

# The PROJECTOR

*"Projecting the Light of the Word of God on the Issues of the Day"*

Dr. Dayton Hobbs, Editor

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## ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP SPEAKS AT GORDON COLLEGE

by  
Peter J. Foxx

Archbishop Humberto Cardinal Medeiros of Boston became the first Roman Catholic bishop ever to speak at Gordon College during the winter academic convocation at the College. Cardinal Medeiros delivered an address on ecumenical relations in which he expressed thanksgiving for the accomplishments of the ecumenical movement but challenged the students at Gordon with their responsibility to work for even greater unity in the Christian community. Several portions of Medeiros' speech, which was published in the March, 1981 issue of *The Gordon*, are quoted below to illustrate how far ecumenicity has progressed.

*...In the past fifteen years, much has been accomplished. Your kind invitation to me to speak here at*

*Gordon College indicates how far along the path of unity we have walked together. We have made great strides because we are learning to love one another as neighbors. And, as neighbors, we have found that we have much in common. We have found a common thirst for holiness. We have found a common love for Christ, and through that love a greater love for one another. We have found a common need to renew and reform ourselves and our churches.*

*...I have said that much has been accomplished in the past fifteen years, yet I hasten to add that much more needs to be done. We are not yet one. There is an old saying that to be unknown is to be unloved. And if we harken to the command of Jesus to love one another, then we*

*must come to know one another. Other than for brief moments since the Reformation 450 years ago, we have not spoken to one another nor adequately sought to understand each other. As a result of these 450 years of polarization, each side has developed a certain "private language" in which we converse with ourselves. The result of this has often led to misunderstandings and even suspicions. The ecumenical agenda, then, must first of all call for comprehensive conversation and an understanding and appreciation of one another's values and strengths. We must know one another better so that we can love one another more. ...Indeed, in the words of Pope Paul VI, "Evangelizing all people*

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## JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

by  
The Late H. C. G. Moule, D.D.  
Bishop of Durham, England

"Justification by Faith"; the phrase is weighty alike with Scripture and with history. In Holy Scripture it is the main theme of two great dogmatic epistles, Romans and Galatians. In Christian history it was the potent watchword of the Reformation movement in its aspect as a vast spiritual upheaval of the church. It is not by any means the only great truth considered in the two epistles; we should woefully misread them if we allowed their message about Justification by Faith to obscure their message about the Holy Ghost, and the strong relation between the two messages. It was not the only great truth which moved and animated the spiritual leaders of the Reformation. Nevertheless, such is the depth and dignity of this truth, and so central

in some respects is its reference to other truths of our salvation, that we may fairly say that it was the message of St. Paul, and the truth that lay at the heart of the distinctive messages of the non-Pauline epistles too, and that it was the truth of the great Reformation of the Western church.

With reason, seeing things as he was led in a profound experience to see them, did Luther say that Justification by Faith was "the articles of a standing or a falling church." With reason does an illustrious representative of the older school of "higher" Anglicanism, a name to me ever bright and venerable, Edward Harold Browne, say that Justification by Faith is not only this, but also "the article of a standing or a falling soul."

### IMPORT OF THE TERMS

Let us apply ourselves first to a study of the meaning of our terms. Here are two great terms before us, Justification and Faith. We shall, of course, consider in its place the word which, in our title, links them, and ask how Justification is "by" Faith. But first, what is Justification, and then, what is Faith?

By derivation, no doubt, JUSTIFICATION means to make just, that is to say, to make conformable to a true standard. It would seem thus to mean a process by which wrong is corrected, and bad is made good, and good better, in the way of actual improvement of the thing or person justified. In one curious

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## Editor's Desk

The following quotes come from an article in the April 10th issue of Christianity Today. The article is entitled "The Unproclaimed Priests of Public Education" by Timothy D. Crater. While I do not know Mr. Crater and could not give a blanket endorsement to everything in the article, it is obvious that the writer has done his homework. He endorses the proper separation of church and state, but then points out a religion that does not obey the rules of this separation.

*The problem I wish to address is the fact that not every religion is willing to abide by this rule of separation, that there are those holding a religious position who are succeeding in obtaining state sponsorship for the teaching of their religious views in public schools.*

*Most religions consist of a unified system of beliefs that deal with basic views on such things as God and human ethics. These would be recognized as two basic elements in all religions — a view of God or some sort of ultimate reality, and a view of ethics, derived from ultimate realities. Most often these are expressed in some kind of holy book. Judaism and Christianity certainly fit that description and make no pretense of being anything other than religious systems.*

*As parents and as taxpayers, however, we may not be aware that humanism also possesses the basic elements of a religion. It has its "holy book," The Humanist Manifesto, I and II, a sort of Old and New Testament, if you will. The religion of humanism should not be confused with humaneness, humanitarianism, or the humanities, however. Humanism calls itself a religion at least seven times in the first four pages of its book. The very first sentence reads, "Humanism is a philosophical, religious, and moral point of view..." Furthermore, humanism holds a position on God — it says there isn't one. Its book says "faith in the prayer-hearing God... is an unproved and outmoded faith ...and there is insufficient evi-*

## JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

case, and, so far as I know, in that case only, the word has this meaning in actual use. "Justification" is

*dence for belief in the existence of a supernatural" (pp. 13, 16).*

*Religious humanism, finally, has a firm position on ethics. Their "Bible" says, "Moral values derive their source from human experience. Ethics is autonomous and situational, needing no theological or ideological sanction" (p. 17). In other words, morals are not derived from absolutes given by God, but are determined by the individual from situation to situation. The Judeo-Christian view is a religion and humanism is its opposite number — image and counter image.*

*Lest there be any doubt, the Supreme Court has on at least two occasions identified secular humanism as a religion: in Abington v. Schempp and Torcaso v. Watkins. In Torcaso, the Court spelled out that "religion" in the constitutional sense includes nontheistic as well as theistic religion and the state is therefore forbidden to prohibit or promote either form of religion. It is here that the problem is to be found. The state is increasingly being put in the position of promoting humanism, a nontheistic religion, and to the detriment of the Judeo-Christian religious tradition.*

Mr. Crater then points out, and rightly so, that the religion of humanism permeates every facet of public education.

*As a parent and taxpayer, I face the problem that humanism is the dominant view among leading educators in the U.S. — among those who set the trends in education, develop the curricula, dispense federal moneys, advise governmental officials on education, and so on. This religious viewpoint is being promoted in public schools, frequently without the knowledge or consent of parents and taxpayers. Many teachers and educators participate in such programs without appreciating their significance. Furthermore, as a Christian, I am increasingly alarmed that my taxes are used to subvert my own position.*

Every Christian should obtain a copy of The Humanist Manifesto, I and II, and study it thoroughly. The obvious goal of every true humanist is the destruction of everything we, as Fundamentalist Christians, hold dear. If you do not have a copy, write me and I will send you one.

a term of the printer's art. The compositor "justifies" a piece of typework when he corrects, brings into perfect order, as to spaces between words and letters, and so on, the types which he has set up.

But this, as I have said, is a solitary case. In the use of words otherwise, universally, Justification and Justify mean something quite different from improvement of condition. They mean establishment of position as before a judge or jury, literal or figurative. They mean the winning of a favorable verdict in such a presence, or again (what is the same thing from another side) the utterance of that verdict, the sentence of acquittal, or the sentence of vindicated right, as the case may be.

I am thinking of the word not at all exclusively as a religious word. Take it in its common, everyday employment; it is always thus. To justify an opinion, to justify a course of conduct, to justify a statement, to justify a friend, what does it mean? Not to readjust and improve your thoughts, or your actions, or your words; not to educate your friend to be wiser or more able. No, but to win a verdict for thought, or action, or word, or friend, at some bar of judgment, as for example the bar of public opinion, or of common conscience. It is not to improve, but to vindicate.

Take a ready illustration to the same effect from Scripture, and from a passage not of doctrine, but of public Israelite law: "If there be a controversy between men, and they come unto judgment, that the judges may judge them, then they shall justify the righteous and condemn the wicked" (Deut. 25:1). Here it is obvious that the question is not one of moral improvement. The judges are not to make the righteous man better. They are to vindicate his position as satisfactory to the law.

Non-theological passages, it may be observed, and generally non-theological connections, are of the greatest use in determining the true, native meaning of theological terms. That is, they were thus used at first, in the simplicity of original truth. Later ages may have deflected that simplicity. It was so as a fact with our word Justification, as we shall see immediately. But at first the word meant in religion precisely what it meant out of it. It meant the winning, or the consequent announcement, of a favorable verdict. Not the word, but the

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### The PROJECTOR

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# JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

application was altered when salvation was in question. It was indeed a new and glorious application. The verdict in question was the verdict not of a Hebrew court, nor of public opinion, but of the eternal Judge of all the earth. But that left the meaning of the word the same.

In regard of "us men and our salvation" it stands related not so much, not so directly, to our need of spiritual revolution, amendment, purification, holiness, as to our need of getting, somehow — in spite of our guilt, our liability, our debt, our deserved condemnation — a sentence of acquittal, a sentence of

acceptance, at the judgment seat of a holy God.

Not that it has nothing to do with our inward spiritual purification. It has intense and vital relations that way. But they are not direct relations. The direct concern of Justification is with man's need of a divine deliverance, not from the power of his sin, but from its guilt.

### JUSTIFICATION NOT THE SAME AS PARDON

The problem raised then, in religion, by the word Justification, is, How shall man be just before God? In other words, How shall we,

having sinned, having broken the holy Law, having violated the will of God, be treated, as to our acceptance before Him, as to our "peace with Him" (Rom. 5:1), as if we had not done so? Its question is not, directly, How shall I a sinner become holy, but, How shall I a sinner be received by my God, whom I have grieved, as if I had not grieved Him?

Here let us note, what will be clear on reflection, that Justification means properly no less than this, the being received by Him as if we had not grieved Him. It is not only, the being forgiven by Him. We do indeed as sinners most urgently need forgiveness, the remission of our sins, the putting away of the holy vengeance of God upon our rebellion. But we need more. We need the voice which says, not merely, you may go; you are let off your penalty; but, you may come; you are welcomed into My presence and fellowship. We shall see later how important this difference is in the practical problems of our full salvation. But one thing is evident at first sight, namely, that this is implied in the very word Justification. For Justification, in common speech, never means pardon. It means winning, or granting, a position of acceptance. "You are justified in taking this course of action," does not mean, you were wrong, yet you are forgiven. It means, you were right, and in the court of my opinion you have proved it. In religion accordingly our Justification means not merely a grant of pardon, but a verdict in favor of our standing as satisfactory before the Judge.

### THE SPECIAL PROBLEM OF OUR JUSTIFICATION

Here in passing let us notice that of course the word Justification does not of itself imply that the justified person is a sinner. To see this as plainly as possible, recollect that God Himself is said to be justified, in Psalm 51:4, and Christ Himself, in I Tim. 3:16. In a human court of law, as we have seen above, it is the supreme duty of the judge to "justify the righteous" (Deut. 25:1), and the righteous only. In all such cases Justification bears its perfectly proper meaning, unperplexed, crossed by no mystery or problem. But then, the moment we come to the concrete, practical question, how shall we be justified, and before God, or, to bring it closer home, how shall I, I the sinner, be welcomed by my offended Lord as if I were satisfactory, then the thought of Justification presents itself to us in a new and

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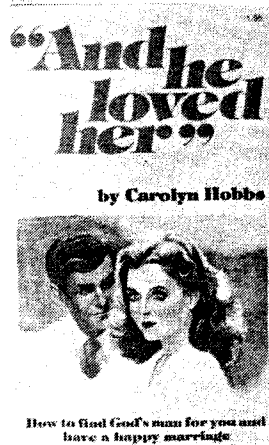
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# Stars of the Morning

By "Aunt Carolyn"

## PRAYER AND PAINS



(Continued from last month)

*The story thus far: Just as the Pilgrim fathers left England for the sake of conscience and conviction, John Eliot also came to America for religious freedom. Once here, his heart was soon stirred by the tremendous mission field among the American Indians. In spite of opposition from fellow colonists and from some of the Indians, Eliot threw his energy and efforts into the task of winning the Indians to the Lord Jesus Christ. Bringing them out of superstitions and savagery was a difficult challenge, but John Eliot worked with patience and love to see the natives reconciled to God.*

Still keeping his work in Roxbury going, Eliot faithfully worked and preached among the Indians. As some were saved, he became burdened that new converts live by Christian standards instead of their old heathen ways. To help in this important task, he brought them together and organized the Christians into "Praying Towns." The Christian Indians voluntarily came to these towns and put themselves under this covenant or promise:

*The grace of Christ helping us, we do give ourselves and our children to God to be His people. He shall rule over us in all our affairs, not only in our religion and the affairs of the church, but also in all our works and affairs of this world.<sup>1</sup>*

In these "praying towns," wholly governed by the Scriptures in all things both in church and state, the Indians, whom others thought of as heathen and savage, learned to hoe, reap, make hay, cut wood and build, and maintained Biblical standards of conduct. Many of the young were well schooled and learned to read and write. In the first town, Natick, the Indians built streets, lots, and a fort. They also built a meeting house, which was used for a schoolhouse through the week and a meeting house on Sunday. An Indian pastor trained by Eliot led

the work, and John also came every two weeks to preach. When the people heard the beating of two drums, they knew it was time to gather at the meeting house for preaching.

It was difficult work, but the message spread, and by the 1670's there were over fourteen "praying towns" with some 3,600 Indian converts living in them.

Added to all this work, Mr. Eliot also carried on the work of translation. First, the Indian boy helped him translate The Lord's Prayer and The Ten Commandments into the Indian tongue. Then Eliot began translating Godly books, so the Indians would have their own versions of such instruction as The Bay Psalm Book, Bayly's Practice of Piety, and Shepard's Sincere Convert. But the great work, the crown of his life, was the translation of the Bible into the Algonquin tongue of the Massachusetts Indians. That was a language nearly all the northern Indians could use with changes in the dialect of the different tribes. What a tedious, painstaking task! Sometimes with all his searching, it seemed he could not find a word in the Indian tongue to express the true meaning. Sometimes his efforts would be thwarted for a time by some rebel Indian who would purposely tell him a wrong word to throw him off course. After untold hours of careful and prayerful study, the seemingly impossible task was completed, and at last, the New Testament was ready in 1661; the whole Bible was completed in 1663. It was called the "Moheecan Bible" and was the first Bible ever printed in America. Christian boys and girls today, even with all their phonics training, might have had difficulty reading that Bible. How would you have liked to come to a word like this?

"Wutappesittukqusunnoohwehtunkquoh" One word! Thirty-four letters for just one word! It was indeed the longest single word in the Bible. It meant "kneeling down to him," as in Mark 1:40.<sup>2</sup> It is no wonder that Cotton Mather, a pastor and scholar of that time, really laughed about it and said he thought the words of the Indian language must have been growing ever since the people were scattered at the Tower of Babel.

Whatever the struggle, John Eliot had accomplished a monumental task. He had translated the Bible for his dear Indian converts, so they could read and study God's Holy Word themselves. God laid the burden on the hearts of some people in England, who formed the "Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in New England." This missionary society

paid for the printing of the Indian Bibles and greatly supported the work among the Indians.

What a labor of love — love for God and love for the Indians. What a trail of sacrifice this man of God burned until his death in 1690, in order to give the Gospel to a people for whom many had no concern. What an example of dedication to the cause of Christ. At the close of the Indian Grammar book that he prepared, John Eliot wrote this motto: "PRAYER AND PAINS, THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, WILL DO ANYTHING." He certainly proved that motto in his own life and left it for other Christians to demonstrate in their service for Christ. Take up the challenge left by this faithful servant of God. No life is a waste or loss if given completely to God's service in answer to His call. "...There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life" (Mark 10:29, 30).

### FOOTNOTES

1. Mary T. Gardner, *Winners of the World* (Boston: Old Corner Book Store, 1901), p. 90.
2. A. H. McCannald, Ed., *The Encyclopedia Americana* (Americana Corporation, New York, 1946), p. 243.

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## The Other Side

with Dave Johnson

### "Alberto" - Exposed

In November of 1980, this column carried an article about a man named Alberto Rivera who claimed to be a former Jesuit priest. The purpose of the article was not to defend the Roman Catholic Church but to warn Christians of what appeared to be a fraudulent fundamentalist. The danger of Alberto was not necessarily in what he said about the Roman system. He accused the Catholic church of many things, and I have no reason to doubt what he said. The problem with Alberto was his personal life. His own story was full of inconsistencies and illogical statements. My warning then, as now, was that if we believe everything that a person says about the Catholic church, then we learn that the person himself is a liar; we have a tendency to not believe anything he says.

Shortly after my November article was published, I received a phone call from Gary Metz, a freelance writer from North Dakota, who was also disturbed about some of the flaws in Alberto's personal life. Mr. Metz took the time to research the situation and finally had an article about Alberto Rivera published in the March 13, 1981 edition of *Christianity Today*.

As a follow-up to my November article, I quote the following excerpts from the *Christianity Today* article entitled, "Jack Chick's Anti-Catholic Alberto Comic Book is Exposed as a Fraud."

A year ago, Alberto Rivera himself issued a sworn statement defending the allegations. He declared in part that, "Alberto is a true and actual account and I will face a court of law to prove the events actually took place."

He may get his chance. This reporter's investigation shows that not only was Rivera not a Jesuit priest, but also that he had two children during the time he claimed to be living a celibate life as a Jesuit. Neither, it seems, does he have a sister in England who was a nun. Rivera has been sought by police for writing bad checks in Hoboken, New Jersey, and for steal-

ing a credit card in Florida. Those revelations taint the credibility of the fantastic stories Rivera tells in the comic books.

Alberto Rivera, also known as Alberto Romero, is a native of the Canary Islands. He has traveled widely and has been associated with numerous Christian organizations and churches, including several in California. He is being sued in a Los Angeles court at the present time by a man who said that Rivera, on behalf of the Hispanic Baptist Church which he started, borrowed \$2,025 with which to invest in property, but never purchased the land. When the man asked for his money back, he received a receipt acknowledging his "contribution" of \$2,025.

Rivera claims to have numerous degrees, including a master's in psychology and at least three doctorates, but he has provided documentation for none of them. He attended a seminary, the Seminario Biblico Latinoamericano in Coasta Rica, with an acquaintance from his home town of Las Palmas, in the Canary Islands, but he did not graduate from the seminary.

The acquaintance, Plutarco Bonilla, a respected Christian leader in Latin America, said Rivera never finished high school and that he was in the seminary's program for non-high school graduates. A letter from the school said he was expelled for "continual lying and defiance of seminary authority." The known chronology of his life does not allow time for him to have achieved the academic status he claims.

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## ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOP AT GORDON COLLEGE

constitutes the essential mission of the Church" (Exhortation on Evangelization, no. 14). This recent pope made these remarks in a document which I believe history will judge to be monumentally significant for Roman Catholic renewal, entitled "On Evangelization in the Modern World."

The pope points out that the sign of unity among all Christians, (Episcopalians, Protestants, Orthodox, and Catholics) is, in itself, a means of evangelization. To the degree that we labor to overcome our divisions, evangelization will be advanced. Our divisions "damage the most holy cause of preaching the Gospel to all men and impede many from embracing the faith." To the degree that we neglect to get to know one another, learn to love one another, and labor to be one, we retard the Christ-mandated command to evangelize the world.

...To quote again the Decree on

Kenneth Wishart, a California minister, once pressed Rivera about his degrees: Rivera said they came from a diploma mill in Colorado, but the place was not identified...

Rivera, who now lives in California, was asked for an interview to discuss the discrepancies in his tale, but he posed so many restrictions before he would agree, that a legitimate interview was not possible. He did say that any wrongdoings prior to his conversion to Christ in 1967 were done under the orders of the Catholic church, and that any wrongdoings since his conversion are fabrications by conspirators.

For several weeks I have tried to secure a copy of *Double Cross*, the sequel to *Alberto*. There are none available in this area, and orders from the publisher are not being filled. The reason for this is not yet clear; however, I would hope that people are beginning to see that they have been hoodwinked by a man who either has mental problems or is knowingly a tool of satan. Whichever Alberto is, he has done considerable harm to the Fundamentalist camp in which he claims to reside.

This is a time when Christian discernment is of utmost importance and discernment comes from sound doctrine. That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive (Eph. 4:14).

Ecumenism, "Almost everyone, though in different ways, longs for the one visible Church of God, a Church truly universal and sent forth to the whole world that the world may be converted to the Gospel and so be saved, to the glory of God" (no. 1).

I plead with you to educate yourselves to this common Christian challenge. Strive to be one in what you say and what you do, and appropriate to yourself the maxim of Pope John XXIII: "In essentials, unity, in non-essentials, diversity, but in all things, love."

Gordon College has absolutely desecrated the good name and memory of her founder, A. J. Gordon. The presence of a Roman Catholic bishop on the platform and the blatant deliverance of Rome's hellish message of ecumenicity are unmistakable indications of the truly deplorable condition of American Christianity.



**Focus  
On  
Religion**  
BY

PETER J. FOXX

### LLOYD-JONES PASSES TO GLORY

David Martyn Lloyd-Jones died in his sleep on March 1 in London. Lloyd-Jones was one of the greatest Bible expositors of our day. His ministry will continue to bear much fruit, however, as he has left behind a goodly number of sound commentaries, and other Biblically-oriented books.

While not an ardent Fundamentalist, this British medical-doctor-turned-preacher and author made an undeniable contribution to the Lord's work through his exaltation of the preaching and the teaching of God's Word. In 1938, he was chosen by G. Campbell Morgan to be his assistant at Westminster Chapel in Buckingham Gate. For over 30 years, Lloyd-Jones evangelized England from that pulpit before retiring to concentrate on a wider ministry of preaching and writing. Martyn Lloyd-Jones - dead at the age of 81.

### FUNDAMENTAL BAPTIST FELLOWSHIP

The 61st Annual Meeting of the Fundamental Baptist Fellowship of America will meet on June 16-17-18, 1981, at the Tabernacle Baptist Church of Virginia Beach, Virginia. Come celebrate 103 years of historical fundamentalism with us. The meeting was previously scheduled and advertised to meet at the Emmanuel Baptist Church of Pontiac, Michigan. PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE IN LOCATION.

Speakers for the event will be Dr. Rod Bell, Host Pastor and President of the F.B.F., Rev. Dallas Ainsley, Dr. Ron Comfort, Dr. Don Jasmin, Dr. Bob Jones III, Dr. John McCormick, Dr. Monroe Parker, Dr. James Singleton, and Dr. Dave Sproul.

The theme of this year's meeting is "Obey The Voice." The opening session will be at 7:00 p.m. on June 16. There will be services at 7:00 and 8:00 each evening and at 10:00 and 11:00 a.m. each morning on the 17th and 18th. An Open Forum will be held at 2:30 on June 18. For more information write to the home office of the Fundamental Baptist Fellowship, 717 N. Whitehurst Landing Road, Virginia Beach, Virginia or call 804/420-5476.

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## JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

most solemn aspect. The word keeps its meaning unshaken. But how about its application. Here am I, guilty. To be justified is to be pronounced not guilty, to be vindicated and accepted by Lawgiver and Law. Is it possible? Is it not impossible?

Justification by Faith, in the actual case of our salvation, is thus a "short phrase." It means, in full, the acceptance of guilty sinners, before God, by Faith. Great is the problem so indicated. And great is the wonder and the glory of the solution given us by the

grace of God. But to this solution we must advance by some further steps.

### WHAT IS FAITH?

We may now fitly approach our second great term, Faith, and ask ourselves, What does it mean? As with Justification, so with Faith, we may best approach the answer by first asking, What does Faith mean in common life and speech? Take such phrases as, to have faith in a policy, faith in a remedy, faith in a political leader, or a military

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# JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

leader, faith in a lawyer, faith in a physician. Here the word Faith is used in a way obviously parallel to that in which, for example, our Lord uses it when He appeals to the Apostles, in the Gospels, to have faith in Him; as He did in the storm on the Lake. The use is parallel also to its habitual use in the epistles; for example, in Romans 4, where St. Paul makes so much of Abraham's faith, in close connection with the faith which he seeks to develop in us.

Now is it not plain that the word means, to all practical intents and purposes, trust, reliance? Is not this obvious without comment when a sick man sends for the physician in whom he has faith, and when the soldier follows, perhaps literally in utter darkness, the general in whom he has faith? Reliance upon thing or person supposed to be trustworthy, this is Faith.

## PRACTICAL CONFIDENCE

To note a further aspect of the word. Faith, in actual common use, tends to mean a practical confidence. Rarely, if ever, do we use it of a mere opinion, however distinct, lying passive in the mind. To have faith in a commander does not mean merely to entertain a conviction, a belief, however positive, that he is skillful and competent. We may entertain such a belief about the commander of the enemy — with very unpleasant impressions on our minds in consequence. We may be confident that he is a great general in a sense the very opposite to a personal confidence in him. No, to have faith in a commander implies a view of him in which we either actually do, or are quite ready to, trust ourselves and our cause to his command. And just the same is true of faith in a divine Promise, faith in a divine Redeemer. It means a reliance, genuine and practical. It means a putting of ourselves and our needs, in personal reliance, into His hands.

Here, in passing, we observe that Faith accordingly always implies an element, more or less, of the dark, of the unknown. Where everything is, so to speak, visible to the heart and mind there scarcely can be Faith. I am on a dangerous piece of water, in a boat, with a skilled and experienced boatman. I cross it, not without tremor perhaps, but with faith. Here faith is exercised on a trustworthy and known object, the

boatman. But it is exercised regarding what are more or less, to me, uncertain circumstances, the amount of peril, and the way to handle the boat in it. Were there no uncertain circumstances my opinion of the boatman would not be faith, but mere opinion; estimate, not reliance.

Our illustration suggests the remark that Faith, as concerned with our salvation, needs a certain and trustworthy Object, even Jesus Christ. Having Him, we have the right condition for exercising Faith, reliance in the dark, trust in His skill and power on our behalf in unknown or mysterious circumstances.

## DEFINITION AND EFFECT

It is all-important to remember alike this simplicity of definition and this grandeur of effect in the matter of Faith. It is all-important in the great question of our salvation. Here on the one side is an action of the mind and will, in itself perfectly simple, capable of the very homeliest illustration. We all know what reliance means. Well, Faith is reliance. But then, when the reliance is directed upon an Object infinitely great and good, when it reposes upon God in Christ, upon Him in His promise, His fidelity, His love, upon His very Self, what is not this reliance in its effects? It is the creature laying hold upon the Creator. It is our reception of God Himself in His Word. So, it is the putting ourselves in the way of His own almighty action in the fulfilment of His Word, in the keeping of His promise.

"The virtue of Faith lies in the virtue of its Object." That Object, in this matter of Justification, so the Scriptures assure us abundantly and with the utmost clearness, is our Lord Jesus Christ Himself, who died for us and rose again.

Here the simplest reliance, so it be sincere, is our point of contact with infinite resources. When lately the vast dam of the Nile was completed, with all its giant sluices, there needed but the touch of a finger on an electric button to swing majestically open the gates of the barrier and so to let through the Nile in all its mass and might. There was the simplest possible contact. But it was contact with forces and appliances adequate to control or liberate at pleasure the great river. So Faith, in reliance

of the soul, the soul perhaps of the child, perhaps of the peasant, perhaps of the outcast, is only a reliant look, a reliant touch. But it sets up contact with JESUS CHRIST, in all His greatness, in His grace, merit, saving power, eternal love.

## FAITH, NO MERIT

One momentous issue from this reflection is as follows: We are here warned off from the temptation to erect Faith into a Saviour, to rest our reliance upon our Faith, if I may put it so. That is a real temptation to many. Hearing, and fully thinking, that to be justified we must have Faith, they, we, are soon occupied with an anxious analysis of our Faith. Do I trust enough? Is my reliance satisfactory in kind and quantity? But if saving Faith is, in its essence, simply a reliant attitude, then the question of its effect and virtue is at once shifted to the question of the adequacy of its Object. The man then is drawn to ask, not, Do I rely enough? but, Is Jesus Christ great enough, and gracious enough, for me to rely upon? The introspective microscope is laid down. The soul's open eyes turn upward to the face of our Lord Jesus Christ; and Faith forgets itself in its own proper action. In other words, the man relies instinctively upon an Object seen to be so magnificently, so supremely, able to sustain him. His feet are on the Rock, and he knows it, not by feeling for his feet, but by feeling the Rock.

Here let us note that Faith, thus seen to be reliance, is obviously a thing as different as possible from merit. No one in common life thinks of a well-placed reliance as meritorious. It is right, but not righteous. It does not make a man deserving of rescue when, being in imminent danger, he implicitly accepts the guidance of his rescuer. And the man who, discovering himself, in the old-fashioned way (the way as old as David before Nathan, Isaiah in the vision, the publican in the temple, the jailor at Philippi, Augustine at Milan), to be a guilty sinner, whose "mouth is shut" before God, relies upon Christ as his all for pardon and peace, certainly does not merit anything for closing with his own salvation. He deserves nothing by the act of accepting all.

"God," says Richard Hooker, in that great "Discourse" of his on Justification, "doth justify the believing man, yet not for the worthiness of his belief but for the worthiness of Him which is believed."2 So it is not our attitude

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## JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

which we rely on. Our attitude is just our reliance. And reliance means the going out upon Another for repose.

Once for all let us remember that we may make the falsest use, even under the truest definitions, of both ideas, Justification and Faith. We may think of either of them as the object of our hope, the ultimate cause of our salvation. So thought of, they are phantoms, nay, they are idols. Seen truly, they are but expressions for Jesus Christ our Lord as He is given and taken. Justification is no Saviour, nor is Faith. Justification by Faith—what is it? It is the acceptance of the guilty by reason of a Trusted Christ.

### "BY" DEFINED

So now we may take up the question of that middle and connective word in our title, "by." Justification by Faith, what does it mean? This divine welcome of the guilty as if they were not guilty, by reliance upon Jesus Christ, what have we to think about this?

We have seen a moment ago that one meaning most certainly cannot be borne by the word "by." It cannot mean "on account of," as if Faith were a valuable consideration which entitled us to Justification. The surrendering rebel is not amnestied because of the valuable consideration of his surrender, but because of the grace of the sovereign or state which amnesties. On the other hand, his surrender is the necessary means to the amnesty becoming actually his. It is his only proper attitude (in a supposed case of unlawful rebellion) towards the offended power. That power cannot, in the nature of things, make peace with a subject who is in a wrong attitude towards it. It wishes him well, or it would not provide amnesty. But it cannot make peace with him while he declines the provision. Surrender is accordingly not the price paid for peace, but it is nevertheless the open hand necessary to appropriate the gift of it.

In a fair measure this illustrates our word "by" in the matter of Justification by Faith. Faith, reliance, is, from one side, just the sinful man's "coming in" to accept the sacred amnesty of God in Christ, taking at His Word his benignant King. It is the rebel's putting himself into right relations

with his offended Lord in this great matter of forgiveness and acceptance. It is not a virtue, not a merit, but a proper means.

### UNION WITH CHRIST

The word "by," *per*, lends itself meantime to the expression of another aspect of the subject. One of the great problems attaching to the mighty truth of Christ our Righteousness, our Merit, our Acceptance, is that of the *nexus*, the bond, which so draws us and Him together that, not in fiction but in fact, our load can pass over to Him and His wealth to us. The New Testament largely teaches, what lies assuredly in the very nature of things, as it puts the facts of salvation before us, that we enter "into" Christ, we come to be "in" Him, we get part and lot in the life eternal, which is in Him alone, by Faith. "He gave power to become the sons of God, to them that believed on His Name." "Believing, we have life in His Name" (John 1:12; 20:31). Faith is our soul-contact with the Son of God, setting up (upon our side) that union with Him in His life of which Scripture is so full. And thus it is open to us, surely, to say that Justification by Faith means, from one momentous aspect, Justification because of the Christ with whom through Faith we are made mysteriously but truly one. Believing, we are one with Him, one in the common life with which the living members live with the Head, by the power of His Spirit. One with Him in life, we are therefore, by no mere legal fiction but in vital fact, capable of oneness with Him in interest also.

### THE MARRIAGE-BOND

"Faith," says Bishop Hopkins of Derry, "is the marriage-bond between Christ and a believer; and therefore all the debts of the believer are chargeable upon Christ, and the righteousness of Christ is instated upon the believer....Indeed this union is a high and inscrutable mystery, yet plain it is that there is such a close, spiritual, and real union between Christ and a believer....So Faith is the way and means of our Justification. By Faith we are united to Christ. By that union we truly have a righteousness. And upon that righteousness the justice as well as mercy of God is engaged to justify and acquit us."<sup>3</sup>

### FOOTNOTES

1. *Messiah Foretold and Expected, ad finem.*
2. *A Discourse of Justification, Chap. 33.*
3. E. Hopkins, *The Doctrine of the Covenants.*

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