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The Emergence of the Anglican Tradition on Justification 1600–1700

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The seventeenth century saw considerable change in English life, including the turmoil and uncertainty occasioned by the Civil War (1641–47), and the theological and ecclesiological changes introduced by the Westminster Assembly.¹ However, at the end of the century, as at the beginning, the Church of England had both an episcopacy and a monarch as her head. Despite the Civil War, the execution of Charles I, the Restoration and the revolution of 1688, the Church of England remained established. During this crucial period, the Church of England possessed bishops whose excellence has never been equalled, and but rarely approached. Of the sixty-three bishops of the period whose sermons have survived,² all were graduates, thirty having taken their first degree at Cambridge, twenty-six at Oxford, five at Trinity College, Dublin, and two at Aberdeen. Possessed of a 'formidable intellectual equipment',³ these bishops were to formulate a classical Anglican approach to Scripture and tradition, reason and faith, which was to give Anglican theology its distinctive character.⁴ These bishops, collectively known as the Caroline divines, devoted much attention to the question of man's justification before God, and their discussion of the matter is of interest, not only for its inherent importance, but also on account of the considerable influence it can be shown to have had on John Henry Newman's *Lectures on Justification* and hence on the Anglo-Catholic revival of the nineteenth century. In the present study, we propose to examine the teaching of the Caroline divines on justification as the background to the teaching of Newman on the matter.

The Caroline divines in general, both before and after the Interregnum, are characterized by their 'Arminianism': that is, their rejection of the doctrine of double predestination. In May 1595 William Barrett, a fellow of Caius College, Cambridge, preached a sermon which touched off the predestinarian controversy which was to lead to the nine Lambeth Articles of 20 November 1595.⁵ These articles maintain a strongly supralapsarian predestinarianism, far surpassing the somewhat ambivalent pronouncements of Article XVII. However, they never gained official acceptance, other than as the private judgements of those who drafted them, and who considered them to be 'true and correspondent to the doctrine professed in this Church of England.

and established by the Laws of the land.⁶ In many respects, the Lambeth Articles are the precursors of the Westminster Confession of Faith in this matter.⁷ The seventeenth century saw the Lambeth Articles failing to achieve any status within the Church of England. In 1604, John Reynolds (†1607) failed to persuade the Hampton Court Conference to append the Lambeth Articles to the Thirty-nine Articles, thus leaving Article XVII—which is easily harmonized with an Arminian doctrine of election—as the sole authoritative pronouncement of the Church of England on the question of predestination. Although there can be little doubt that predestinarianism continued to enjoy the support of many pastors, there is a noticeable decline in academic support for the idea from the beginning of the seventeenth century. Thus the teaching of Richard Hooker at Oxford, and Lancelot Andrewes at Cambridge, points to an ‘Arminianism before Arminius’ in England, which was to receive considerable impetus through the influence of William Laud, later Archbishop of Canterbury.⁸

Andrewes’ hostility to the Reformed teaching on predestination was partly due to his considerable patristic learning, and was undoubtedly reinforced by his celebrated maxim, ‘Two testaments, three creeds, the four councils and the first five centuries’. Rather like Vincent of Lérins, Andrewes declined to support the latest speculation on the matter of predestination precisely because it was so obviously an innovation. However, the Arminianism of the period is probably best demonstrated from the controversy surrounding the appearance of Henry Hammond’s *Practical Catechism*, published anonymously in 1645.⁹ This work may be regarded as the classic presentation of the Laudian attitude to the question of the universality of redemption:¹⁰

That man being thus fallen, God out of his infinite compassion to his creature, made after his own image ... decreed to send his only begotten Son Jesus Christ into the world, to undertake the great work of our Redemption, and to satisfie his Justice for sin, that so notwithstanding the same, the whole mass of mankind lost by the Fall of the first Adam, might be restored to a capability of salvation, through the mercie of God, and the merits of Jesus Christ, the second Adam.

Hammond rejects both the supra- and infra-lapsarian understandings of predestination, along with the allied doctrine of limited atonement, asserting that Christ died for, and thereby redeemed all, mankind—a view rejected by John Owen in his classic treatise *Death of Death in the Death of Christ*. However, when Hammond’s teaching was criticized as being Arminian, there were some who rose to its defence. Thus Clement Barksdale noted that¹¹

You are mistaken when you think the doctrine of Universal Redemption Arminianisme. It was the doctrine of the Church of England before Arminius was borne. We learne it out of the old Church-Catechisme. I

believe in Iesus Christ, who hath redeemed me and all mankind. And the Church hath learned it out of the plaine scripture, where Christ is the Lamb of God that taketh away the sinnes of the world.

In this, Barksdale must be regarded as substantially correct. The Bezan doctrine of limited atonement was somewhat late in arriving in England, by which time the older view, which can be considered as due to Calvin rather than Beza, had been incorporated into the liturgy of the Church of England. This poses a nice problem in nomenclature: is one to style men such as Peter Baro (†1599) as an 'Arminian *avant la lettre*',¹² or is one to accept their teaching as typical of the period before the Arminian controversy brought that matter to a head? Most Anglican divines in the sixteenth century appear to have accepted the notion of predestination in the general sense of Article XVII, which need state no more than the classical Thomist position. The doctrine of salvation, as taught by men such as Hooker or Andrewes, is based on the premise of universal redemption, but *not* the universal salvation, of all mankind by Jesus Christ. However, there were dissenting voices among the bishops. Thus Ussher adopted a more predestinarian approach:¹³

Before they had done either good or evil, God in his eternal counsel set some apart upon whom he would in time shew the riches of his mercy; and determine to withhold the same from others, upon whom he would show the severity of his justice.

However, if the early Caroline divines were not unanimous in their 'Arminianism *avant la lettre*', they were considerably more united in their rejection of the doctrine of justification by inherent (as opposed to imputed) righteousness, or by works as well as by faith.

In 1701, two letters of Thomas Barlow (1607–91), sometime Bishop of Lincoln, were published.¹⁴ Addressed to a priest in Barlow's diocese, identified only by his initials 'J.W.', the letters condemn the harmonization of Paul and James to yield a doctrine of justification by faith *and* works. Whilst the letters acknowledge that this does not amount to the teaching that works are the *meritorious* cause of man's justification, they censure the doctrine for its denial of the imputation of Christ's righteousness in justification. As we shall show below, it is clear that Barlow is here condemning a doctrine of justification particularly associated with the post-Restoration divines. However, the real significance of the letters lies in their historical insight. Barlow asserted that Anglican divines

who have writ of our justification *coram Deo* before the late unhappy rebellion, such as Bishop Jewel, Hooker, Reynolds, Whittaker, Field, Downham, John White, etc., do constantly prove and vindicate the imputation of our blessed Saviour's Righteousness against the contrary

doctrine of Racovia and Rome, Papists and Socinians. So that in truth it is only you, and some Neotericks, who (since the year 1640) deny such imputation.

In this, Barlow must be judged correct. In every case he mentions, the doctrine of justification by imputed righteousness is defended (more strictly, the doctrine that the *formal cause* of justification is imputed righteousness). This may be illustrated by considering one of the divines Barlow mentions, as well as two he does not.

George Downham (†1652), Bishop of Derry, defined justification thus: 'a most gracious and righteous action of God whereby he, imputing the righteousness of Christ to a believing sinner, absolveth him from his sinnes and accepteth him as righteous in Christ, and as an heir of eternal life, to the praise and glory of his owne mercy and justice.'¹⁵ Of course, God infuses righteousness into those whom he justifies—but this infused righteousness relates to sanctification, and not justification. Justification is an act of God without us, whilst sanctification is an act of God within us; justification is perfect whilst sanctification can only begin in this life, and will be perfected in the life to come. The imperfect nature of this infused righteousness means that 'the imputation of Christ's righteousness is the formal cause of justification, because by imputation of Christ's righteousness, God doth iustifie us.'¹⁶ Downham rejects the opinion of those Protestants who appear to make remission of sins the formal cause of justification, or who limit the scope of Christ's righteousness to his passive obedience. 'The parts therefore of justification are two: absolution from sinne and acceptation as righteous in Christ, both of which the Lord granteth by the full and perfect satisfaction of Christ, whereby he fully satisfied the Law, both in respect of the penalty, which he satisfied by his sufferings, and also in respect of the precept, which he satisfied by his perfect righteousness, both habituall and actuall.'¹⁷ Man is not justified by any inherent quality infused into him, but by the righteousness of Christ imputed to him. In his *Treatise on Justification* (1631), John Davenant (1572–1641), Bishop of Salisbury, rejected Bellarmine's teaching that infused righteousness is the formal cause of justification. 'We do not deny that inherent righteousness is infused into the justified by Christ ... but we affirm that, whilst in this life it is inchoate and imperfect, and therefore not the cause of our justification, but the appendage.'¹⁸ This 'appendage' is sanctification, which is to be distinguished from justification. The basic criticism which Davenant directs at Bellarmine is that infused righteousness, although real, is imperfect, and therefore not the formal cause of justification. Furthermore, the persistence of sin in the believer undermines the sufficiency of infused righteousness for justification still further. By contrast, the imputed righteousness of Christ is perfect, untainted by sin, and thus alone sufficient as the formal cause of justification. A similar teaching can be found in the

writings of Lancelot Andrewes (1555–1626), Bishop of Winchester. In his 1600 sermon 'Of Justification in Christ's Name',¹⁹ he stresses the importance of the divine attribute of righteousness. How are we to interpret the divine name *Jehova iustitia nostra* (Jeremiah 23:6)?

The prophet setteth here before us in his royal judicial power in the person of a King, and a King set down to execute judgement: and this he telleth us, before he thinks meet to tell us his name. Before this King, thus set down in his throne, there to do judgement, the righteousness that will stand against the Law, our conscience, Satan, sin, the gates of Hell and the power of darkness; and so stand that we may be delivered by it from death, despair and damnation; and entitled by it to life, salvation and happiness eternal: that is righteousness indeed; that it is we seek for, if we may find it.

Man's righteousness *coram Rege iusto iudicium faciente* is not his own righteousness, but the righteousness of *Jehova iustitia nostra*. However, this righteousness must not be understood as inherent righteousness, as the Church of Rome teaches. Whilst Andrewes conceded that the Church of Rome understood the negative aspect of the divine righteousness—the satisfaction required for sin—in terms similar to those of the Anglican divines, he rejected their understanding of the positive aspects of the divine righteousness:²⁰

In the positive justice, or that part thereof which is meritorious for reward, there fall they into a fancy they may give it over, and suppose that *iustitia a Domino*, 'a righteousness from God' they grant, yet inherent in themselves, without the righteousness that is in Christ, will serve them; whereof they have a good conceit that it will endure God's justice, and standeth not by acceptance.

Andrewes' point is based upon his analysis of the two types of righteousness, one being a quality of the individual, the other an act of the divine judge. If the *iustitia a Domino* is conceived as a quality in man, how can it stand up to the divine judgement? Only by being itself grounded in that divine judgement can the *iustitia a Domino* avail—and hence man is justified by 'reputed', not inherent, righteousness.

In general, the earlier Caroline divines forged an eclecticism typical of Anglicanism: a High Church ecclesiastical polity, an Augustinian doctrine of grace, an Arminian doctrine of election, and a thoroughly Protestant understanding of imputed righteousness as the formal cause of justification. The paradox posed by the *liberum arbitrium captivatum*, which may be regarded as the essential foundation of any Augustinian doctrine of justification, was well appreciated by the divines of the period, and received its most thoughtful expression in John Donne's *Divine Meditations*:²¹

Batter my heart, three-personed God; for you
As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend;
That I may rise, and stand, o'erthrow me and bend,
Your force, to break, blow, burn, and make me new.
I, like an usurped town, to another due,
Labour to admit you, but, oh, to no end,
Reason your viceroy in me, me should defend,
But is captived, and proves weak or untrue,
Yet dearly I love you, and would be loved fain,
But am betrothed unto your enemy,
Divorce me, untie or break that knot again,
Take me to you, imprison me, for I
Except you enthal me, never shall be free,
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

With the exception of their Arminianism, the Westminster Assembly confirmed the chief features of the early Caroline doctrine of justification:

- 1) Justification and sanctification are distinguished.
- 2) The formal cause of justification is declared to be imputed righteousness.

However, perhaps as a reaction against the theology of the Westminster divines, the divines of the Restoration developed a very different doctrine of justification, as will become apparent.

The doctrines of justification which emerged in the writings of the Caroline divines in the period after the Restoration of the monarchy (1660) may be characterized as follows:

- 1) The teachings of Paul and James are harmonized, so that both faith and works are held to be necessary for justification. This position frequently involved the assumption that faith was itself a work.
- 2) Justification and sanctification are no longer distinguished, so that justification is understood as a process which includes the sanctification of the believer.
- 3) The formal cause of justification is stated to be either infused righteousness alone, or *both* infused and imputed righteousness — but not imputed righteousness *alone*.
- 4) As before, an Arminian doctrine of the universal redemption of mankind in Christ is taught.

However, it must be pointed out that these opinions can be shown to be in circulation prior to the Civil War. Thus the *Considerationes* of William Forbes, the first Bishop of Edinburgh, can be shown to contain elements of this doctrine of justification. Although written before 1634, these *Considerationes* were only published after their author's death, and it cannot be proved that the Restoration divines drew upon this work (which appeared in 1658) for their own teaching. Of this school, the most important are Henry Hammond (1605–60), George Bull (1634–1710) and Jeremy Taylor (1613–67). We propose

to examine the teaching of all, save Hammond, on the question of the relation between Paul and James, the formal cause of justification, and the relation between justification and sanctification. However, we begin by considering the views of William Forbes (1585–1634)—views which, we again wish to stress, date from *before* the Civil War.

Forbes was appointed first Bishop of Edinburgh by Charles I in 1634, some two months before his death. His *Considerationes modestae et pacificae* were greatly admired for their erudition, and must be regarded as the most important contribution of the Caroline divines to the discussion of justification. It is divided into five books, reflecting the structure of Bellarmine's *de iustificatione*, to which it is a reply. The first book deals with the question of justifying faith, which Forbes defines as 'a firm and sure assent of the mind, produced by the Holy Spirit from the Word, by which we acknowledge all things revealed by God in the Scriptures, and especially those concerning the mystery of our redemption and salvation, wrought by Christ, to be true, by reason of the authority of God who has revealed them.'²² Forbes concedes that the object of faith can be said to be all truth revealed by God in Scripture, but insists that the principal object of justifying faith is 'Christ as mediator and the redemption wrought by him.' In this, the influence of Calvin is evident. However, Forbes dismisses controversy on the nature of justifying faith as futile: the real question at issue is whether it is faith *alone* which justifies. 'To most of the disputants on both sides, this question appears of so great importance, that they think they must contend about it with a never-ending dissension, and an irreconcilable war.' The common opinion of Protestants, according to Forbes, is that the faith by which we are justified is a living faith, working by love, so that Roman Catholic objections to Protestantism on this account are irrelevant. Likewise, many Roman Catholics reject the meritorious character of any disposition in man as a preparation for justification. This indicates that the *locus* of the controversy lies elsewhere. 'Protestants, however, almost universally teach that we are justified by faith alone, and that not after the manner of a disposition (as the Romanists say) but after the manner of an instrument; that is, that justification is received, or, as they themselves say, apprehended, by no other thing than faith.'²³ However, Forbes points out that this is not scriptural. 'All the most learned Protestants' correctly deny that Scripture anywhere expressly states that faith *alone* justifies. Thus in the verse, 'a man is not justified by the works of the law, except by the faith of Jesus Christ', the word 'except' is to be understood in an *adversative* sense—that is, as 'but'. 'The Holy Scriptures nowhere, either expressly or by necessary consequence, attribute to faith alone the whole power of justifying, or what is the same thing, assert that faith is the only instrument or means of receiving and apprehending the grace of justification.'²⁴ St Paul speaks of justification

by faith because he was striving to exclude the works of the law and human merit from justification, and to place it upon the merit of Christ. However, by attributing justification to faith, St Paul does not exclude the other dispositions, such as penitence, love and hope, from the matter. Faith does not justify *alone*, although it does justify 'in a singular manner'. Man's works derive their worth from faith, so that just as faith without works is dead, so works without faith are nothing. Indeed, works cannot be excluded from justification without excluding faith itself: 'for who denies that it is a work of some kind, and even a work of ours—that is, by us performed, by the aid of grace?'²⁵ The opinion of those Protestants 'who teach that faith, when we are said to be justified by it, is not to be taken properly, but correlatively and metonymically—viz., for the justice of Christ and the forgiveness of sins, which are apprehended by faith' is to be rejected. Faith is 'an instrument or medium of our justification, only as it is a work; because we apprehend or obtain justice not by the habit, but by the act or operation of faith, and therefore faith, in the business of our justification, is to be conceived of as a work, not meritorious ... but purely instrumental, whereby we receive or obtain justice.'²⁶ Thus the opinions of St Paul and St James are seen not to conflict. Forbes concludes his discussion of justifying faith thus: 'since it is nowhere said in Holy Scripture ... that "we are justified by faith alone"; and since the Fathers, who have often used this expression, never understood it in the sense in which it is universally taken nowadays by Protestants ... we therefore [consider] ... that the opinion of all the more rigid Protestants is opposed as well to truth as to Christian charity.'²⁷ Likewise, the Romanist opinion that 'faith alone does *not* justify' is incorrect, in so far as justifying faith cannot be separated from charity; as St Augustine says, 'without love faith may be, but cannot profit'—nor therefore justify.

Forbes next considers the question of the formal cause of justification—whether the 'formal cause of justification is to be placed solely in the forgiveness of sins, or whether also in internal renewing and sanctification.' Both Roman Catholics and Protestants, according to Forbes, agree that faith *qua* faith is not the formal cause of justification, so that the essential difference between the Roman Catholic and Protestant doctrines of justification must be considered to lie in their respective conceptions of the *iustitia Christi*. 'Many Protestants say that the justice or obedience of Christ, in so far as it is applied and imputed to us by faith, is the formal cause of justification, whereby we are, and are pronounced, just before God.' However, certain other Protestants, and most Romanists, 'hold that Christ's justice or obedience imputed or applied to us is not the formal cause, but only the meritorious or impulsive cause ... of our justification.'²⁸ Forbes modifies this second position slightly, insisting that it is the justice of Christ itself (as opposed to the justice of Christ

applied or imputed to us) which is the meritorious, but not the formal, cause of justification. If the imputation of Christ's justice to us were the formal cause of justification, the following absurdities would result:²⁹

- 1) We ought to be accounted no less righteous than Christ himself before God.
- 2) All those who are justified are equally justified, as they are all just by the imputation of the one and the same justice of Christ, equally imputed to each person. The distinction between justification and sanctification allows this difficulty to be avoided, but Forbes rejects this distinction as *non satis solida*.
- 3) Those who are justified are more just in this life than they will be in the life eternal.

As noted in 2), Forbes insists that 'sanctification, and not merely the forgiveness of sins, pertains to justification.'³⁰ He is able to produce abundant patristic support for this thesis, not least that of St Augustine; indeed, Forbes displays his considerable knowledge of the earlier Reformed literature when he points out that the earlier Protestants were aware of the differences between their own teaching and that of St Augustine at this point. Forbes couples the forensic, or imputative, sense of justification with the factitive sense by linking the two concepts of imputed and inherent righteousness to form a single formal cause of justification: 'Justification is an entity, one by aggregation, and compounded of two, which by necessary conjunction and co-ordination are one only.'³¹ Forbes grants that it is undeniable that there are forensic overtones to the term 'justify' as used in Scripture, yet insists that the sinner is not merely pardoned but also healed and cleansed of his sins, so that 'the whole sanctification or renewal of man ought to be understood as comprehended in the expression "forgiveness of sins".'³²

The year of Forbes's death saw the birth of George Bull (1634–1710), Bishop of St Davids. Bull's most celebrated work was his *Harmonia Apostolica* (1669–70), an attack on solafideism. Bull conceived his work as a 'timely antidote against this Solifidianism, or rather Libertinism, which some in this dregs of time teach openly and shamelessly.'³³ Bull begins his discussion of James's doctrine of justification by noting the forensic sense of the term 'justification'. Both James and Paul use the term to mean 'to impute righteousness' — regarding a man as just, not making a man just.³⁴ Bull's polemic is here directed against Hugo Grotius, who distinguished the two propositions:

- 1) Man is justified by faith.
- 2) Faith is imputed to man for righteousness.

For Bull, the two propositions are identical. The following syllogism is then set up:

- 1) The justification which St Paul denies to works he ascribes to faith.

2) The justification which he ascribes to works is a judicial term, by which man is pronounced righteous.

Therefore: the justification which he attributes to faith is of a similar nature. This judicial concept of justification must be adhered to closely, 'not only to answer the perversions of the Roman Catholics, with which they have obscured the doctrine of both St Paul and St James, but also because it will be of some use to confute the Antinomians and Solifidians whom, on this question, I have considered as wandering in an opposite, but no less dangerous, manner.' Before developing this point, Bull explains what is meant by James's declaration that man is 'justified by works'. This 'does not mean that our works are the principal and meritorious cause of our justification', as that rests solely upon the divine mercy and the merit of Christ. By 'justification by works' we are to understand that works are the *conditio sine qua non* of justification. 'A man is therefore said to "be justified by works" because good works are ordered and established by God in the Gospel Covenant as the necessary condition for a man's justification.'³⁵

In view of this necessity of works as a *conditio sine qua non* of justification, Bull considers it impossible for the Libertines to defend a doctrine of justification by faith alone. The instrumentality of faith, as understood by the solafideists, is but 'a trifling piece of sophistry'. If the term 'instrument' is understood in its proper sense, as the secondary efficient cause, it is evident that faith cannot be the instrument of justification. Further, an instrumental cause operates according to its individual nature, and the consequent effect may be properly attributed to it. Thus it is absurd to understand faith as the instrument of justification, in that it is God who alone, by his gracious act of mercy, justifies man irrespective of his faith or works. Faith can only be an instrument of justification in the sense that it is 'commanded by God, and performed by his grace'. In other words, both faith and works can be said to exercise a *sine qua non* causality in relation to justification.

Bull then develops the judicial aspect of justification to bring forward another argument against the doctrine of justification *sola fide*. As justification clearly refers to the proceedings of a trial, it is instructive to consider what factors might influence the divine verdict. Bull draws the following conclusions:

- 1) Whoever is acquitted by the law of Christ must necessarily fulfil that law.
- 2) Therefore, by faith alone, no one is acquitted by the law of Christ.
- 3) Therefore no one is justified by faith without works. This somewhat tenuous conclusion is partially strengthened by his exploitation of two points which were conceded by most Reformed divines: a) that justifying faith must be a living faith—producing good works; b) that good works are necessary to salvation.

Bull thus asserts that 'good works not only accompany justifying faith, but also are no less required to justification than faith itself ... and are as much to be regarded as a cause in this matter of faith (that is, that faith and works are jointly prescribed as the only condition of justification in the Gospel Covenant).'³⁶

Jeremy Taylor (1613–67), Bishop of Down and Connor, is remembered chiefly for his devotional writings, although his contributions to moral theology are also of importance.³⁷ His theology of justification is best studied from the three sermons preached at Christ Church, Dublin, in 1662.³⁸ What is the difference between the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, and the righteousness of the gospel? The former 'placed their righteousness in negatives; they would not commit what was forbidden, but they cared but little for the included positive, and the omission of good actions did not trouble them; they would not hurt their brother in a forbidden instance, but neither would they do him good according to the intention of the commandment.' Thus 'they accounted themselves good, not for doing good, but for doing no evil; that was the sum of their theology ... they taught that God would put our good works and bad into the scale, and according to the heavier scale give a portion in the world to come; so that some evil they would allow to themselves and their disciples, always provided that it was less than the good they did.'³⁹ However, Taylor points to the inner motivation which underlies a moral action as the criterion of evangelical righteousness. The righteousness which makes us just in God's eyes is not external, but stems from the love of the heart, and the real change in mind and obedience of the Spirit. Christians must ensure that they do not 'but peep at the Sun of Righteousness'; rather, what is done, must be done well. 'True Christians are such as are crucified with Christ, and dead unto all sins; and finally place their whole love on God, and for his sake upon all mankind.'⁴⁰

Having noted the demands made of Christians by the gospel, Taylor turns to a consideration of the problem of justification. 'That we are justified by faith, St Paul tells us; that we are also justified by works, we are told in my text (James 2:24); and both may be true ... and how both these should be true is something harder to unriddle.'⁴¹ After a brief survey of the problems of definition, and the respective causalities of acts and habits, Taylor declares his intention of bypassing these subtleties, and proceeding directly to the theology of justification. 'The end of faith is that we should be disciples and servants of the Lord Jesus, advancing his Kingdom here, and partaking of it hereafter.'⁴² This being granted, as Taylor assumes it will be, he argues that it is therefore impossible to separate faith and works, or to teach that they are opposed to each other in effecting man's salvation. Taylor demonstrates this by setting up two propositions for discussion:⁴³

1) By faith only a man is not justified.

2) By works also a man is justified.

These two propositions, the one negative, the other positive, constitute the text of his sermon (James 2:24). In the first proposition, 'faith only' refers to *faith without obedience*. Abraham's faith without Abraham's works is a withered hand, which cannot work the life of grace in us, still less obtain eternal life for us. There is nothing inconsistent in man's having faith, and working unrighteousness—Taylor appeals to the 'faith of the devils' (James 2:19) as an example. 'If faith be defined to be any thing that does not change our natures, and make us to be a new creation unto God, if keeping the commandments be not in the definition of faith, it avails nothing at all.'⁴⁴ Taylor concludes that this point is so obvious that no further discussion is required. Without obedience, no man can go to heaven. Unless faith purges away our sins, it can never justify. Like a stomach powder, faith only works if it purges and purifies. 'No man's sins are pardoned, but in the same measure in which they are mortified, destroyed and taken away; so that if faith does not cure our sinful natures it can never justify, it can never procure our pardon.'⁴⁵ Thus justification and sanctification cannot be distinguished, except as words which signify 'the various steps of progression in the same course'. The two are distinct notionally, but not actually. Man is therefore justified by faith and by works, by the obedience of faith.

In his *Learned Discourse of Justification*, Richard Hooker spoke of 'that grand question, which hangeth yet in controversy between us and the Church of Rome, about the matter of justifying righteousness.'⁴⁶ The following century of Anglican divinity saw the same 'grand question', along with other, previously undisputed questions, becoming subjects of controversy within Anglicanism itself. A survey of the writings of the Caroline divines indicates a remarkable degree of agreement among them concerning the chief aspects of the doctrine of justification—*provided that they are considered as two distinct groups*: those who wrote before the Commonwealth being one group, and those who wrote after it another. In general, they may be distinguished as follows.

The *pre-Commonwealth divines* followed Richard Hooker, insisting that justifying righteousness was imputed to man, that faith was not a work, and that justification was to be considered distinct from sanctification. The *post-Commonwealth divines* taught, in general, that justifying righteousness was either inherent to man, or a combination of inherent and imputed righteousness; that man was justified on account of 'believing deeds'—i.e., that faith was a human work—and that sanctification was essentially an aspect of justification. The intervention of the Commonwealth between these two schools of thought suggests that the new directions taken within Anglicanism relating to the doctrine of justification arose as a

conscious reaction against the teaching of the Westminster Divines, whose theology of justification was similar, in many respects, to that of the pre-Commonwealth divines.

The significance of these observations to Newman's attempts to construct a *via media* doctrine of justification will be obvious. Newman's own doctrine of justification, expounded in the 1837 *Lectures on Justification*, is very similar to that of the post-Commonwealth divines on each of the three points mentioned. Newman himself appears to realize that his teaching is at variance with some of the pre-Commonwealth divines: in the *Appendix* to these lectures, Newman appealed to 'the three who have sometimes been considered the special lights of our later church, Hooker, Taylor and Barrow.'⁴⁷ While Newman is able to claim the support of the two latter for his own opinions, he is obliged to report that Hooker 'decides the contrary way, declaring not only for one special view of justification ... but that the opposite opinion is a virtual denial of gospel truth.'⁴⁸ The 'opposite opinion' in question happens to bear a remarkable resemblance to that of Newman! Furthermore, had Newman extended his analysis of the teaching of the Caroline divines to include those who wrote before the Commonwealth—such as Andrewes, Jewel, Reynolds, Downham, Ussher, Davenant and Whittaker—he would have found himself extremely embarrassed concerning the alleged 'Anglicanism' of his own doctrine of justification. The case for a *via media* doctrine of justification is thus seen to rest upon the teachings of a group of theologians who operated over a mere thirty-year period which immediately followed the greatest upset in English history—the period of the Commonwealth. It is therefore absurd to regard the divines of the Restoration period as in any way representing a definitive statement of the essence of 'Anglican' thinking on justification, and yet precisely this assumption underlies Newman's thinking, even if it is not explicitly acknowledged. To do this would be to lapse into an arbitrary historical positivism, unacceptable for two reasons:

1) Anglicanism cannot be defined with reference to what a small group of theologians, operating over such a short period of time, believed.

2) If any such group *can* be singled out, the *first* generation of Anglican theologians, including Cranmer and Hooker, must be deemed to have far greater claim to the distinction than the later Caroline divines.

Indeed, it is possible to argue that the post-Commonwealth divines effectively reversed the previous Anglican teaching on justification, thereby still further weakening their claim to the distinction in question.

In an earlier study, we argued that Newman's critique of Luther was seriously misguided, and that—regrettably—there are excellent

reasons for supposing that Newman deliberately misrepresented Luther in order to facilitate his critique of the Reformer.⁴⁹ In the present study, we have argued that Newman's own positive teaching, as contained in these lectures, corresponds to 'Anglican' thinking on justification during a period of theological *reaction*—when the Anglican theologians of the period were seeking to distance themselves from the Puritan divinity of the Westminster Confession, which was, for them, uncomfortably close in its statements on justification to those of the earlier Caroline divines. Underlying Newman's attempts to construct an authentically Anglican approach to justification is an arbitrary historical positivism, which inevitably invalidates his efforts in the eyes of all save those who share his historical presuppositions. Newman's references to Jeremy Taylor, Isaac Barrow, George Bull and Richard Baxter—all Restoration divines—and his evident embarrassment at Hooker's divergence from them, point to certain implicit historico-theological presuppositions which require to be made explicit and challenged. Newman often repeated his desire to 'build up a system of theology out of the Anglican divines', and indicated in his autobiography that the 1837 *Lectures on Justification* were a 'tentative inquiry' towards that end.⁵⁰ It is clear, both from the references to Anglican divines within those lectures, and from the substance of Newman's own position, that Newman has imposed upon the phrase 'Anglican divines' an interpretation which excludes the founding fathers of the Church of England, and practically every theologian it produced during the first century of its existence!

Newman's *Lectures* are an outstanding example of the polemical theology of the Victorian church, with all its strengths and weaknesses. They are, however, of no real permanent value to the Church of England today, and their tentative probings towards a *via media* doctrine of justification were to remain unexplored. The Caroline divines of the Restoration period may have developed a theology of justification which appeared to mediate between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism, but it is one whose 'Anglicanism' is open to question, and whose historico-theological foundations are impossible to sustain in the light of contemporary Reformation and Tridentine scholarship.

What, then, remains of the *via media*? The possibility of a coherent *Anglican* theology of justification as a *tertium quid* is no longer taken seriously. In practice, it may be regarded as near-certain that Anglican theologians will continue to embrace a spectrum of theologies of justification, as they have in the past. Those with evangelical persuasions will continue to hold doctrines of justification which are essentially Protestant in substance and emphasis, while those who are Anglo-Catholic will continue to hold doctrines which are closer to the teaching of Trent. The Anglican Church, therefore,

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by its very nature, may be said to possess a *via media* doctrine of justification. This does not, however, mean that Anglicans are agreed upon a single doctrine of justification which mediates between Protestant and Roman Catholic, but rather that the tensions which are everywhere evident between the Protestant and Catholic wings of the Church of England inevitably lead to a spectrum of theologies of justification within one church. That such a *via media* exists is undeniable; whether it has any significance is open to question.

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NOTES

- 1 See R. B. Knox, 'Bishops in the Pulpit in the 17th Century: Continuity amid Change', *Reformation, Conformity and Dissent*, R. B. Knox, ed. (Epworth, London 1977) pp.92-114.
- 2 For a list of the bishops in question, see Knox, op. cit., pp.112-14.
- 3 *ibid.*, p.94.
- 4 On this, see H. R. McAdoo, *The Spirit of Anglicanism: A Survey of Anglican Theological Method in the Seventeenth Century* (A. & C. Black, London 1965).
- 5 Text in E. F. K. Müller, *Die Bekenntnisschriften der reformierten Kirche* (Georg Böhme, Leipzig 1903), 525.15-526.5.
- 6 The words cited are Whitgift's: see Philip Hughes, *The Reformation in England* (Burns & Oates, London 1963), vol. 3, p.233.
- 7 Both reflect the Puritan position within the Church of England.
- 8 On Laud, see H. R. Trevor-Roper, *Archbishop Laud 1573-1645* (Macmillan, London 1962).
- 9 For the circumstances surrounding the work, see J. W. Packer, *The Transformation of Anglicanism 1643-1660* (Manchester University, Manchester 1969), pp.26-8. For English Arminianism in general, see A. W. Harrison, *Arminianism* (Duckworth, London 1937), pp.122-56.
- 10 Packer, op. cit., p.55.
- 11 Cited Packer, op. cit., p.56.
- 12 Thus H. C. Porter, *Reformation and Reaction in Tudor Cambridge* (CUP, Cambridge 1958), p.281.
- 13 Cited Packer, op. cit., p.59.
- 14 *Two Letters Written by the Rt Rev. Thomas Barlow* (London 1701), citation p.139; cf. p.102. A copy of this rare book may be found in the Tanner Collection at the Bodleian Library.
- 15 *A Treatise of Justification* (London 1639), p.2. Note that 'Downham' is often spelt 'Downname' in contemporary sources.
- 16 *ibid.*, p.29.
- 17 *ibid.*, pp.47-8.
- 18 *A Treatise on Justification, or the 'Disputatio de Iustitia Habituali et Actuali'* (London 1844), pp.164-5.
- 19 Andrewes, *Works* (LACT, Oxford 1841-52), vol. V, pp.104-26.
- 20 *ibid.*, pp.116-17.
- 21 *Divine Meditations*, Sonnet XIV. The study of D. L. Peterson, 'John Donne's Holy Sonnets and the Anglican Doctrine of Contrition', *Studies in Philology*, 56, 1959, pp.504-18 is useful here, but generalizes concerning 'Anglican' theology.
- 22 William Forbes, *Considerationes* (2 vols, LACT, Oxford 1850-56), vol. I, p.16.
- 23 *ibid.*, p.32.

- 24 *ibid.*, p.38.
- 25 *ibid.*, p.54.
- 26 *ibid.*, p.56.
- 27 *ibid.*, pp.86–8.
- 28 *ibid.*, p.126.
- 29 *ibid.*, pp.134–6.
- 30 *ibid.*, p.174.
- 31 *ibid.*, p.204.
- 32 *ibid.*, p.216.
- 33 George Bull, *Harmonia Apostolica* (LACT, London 1842), p.ix.
- 34 *ibid.*, p.8.
- 35 *ibid.*, p.11. Bull indicates that he understands ‘justification by faith’ in a similar sense.
- 36 *ibid.*, p.34.
- 37 Jeremy Taylor, *Works*, ed. C. P. Eden, 10 vols. (London 1847–54). For the best study of Caroline moral theology, see H. R. McAdoo, *The Structure of Caroline Moral Theology* (Longmans, London 1949).
- 38 Taylor, *Works*, volume VIII, pp.247–302.
- 39 *ibid.*, sermon 1, p.250.
- 40 *ibid.*, p.265.
- 41 *ibid.*, sermon 3, p.284.
- 42 *ibid.*, p.287.
- 43 *ibid.*, p.288.
- 44 *ibid.*, p.289.
- 45 *ibid.*, p.290.
- 46 Richard Hooker, *Works*, ed. J. Keble (OUP, Oxford 1845³), vol. III, p.486.
- 47 J. H. Newman, *Lectures on Justification* (Rivingtons, London 1874⁴), p.400.
- 48 *ibid.*, p.402.
- 49 A. E. McGrath, ‘John Henry Newman’s *Lectures on Justification*: The High Church Misrepresentation of Luther’, *Churchman*, 97, 1983, pp.112–22.
- 50 J. H. Newman, *Apologia pro vita sua* (Dent, London 1966), p.86.