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RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HOLINESS

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BY
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RIGHTEOUSNESS AND HOLINESS.

He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.—
REV. xxii. II.

WE have lately observed the day of the Commemoration of All Saints—that is, of all the holy ones of God; and we are now within the sacred season of Advent, a season in which we celebrate in joyful remembrance the first coming of our Lord to offer upon our behalf the sacrifice of His most precious sufferings and death, and anticipate that second coming, when He shall appear unto those who look for Him without sin unto salvation. “But who may abide the day of His coming, and who shall stand when He appeareth? For He is like a refiner’s fire, and like fuller’s soap. And He shall purify the Sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.” (Malachi iii. 2, 3.)

On every returning season of Advent, these considerations seem to meet us at the threshold, arresting our attention with sterner grasp, rousing us to more intense earnestness for the preparation of the Church, and of ourselves. Who can tell how soon may

arrive the time, when the Lamb shall come forth to lead up and present that company of “first fruits unto God and to the Lamb,” “in whose mouth“ shall be “found no guile,” who shall be “without fault before the throne of God“? Guileless and faultless! Such must be the condition of the first ripe fruits! Such also must be the condition of the whole field of grain, before the Husbandman will send forth His reapers to put in the sickle.

The Church cannot attain to the glory of the Resurrection from among the dead, until she have attained the complete stature, the perfect ripeness (to return to the spiritual analogy) for which the Husbandman labours and waits, and God sends down the latter rain. The Church as a holy Bride must make herself ready, and every man abiding in the true Vine, every true member of the Church, must be presented holy and perfect in Christ.

We cannot therefore at this season present to ourselves more momentous questions than these: What is the nature of Christian righteousness and holiness? Wherein do they consist? How are they to be attained? How are they to be perfected?

May God Almighty, by the inspiration of his most blessed quickening Spirit, lead us into the living as-

urance of the truth, that we may lift up our heads with confidence, and listen with joy unmingled with apprehension, and yet with holy awe, to the voice of the coming Lord!

“The time is at hand: he that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous (ο δίκαιος), let him be rendered yet more righteous: and he that is holy (ο αγιος), let him be rendered still more holy. Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be.“ (Rev. XXII. 10, 11, 12.)

Let us, then, on entering on this inquiry, observe in the text I have selected three points of instruction, which may assist us in our proposed object.

1. That righteousness and holiness are two distinct things, however connected. Connected we know them to be from several passages of Scripture; but here they are expressly distinguished, not only in name, but as they are subjects of growth or action. “He that is righteous, let him yet be made righteous; and he that is holy, let him be yet sanctified.“

2. We find that, as righteousness is opposed to injustice, so holiness is opposed to filthiness. For there is an evident parallelism in this passage; for as the first and third clauses of the sentence are opposed (he that is unjust or unrighteous - he that is righteous or just - it is the same word, ο δίκαιος) so, by a mode of writing well known to the students of Scripture under the name of "parallelism," the second and fourth clauses are also placed in antithesis - he that is filthy, and he that is holy.

3. That the righteousness of the righteous, and the holiness of the holy, are (whether from intrinsic value or from some extrinsic cause, I do not here stop to inquire) meritorious, being treated by God, Who cannot lie nor be deceived, as meritorious, is clear from Scripture. "Behold, I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every man according as his work shall be" - evidently to recompense both the unjust and the filthy, and also the holy and the just.

With these preliminary observations derived from the text, let us inquire what is the meaning of these two words, "righteous" and "holy," as here used. The first we shall find very obvious; the second will require more investigation.

The word "righteous" or "just," with its modes, "to make righteous" or "to justify," "righteousness" or "justice," are the equivalents to the Hebrew צדק, צדקה, צדקה or and to the Greek δίκαιος, δικαιοω, δικαιοσύνη, or δικη; which last is probably identical with the Hebrew word צדק, omitting the first syllable, since the Greeks have no letter corresponding in sound to the צ of the Hebrew. The Hebrew word is supposed by some to mean originally "straight" or "right." Its ordinary sense is, the acting in accordance with the rules of an impartial tribunal - that is, the fulfilling of equal justice, giving to every one his due; and righteousness or justice is the quality in the exercise of which, or the condition in which, the duty is perfectly discharged. And as regards Christian righteousness, our Saviour, when He enjoined upon His disciples that theirs must "exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees," instructs them that it extends not merely to what is due to our fellows or to God by positive Law; it comprises also all that God requires at our hands, who is Infinite Love; and extends not only to outward action, but to the thoughts und heart; and that it is not doctrinal merely, but practical. St. John also instructs us, when he writes: "Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as He (i.e., Christ) is righteous."

Righteousness or justice, then, is strict conformity to the right rule. Applied to the outward conduct, it is doing and saying to every one what is due: applied to the inward habit of mind, it comprises not only the purpose to do and speak the right thing, but also right and true thoughts and perceptions of things, as distinct from all perverseness of thought and perception. As respects the whole man, it comprises the whole range of our relative duties, and passing beyond the region of the senses and of the understanding, it extends to the direction and bent of the will and of the spirit of man. He is not a righteous man whose heart is not right towards God. He is not a righteous man, his condition is not right, who is not at any given moment the exact and precise being God would have him to be.

My brethren, how high and unattainable by fallen man is this "righteousness of God"!

Let us next proceed to inquire concerning the word "holy," "holiness," "make holy," or „sanctify.“ Nor shall we find it as easy as in the last case to define precisely what is meant by the term, when applied as a general term to God, and to His children. The original meaning of the Hebrew word of which it is the

translation, is "to prepare for some purpose,"¹ or to appropriate, and then by an easy transition it is employed to convey the meaning of separation. This last is ordinarily given as the primary meaning of the word, and in like manner the corresponding Greek word „αγιος“ is supposed by some to be derived from words implying separation from earth.

It is unquestionable that the word is used in the Old Testament in the strict sense of preparation,² or separation and selection.³ And in this last sense of separation it forms the basis of its higher use, when applied to places, things, and persons separated or devoted to the service of God. In the same sense also it is applied to the children of Israel, chosen to be the peculiar and separated people of God, and from them, but in a still higher form, as we shall presently see, it is properly transferable to the Christian Church. In our text, again, it is opposed to „filthiness,“ and we

¹ "Parari, praeparari, destinari ad aliquid, generatiter: in specie, sacrari, consecrari, sanctificari, sanctum, sacrum, esse, vel fieri." Buxtorf sub voce שדק.

² Jer. vi. 4: "prepare ye (וּשְׂדָקוּ) war against her," and parallel passages.

³ As in Jer. xxii. 7: "And I will prepare (יִתְשַׁדְּקוּ) destroyers against thee." Josh. xx. 7: "And they appointed" (marg. "Heb. sanctified" (וּשְׂדָקוּ), Kedesh." Jer. i. 5: "Before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee" (רִיתְשַׁדְּקָה) compared with Gal. i. i5, ἀφορισσας με.

find it frequently used in the Old Testament in the same opposition to uncleanness, pollution, and impurity both in a moral and in a material sense. As, for instance. in 2 Samuel xi. 4, where it is said that Bathsheba sanctified herself from her uncleanness. So also in Deut. xxiii. 14, where, after directing the cleansing of the camp from all impurities, it is said, "The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy camp; therefore shall thy camp be holy." And in Lev. xi. 43,44, after prescribing the distinction between clean and unclean meats, "Ye shall not make yourselves abominable or unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby; for I am the Lord your God, therefore sanctify yourselves und ye shall be holy, for I am holy."

But none of these meanings exhausts or satisfies its application when applied to God's holy ones. It is very true that God is infinitely separated by His nature from all created beings, so separated that His self-existence and His absolute und essential infinity are uncommunicable to any creature. "He only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath Seen, nor can see." This infinite exaltation above all creatures forms, no doubt, one element in our idea of His surpassing holiness. So also, separation from all that is impure, all that is unrighteous, all that is evil in every shape -

all these are elements in our ideas of holiness in God and in His saints.

Who can conceive of an unrighteous man as being holy - of a cruel and proud, and especially an impure, man being holy? And yet the idea of holiness is more than the aggregate of the ideas of righteousness, of harmlessness, of love, of meekness, of purity. When we apply the term "holy" to God' we mean a real and substantial quality - so essential an attribute of God, that His Name is "Holy." "Let them praise Thy great und terrible Name, for it is Holy." Such is the song of the Seraphim before His presence as represented by Isaiah. "Holy, Holy, Holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come." Such is the hymn in the Apocalypse of the four living creatures, leading the worship of all who live, und manifesting that this thrice-repeated name is the very name of the Triune God; und especially is it the name of the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Father und of the Son—the Holy Ghost. Moreover, it is an active principle; not a mere passive quality, but an active principle - we may say the source of all movement of spiritual life, for it is according to the Spirit of Holiness that Jesus was declared to be "the Son of God with power, by the resurrection from the dead." Moreover, it is communicable, und is communicated unto men, for the very calling of the Church is to be "Holy ones," κλητοι αγιοι, called

saints. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord;" und both St. Paul und St. Peter declare that the elect of God are chosen unto salvation through sanctification of the Spirit. And St. Paul says, "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, und that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." (1.Cor. iii. ,6, 17.)

Still, we have not yet arrived at a clear und definite answer to our question, What is holiness? Suppose we all have, or, putting away our own preconceptions, might have, a very distinct idea of the signification of the word "righteous"; yet as to the term "holy," although we can say what it IS NOT, we find ourselves unable to say adequately and fully what it IS. And the reason for this is, that holiness is a purely spiritual quality.

Whoever will weigh the passages of Holy Scripture just referred to, will perceive that holiness in its highest sense originally belongs to God alone, and to no creature whomsoever; that God appropriates it to Himself, assuming it as His own Name, by which He reveals Himself to His reasonable creatures, and under which He accepts their worship; that it is more than a quality, or mere attribute, having only its peculiar exercise and the fruits produced thereby; but

that it is in God the source and fountain, the generating principle and effectual cause, of all that is good, pure, lovely, righteous, and true. It is the very habit and mode wherein und whereby He exercises all these. He is all these, because He is holy. The creatures of God may be created righteous, pure, sincere; they may be endowed with affection und truth, their heart may naturally be set upon God, and in this sense - in the sense of separation from evil and dedication to God - they may be called holy; but in the highest, the Divine sense of the term, no being can be created holy: God is holy, His Spirit is the Holy Ghost - by the Holy Ghost, through Christ, He imparts holiness unto those that are in Christ; but no creature can be holy in himself. And while in Scripture it is said that God made man upright, it is nowhere said. that God made man holy; nor is the term in any sense whatever applied to men, or to any man, until God at Sinai separated the seed of Jacob to be His peculiar people, a holy nation, as the foreshadowing type of His holy Church.

True Christian holiness, then, is not the mere separation from the uncleanness of sin, nor merely the external separation to God, nor even true devotedness to Him. These have at all times been the characteristics of God's servants, who have on this account been called His Saints. But the holiness which

becomes the household of God in Christ is more than all this. It is, as it were, a well-spring of life evermore, producing as its fruits every righteous and good and pure und acceptable word und work; in a word, “whatever things are true, honest, just, or righteous, lovely, or of good report.” And let us mark this distinction - the gift or grace of righteousness is the immediate cause of righteousness in act; the gift or grace of love produces that which is loving; the gift or grace of purity that which is pure. But the gift of holiness includes all these other gifts, and is itself beyond them all, supplying all, and overflowing graciously upon and through all. There is in it an infinite affinity with all goodness, and an infinite abhorrence of all evil, which can only be Divine. To be partakers of the Divine holiness, is nothing less than to be partakers of the Divine nature. So that, as we shall presently see, none can be truly holy, except through the quickening power of the Holy Ghost, regenerating him with the life of Christ, and making him partaker of the holiness of God. “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin, for His seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.”

In summing up my account of these two words, righteousness and holiness,“ let me remark that, although the man that is holy must needs be impelled to righteousness, and no unrighteous man can be

holy, yet the two are fitly to be distinguished as representations of two distinct classes of virtues. Holiness is entirely independent of obligation; it exists whether there be obligation or no. It is a habit, or rather a nature spontaneously acting according to its own ineffable laws towards surrounding objects, abhorring and rejecting evil, and communicating good; but, if there be no surrounding objects, reposing in its own self-consciousness. Whereas righteousness is the simple fulfilment of obligation, and has reference only to others, and to the duties resulting from relations with others. Righteousness is in itself the disposition to fulfil, and the actual fulfilment of what is just due, and comprises the exercise of all other virtues when directed towards this end. Holiness embraces the whole circle of virtues, including righteousness itself, and, as distinguished from righteousness, comprises their spontaneous and habitual exercise. Righteousness is *action*, but holiness is *life*.

Having thus endeavoured, as far as possible, to give a precise and distinct meaning to these two words, “righteous“ und “holy,“ a very slight consideration will lead us to perceive the deep importance of the further question, “How are they to be attained“? For man was created righteous, pure, and innocent, and having, through his own choice and will, through the seduction of the devil, transgressed the one and

only commandment God gave him, the penalty of which he was warned hath come upon him, and he is by nature dead to righteousness, alienated from God, brought under the power and into the possession of the devil, being a child of disobedience and of wrath. In this condition he is without help or remedy in himself, and obnoxious to eternal wrath and condemnation, except an atonement can be found for his sins past, and he be again restored to righteousness; and, I do not add, restored to purity and innocence, but I add, endowed with holiness.

For man can never be restored to that precise condition in which he was created. He was created in innocence, in unconsciousness of evil, and of good as opposed to evil. Blissful ignorance, except the knowledge of evil be combined with infinite, with Divine abhorrence of it, and choice of good—that is, to say, with Divine holiness! How fearful this knowledge is when possessed by a mere finite creature endowed with free-will, even when entirely devoid of all consciousness of or privity to evil, may be gathered from the history of man. He knew but of one way in which God could be disobeyed. He had no compulsion on his will. He was surrounded with innumerable proofs that God could have but one object in any restriction laid upon him. Concerning that restriction, God had warned him of the certain penalty, that most fearful

penalty - Death; that shadowy, dark, impenetrable mystery, repulsive and abhorrent to every living thing. Perfectly capable of standing, he fell, and proved that except God be pleased to impart to man something beyond the limits of created life, and to make him in some measure partaker of His own nature, there could be no infallible security against sin. For, although it be true that a being endowed with will, and created righteous, is at no time *necessitated* to fall, yet it is also true that at no period is he *secure* from falling. This is the attribute of God, intimately cognisant of all possible evil as well as of all possible good, and Himself the eternal and only foundation of indefectible righteousness and unspotted purity - Himself the Holy One.

Man, therefore, must be redeemed from sin, and made righteous and holy. He cannot be made righteous and holy, except the past be forgiven. But the common sense of mankind and the general agreement of all who fear God, however they may differ in their mode of expressing it, dictate that none can be truly acceptable to God, in none can He take pleasure, none can hope for deliverance from eternal wrath, nor for admission to eternal blessedness, except as they become in disposition, and, as far as opportunity offers, in their thoughts, words, and actions, righteous

and good - except, in the strict meaning of the terms, they be truly justified and sanctified.

And yet, notwithstanding this general agreement, no subject has been more a matter of contention among Christians in the last three hundred and fifty years than this – the justifying and sanctifying grace of God. Nor is there anything which more betokens the fallen condition of the Church, than the errors into which Christian people have fallen on these important subjects, and the low estimate they form of what is righteousness and what is holiness, as attainable by the Christian. And, however painful the task, it is necessary to advert to these controversies in order to obtain such a view of our subject as may enable me to warn and arm you against errors.

In the first place, the Roman Catholic considers that justification comprises the whole work of God in the soul of man, in bringing him from the death of sin to the life of righteousness; that it has its commencement in the movement of God's prevenient grace which, arousing and assisting man, disposes him to co-operate therewith - disposes him also to hearken to, and to believe the Gospel, to fear, to repent, to hope, to trust, and to love; to desire Baptism, and to live in newness of life and in obedience to God's commandments. Upon this follows justification

itself, which comprises the remission of sins and sanctification, of which the instrumental cause is Baptism; and in those who are thus justified the love of God is inherent, and with remission of sins, faith, hope, and charity are infused. The good actions fulfilled by men thus justified are the fruits of these infused gifts of God, now become inherent in man, and, being wrought in God by the justified, are meritorious; they satisfy the Divine requirements, and merit eternal life, if those who do them die in grace: which grace of righteousness is ours, because inherent in us; and it is God's, because He it is who infuses it into us.

On the other hand, the Protestant contends that the meaning of the term "justification," as applied to sinners, is not the making of them to be righteous, in any proper sense, but the accounting of them to be righteous, first through the forgiveness of sins for the merits of Christ's sacrifice, and next, through the imputation to them of the righteousness of Christ; that our only part in this justification is faith, without any works of our own, which faith, however, must, say some, will infallibly, say others, work by love, or otherwise it is not a justifying faith. This same faith they affirm to be the gift of God. Some have called this faith the instrument of justification, but others have resisted this, as making faith a meritorious cause,

and they contend that repentance and faith are the condition of justification. It is, however, insisted generally, that God justifies none whom He does not regenerate and sanctify, but that good works done after justification have no proper merit of their own, though wrought by the Spirit of God, but are tainted with imperfection and are accepted only on account of, and their defects supplied by, the merits of the righteousness of Christ, which is imputed to the works, as well as to those who perform them.

Brethren, I come to the conclusion, with the two learned Bishops, Bossuet, the Roman Catholic, and Burnet, the Protestant, as well as with Barclay the Quaker, that this discussion, so far as it relates to justification, is a dispute about terms - viz., whether the term "justification" means simply pardon and acceptance, or whether it comprises within it regeneration and sanctification.

Both of these systems profess to reject human merit as the ground of our salvation, and set forth the mercy of God as the only efficient cause, and the sacrifice of Christ as the only meritorious cause of our salvation. Both ascribe all our good works to the grace of God's Holy Spirit freely vouchsafed to us; both profess to trace the goodness, righteousness, or holiness attainable by man (whatever be its degree,

whether perfect or imperfect, whether meritorious in itself, or only through the supplement of Christ's imputed righteousness), to the operation of the Spirit of God; and deny that, without His Spirit, man could attain thereto, or even could turn himself towards God. But both regard the attainments of regenerated man in goodness, righteousness, or holiness, as being inherent in him, and therefore as being his, although by gift from God. Both of these systems therefore tend to draw off the attention from God to ourselves. The Roman Catholic regards his works as meritorious - the Protestant regards his works as proofs of the genuineness of his faith; nor (although in terms they seem to be opposed to each other) do they very much differ, either as to the existence of imperfection in the righteousness and holiness of the regenerate man, or as to the intrinsic merit attaching to him. I am aware that to some these statements may seem to require proof; but I must hasten on.

Nor am I careful to deny that the positions maintained by both these parties, although partial and inadequate, contain a measure of truth. It is not, however, the truth peculiar to the Gospel. The Holy Spirit of God has ever wrought in the hearts of the faithful, enabling them to work righteousness, to obtain promises, to endure persecutions, "to choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy

the pleasures of sin for a season;“ “to esteem Christ’s reproach greater riches than Egypt’s treasures.“ All this is as true of the saints before the coming of Christ, as of the sains who are very members of His Body; but it has not been borne in mind that none of them had attained unto the righteousness of God; nor were they regenerated with the Spirit of holiness from Him that is risen from the dead. They were neither dead with Him, nor risen with Him, nor one with Him; neither righteous, nor holy, according to the calling of the Christian, nor according to the grace in which he stands: for, “the Holy Ghost was not yet given.“ The standard has been reduced to that which existed before Christ, and the distinction between the degree and mode of the sanctification of the saints of God before Christ, and of the saints baptized into Him, has been almost, if not entirely, forgotten. Such is the result of that modified Christianity which, in the absence of the living word of the Prophet, and the living authority of the Apostle, the people of God have still retained, and their teachers have systematized. While the letter of the Gospel remains in the tradition of Holy Scripture, much of the life and spirit has become dormant, and its effects to a great degree have disappeared. The people of God have forgotten what is the reality of the Body of Christ; if they had not forgotten it, they could not have resigned the ministries of Apostles and Prophets without a breath of hope, or

the utterance of even one petition for their restoration. Forgetting this reality, how can we be surprised that they should have forgotten the righteousness and holiness which become that Body of Christ, the temple of the Holy Ghost? They have forgotten also the hope of the instant coming of the Lord; how then can we be surprised that they have forgotten the necessary preparation to meet Him? “The visible Church has become an earthly institution, training her children for the grave instead of leading on unto the Resurrection. How then can we be surprised that their notions of holiness should have received a taint from associations with the world?“

The genuine consequence of this degeneracy, and of the doctrines to which I have referred, are the many false notions which abound as to the nature of holiness. Fastings, alms, and prayers, and other pious exercises, are by some counted to be acts of righteous satisfaction to God, available for removing the temporal penalties of personal sins; and when these are satisfied, capable, through the dispensation of the Church, of supplying the deficiencies of others. And as respects holiness, many attribute this quality to excessive fastings, and severe austerities, and separation from the world. While others, omitting the austerities, count holiness to consist in separation from society, and in looks and gestures and forms of

expression - accompanied, alas! too often, in both these contradictory instances, with abandonment of those relative duties which we owe to our fellow-men.

There is not a mere dangerous error, none more subversive of the notion of true holiness, none more captivating in peculiar moods of the mind, than the error of placing holiness in abstinence, and separation, or in a mere fleshly mortification. These are the fruits, not of holiness, but of superstition - a cruel mother of a cruel offspring; they are the substitutes for that true holiness, whose fruits are temperance, sobriety, and love. How different the example of our Lord! His great fast was a spiritual act, in which the spirit sustained the body; He fasted forty days, "and afterwards He was an hungered." The nights spent by Him in prayer were not the consequences of a rigid rule perpetually applicable, but in the discharge of a spiritual necessity; His repose was in communion with His Father. His meat was to fulfil His Father's will. The hardships which He endured were indeed, in one sense, voluntary, but only because they were the necessary results of that original purpose, by which, in order to fulfil His Father's will, He voluntarily consented to leave the glory which He had with the Father, and made Himself of no reputation. Let us follow His example, never hesitating for His sake, in obedience to His will and for the sake of His Church, to en-

ter upon any course which He may point out to us, whatever may be the hardships inevitably resulting; but never aggravating those necessary hardships by selfimposed and self-inflicted severities, nor reckoning that either holiness or righteousness consists in privations; but rather in such dispositions as fit us for the glory and blessedness of Heaven, while they also fit us to encounter and endure the sufferings which must necessarily await us here, if we will be glorified with Christ hereafter.

Taking with us these warnings, let us prosecute our inquiry how we may be made a holy and righteous people - keeping this in mind as the precise object we have in view.

We are not inquiring as to the various meanings in which the word "justify" has been employed in Scripture, or may with propriety be employed. We all of us know, in every-day life, the various uses of the word; and there can be no doubt that St. Paul employs it, in certain passages, in a relative and imperfect sense. The faith of Abraham was reckoned unto him for righteousness; and except through faith it is impossible that any sinful being can be justified in the sense of being pardoned and accepted.

At every stage of God's dealings with man, the sinner who acknowledges his own helplessness, and repents, and turns to God, and trusts in Him, is surely accepted of Him; his faith is reckoned unto him for righteousness, and God is both merciful and just, through Jesus Christ, in extending to him forgiveness.

But, while this is the invariable posture of mind on the part of man, without which there is no acceptance with God, the character of that justification, to which in different stages of God's dealings with man the sinner is admitted, has greatly varied; Abraham's faith, proved by his obedience in leaving his father's house - in waiting for and receiving Isaac as his heir, in lifting up his hand to slay Isaac - was counted to him for righteousness before he was circumcised, and circumcision was the sign of that righteousness. But circumcision, when enjoined anew, became the instrument of righteousness, being the instrument of the covenant into which God entered with him and with his seed.

Again, the faith of Aaron, and of Phineas, would not have saved them if they had said, "We believe in God, and therefore we are not required to keep the law." But it did save them, although they were never baptized into Christ, nor were in their lifetime mem-

bers of His Body. The unbaptized convert is not grafted into Christ, nor is he sanctified with the Spirit of Christ, as those who are in Him are sanctified; and yet, if he believe with his heart the Gospel which is preached to him, he not only believes unto righteousness, waiting for the gift of God in holy Baptism, but were he to die this moment, we cannot doubt of his acceptance with God, and that his faith shall be counted to him for righteousness: while, at the same time, he who perversely, and with full knowledge of God's commandment, says that he believes, and rejects the waters of Baptism, his faith shall never save him, it shall not be counted to him for righteousness. Nor is this all. There yet awaits the baptized man, in common with all the saints of God, full and entire justification, when in our whole being, in body, soul, and spirit, we shall be entirely conformed to the image of the Righteous One.

Whosoever, therefore, through grace, believes God, and seeks His will, that man is accepted of God, of His infinite mercy through Christ. And, as through Abraham's faith God was enabled to inaugurate a covenant with Him and his seed, which is the figure of the true; so also, those unto whom the Gospel is preached in all its completeness, and who follow the faith of Abraham, are admitted by Him into that true

covenant, wherein He works in us His righteousness, and makes us partakers of His holiness.

Man, in the sin of Adam, lost original righteousness; by which I mean, that he not only lost the favour of God, and came into a state of condemnation, but lost that condition wherein he was capable of fulfilling righteousness. With respect to this state of condemnation, even if it had been possible that at any moment man could cease altogether from sin, and were in the future to fulfil all righteousness, he could not thereby obliterate his past guilt, nor merit eternal life by his righteousness - he could not merit salvation by reason of any acts of his own, whether springing from himself or springing even from the grace of God. God is most merciful, and ready to accept all His creatures who turn to Him; but God is Himself most righteous; and, unless some means could be found for reconciling His justice with the exercise of mercy, there could be no forgiveness or acceptance to one who had once sinned.

But, moreover, man in his fallen condition cannot fulfil righteousness. Not that he is incapable of good and right dispositions, or of individual actions, righteous if regarded only in certain relations towards our fellows. He is capable of improvement and of deterioration, moral as well as physical, both as respects

individuals, and as respects successive generations: improvement, proceeding from the good Spirit of God, who has not forsaken His rebellious creatures; deterioration, proceeding from the wilful acts of men resisting God, and disregarding, or at least not observing, the rules of His moral government, or His physical laws - both tending, under His providential dispensation of all things, towards His own ultimate designs. But no action can be truly righteous, which is not directed to God's glory, for in all our acts there is a duty to Him; and, as no man can by His own power move himself to God, so no man is by nature, in its fallen state, capable of righteousness.

Infinite compassion and love, directed by infinite wisdom, have devised the way by which God can be just, and yet justify the sinner freely by His grace, even through the redemption that is in Christ, "whom He hath set forth 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." Christ, by His holy conversation in human nature, by His sinless life, and by His most precious sufferings and death, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot, hath fulfilled all righteousness, and offered a perfect sacrifice for all sin, and made full satisfaction to all the demands of God upon man. And now, being raised from the dead by the Spirit of holi-

ness, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He is made unto us from God, even unto as many as are in Him, Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption (in which last word is meant final and complete deliverance), that, according as it is written, "he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

God, therefore, for the sake of His Son, freely accepts all who turn unto Him with penitence and in faith. He grants to them remission of their sins, and translates them from the power of the devil, and the corruption of the world, into the kingdom of His Son, "which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost." And the mode in which He makes them righteous and holy is, that He quickens them with the life of regeneration from Christ, thus making them to be very members of His mystical Body - so that all that is Christ's is theirs, not by imputation merely, nor by impartation or gift from Christ to them merely, but by communion in Him, in His life and being, as He now subsists in the condition upon which He entered, through the operation and energy of the Holy Ghost in raising Him from the dead.

And they that are regenerate, although they be the same creatures by natural constitution as at their birth, have yet become, spiritually and personally,

new creatures in Christ, by reason of the new life they have thus received in Christ, not out of Him, nor in themselves, not in the flesh - that is, not in the old nature, which is incapable of righteousness, and to which they are dead - but in Christ. And this death, and this life, are, through faith, and by means of a spiritual action, wrought in their spirits by the Holy Ghost. As they are in Christ, so Christ is in them. They are dead to sin; the body is dead, because of sin, being crucified with Christ; but the spirit is life, on account of righteousness. And so, being dead to that old nature which they bear about with them, and being alive to Christ, Who dwells in them, they cannot sin; for the power of that righteousness and that holiness which are in Christ, not in them, is put forth in all the workings of their life, in the consciousness of their spirits, in their thoughts, their words, their actions. This is that free gift of righteousness, and that reign of grace, of which the Apostle speaks in the epistle to the Romans - this is that death, and this is that life, of which again he speaks, when he says to the Galatians: "I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me."

And to every one of you I testify, to as many as have been baptized into Christ and have put on Christ, that He is in you, to perfect righteousness in all your acts, to perfect holiness in your entire consciousness. Only you must, on your part, abide through faith in that death into which you have been baptized, and live and move in that life in which you have been regenerated. The old nature is in you, and will be, until, either through natural death and resurrection, or by change, it shall be entirely swallowed up in "the redemption of the body."

The gift of God to you in regeneration is that that nature should now be held spiritually in death, and that you, being engrafted into Christ, should live in Him. You have it in your own power to let go your confidence in God; and, if you do, you shall find yourselves again in the flesh, doing the works of the flesh, and, except for God's restraining grace, either at once or gradually, forgetting and forsaking God. But if you will continually abide in the faith of the gift of God, and in the presence of Christ in you, there is no limit to the power of Christ for righteousness and holiness in you. As, when upon this earth, in this frail mortal flesh, liable to temptation, and in it tempted in all points like as we, He evermore lived the life of perfect righteousness, and of infinite holiness, - so would He, in all the members of His Body mystical, put forth the

same sanctifying power, and bring you perpetually out of death unto life, walk in you, and live in you, exercising all your faculties and powers in righteousness and true holiness.

This is no play of words, or figure of speech. As you remain steadfast in the faith of God's mercy through Christ in forgiving you, and of His gracious act in engrafting you into Christ; as you persevere in the consciousness that Christ is in you, to direct your heart, to rule your will, to keep in due subjection every movement, to bring into captivity to Him every thought, and to inspire you with His own infinitely holy mind, to move you to every holy affection and desire, to work in you every true and righteous and honest act, to fulfil in your life every relative duty towards God, towards your neighbour, towards all that are in relation with you; so trusting, and looking steadfastly to Christ - (let the truth and honour of God be to us all the sufficient testimony) - you shall be righteous in all your acts, and holy in your whole heart and thoughts and consciousness. And this, not by any mere passive acquiescence in some sensible supernatural power, but by active cooperation with the supernatural power of Him that dwelleth in us by the Holy Ghost, and in Whose precious communion we rejoice - by active co-operation with which the powers, faculties, and affections of man, moral, intel-

lectual, and spiritual, shall all be engaged, and all be employed as the servants of God, and the instruments of His righteousness.

Though man is spiritually dead towards God, and by nature locked up in alienation from Him, yet he is a moral being, capable (as we have said) of culture to an indefinite extent: his spiritual affections, through the influence of God's Holy Spirit, may, to an indefinite degree, be detached from the things of this world, and directed heavenward. The lessons of the Christian philosopher, the precepts of the Christian pastor, may through Divine grace influence the train of thought, modify and correct the habits, warm and expand the heart. But the indwelling of Christ by the Holy Ghost, effected and maintained through the instrumentality of the Sacraments of the Church, can alone bestow true righteousness and sanctification. This will seal all the lessons and precepts, and the care and ministry of pastors, and the means of grace, in their effects upon the understanding and heart and will, the mind and soul and spirit of the man. This will bring forth, and direct to their true end, all the awakened energies and powers.

Thus have I sought to explain what are the righteousness and holiness of the Gospel, and, in explaining, have shown how utterly they are beyond the

power of man to attain or to keep. I have also sought to set before you how God enables you both to attain and to keep them. Not through education or moral training, not through the power of religious discipline; not through any power of the Holy Ghost acting upon the heart and mind, as He hath ever striven with and acted upon the sons of men - nay, not through any gift of grace committed unto man, can be made truly righteous, or truly holy. Let none of these things be neglected - none can be spared in fitting man to be the perfect instrument for expressing the very mind of Christ, and fulfilling the will, and observing the righteousness of God. But this great end on earth in each, considered in his personal individuality, can only be effected through his union with Christ - Christ dwelling in him by the Holy Ghost, and fulfilling in him all righteousness and holiness. The formal cause of our righteousness is the righteousness of God in Christ - the remote and efficient cause is the mercy of God. The proximate efficient cause is the presence of Christ, and the instrumental cause is the sacrament of salvation, Baptism - which unites to Christ - together with the imposition of the Apostles' hands, sealing and confirming, and the Holy Eucharist, which continually feeds and restores the same vital union with Christ.

And thus we see how the whole Gospel of Christ becomes concentrated in Himself, and how the different lines of Divine light and glory which, radiating from Him to every ministry of the Church, and carrying up the contemplative soul from them to Him, are intermingled, or rather are identical, with those which shine into and illuminate every individual baptized into the one Body. There is one Body, there are many members; and God hath set in that Body, the Church, first Apostles, secondarily Prophets, and all the other organs which mutually minister one to the other, and proceeding from the Head give to the Body unity and compactness by that which every joint supplieth - and that Body is Christ. There is no one Body, into which all the members are by one Spirit baptized, and have all been made to drink into one Spirit, and that Body is the same one Body, even Christ. Christ the Son of God, the risen Man, Emmanuel, is He whose Body it is. And, as the person of a man, inseparably identical with his own spirit, is present in all the members of his body, so is Christ present by the Holy Ghost in Apostles, in Prophets, in Evangelists in Pastors, in Angels, in Priests, in Deacons, in every living ordinance, in every living Sacrament - living, because He lives in them - to minister and to fulfil, by each, the separate function and work for which each is ordained. And equally it is true that He is present by the Holy Ghost in every individual baptized into Him,

through the instrumentality of every ministry and ordinance and Sacrament, each in its place to form in the inner man His own image, and to exercise, through means of all his faculties, and in his action, and in his whole life, that righteousness and that holiness, which ever actuated Himself, and was expressed in His own being as a man.

Such is the Gospel I have laboured to impart unto you - Christ present in His Church, Christ in you the hope of glory, Christ the beginning, the continuation, and the consummation of your salvation, Christ the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, Who hath come, Who is present, Who is to come, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever, our Wisdom, our Righteousness, our Sanctification, our Redemption. I have not stayed to examine the many questions which have been agitated, as to freewill, as to merit, as to the relative place of faith or of works. I have presumed that we were all assured that the precious sufferings and death of Christ are the only meritorious cause of our acceptance with God, and the operation of the Holy Ghost, the only efficient cause of our embracing the Gospel, or of our attaining to, or abiding in the grace in which we stand.

I have shown you that righteousness in yourself you can never attain; it was lost for ever to the race of

Adam in his transgression. Holiness in yourself you can never attain; it is the attribute of God. But to be righteous, to be holy, you are called, and that calling, upon the peril of your soul, you must attain. And in Christ they are to be found, and abiding in Him, and living in Him, they are yours.

That righteousness and that holiness are perfect - they cannot be diminished, nor added unto. But your own moral and spiritual preparation to work the works of righteousness and to abide in holiness - the strength of your own faith, and the consequent extent to which this perfect righteousness and this perfect holiness may be wrought in and through you, admit of progressive degrees. Grow, therefore, in faith, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour. Render unto all their due; owe no man anything, but to love one another, for love is the fulfilling of the Law. "Add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." And, waiting upon the Lord, He shall bestow upon you evermore the increase of faith and hope and charity, and enable you to perfect holiness in His fear.

And now the last hour is striking, and the great Day approaches which shall reveal from Heaven Him

that, with eyes of fire, shall search the hearts, and try the reins, of all those who profess His Name.

To stand in our own righteousness, to look on our own independent holiness, in that moment, will be madness and despair. And yet, holy and righteous must we be found, perfect in holiness and in righteousness, or even from the midst of the Marriage Feast we must be plucked out and banished. Unto Him, then, let us betake ourselves, Who is our Righteousness, and our Sanctification. In Him let us evermore hide - Him let us invite, in our inmost heart, that He may dwell in us, and work in us all the good pleasure of His will. And this He hath given Himself to us to do; for this He hath again bestowed upon His Church the ministries of His house, and by them He seeks to unite us to Himself, that not a thought should stray from Him - not a word or act but should be in Him. So, looking to Him continually, we shall welcome His approach. And when His warning voice shall close the time of probation which He extends to His Church, exclaiming, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still;" we shall be prepared to meet Him with joy, responding: "There is One Holy, even One Lord Jesus Christ, in Whom are we to the glory of God the Father."