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*JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH IN ST. JAMES AND
ST. PAUL.*

It is probably beyond us absolutely to reconcile what St. James and St. Paul say on justification. The harmonist has to aim at clearing away apparent verbal, superficial discrepancies that the divergence which ultimately comes to view may be the more instructive. But it will not be right simply to take St. Paul's statement as the standard, and square in St. James how we can. While St. Paul's is the longer, more formal, fully reasoned exposition, St. James is not one whose words may be estimated according to their quantity or their formal completeness of argument or statement.

The point is well worn by controversy, but that at least witnesses to its importance, and the more one knows of the popular Christianity of England the greater does this seem here and now.

I should put it, then, that St. James as much as St. Paul accepts the doctrine of justification by faith. They differ in that St. Paul recognizes but one sort of faith exhibited in various ways but radically one; St. James, two things which may be called faith, a dead faith and by implication a living faith, whose vitality has to be tested, attaching justifying force exclusively to living faith. Assuming we are to harmonize, we must either say St. Paul would disown the dead faith of St. James from being faith at all, or make them mean different things by justifying.

“What doth it profit, my brethren, if a man say he hath faith, but have not works? can that (R.V.) faith

save him ? ” This abrupt beginning has, no doubt, some reference to the faith of *v. 1*. But obviously there is a major premiss understood, which the man introduced assumes and expects his hearers to grant, i.e. Faith saves men. Does St. James grant it? His argument shows that he does, provided it is not carelessly interpreted. Or we may say he distinguishes, but introduces the distinction gradually. For he himself answers for the man not having works, but puts into the man’s mouth the claim to faith, not committing himself at first to affirm or deny that he has faith, but after an illustration from ineffectual sympathy concludes that what the man has is dead faith, faith dead in itself. It is not that faith without works is insufficient, that it needs the co-operation of something else for joint efforts to effect salvation. It is not a barren parent to have as adopted children the works of the law or of morality. It is dead in itself quite apart from the question of works, though it is the absence of works that betrays this. Practically, his view is, a living faith does save a man, a dead faith cannot.

In *v. 18*: “Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works.” It is plain he is speaking of a faith and of works vitally connected; and of that office of works which is to bear witness to the existence of faith.

In *v. 19*: In place of living faith and its fruit works we have the intellectual belief of demons and their shudder or horror. St. James does not say *φοβούνται*. Fear is indeed in itself a neutral word; but when the object is God it so uniformly stands for willing submission to awe of God’s majesty, that St. James avoids the word. Such a fear would be work. The outcome of the will is work, and there is no work where there is no will. But the horror, the thrill of the skin from external irritation of the nerves, is wholly

passive, even where it is a gracious symptom. The faith of the demons is a dead faith devoid of work though not devoid of result.

vv. 21–24: The case of Abraham. The intimate and inseparable connexion of faith and works is shown by St. James actually alleging Abraham's justification by works as a fulfilment of the Scripture which said he was justified by faith. Working is here little more to him than faith in energy.

So in *v.* 24. "A man is justified by works and not only by faith." He does not say partly by works. So far as they are mentioned at all, it is wholly by works. And yet it is not *and not by faith*, but *and not by faith only* (*μόνον*). For the explanation we have to look to the context. Faith occupies the whole ground as truly as do works. It is not merely the antecedent of works, the source of which works are the stream. It does not give birth to work, and then abdicate or vanish. It lives in work, though this may not be the Apostle's application of the figure of body and spirit.

v. 25: "Well, anyhow, it stands to reason that a harlot was not justified by works." Certainly she was. Her faith was a practical faith. She received the messengers, and sent them out another way. There is nothing intrinsically good in that action regarded alone, but it was a work, and that work the fruit of faith.

St. James gives two concrete instances of justifying works; and it is to be observed that they are not good works, like clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, preaching the Gospel. Child killing and treachery are *primâ facie* evil works, it is only by reference to their motive faith that they become good, and assume a justifying character.

v. 26: "As the body without the spirit is dead, etc." The strangeness of the illustration shows how faith

predominates, occupies the whole field in St. James' view. Living faith is everything, both body and spirit. He cannot imagine works in their doing, except as a function of faith. To say that a man is justified by works is to say he is justified by the action of faith. All good works are to him works of faith; and we might say, as St. Paul knows only one faith, so it is natural to St. James to think of all work as good work. Ἔργον and ποιεῖν and their cognates are almost solely used by him of what is good: to say a man is ποιητῆς ἔργου is itself a praise. The only exceptions are ii. 9, ἀμαρτίαν ἐργάζεσθε, and v. 15, ἀμαρτίας πεποιηκώς. (Cf. iii. 16, πᾶν φαῦλον πρᾶγμα.)

For some further notes on the passage.

v. 14: Μὴ δύναται ἡ πίστις σῶσαι αὐτόν; Σῶσαι shows that the ὄφελος expected by the man was σωτηρία, otherwise there might be various profitable effects falling short of salvation; i.e. it points to the assumption of a general law, Faith saves.

The benefit in question further on, vv. 21–25, is not salvation, but justification. St. Paul seldom connects salvation with faith, and not in his great argument; (Acts xvi. 21, 1 Cor. i. 21, Ephes. ii. 8, Rom. x. 9, 10; cf. 1 Tim. i. 16, Gal. ii. 20.) Elsewhere it is proportionately more frequent. Acts xv. 11, 1 Peter i. 5, 9, Heb. x. 39, and ἡ πίστις σου σέσωκέ σε of the Gospels, which must sometimes refer to more than bodily healing, Luke vii. 50, xvii. 19.

vv. 15–16: This is not an example of faith without works; it is an illustration from the analogous case of good feeling not issuing in works. The εἴπη of v. 16 is parallel to the λέγη of v. 14. In both cases the verb is assumed to represent some actual feeling or state of mind behind the saying; but the feeling in the second case has nothing necessarily to do with faith.

v. 20: θέλεις δὲ γινῶναι, κ.τ.λ.: Perhaps "Hast thou a

mind to know, or art thou blind because thou wilt not see ?” as Bengel: “Sane *inanes* homines nolunt scire et dissimulant.” Only the wilfully thoughtless (*κενός*) can fail to see what may be called tautological truth. The statement contains its own proof, or at least the beginning of it. “Art thou willing to recognize that faith apart from works is without work ; that what does no good does thee no good ?” *ἀργός* used with conscious reference to its derivation as in 2 Peter i. 8, *οὐκ ἀργούς οὐδέ ἀκάρπους* ; and *ἔργα* practically identified with the form of salvation.

v. 22: *ἡ πίστις συνήργει τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ*. Only in this word *συνήργει* are faith and the works of the faithful regarded as apart. One would have expected rather *ἐνήργει ἐν τοῖς ἔργοις αὐτοῦ*. But the figure is difficult anyhow. *Συνήργει* involves doing of *ἔργα*, works of faith alongside of works of the faithful. Dr. Scott, in the *Speaker's Commentary*, prefers the rendering, “wrought with him in his works” ; and maintains it by forcible arguments. This would not seriously conflict with the rest of the passage, but makes Faith too much a thing external to the man, and it is difficult to take *τοῖς ἔργοις* otherwise than dependent on *συνήργει*. Alford makes St. James in the last verse of the chapter view faith as the body and obedience as the spirit. Here then he understands “Faith wrought with obedience.” But even if in the final verse obedience is the spirit, the living faith is thought of as body and spirit together, and as in this *v. 22* the co-operating faith must be living faith, obedience must be in it and not a fellow-worker outside.

Knowing quotes a preferable interpretation of Bey-schlag's.

St. James views works here in a different way from elsewhere. These are not works in their doing, for in that they are inseparable from faith ; but works already done and now producing their sequence of effect under the control

of God alone; and yet forming providentially new material for the exercise of faith. Abraham's faith won him a son; here was a new field for his faith, which ultimately gave room for its crowning work, the offering of the willing victim in assurance of Resurrection. St. James, then, in quoting Genesis xv. 6, is fully aware of its relative date, as is shown indeed by *ἐπληρώθη ἡ γραφή*, as if it were the fulfilment of a prediction; he regards Genesis xv. 6 in its place as the applying to an undeveloped state of things a sentence which awaits the verification of development. So with Christ the *τῆς πίστεως ἀρχηγὸν καὶ τελειωτὴν*, every victory led to and furnished a field for a wider and more strenuous conflict, until in the Cross and Resurrection He became *εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα τετελειωμένος*.

ἐκ τῶν ἔργων ἡ πίστις ἐτελειώθη. This argument assumes justification by faith, for he regards Abraham's justification *ἐκ τῶν ἔργων* as proved when he has shown that the *ἔργα* were ancillary to the perfecting of his faith.

Both St. Paul and St. James seem to regard the justification of Abraham in Genesis xv. 6 not merely as a declaring him righteous with respect to that particular act of belief, nor only as regards his whole character and actions up to that point, but as regards his whole life and character absolutely. If so, the real difficulty is in the first verse of Genesis xxii., "God did tempt Abraham." Why, if He knew him to be already righteous, was there need to do so? At this point it seems to me the real difference comes in between the two Apostles. It is a matter that comes up in several places of the Old Testament, but perhaps not elsewhere in the New. It may point to a graduation of the Divine energy which not only logic but the very blaze of the Christian revelation conceals to us. God is regarded sometimes as omniscient, sometimes as acquiring knowledge experimentally; in

Genesis, as at Babel (xi. 5), Sodom (xviii. 21); in 2 Chronicles xxxii. 31, of Hezekiah; in Isaiah lxiii. 8, of Israel (as implied); and strikingly in Psalm cxxxix. : for that in a great part of it dwells on God's omniscience, but ends with the Psalmist's prayer that God may know him not only by searching but by testing, a paradox from which the Prayer-book translator has so far shrunk as to avoid the word *know* in *v.* 23.

The justification which St. James is thinking of is that sort to which is applied the unsatisfactory word *forensic*. For in *v.* 18 works are spoken of as evidence; and in the case of Abraham the works and obedience are in answer to a test; a test is not meant to create what is not, but to demonstrate what is.

The natural feeling with which St. James started seems to have drawn no practical distinction between faith and works; cf. St. Matt. xxi. 31, 32. He finds in possession aphorisms, Faith saves and Faith justifies, and has no intention of dislodging them, but for that very reason is less guarded in wording his argument in a way which an inattentive hearer may take for disparagement of faith, or anyhow an exalting of works at the expense of it. St. Paul for a certain purpose contrasts faith and works; St. James has no contrast between faith and works, but between no works and works, between a working faith and an unworking faith.

Faith without works is dead, given of course time for working, allowing it time to draw, so to say, its first breath. The connexion between faith and works assumed or pointed out by St. James must be closer than mere consistency and correspondence. What is Faith? Is a definition to be expected? In what terms can it be defined? Into what elements can it be analysed? To what points more surely fixed can it be referred? Faith, Hope and

Charity are classed together by St. Paul. Of these it is clear that *ἀγάπη* is incapable of definition because *ὁ Θεὸς ἀγάπη ἐστίν*. Then it is reasonable if not inevitable to infer that Faith too is elemental, not to be analysed or defined any more than an individual. This is borne out by such a discussion of the word *πίστις* as is in Sanday and Headlam's *Romans* p. 31 sqq.; the manifold uses and applications suggest some deep principle which comes to the surface or exhibits itself in various ways. A feature in Scripture points the same way. In the mention of faith the sequence of thought is sometimes not easy to follow, or at least not obvious. Thus Numbers xx. 12, at first sight one would have said the words of Moses and Aaron certainly showed faith, however censurable on other grounds, and that the fact proved it. So in Matthew xvii. 20 the disciples seem to have made the attempt in the full expectation and, as we might say, belief that they could cast out the evil spirit. In Luke xvii. 5-10 the Lord's answer is quite unexpected and the connexion of the following parable difficult.

But if Faith cannot be defined, it does not follow nothing can be said about it. Much may be said to identify and distinguish and describe it, the circumstances under which it acts, its method of acting and the results, as in Hebrews xi. 1. ("Not a logical definition of faith, but a description of its practical effect": Rendall *ad loc.*) But I think it impossible to question that it is a dependence upon or committal unto God or Christ of the whole man. If it were questioned, it might not be easy to demonstrate that it engages the whole man, but I venture to say that the Christian conscience revolts at anything less.¹ Faith

¹ "Faith is not an intellectual assent, nor a sympathetic sentiment merely. It is the absolute surrender of self to the will of a Being who has a right to command this surrender. It is this which places men

accepts God as the one principle of light and knowledge and so believes His word ; it accepts God as good, and so reposes trust in Him ; it accepts Him as Lord and commits the will to Him, submits the will to Him to will the things He wills, but something deeper offers the will itself to Him to be animated and inspired from the divine source. Will is involved in all energy of faith in believing and trusting as well as in obeying. In the case of obedience it is the will to do His will that is involved in Faith. Will is man's contribution to work. God giveth it a body as it may please Him ; and if the will is to do His will, the body He gives it is a good and righteous work accepted as evidence of the faith from which it proceeded. Believe in the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved. Lord is not merely an honorific title, nor indicates only that He is able to do what is looked for, but reminds the inquirer that inherent in belief is obedient service of the Lord Christ. This committal of the will to God is not a lapse into passivity, not mere resignation. God is omnipotent apart from any concession on man's part. It is an active adoption of God's will as the man's own, actively carried on so far as lies within his power. To offer the will to God is not to destroy it, but to exercise it *κατὰ θεόν*. Then we might say that Faith without the spirit of obedience is not real faith, but the word used by St. James is not *unreal* but *dead*.

It is so universally agreed that *δικαιοῦν* is to acknowledge as just and not to make just, it might seem hopeless to say a word on the other side. (Perhaps we may call the first the *subjective*, and the second the *factive*, meaning of *δικαιοῦν* and such verbs.) When it is pointed out that the regular force of the termination added to an adjective stem

in personal relation to God, which (in St. Paul's language) justifies them before God. For it touches the springs of their actions."—Lightfoot's *Colossians*, p. 187.

is factitive, as *τυφλοῦν*, *to make blind*, the answer is that the case of adjectives of moral meaning, as in *ἀξιοῦν*, *ὀσιοῦν*, *δικαιοῦν*, is an exception. But why is it an exception? Because a moral quality cannot be imparted from outside, and so the form is left available for the next nearest meaning. Morals depend on the man's willing action. If a man is not by his voluntary goodness *ὀσιος*, it is inconceivable that he can be made so by external action. But this inconceivableness is at the bottom of all St. Paul's argument. It is implied by the necessity of the death of Christ. It was the impossibility of justification by any conceivable method (My will is perverse, nothing in me can straighten it, nothing outside me can work it) that was the awful burden on St. Paul's mind before he found a practical solution in Christ. His insatiable thirst was for a real righteousness. Was he one to be satisfied with anything but reality?

Then grammatically the assertion is not entirely true. There are forms in which the sense of *make* is available even with moral meaning, and consequently is used.

(1) The deponent uses must be derived from the factitive meaning; Psalm xvii. 26, *ὀσιωθήσῃ* parallel to *ἀθῶος ἔσῃ*, *ἐκλεκτὸς ἔσῃ*, *διαστρέψεις* *thou shalt behave piously*; Psalm lxxvii. 8, 37, *ἐπιστάθησαν*,¹ *they turned out actually faithful*, Sir. xxvii. 17, xxix. 3; and probably occasionally from *δικαιοῦν*, as Isaiah xlv. 25 *ἀπὸ κυρίου δικαιοθήσονται*, for there is nothing in the context to suggest accusation or acquittal and the previous verse speaks of actual righteousness; so Sir. xviii. 22, *μὴ μείνης ἕως θανάτου δικαιοθήναι*, xxvi. 29, xxxiv. 5, Gen. xxxviii. 26 (cf. Gal. ii. 16, 17). The natural English renderings would be *proved*, *showed themselves*, *were found*; but these, according to

¹ The Vulg. has indeed *nec fideles habiti sunt*; but the translator was not clear about the word rendering verse 8 curiously *non est creditus cum Deo spiritus ejus*, a confusion with *ἐπιστεύθη*.

modern idiom, are only formally subjective. And the same is true of the Greek in the instances last quoted. Even granted the *δικαιοῦν* formally subjective, the judge is assumed to judge correctly, and the whole weight of meaning is thrown on actually existing righteousness. Connotation is always apt to follow denotation; and as *δικαιοῦν*, to regard, comes from a *δικαιοῦν*, to make (imaginary if you will), so is it ready to revert if need be to the original and natural force of the termination.

(2) In the reflexive use the inconceivableness of meaning clearly does not arise; and so we have Psalm lxxii. 13, *ματαίως ἐδικαίωσα τὴν καρδίαν μου*, where a subjective or forensic force would be quite inapplicable (cf. Jer. iii. 11).

ἀξιῶν is always subjective; but here the meaning of the adjective itself naturally appeals to a judgment.

Then though the factitive sense of *δικαιοῦν* was excluded generally by unsuitableness, it was waiting there and ready to press in.

In Revelation xxii. 11 no one, apart from MS. authority, would hesitate to call *δικαιοσύνην ποιησάτω* the gloss on *δικαιωθήτω*; but as (if I may judge with all diffidence from Alford's Apparatus Criticus) *δικαιωθήτω* is in any case an early reading, the argument for my purpose is stronger if *δικαιωθήτω* was substituted as familiarly bearing the meaning of *δικ. ποιησ.* than if it were original and standing in need of a gloss.

The forensic meaning of *δικαιοῦν* would start from the factitive; it would be originally *to make δικαίος*, only *δικαίος* according to a forensic standard. And taking the forensic meaning of the verb as subjective (which no doubt it becomes, i.e. *δικαιοῦν*=to hold or treat as absolutely *δικαίος*), it is only one branch of the subjective meaning. The word forensic is strictly suitable when *δικαίος* has the negative meaning of *not guilty* after accusation or suspicion

of guilt, as in Matthew xxvii. 19. But *δικαιοῦν* has also the meaning to regard as positively and actively righteous, as Romans ii. 13, *οἱ ποιηταὶ τοῦ νόμου δικαιωθήσονται*, where, on the one hand, the meaning must be subjective, for the doers of the law are just already and do not want making just, and on the other there is no suspicion of guilt to set aside. Still, as a rule, the subjective meaning of *δικαιοῦν* more naturally goes with the negative *δικαίως*, to declare not guilty. Where the thought is of positive active righteousness of actual men it would commonly, if the word allowed it, be more obvious to take a factitive sense, to make righteous.

Man has a continual debt of activity to God, and in the uninterrupted discharge of that debt, or at least in the spirit which leads to its uninterrupted discharge, *δικαιοσύνη* consists. Therefore to those to whom activity is possible there is no being negatively *δικαίως*, not guilty, without being actively righteous. There is apart from Christ a justification of sin at once factitive and forensic (as in classical use) provided in the original course of nature. It may be called a degenerate case of justification, *Ἡ ἁμαρτία ἀποτελεσθεῖσα ἀποκνεῖ θάνατον*, and *ὁ ἀποθανὼν δεδικαίωται ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας*. It is not naturally beneficial to the justified, nor does it naturally justify God as the Creator of what has to be destroyed. But St. Paul has to show how through Christ it is adopted into the salutary process so as to help on both these ends.

There are places in St. Paul where it would be more natural were it allowable to take *δικαιοῦν* of making absolutely righteous. Romans iii. 26, *δικαίον καὶ δικαιοῦντα*, suggests that the righteousness conferred on man is like God's. Romans iv. 25, *διὰ τὴν δικαίωσιν ἡμῶν*, connected with Christ's Resurrection, is more naturally of positive righteousness. The *δικαίωσις* which is the abolition of guilt is rather associated by St. Paul with Christ's death. If so, the

subjective sense would have little force : it would be rather with a view to making than with a view to declaring righteous. So in Romans, v. 18, in spite of the parallel *κατάκριμα*, the *δικαίωσω ζωῆς* (as opposed to the *δικαίωσις θανάτου*, Romans vi. 7) is more naturally understood absolutely. One might add Romans iv. 5, *τὸν δικαιοῦντα τὸν ἀσεβῆ*, for *ἀσεβῆς* is not a word of forensic associations. Or again in Romans viii. 29, 30, the forensic sense seems hardly to fit in with the elevation of the passage, "Whom he did foreknow, them he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son . . . and whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he regarded and treated as blameless and innocent, and whom he thus exempted from suspicion of guilt, them he also glorified." This does not fill out the *συμμόρφους τῆς εἰκόνας τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ* as one would have expected.

But no doubt St. Paul's use of *δικαιοῦν* is as a rule the subjective use. This (i.) because the justification with which his argument is specially concerned is the initial, the transition from guilt to innocence which naturally calls up to the mind a tribunal and a judge. But (ii.) still more from his feeling of a personal character and object in *δικαιοσύνη*. The only fault indeed he finds explicitly with the righteousness of the law is that it is not practically forthcoming ; but there is a feeling running through that it is at the best a cold impersonal dead righteousness, not worth calling righteousness beside that which is to the living God, that there is no true righteousness of the creature but such as is to God. I would word it that with St. Paul *δικαιοῦν* means to make forensically, subjectively, relatively righteous, but relatively to God. And relatively to God is to him identical with absolutely ; so the distinction between forensic and actual, between make and regard, is merged. It is possible to pass

without interruption from one to the other. But it is not as if mere will (so far as human intelligence can conceive) could make justice. Justice is not an independent standard to which God perfectly conforms; it is the expression of His will. But it is (if our thought may be exercised in such things) an element of the Divine character which can be revealed to our minds and approved by our judgments apart from the assurance of His personality. It can be exhibited in the creature, and when we say that God is just we mean that as far as we can compare different circumstances (and that is a very great limitation), the whole of His doings, whether we know enough to perceive this or not, does answer to that element justice of which we have already some real if imperfect knowledge.

I wish to maintain that the conclusion reluctantly reached by SH. that justification (in St. Paul's view) works by a fiction is not a sound conclusion, and to enter no more than absolutely necessary on the office of the Atonement in it, or on other points connected with it as the place in it and effect of Holy Baptism.

While thinking that arguments above adduced for a factitive sense of *δικαιοῦν* are worth consideration, I would not rest on that but rather on the necessity that what God does must be done in truth, and what He pronounces is incapable of fiction, and the certainty that this was the belief of St. Paul; and further, as pointed out by Newman (*Justification*, p. 84 sqq.), that the voice of the Lord is mighty in operation. "God's word is the instrument of His deed. When then He solemnly utters the command, 'Let the soul be just,' it becomes just." When God justifies the ungodly it is as when Christ heals the sick and raises the dead; the men cease to be ungodly, sick or dead who were previously denoted by these defects.

SH. say "The facts of language are inexorable . . .

δικαιούν, δικαιούσθαι have reference to a judicial verdict and to nothing beyond." This is rather beyond their own facts ; it is straining language to speak of judicial verdict in connexion with, e.g., Luke vii. 29. But a judicial verdict may be viewed from more than one point. But is it reasonable because St. Paul brings in a figure from human society to tie him down to the details of circumstance ? A judicial verdict declares a man just according to the standard of the local polity. God as judge speaks it with regard to His own standard. A human court excuses the fallibility of its verdicts by the inevitable imperfection of human insight. It cannot be so with God. On any standard human or divine those may fairly be classed among *δίκαιοί* who come under any one, not necessarily more than one, of these heads. (i) Those who never committed an *ἀδίκημα*. (ii.) Those who having done so have made it good, whether by compensation, or by exhausting the punishment due. (iii.) Those who having done so have got rid of the spirit of *ἀδικία*, and have gained, or been given by change of mind, the internal character of *δικαιοσύνη*.

As to (i.) it is naturally impossible that those who have committed *ἀδικήματα* should be classed, except by fiction among those who have not. Yet it is not clear but what this is divinely possible, not by undoing the past, but by separating the personality of the man from the past as by death and resurrection. But without insisting on this, in what ways is the *ἡδίκηκός* distinguished from the *δικαίος*. Answering to (ii.) he has incurred a debt to those outside him, whether to God or to His creatures ; and to (iii.) he has injured himself becoming burdened with a sense of guilt, and acquiring in greater or less degree the character and habit of *ἀδικία*. There is no common-sense impossibility in God remitting the debt to Himself, and compensating to other creditors their loss, nor again in the man coming to a better mind and getting

rid of the feeling of guilt. It is common experience that assures us of the difficulty of these things; and Christian doctrine and St. Paul's teaching are on the same side, aggravating the estimate of the debt, and instead of difficulty showing impossibility, apart from means held in reserve by God which could neither be anticipated nor imagined, nor now more than practically apprehended.

Then (ii.) though the figure of debt is not one applied by St. Paul to sin, he has what bears on this as in speaking of purchase and redemption. But it may be better not to dwell here but to go on to

(iii.) The just man is one possessing the character whose proper outcome is just actions. He has not of necessity performed just actions; time to do so may be wanting, the opportunity have not yet arisen. When it does arise, he may change and act unjustly and become unjust instead of just. The performance of just actions is the only criterion human witnesses can have of a just character, but we cannot deny to God an immediate discernment. Without then restricting God's justification to this third method, I take it that at least therein may be seen how God can justify without fiction. From two sides the mercy of God is set free to act in truth, on the side of Christ by death and resurrection, on the side of man by faith. There is a necessary attraction of God upon the being; unbelief resists it, faith abstains from resisting. But it has no instrument through which to act. The old nature, the flesh, as it is called, from what has become its dominant element is tainted; its members are incapable as yet of being even *ὄπλα δικαιοσύνης τῷ θεῷ*, much less, as they were meant to be, the natural organs of home-bred righteous energy. So though faith is righteous as far as it goes, it is not more than latent potential righteousness; and, moreover, has as yet no active conquering force to convert from evil into good the ungodliness of nature in

which it is imprisoned. And here parenthetically of faith before Christ. It is clear that then principles were not exhibited, in a sense mystical truth such as St. Paul teaches is not meant for exhibition ; but then the mercy of God was content with provisional arrangements not of lasting use except that they deferred inevitable results till Christ should come. There was the seed of corruption, the severance from God and from life ; but dissolution had not of necessity proceeded far ; there was, as there is, much in human nature that was relatively good, though it was separated from the only end in which it could be radically good, being incapable of love towards God.

But faith, in spite of its evil surroundings and its own imbecility, is, so far as it goes, good, though not meritorious, and it is not in God to destroy good. It comes from what in man is central, inmost, deepest, most personal, all-pervading, and it is directed towards God the Author of all good. While hardly itself actual *δικαιοσύνη*, it is such as could, if it pleased God, without fiction *λογισθῆναι εἰς δικαιοσύνην*. It is at first an empty hand held out to receive, a channel into and through which goodness can flow and flow on ; in it the Almighty will graciously recognize an appeal for means of expression, instruments of effect, relief from the imprisonment of the old nature, in short, life. The thing is not too hard for the Lord, but it is no ordinary evoking even of Almighty power. To the faith which looks to him he sets forth His Son not only for the relief and abolition of guilt, but for the supply of a new nature in which righteousness can properly be expressed, a righteous nature because it is the nature of Christ become communicable. Faith in Christ, which is the form faith in God now takes, is not itself union with Christ. The union is the gift conferred in answer to the appeal of faith ; for I suppose we may fairly say from St John i. 12, " To them that

believe on his Name gave He power to become children of God." The first act of union must necessarily be to alienate the old nature, to divest the person of it before he can put on the new. This is the death spoken of in Romans vi. as in some way identified with the death of Christ; it is the first step in justification, involving the abolition of guilt, but not in itself as yet the actual saving process; it would, so St. Paul implies in 1 Corinthians xv., have no beneficial effect but that it is followed by resurrection, necessarily followed by a resurrection in some mysterious way one with the Resurrection of Christ, a new birth, the investing with a new nature. The old remains indeed severed but not yet removed. It is now in the sight of God a circumstance external to the man, but pressing very closely. It may furnish instruments for his service of God, or may exercise a foreign tyranny, or become a wilfully assumed ally; to it in its severance from God, as to forbidden ground, he may choose to return, instead of abiding in the new, and may make it the region of his acting and willing though no longer a home; for the old relation of the man to it, natural and divinely originated, is broken irreparably.

Faith was used by God as an instrument of uniting the man to Christ. Whether or no we may say he could not, anyhow apart from that he would not, have effected the union. The continuance is equally necessary to the maintenance of the union at least in this life. Galatians ii. 20, *ὁ δὲ νῦν ζῶ ἐν σαρκὶ ἐν πίστει ζῶ τῇ τοῦ υἱοῦ τοῦ θεοῦ*; or 2 Corinthians i. 24, *τῇ γὰρ πίστει ἐστήκατε*; or Romans xi. 20, *τῆ ἀπιστία ἐξεκλάσθησαν σὺ δὲ τῇ πίστει ἔστηκας*; or Hebrews x. 38, *ὁ δὲ δικαίος μου ἐκ πίστεως ζήσεται καὶ ἐὰν ὑποστείληται οὐκ εὐδοκεῖ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐν αὐτῷ*.

We might have expected that God, all-seeing and fore-knowing, would only at the first accept that faith which He either saw or at least foreknew would persevere. But it is

clear both from St. Paul and other New Testament writers, and from our Lord Himself, that it is not so. Three times (1 Cor. x. 1-13, Heb. iii. 7-iv. 11, Jude 5) the destruction of the people in the wilderness after their acceptance as the people of God is applied for warning to Christians, and therefore almost of necessity as a pattern of what does take place in the Christian Church. The use of the imperative (*Abide in Me* (John xv. 14, 1 John ii. 28) and the hypothetical *If ye abide* (John xv. 5, 7, Romans xi. 22, Col. i. 23) recognizes the possibility of not abiding. But, above all, our Lord's illustrations from fruit-bearing vegetation, the parables of the Sower and the Seed and of the Vine, show that that life, which is meant to be permanent in a man, may be received and the man actually live and grow in it, and yet fail of permanence in it. The fruit in an ordinary way is that which contains the seed. To insist on this is so accordant with New Testament analogy that it ought not to seem fanciful. At least in the parable of the sower we have to think of the fruit both as that which the plant gives up from itself to the planter, and as that which contains the perpetuation of life.

We are in the neighbourhood of profundities, but it is a question of popular theology which has brought us there. I wish to avoid them while recognizing their existence; to trace the shore, so to say, of the deep waters, but not attempt to sound their depths. It seems necessary to draw, in the case of human beings a distinction of person and nature in some respects like the one familiar in the doctrine of the Incarnation. The Catholic expression of that doctrine is wholly true and necessary to the Church, but it can only express truth up to a certain point. I would not offer the distinction in human beings generally as more than, so to say, the convenience of a rough outline, with which we may note in filling up the details how far they coincide. Per-

sonality is an elemental, insoluble idea. On it turn the questions which no one can answer, and from it come, in all appearance uncaused, the causative energies which defy calculation or prediction. Human personality can only be defined as that which the dress of human nature will fit. It is, we may think, apart from its manifestations, i.e. its workings, inscrutable to every created intelligence. Nothing is hidden from the Divine omniscience. In that God knows whether the faith which appears is an ingrained characteristic, or accidental function of the person; and it may probably be, too, that He also perceives a difference of the embryo which nothing short of Divine perfection of insight could penetrate to discern. But the creature's explicit knowledge goes on in time and is dependent on manifestations; and as it is part of the glory of God to justify His ways to created beings, the faith has to be tested whether it is genuine by workings. The *τὸ δοκίμιον τῆς πίστεως* of James i. 3 and of 1 Peter i. 7 seem to allow this expression, but St. Paul words it not that the faith is tested but that the man is tested with regard to the faith. 2 Corinthians xiii. 5, *ἑαυτοὺς πειράζετε εἰ ἔστε ἐν τῇ πίστει, ἑαυτοὺς δοκιμάζετε*. Previous to testing the man is faultless, the possibility of evil latent does not prevent his being rightly regarded as just till he acts otherwise. "Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created till iniquity was found in thee." In strange contrast to the initial, inexplicable uncertainty of what may come from personality is the persistency of character which it ultimately either acquires or develops. Adam was created *δικαιός*, i.e. both innocent of actual sin and with a nature suited to operate *δικαιῶς*, but he had to be tried personally whether he accepted that state and nature. In the case of the man justified in Christ, the facts which make for standing are stronger, for the nature of Christ is more powerful for good; but so, too, are the facts

which make for falling, for by comparison Adam's temptation was external. He then, too, after the fair start he is now enabled to make, has to be tested whether he personally wholly and permanently adheres to Christ, whether he has root in himself. This phrase of St. Matthew and St. Mark, to which it is hard to give an exact meaning either in the literalness of the parable or in its interpretation, does somehow convey to our minds the idea of personal persistency we want to express. At what point the character of persistency or otherwise is established in the person, God only knows and can see; for all others absolute knowledge has to wait till the testing is over. Faith justifies and saves, but does not itself convey the assurance of ultimate salvation. There is some difficulty in the wording of 1 John v. 17, but from the whole passage it is clear that assurance is the gift of love and perfect assurance the gift of perfected love; and this is confirmed by a comparison of John v. 24 with 1 John iii. 14; for in the Gospel the passage from death unto life is ascribed to faith, in the Epistle the knowledge of it to love.

What then is the faith which justifies, places in the justified state (such expressions are allowable, though what is meant is rather evokes the justification of God), and yet which needs to be tested? It is one thing to speak for direct personal edification, and another to enter on a question of more or less abstract theology, though I hope this may be not otherwise than edifying in its way. But in the former case faith is required in its fullest form, that is no faith which aims at a minimum of expression, while as a matter of theology there may be use in dwelling on the very small amount which God will accept. Speaking with the greatest reserve, I should say faith can take many forms, or rather may be exercised and exhibited in a variety of ways, intellectual belief, action on belief, obedience, trust. Where faith is

shown in any one way, there being in no other way wilful unbelief (and this applies to the faith of the Church presenting infants), it is accepted and receives the answer of grace, which will strengthen the receiver in enduring the test whether his faith is good in all directions and whether it is tenaciously held. Abraham's faith in Genesis xv. 6 was exercised on a limited point. It was the intellectual acceptance of God's prediction of an apparently improbable fact which would be to His honour. The event proved that that act of belief proceeded from a universal immovable faith. Until the sacrifice of Isaac his justification brought him present peace and friendship with God and a clearer-sighted trust for present and future ; but it did not give him assurance concerning his own self for the future (we do not know in what form this question would have presented itself to him), until in standing that great test his faith attained full stature.

The view maintained here is that the justification of St. Paul is a making just, or at least involves a making just, and that by no remote deduction, whether or not from the grammatical meaning is a minor point, but what God says must be. And it is not a mere conferring of innocence as regards the past. That would be justification only for the dead, and would come in due course without Christ, for the living it would leave the future blank. But it is the imparting of a righteous character, a capacity for righteous action i.e. for good works, and this from an engrafting in Christ ; so that the righteousness and the good works may with equal correctness be described as the works of Christ and the works of the believer, just as we may properly say the tree bears the fruit or the branch bears the fruit. They are as truly the believer's works and doings as any doings whatever, good or evil, godless or indifferent, can be the doings of a man. In them his personal agency is exercised and stirred up

to the full ; all the principles of agency, will, belief or knowledge, counsel or resolution are there exercised, but in the way of faith in God through Christ. There is a view which recognizes the importance of good works, but, contrary to St. John xv. 2, 6, regards them as the necessary effect of the vital union with Christ. The believer is not to aim at doing them himself, Christ does them, not he. This is to regard the regenerate nature as devoid of the highest and deepest energies, it is a sort of Apollinarian mutilation. Christ does them and he does them. "He that believeth in me, the works that I do shall he do also." As in so many cases, the relation of the believer to Christ is assimilated to the relation of the Son to the Father. "Whatever things [the Father] doeth, these doeth the Son in like manner"; and this comes soon after that verse St. John v. 17, *My Father worketh hitherto, and I work*, which implies that the Son's is as truly and as fully agency as the Father's. We have indeed, *I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; I laboured, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me*. These are parallel to *My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me. The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. The Father that dwelleth in me, He doeth the works*. Will any one deny that Christ was in the fullest sense the doer of them, that what He said and taught He spoke with full and intelligent assent, by free act and willing intention? *He that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit* is in its measure parallel to *I and my Father are one*; and so the believer's agency is sometimes identified immediately with the agency of God. (Phil. ii. 12, 13, Heb. xiii. 21.)

F. W. MOZLEY.