Justice is not exercised therein, I am sure it is no Projection of his; and if it is not effectual, it cannot have GOD for its Author: Because it is impossible that infinite Wisdom should form a Scheme which is ineffectual. Finite Wisdom may; but infinite Wisdom cannot.

GOD is glorified in the Plan of our Salvation. All the Parts of it spring from divine Sovereignty. Grace and Holiness, Mercy and Justice, have an equal Share of Glory, and perfectly harmonize therein. As rich boundless Grace is conspicuous in that Title, which we have to Glory by Adoption: So Justice is manifested in that Right which we have to eternal Life, through the Righteousness of CHRIST, it being proportionate to the highest Felicity we are capable of enjoying. Right to Heaven by Adoption does not supersede nor render unnecessary, that Right which we have unto it through the Obedience of CHRIST.



FOOTNOTES

- ^{ft1} Licet enim Vocabulum Meriti nunquam exstet; quia nec Hebraei nec Graeci ullum habent, quod Merito proprie respondeat — tamen ad Sensem Meriti accedit Vox **Περιποίησεως**, Acquisitio, & Verbum **πειποιεῖσθαι**, acquirere. Quibus de Liverationis Opere frequenter utitur Scriptura, in Romans Cap. V. p. 545.
- ^{ft2} Imo quum Obedientia haec non meri Homini fit, sed Christi **Θεανθρώπου**, Personae infinitae, ipsa quoque infinitae Dignitatis est, consequenter justam Proportionem habet ad maximam Gloriam illi respondentem, atque hactenus est *Meritum*, quod recant *de condigno*, quale in nullam meram Creaturam cadit. OEcon. Foed. Lib. II. Cap. III. Sect. XXXIII.
- ^{ft3} Non maim mens Domini est, quod qui Oves ejus sunt, non possint propria culpa desinere esse ipsius Oves: Sed quod nemo, quamdiu Oves ejus sunt & manent, eas de manu ipsius rapere possit, ac salutem per vim impedire. Theolog-Christ. Lib. V. Cap. LXXXIV. Sect. 7.