

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

[PayPal](#)

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php

The Doctrine in the Church of England

BY THE REV. G. W. H. LAMPE, M.C., M.A.

“THE Church of England at the time of the Reformation was, as usual, sober, candid and moderate. The *Necessary Doctrine* gives much the same idea of Justification with our Article (XI) : and that the Notions it contains are, on our present subject, to be accounted Reformed appears by what is said in the part relating to Good Workes against ‘munkes, friars, nunnes, and such other’. The part relating to Justification, as we may judge particularly by the conclusion of it, seems to have been composed with the same general design as that concerning Freewill, namely, to retain both the doctrines which are opposed to each other, without attempting a formal reconciliation between them. Which agrees with what a very sensible writer* mentions as the design of the Homily referred to in our Article ; ‘it gives,’ says he, ‘no occasion to a reader who considers the whole with attention, either to magnify too highly the efficacy of faith, or depreciate too much the necessity of good works’”.

With this thoroughly Anglican compromise, and what would to-day inevitably be called ‘theological tension’, Dr. John Hey, Norrisian Professor in the University of Cambridge, sums up the issue of Faith and Works in the commentary on Article XI which he included in the lectures he delivered between 1780 and 1795. It reflects a curious feature of the history of the doctrine of Justification in the Church of England, namely, the fact that although the truth that man is justified by faith alone is written into our official formularies with no uncertain hand, it is a doctrine which has been treated by a surprisingly large number of our representative theologians, outside the seventeenth-century Calvinist and more recent Evangelical traditions, as an embarrassment—something almost a little indecent, to which it would be ungentlemanly to allude too outspokenly. Polite Anglicans try, at least, to suggest that the controversy over Faith and Works was one of the Church of England’s youthful follies, an indiscretion of over-zealous Reformers, which it would be unkind to hold against her now that she has grown up and settled down to respectability. To quote Dr. Hey once more, as a typical 18th century Churchman of the Latitudinarian school : “On this matter I feel myself most inclined to observe, that the Reformed have departed so much from the rigour of their doctrine about Faith, and the Romanists from theirs about good works, that there seems now very little difference between them”.

Dr. Hey had indeed persuaded himself that it was questionable whether the difference between the Romanist and Reformed doctrines was important, or whether the distinction was one which can be made by the human understanding. If perhaps few Anglicans were prepared to go so far as this, it is at least clear that long before the beginning of the Oxford Movement, and W. G. Ward’s contention that Lutheran-

* Supposed to be Green, Bishop of Lincoln.

ism is "more fundamentally at variance with our higher and better nature than Atheism itself", the tendency was far advanced in non-Evangelical Anglicanism to forget the vital importance of Luther's rediscovery of the Pauline teaching that sinful men cannot hope to earn the favour of God by their own merits but that, since "when we were yet without strength, Christ died for the ungodly", they need only put their trust in God's forgiving mercy through Christ, that is, that they are justified by faith alone without works. In the light of this tendency we need not be surprised at Bishop Thirlwall's failure to recognise the decisively important character of the controversy aroused by Newman's Lectures on Justification, and his insistence that the dispute was one of mere words and artificial technicalities. It was a failure for which the way had been prepared by the long history of the greater failure of the Anglican Church as a whole to explore and define the implications of its own formularies.

I

At first sight it is surprising that a doctrine whose roots lie not only in the subtleties of St. Paul's controversies with Rabbinic Judaism, but also in the plain simplicity of the parable of the Prodigal Son, should not have been more firmly held and understood as the essential heart of the Christian Gospel. The reasons for luke-warmness on the part of many Anglicans about this cardinal doctrine are, however, fairly clear. Their expression has varied considerably from time to time, although the root causes remain the same.

In our present situation the dispute in the Church of England is not between those who would uphold justification by faith and those who wish to maintain justification by human works deserving of merit. Those who to-day distrust the Reformer's doctrine of *sola fide* (which, as Cranmer was at pains to point out, has the support of Hilary, Basil, Chrysostom, and Ambrose, among other patristic authors), do not wish to supplement it with the theory of justification on account of our own merits. They would rather follow Newman in holding that "Christ is our righteousness by dwelling in us by the Spirit. . . . This is really and truly our justification, not faith, not holiness, not, much less, a mere imputation, but through God's mercy the very Presence of Christ", and, further, that this Presence is mediated sacramentally. Newman feared what he thought to be Luther's substitution of inward and subjective signs of grace for outward and objective, and contemplation of self for reverence towards the Church. Similarly, the authors of *Catholicity* maintain that the act of God in Baptism is in effect denied by what they call the "insertion of the non-Biblical word 'alone'".

In the earlier history of Anglican thought the emphasis was laid elsewhere. Objection was not taken to the idea of *sola fide* on the ground of sacramentalism. Indeed, reliance upon the fact of Baptism, considered apart from the practice of good living, was as distasteful to many Anglicans as the Puritan insistence on faith alone. Moreover, it had been made abundantly clear in the theology of the Reformers that the doctrine of justification alone through faith, is on no account

to be set in opposition to the Catholic theory of the necessity of Baptism. Sacraments are, as Article XXV points out, means by which God acts in order to quicken and maintain faith.

It was, in fact, on other grounds, namely those of moralism, that objection was commonly raised to the theory of justification by faith alone. Dr. Hey feels it necessary to devote some space to the refutation of the objection: "Is not the doctrine of justification by Faith remote from our common notion of things? And on that account disadvantageous to Virtue? And even to Revelation, by prejudicing men of philosophical minds against it?" He goes on to suggest that "to Romanists we might make our Article more acceptable by softening some expressions seemingly tending to Antinomianism and by strengthening expressions tending to encourage Virtue and the hope of its rewards. . . . From Romanists we might expect a concession that actions can only be good when performed on good principles . . . and to own that we mean to adopt no system but that which promotes Virtue".

Here is the real heart of the difficulty. Much of the later Protestant theology had tended to emphasize faith rather than its object, Christ, and to speak as though faith itself were a sort of justifying work or virtue which enabled man to find favour with God. Moreover, the moralism of English thought, or perhaps it would be more true to say, of the English temperament, has made it more difficult for our Church than for any other Reformed communion to appreciate the vital significance of Luther's rediscovery. It is, in many cases, not so much an issue between two divergent conceptions of grace, as a struggle between the Pauline Gospel and the English tendency to subordinate religion to morality, to develop a holy terror of antinomianism, to insist on a man standing, as it were, squarely on his own moral feet, and to fight shy of any recourse to sources of strength and assurance outside oneself, whether they be obtained through sacraments or through a recognition of one's own sinful nature and a reliance on grace alone. The Englishman has generally found it hard to believe that the majesty of God is not in some way infringed if he forgives the sinner *qua* sinner and not *qua* reformed character. He is always inclined to feel a certain instinctive, if lurking, sympathy with the elder brother in the parable.

In some respects this tendency has been by no means unhealthy. The difficulties which the doctrine of *sola fide* has had to meet in the Church of England have been due in no small measure to a laudable hatred of cant and hypocrisy, the besetting sins of the Puritan, and to a detestation of the antinomianism which some exponents of *sola fide* in the 17th century appeared to be encouraging. One can easily detect the semi-conscious fear in the minds of many respectable Anglicans lest too enthusiastic an approbation of the Reformers' teaching should instantly cause decent citizens to cast off their clothes and rush down the street in a fanatical frenzy to join the conventicles of the Adamites and the Ranters. Much can be learnt of the attitude of Englishmen of the 18th century from the sentiments voiced by the writer of the epitaph upon Wesley's opponent, Bishop Lavington, when he summed up the bishop's virtues in the words, "He was a zealous opponent of pretence and enthusiasm". "Faith alone," as it had

been upheld by some Protestant extremists, seemed to smack of both these vices.

A further objection to the doctrine, but one which was less often expressed, was the general abhorrence in many circles of the doctrine of predestination which it seemed to imply. Nor must it be forgotten that Anglican theology sought to do full justice to the whole witness of Scripture, including the teaching on reward; it was not dominated by any rigid dogmatic system which might attempt to distort the Bible to fit its own preconceptions.

Nevertheless, these amiable characteristics depended upon, and in turn perpetuated, very serious theological confusions. Justification *per fidem* was often understood, sometimes through the fault of its defenders, as though it were justification *propter fidem*. The emphasis was too frequently laid upon the human response rather than the divine initiative, upon man rather than Christ. The constant insistence which we encounter, backed by citations from St. James, that faith is more than bare intellectual assent, is true enough; but the inference was drawn in many cases that man is actually justified by faith plus, or including, the other Christian virtues, with the result that justification was often thoroughly confused with sanctification. It was therefore by no means easy for Anglicans to put up a strong and united defence against Bellarmine in the controversy about whether God imparts such righteousness to sinners that on the strength of their infused righteousness they become acceptable to him, or whether God justifies those who are still sinners and who have no righteousness of their own but only the righteousness of Christ in which to present themselves before Him. We may also notice a tendency, which appears at intervals, to confuse our initial acceptance into the status of sons of God with the final judgment in the day when God will render to every man according to his works. The latter tendency no doubt arose from the fear lest the Reformed doctrine of justification should suggest that the justified sinner has been finally accepted in such a way that he cannot fail to be saved—a confusion, in fact, between justification and salvation.

I have emphasized some of the difficulties with which the doctrine has had to contend in our Church. I do not, of course, mean to imply that there has not at the same time existed a clear and strong stream of tradition which has ably upheld and expounded the teaching of the Articles, which is plain and uncompromising upon this subject. It was of the Romans, not of his own fellow churchmen, that Hooker wrote: "Our adversaries in the matter of justification do greatly please themselves, exclaiming that we tread all Christian virtues under our feet and require nothing in Christians but faith". The early Reformers, such as Tyndale and Hooper, were perfectly clear that justification means the forgiveness of sins and the favour of God, received by faith, and that, though we are endued by God with righteousness when we are justified, it is not on the ground of such righteousness that we are accepted in his sight.

I have rather tried to suggest some reasons why the Church's witness in this matter has not been unanimous, and why, despite the plain language of the Article, it has tended to adopt a "fence-sitting"

attitude to the question. I say "fence-sitting" rather than "compromising", because it seems to me that confusion of thought rather than the theory of the *via media* has marked the history of the doctrine in the Church of England.

II

Let us now consider some representative writers of the classical period of Anglican theology. We may well begin with a relatively familiar and quasi-official document, the Homily of the Salvation of Mankind, which embodies Cranmer's own theory and has been accorded official recognition by Article XI, if it alone, and not all four homilies (on Human Misery, Salvation, Faith, and Good Works) is to be taken to represent the non-existent "Homily on Justification" to which the Article refers the reader.

The doctrine of this Homily is clear enough. It is well summed up in a passage which runs as follows: "Because all men be sinners and offenders against God, and breakers of his law and commandments, therefore can no man, by his own acts, works, and deeds, seem they never so good, be justified and made righteous before God: but every man of necessity is constrained to seek for another righteousness or justification, to be received at God's own hands; that is to say, the forgiveness of his sins and trespasses, in such things as he hath offended. And this justification, or righteousness, which we so receive of God's mercy and Christ's merits, embraced by faith, is taken, accepted, and allowed of God for our perfect and full justification". That is to say, we are freely forgiven by God while we are yet sinners, by virtue of the reconciliation wrought by Christ. Man's only part in his justification is to receive the gift of God's mercy by faith. It should be observed that in the Homily this eminently scriptural doctrine is linked with an Atonement theology of the Anselmic type. "Christ made satisfaction or amends to the Father for our sins, and assuaged his wrath." Hence, "infants baptised and dying in infancy are by his sacrifice washed from sin and brought to God's favour, and sinners after their baptism are washed from sin on their repentance, and no spot remains to be imputed to their damnation. God's justice demanded a ransom; His mercy allowed us to go free without paying it. There are three elements in justification; the mercy of God, the satisfaction of his justice by Christ, and our faith, which is the working of Christ within us". It is, I think, perfectly possible to maintain the essentials of this remarkable Trinitarian definition of our justification without tying it to the particular interpretation of the Atonement to which the Homily itself is committed.

In view of the controversies both of the 16th century and to-day, the Homily's definition of the relationship between faith and the other virtues, and between faith and works, is most important. Faith, it is stated, does not exclude repentance, hope, love, or the fear of God, but it does exclude them from the office of justifying. They are all present in the justified, but they do not justify him. So also with good works. They are necessarily and inevitably linked to faith, but they do not justify. Justification by faith, it is pointed out, does not mean that we should do no good works, but works cannot merit

justification, and the phrase "without works" serves to emphasize man's weakness and the goodness of God. All the merit in our justification belongs to Christ, and justification pertains to the office of God alone. It is something received by men. We are not justified by any merit of our faith, but, being totally undeserving of remission of sins and justification, we trust solely in God's mercy and the sacrifice of Christ in order to obtain remission of original sin in Baptism and of post-baptismal sin by repentance.

The Homily does not in any way minimize the importance of what is sacramentally effected, provided always (a difficult matter) that faith is in some way presupposed in the baptised. Further, full emphasis is laid upon the virtues and works that must accompany genuine faith as its external manifestation and the guarantee of its existence; but such works have nothing in common with the works of supererogation encouraged by the mediæval Church.

It may now be worth while to turn to Hooker's "Learned Discourse of Justification, Works, and how the Foundation of Faith is Overthrown". Hooker is quick to observe the constant confusion in Roman theology between justification and sanctification. He defines the truth of the matter thus: "There is a glorifying righteousness of men in the world to come; and there is a justifying and a sanctifying righteousness here. The righteousness wherewith we shall be clothed in the world to come is both perfect and inherent. That whereby we are here justified is perfect, but not inherent. That whereby we are sanctified is inherent, but not perfect". Romans and Anglicans agree, as he readily admits, in holding the sinfulness of all men (apart from the Roman doctrine on the Blessed Virgin), that God alone justifies, that He justifies by the merits of Christ, and that Christ's merits must be applied. The fundamental difference is that the former hold that God justifies by the infusion of grace to produce inherent righteousness, and that the increase of this grace is merited by good works so that the soul becomes more fully justified. "The first receipt of grace is in their divinity the first justification; the increase thereof the second justification." Here Hooker has put his finger, more surely than most Anglican writers, on an important issue. Not only is the Roman doctrine of justification by infused grace contrary to the New Testament teaching; it is thrown into utter confusion by the theory of a first and a second justification, and of the possibility of degrees of justification. It is exactly the doctrines which Hooker attacks which a modern writer, A. H. Rees, tries to read out of the Anglican formularies, relying, in the absence of better testimony, on the King's Book of 1538 and in the Prayer Book on such phrases as the "increase of faith, hope and charity", and, "daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more", which, of course, have nothing whatever to do with the matter at issue. In fact, the Anglican reply to these Roman doctrines, as it is set out by Hooker, follows the general line of the Homily. "Whether they speak of the first or second justification, they make the essence of it a divine quality inherent, . . . but the righteousness wherein we must be found if we will be justified is not our own; therefore we cannot be justified by any inherent quality. Christ hath merited righteousness for as many as are found in him.

In him God findeth us if we be faithful ; for by faith we are incorporated into him. Then . . . even the man which in himself is impious, full of iniquity, full of sin ; him being found in Christ through faith, and having his sin in hatred through repentance . . . God beholdeth with a gracious eye, putteth away his sin by not imputing it, taketh quite away the punishment due thereunto by pardoning it, and accepteth him in Jesus Christ as perfectly righteous, as if he had fulfilled all that is commanded him in the law ; shall I say, more perfectly righteous than if himself had fulfilled the whole law." There is indeed an inherent righteousness, but this is the righteousness of sanctification, not of justification. Of the latter, Paul said that it is of faith without works ; of the former it was said by St. James that we have it by works, and not only by faith. The former is ours by imputation ; the latter consists of faith, hope, charity, and the other virtues. God gives us both kinds of righteousness, " the one by accepting us for righteous in Christ, the other by working Christian righteousness in us ". The latter consists in infused virtues introduced into the soul by the Holy Spirit.

Faith is for Hooker, as for Cranmer, not a mere barren faith, unaccompanied by the other virtues or by works. Hope and charity are " always joined as inseparable mates with faith in the man that is justified ", and works are " necessary duties required at the hands of every justified man " ; but " faith is the only hand which putteth on Christ unto justification ".

III

On these lines Hooker lays down the general course of much Anglican thought during the 17th century, though it is the more Calvinist wing of the Church which most uncompromisingly maintains the doctrine of *sola fide* and of the relationship between faith and works which had been adumbrated by Cranmer and Hooker.

Bishop Hall, for example, in " The Old Religion ", quotes the anathema of Trent against " those who shall dare to say that we are formally justified by Christ's righteousness ; or by the sole imputation of that righteousness, or by the sole remission of our sins ; and not by our inherent grace, diffused in our hearts by the Holy Ghost ". On the Tridentine doctrine that we are not merely reputed, but actually made, truly just, Hall remarks : " That there is an inherent justice in us is no less certain than that it is wrought in us by the Holy Ghost. For God doth not justify the wicked man as such, but out of wicked makes him good ; not by mere acceptance, but by a real change, while he sanctifies him whom he justifies. These two acts of mercy are inseparable ; but this justice, being wrought in us by the Holy Spirit according to the model of our weak receipt, and not according to the full powers of the Infinite Agent, is not so perfect that it can bear us out before the tribunal of God. It must be only under the garment of our Elder Brother that we dare come in for a blessing : his righteousness, made ours by faith, is that whereby we are justified in the sight of God : this doctrine is that which is blasted with a Tridentine curse". Justification by faith, however, does not mean that it is " the act or habit of faith that justifieth : it is he that

justifieth the wicked, whom our faith makes ours, and our sin his ”.

Hall goes on to develop an important point. Whereas nothing can formally make us just but that which is perfect in itself, our inherent righteousness is, at best, in this life defective. Hence, though it is true that God really effects a change in us by the operation of the Spirit, yet we continue to stand before God as sinners. “To the very last hour,” he says, “our prayer must be, ‘Forgive us our trespasses’. Our very daily endeavour, therefore, of increasing our renovation, convinceth us sufficiently of imperfection; and the imperfection of our regeneration convinceth the impossibility of justification by such inherent righteousness”. If in these extracts Hall seems to offer us something less forcibly expressed than the Lutheran *simul justus, simul peccator*, his teaching is essentially similar at this point to Luther’s. At the same time he has answered the Roman theory that our inherent or infused righteousness, which he agrees is present in us, can be the ground of our acceptance with God.

Bishop Hall’s views find many echoes in the better-known treatise of Bishop Davenant of Salisbury, published in 1631 under the title, “Disputatio de Justitia”. Allport’s translation of this work, it is interesting to observe, was produced in 1844 as a counterblast to Newman’s Essay. The argument proceeds from a discussion of Bellarmine’s strictures on the Protestant position. The first point alleged by him is that “Calvin, with the Lutherans, does not admit of any inherent righteousness”. Davenant replies that “A certain habitual or inherent righteousness is bestowed or infused into all the justified”. This inherent righteousness is “the supernatural gift of sanctifying grace, opposed to original sin, . . . repairing and renewing that image of God which through original sin was defiled and lost.” On account of this righteousness the regenerate are accounted just, and this means that “God distinguishes those upon whom he impresses this new image of holiness from the carnal and unregenerate”. “Not because this infused holiness or inherent righteousness is perfect; but because it is genuine . . . and is both known and acceptable to God, who has infused it into the minds of the regenerate.” “Whoever denies infused and inherent righteousness to be in those whom the Holy Spirit has thus changed and renewed is manifestly opposing the Scriptures.” Yet, although Davenant claims that those who are regenerate are called righteous from this inherent righteousness, he will not allow that they are thereby to be called justified. The latter term includes “acquittal from all sin, and acceptance to life eternal”. Inherent righteousness, on the other hand, exists in the regenerate alongside sinfulness, which it cannot instantly expel, though “the infused light expels more and more the native darkness”. On Augustine’s lines, Davenant explains that in the regenerate concupiscence, though weakened and broken, is not eradicated. It follows that baptismal grace does not totally remove sin at one moment. “The grace of Christ in forgiving,” he explains, “purges us forthwith from all sin and impurity . . . but grace in renewing, of which also we are made partakers in baptism, exerts its virtue by degrees, in purging out the taint of sin, and at length in the end of life exterminating it. The Papists therefore are sadly mistaken

in thinking that the grace of baptism in the first moment in which it is administered, exerts its whole efficacy ; whereas it works through the whole life in subduing sin and at length effects its perfect expulsion." Therefore, because our infused righteousness, bestowed on us in the process of sanctification, here associated with the proleptic efficacy of baptism, is partial and incomplete and defiled by sin, it cannot be the formal cause of justification. Justification itself denotes an act of jurisdiction, not of infusion. By this act God absolves the sinner, declares him just, and accepts him to eternal life.

On the other hand, Davenant condemns as false and foolish the assertion that the sinner is justified by a legal fiction. God bestows on him " a righteousness so complete and perfect that God in beholding him cannot but regard as righteous the person upon whom the same is bestowed ". Such righteousness cannot be the imperfect inherent righteousness of which he has spoken. God does infuse such a righteousness in the very act of justifying, but " we deny that the sentence of God in justifying has respect to this as the cause by which man is constituted justified ". Nor is faith the formal cause of justification, as Bellarmine imagined Protestants to believe. The formal cause of our justification is the " obedience of Christ apprehended by faith ". Justification, therefore, is not a bare forensic declaration ; it comprises a gift of perfect righteousness. This is not our imperfect infused righteousness (which is " not the cause of our justification, but its appendage ") for, though every person is indeed not only pronounced but actually made righteous, this happens only through the attaining to the righteousness performed by Christ, which is communicated and imputed to us by the divine appointment. This gift is received through faith. Inherent righteousness, on the other hand, is the formal cause, not of our justification, but of sanctification, and the gift of love itself is part of our sanctification and not a cause of our being justified in the sight of God.

Imputation, then, means more than an artificial or fictitious ascription to us of Christ's righteousness. This, says Davenant, was a fact which Bellarmine did not understand. He imagined that Protestants believed " that we are not otherwise endowed with the righteousness of Christ than by thought, as boys are accustomed to say in the schools that they can assign blackness to a swan in their minds and whiteness to a crow ". In fact, Christ's righteousness is truly imputed to us because God regards all those who believe and are united into one person with Christ as having become truly partakers of His righteousness and obedience. Good works are in every way necessary, but they never earn merit. They are always the works of unprofitable servants. Moreover, St. Paul does not say, " Ye are received among the sons because the Spirit has impressed upon you a certain inherent holiness ", but, on the contrary, " Because through Christ, you are received among the sons, therefore you are endowed with those gifts of grace ". Inherent holiness is not the cause of sonship, but its consequence.

I have dealt at some length with Davenant because he appears to me to be one of the most successful Anglican writers on this subject. I must therefore confine myself to a very brief treatment of certain

authors who reflect the tendencies which I mentioned at the beginning of this paper—in particular to those theologians to whom the Tractarians made constant appeal, Jeremy Taylor and Bull.

IV

In Taylor's sermon, "Fides Formata, or Faith working by Love," there occur one or two well-known passages which will illustrate his fear lest the doctrine of justification by faith should conflict with the great emphasis which he seeks to lay upon obedience and holiness. "St. Paul," he declares, "from whose mistaken words much noise hath been made in this question, is clear in this particular. 'Nothing in Christ Jesus can avail, but faith working by charity', that is . . . 'Nothing but a new creature', nothing but 'keeping the commandments of God. . .'. If keeping the commandments be not in the definition of faith, it avails nothing at all". "A man is not justified by faith alone, that is, by faith which hath not in it charity and obedience". It will be absolutely to no purpose to say that faith alone does justify, if when a man is justified he is never the nearer to be saved, for "without obedience no man can go to heaven".

Here, surely, is the reappearance in Anglican thought of exactly those confusions in Roman doctrine to which Hooker had supplied the answer. "Going to heaven," and the whole process of sanctification, are treated as though they were synonymous with justification. Nor does Taylor clear up the difficulty when he goes on to assert that, "No man is actually justified but he that is in some measure sanctified". He is thinking of what the Romans had called the second justification. "Our sins," he says, "are potentially pardoned when . . . by resolving and fighting against sin we die to sin daily, and so are made conformable to his death; but we must partake of Christ's resurrection before this justification can be made actual. When we are dead to sin and are risen again unto righteousness, then . . . we are truly and indeed justified, till then we are not". It is indeed, he admits, "the mercy and the free gift of Christ that brings me unto glory. But yet, he that shall exclude the works of faith from the justification of a sinner by the blood of Christ, may as well exclude faith itself; for faith itself is . . . a good work; it is not only the cause of obedience but a part of it". Semi-Pelagianism has rarely been carried to such lengths by Anglican writers on justification. In this respect Taylor is by no means typical of his age, and few theologians in our Church have shown so complete a failure to grasp the elements of the doctrine which they were discussing.

More normal is the teaching of Bishop Bull in the "Harmonia Apostolica", familiar as the quarry from which Newman gathered much material. Bull's object is to demonstrate the harmony between St. Paul and St. James, and so to refute those zealous contemporary Paulinists whose doctrine seemed to him to savour of antinomianism and unethical pseudo-spirituality. He starts from the premise that "it is more reasonable to interpret St. Paul from St. James than St. James from St. Paul. The obscurity of the latter's style, and the fact that in his epistles he is attacking unfamiliar Rabbinic doctrines do bring it about that in him there are some things hard to be understood." He argues that the theory that a man is justified by faith

without works is taught in so many words by no inspired writer but St. Paul, and that that doctrine is nowhere taught, even by him, "except in the way of controversy . . . where he is speaking to Jews, and trying to drive them from their trust in the Mosaic covenant". St. Paul's real view is that we are justified, as he shows in Gal. v. 6, *fide caritate formata*. Justification includes "not only deliverance from sins, but also the reckoning of a reward, or being accepted to salvation and life eternal".

Here again we see the confusion of thought which mistakes justification for the final acceptance, and faith for a virtue supposed to merit justification. Bull does not realise that justification by faith means justification by the grace of Christ apprehended by faith. Consequently he insists that justification is by a union of faith with obedience, charity, and the other virtues. He exclaims against his opponents that they "deny that the moral law is put before us by Christ as the rule of our justification". Against such people, he will "join the Roman Catholics in openly and freely condemning such dogmas as often as there is opportunity, although they spring from our party". That Christ's righteousness is imputed is admissible in so far as it means that on its account we obtain forgiveness of our sins, but that it is so imputed that it really becomes ours is to be utterly rejected as laying the foundation of the "most pestilent heresy of antinomianism". It is indeed incompatible with the forgiveness of sins.

What, then, did St. Paul mean by faith? He uses the term to "prove the case of justification by the Gospel above that by the Law," and because it serves to exclude merit. Faith really means "all the works of Christian piety". The works opposed by St. Paul are not Christian works. He "rejects from justification the following descriptions of works: First, ritual works prescribed by the ceremonial law; secondly, moral works performed by the natural powers of man . . . before and without the grace of the Gospel; thirdly, Jewish works or that trifling righteousness inculcated by the Jewish masters; fourthly and lastly, all works separate from Christ the mediator, which would obtain salvation by their own power or without reference to the covenant of grace established by the blood of Christ. . . . On the other hand, that the moral works arising from the grace of the Gospel covenant efficaciously conduce to the justification of man and his eternal salvation, St. Paul does not only not deny, but is employed almost entirely in establishing".

Bull thus maintains, in exact opposition to Davenant, that works effectively conduce to justification, instead of being logically posterior to faith as its by-product. Yet he denies any place to merit. Those who teach that a heavenly reward is due to the good works of the just from condignity, that is, on account of their own intrinsic goodness and worth, "have never known or felt the grace of Christ". Justifying works proceed from grace, and offer no scope for merit. Hence faith seems to him to be excluded as the cause of our justification, equally with all other virtues; "we must", he says, "disregard faith and all other virtues, and trust only to the divine mercy and the merits of our Saviour". One feels that had his opponents made out their own case properly, Bull would have withdrawn at least this objection. Yet as the matter stands, he may perhaps be taken as representative of the *via media*.

The misunderstanding arises, however, even more forcibly in William Law's entertaining "Dialogue between a Methodist and a Churchman of Justification by Faith and Works", published in 1760. The Methodist has complained that Anglican preaching for the past century has been full of a soul-destroying doctrine of justification by faith and works. The Churchman maintains that faith and works are one and the same indivisible thing. To place one's reliance upon faith as the cause of justification is the same thing as to place it upon works. "Churchman: 'But now suppose one man to rely on his own faith and another to rely on his own works, then . . . the faith of the one and the works of the other are equally the same worthless filthy rags. On the other hand, do but ascribe good works to the same original and divine power as a right faith must be ascribed to, and then faith and works are equally one power of God to salvation because equally, . . . the same saving work of God in our souls'." The Methodist cites the parable of the Publican. Churchman answers: "Let it then be supposed that the Pharisee had said, God, I thank thee that my faith is not like other men's faith: it needs not the help of fasting and praying, etc. I ask you, had this been a better Pharisee than the other? Had this boasting of faith been better than that boasting of works?" Like Bull, Law makes the Churchman insist that St. Paul's "faith alone means nothing else but the Gospel religion alone", and that by works he meant only Jewish or heathen works. Had Christian works been included in his strictures, he would be doing no better than "teaching a Christian to be good without goodness". As for imputation, Christ said that the tree is known by its fruits, but "No, say your imputation doctors, that need not be; let some good hand only hang good fruit outwardly upon it, and then you will rightly know the tree by its fruits. And it will be more glorious to the tree to have a variety of good fruit outwardly imputed to it or hung upon it, than to have a good fruit from its own root".

Law's astonishing summary of the matter is: "Two or three old heresies joined together would not more abuse and contradict the Gospel than your three doctrines of faith without works, of a righteousness of Christ only outwardly imputed to us, of absolute election and reprobation. These are the scandal and reproach of the Reformation, wherever they may be found, and have nothing to support them but that implicit adherence and systematic obstinacy which keeps Romish scholars steady to a Trent creed. . . . 'This do and thou shalt live' is the law of works which was from the beginning, is now, always will be, the one law of life. And whether you consider the Adamic, Patriarchal, Legal, Prophetic or Gospel state of the Church, DOING IS ALL" (Law's capitals).

Here, with more than its wonted vigour, speaks Anglican moralism. Such may still be the religion of the man in the pew; but it is of some comfort to reflect that a modern Anglican theologian, whatever his party label, would be unlikely to express himself in similar terms. Perhaps it is to be in the 20th century that the Church of England is to feel its way to a clearer expression than it has produced in the past of the doctrine which is undoubtedly fixed in the heart of its inheritance, and to discover it in a sounder and more Christ-centred doctrine of grace.