

## **TREATY ON JUSTIFICATION**

### **BOOK ONE**

WHERE WE INVESTIGATE WHAT WAS THE TRUE THOUGHT OF THE APOSTLES WHEN THEY SPOKE OF JUSTIFICATION.

#### **CHAPTER I. Purpose of this Treaty. Various Questions to Examine.**

There are very few subjects in Theology on which there are more disputes than on that of JUSTIFICATION. It appears from the writings of the Apostles, especially those of St. James and St. Paul, that already in their time, there were great controversies on this subject, on one side between Jews and Christians, and on the other between Christians themselves. It is nearly the same since the Reformation: we have great disputes on this subject with the Roman Church, with the Socinians, and the Remonstrants; Our Theologians themselves are not entirely in agreement on this matter, and there are various things on which they have not yet been able to agree. These disputes are not all of the same order. Some consist only of simple misunderstandings, and on which one would agree if, instead of the term justify, one used some others that are regarded as equivalent, such as, according to some, convert, regenerate, sanctify; and according to others, grant grace, pardon sins, remit them, exempt from punishment, etc. There are several that are more substantive, but which are ordinarily treated under other titles, and in relation to other subjects. Some consist only in knowing what is the sense in which Scripture employs the terms it uses on this subject. Some others finally concern the thing itself, are furthermore very real, and even rather important.

First, one asks what is the true meaning of the term justify. The Roman Church takes it in one sense, and we in another. By justify, the Roman Church wants us to understand one or the other of these two things: either to make more just one who was not; or to make more just one who already was. Instead, we maintain that one should take this term in the sense of the Court, according to which justify is not to make just, but to declare just, to recognize as just, to absolve, to give favorable verdict.

Second, one disputes on the very thing that one claims is designated by this expression. And as this thing is not the same in all Hypotheses, this diversity contributes greatly to multiplying the controversies.

According to the Roman Church, Justification consists in two things. One is that change which it believes that Grace operates, when from wicked that we were it makes us become good people, pouring into our souls supernatural habits, especially that of Charity, which happens, according to some, to all those who receive with attrition what they call the Sacrament of Penance; and according to others, to those who receive it with contrition. And this is what is called the first Justification. The second consists in the increase and in the strengthening of the supernatural habits, which the first Justification had spread in the soul. It believes moreover that the first Justification is merited by Contrition, of that species of merit

which it calls of congruity; and the second, by all sorts of good works, and of that species of merit which it calls of condignity.

As all this is contested, as the Socinians and the Remonstrants do not admit infused habits, as we maintain that Attrition is not sufficient to obtain the remission of sins; and as we believe that neither contrition, nor any of our good works, merit anything before God; all this creates various disputes, but which are not appropriate here. They properly concern the matter of Conversion, that of Grace, and of Free will.

For us, we distinguish a double Justification, that of the Sinner, and that of the Just. According to us, the Justification of the Sinner consists principally in the remission of sins, which God grants by his pure Grace to all those who believe in his Son, imputing to them the perfect satisfaction that this great Savior presented to him. But this gives rise to a very great number of Questions. Indeed, there is agreement neither on the sins that God pardons us, nor on the time at which he pardons them, nor on the manner in which he pardons them, nor on what he requires of those to whom he offers this grace, nor on the efficacy and activity of what he requires. One asks further, if those to whom God has granted this grace can have some certainty that they have received it; and supposing that they can, what is the way by which they have it. Finally one asks, in what does the Justification of the Just consist; and on each of these things there are various discussions, into which one must necessarily enter to give some knowledge of this important subject.

This comes from the fact that, whatever Hypothesis one follows, it is impossible to explain this subject without advancing a great number of Propositions, among which there are very few that cannot be contested, and which are not in fact. Thus, as many as there are of these particular Propositions, just as many Questions are there that one debates on this subject.

Among these Questions, there are some that influence practice, and which by that very fact are very important. There is such an opinion which in certain cases absolutely ruins the hope of being received in grace, which one must necessarily have to form the design to convert oneself. There is also such another Hypothesis, which leads to security, and which strengthens the inclination that we all have to flatter ourselves, and to plunge ourselves into laxity and into license. It is certain at least, that these are Objections that the various Parties make to each other every day. Consequently, nothing could be more necessary than to see if these Objections have some solidity; which one cannot do without examining all these Questions.

There are moreover some rather intricate ones. For as they have been treated by people of intelligence, who have omitted nothing of what seemed to them proper to give color to their opinions, it has happened that instead of putting the Truth in its light, they have obscured it, and have caused that there are few subjects in which one sees less clearly than in this one.

All this makes it good to see if one could not shed some light on it; and that is what I propose to work on in this Treaty, where I am going to go through all these Questions, at least those that will seem to me the most important.

For this purpose, I intend to do three things. I will research first, what is the sense in which the Apostles have taken this term justify, what are the Questions they have treated when they have used this expression; and what are the Truths they intended to establish. This will be the subject of this first Book.

I will then come to the Questions which presently divide Christians. And as some of these Questions concern the Justification of the Sinner, some others that of the Just, I will treat the first in the second Book, and the second in the third. This is the division of this Treaty.

## **CHAPTER II. That Justify is Not to Make Just by an Inherent Justice.**

I begin with the first of these Questions, which has for its subject the true meaning of the term justify. On which it must be noted first, that to ask what is the meaning of this term, is not to ask what is the sense in which we should employ it. That would only be a pure dispute of words, which would not merit our stopping. What we are researching is to know what is the sense in which Scripture employs this manner of speaking when it uses it, as it is certain that it does in various places.

This Question, moreover, is very real, and even rather important. For as Scripture is the pure Word of God, and the only Rule of our Faith, it cannot be a thing of little importance, to know with certainty what is the true meaning of what it says on this great subject. Moreover, the decision of this Question carries by right the decision of the preceding one. For what could be more reasonable than to speak with Scripture, and to give to our expressions the meaning that this sacred Book has given them?

It must be noted secondly, that when one asks what is the sense in which Scripture uses the term justify, one does not ask what is the sense in which it uses it every time it employs it. There is no dispute on this subject. Both sides agree on the meaning of most of the places where this manner of speaking is found employed. One agrees, for example, that when Scripture says that God is justified by men, as it says very often, when again it says speaking of Judges, that they justify those who appear before them; in all these passages, and in some others similar, one must take this term in the sense of the Court, in which one says justify, to say absolve, declare just, give favorable verdict, etc.

The dispute consists solely in knowing what is the sense in which it is said in Scripture, that God justifies men. And as this subject has been principally treated by two Apostles, by St. Paul and by St. James, by one in the Epistle to the Romans and in the Epistle to the Galatians, and by the other in Chapter II of his Catholic [Epistle], it is principally on the meaning of these places that one is in dispute.

I have already said, that according to the Roman Church, justify is to make just by a real and interior change, which produces, or at the very least which strengthens in us the habits of Holiness and of Justice. The two principal reasons which it uses to prove it, are first, that there are two places in Scripture, where it maintains that one cannot deny that one must understand this word in this sense. One is that of Dan. XII.3, where it is said, that those who will have justified many, will shine like stars

forever. The other is that of Revelation XXII.11, where the Holy Spirit says, that he who is just, must justify himself further. It says secondly, that St. Paul assures that God justifies the wicked; which would be unbearable, if justify were nothing else than to declare just. For in this supposition, God would do what he cannot bear that men do. Witness what the Sage says in his Proverbs, that he who justifies the wicked, is an abomination to him.

But these two proofs are extremely weak. The first has two great defects. What it supposes is very uncertain, and the conclusion that it draws from it is not necessary. For as to the first, it is very possible that in the passage of Daniel, justify is nothing else than to lead to the state of justification, which one can say that Preachers do in regard to their Hearers, in working to bring about Faith in their soul. And indeed, if St. Paul was able to say that these same Preachers save those who listen to them, why could one not say that they justify them, since they work effectively to make them be justified? And as for what concerns the place in Revelation, in all likelihood, the meaning is that he who is just, must manifest his justice by the exercise of good works. Whatever the case may be, one could not prove, either that one cannot explain these two places of Scripture in this sense, or especially that one must give them the sense that the Roman Church gives them.

But I want the sense that it gives them to be the true one. Does it follow from this that this is the sense of all the other places of Scripture, where the same term is employed? What could be less reasonable than such a claim? For who does not know that there is an infinity of terms that Scripture employs in different senses, and which signify sometimes one thing, and sometimes another? In particular, can one deny that the term justify very often signifies in Scripture, to declare just? Why then could we not conclude from the places where it has this sense, that it also has it in those where it is spoken of the Justification of the Sinner, with as much reason as one concludes that this word designates an effective change, from what one supposes that it has this sense in the two Passages of which we speak?

It will also be good to note, that even if one understood these two Passages as of the production, or of the increase of an inherent Justice, it would not follow that one would understand them in the sense that the Roman Church gives to the term justify in this dispute. It understands by this, sometimes the infusion, and sometimes the increase of supernatural habits. And can one say that Daniel and St. John spoke, either of one or of the other? This infusion, and this increase, are immediate effects of the power of God; and Daniel and St. John speak only of the works of men. Consequently, the sense in which they take these terms is very different from that in which the Roman Church uses them.

As for what concerns the place of St. Paul, who says that God justifies the wicked, there is no doubt that it must be understood in the same sense in which it is said in the Gospel, that the blind see, that the lame walk, etc.; and that thus the meaning is, not that God justifies the one who always remains wicked, but only, that he justifies the one who was so, and who in this very moment ceases to be so. Thus, all that one will be able to conclude from this passage, is that God never justifies anyone, without

regenerating him at that very moment. But it does not follow from this at all, that Justification and Regeneration are only one and the same thing.

All that I have just said shows clearly, that the Roman Church cannot prove the explanation it gives to this manner of speaking. But that is not all. It is easy to prove that this explanation is not at all just. This is what several have done with care, and with all the thoroughness that the subject demands. As for myself I will content myself with some considerations, which will put this truth in its light.

I. The first, that the ordinary sense of this expression is that which one calls the sense of the Court. For example, when it is spoken of Judges who justify the guilty, when again it is said that God is justified by men, and in a great number of similar occasions. As nothing is more natural than to judge the sense of the contested places, by that of the places on which one agrees; nothing could be more reasonable, than to say that when Scripture speaks of our Justification, it understands by this to declare just, since that is the constant and ordinary sense of this manner of speaking in the other places where it is found.

II. If justify were to make just, its contrary would be to make unjust, to make become wicked. It is not, however, this second action that Scripture opposes to Justification, as its contrary, it is condemnation: as appears from these three places. Job IX.20. If I justify myself, my own mouth will condemn me. Matt. XII.37. You will be justified by your words, and by your words you will be condemned. Rom. VIII.32. Who will bring accusation against God's elect? God is the one who justifies. Who is the one who will condemn?

III. If justify were to make just, it would be the same thing as sanctify, as convert, as regenerate. Yet Scripture distinguishes clearly enough these two graces. For example, when it says I. Cor. 1.30. that Jesus Christ has been made for us by the Father wisdom, justice, sanctification, and redemption, that is to say, author and principle of all these graces. For example again, when St. Paul says I. Cor. VI.11. Such things you were; but you have been washed of them, but you have been sanctified of them, but you have been justified of them.

IV. If justify were to make just, Scripture would not make this grace consist in the Remission of sins, or what amounts to the same thing, in not imputing them. That is however what it does in various places, as I hope to show in the sequel.

V. If justify were to make just, Scripture, which so often attributes the work of our Regeneration to the Holy Spirit, would sometimes attribute to it that of Justification. That is however what we do not see it do. It attributes this grace, not to the Holy Spirit, but to the death of Jesus Christ, and to the salutary virtue of his Blood, as to its principle. Witness these places of St. Paul. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. Rom. III.23. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from wrath through him. Rom. V.9. As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Rom. V.19.

VI. Finally, St. Paul says that no flesh will be justified before God by the works of the Law; Rom. III.20. conformably to what David had said Ps. CXLIII. Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for no living being will be justified before thee. It is evident that in these Passages, to be justified is to be absolved in judgment, not to be converted, or regenerated. First, what David prays to God not to enter into judgment with him, shows it with evidence. Moreover, this turn of expression, to be justified before God, corresponds admirably to the idea of an Accused who appears before the Tribunal of his Judge; but it has no relation with the grace that God makes to a Sinner in triumphing over his obstinacy by the attractions of his Grace. Indeed, one does not say that a Sinner is converted, is regenerated, is sanctified before God; but that it is God who converts him, who regenerates him, who sanctifies him. Finally, if to be justified signified to be converted, what sense could one give to these words of the Prophet, no living being will be justified before thee? Would he not say, if he took this word in the sense of the Roman Church, that there is no one that God regenerates? which is so opposed to the Gospel and to experience.

### **CHAPTER III. That Justify is Not to Treat as Just.**

It is not therefore the Roman Church that must be consulted, to know what is the true meaning of the term justify. Some claim that justify is to treat as just, it is to act with those whom one justifies, in the same manner as one would act if one regarded them as just. I do not want to deny that this explanation might have place in the places where it is spoken of the Justification of the Just. Still even in this regard there are two things to note. The first, that this explanation does not exhaust all the meaning of the Passages which state that God justifies the Just. They do not only imply that God treats them as just; but further, that he recognizes them as just, and that he declares them such, as I hope to show in the sequel.

The second remark that must be made on this subject, is that to treat as just, is an expression which applies to various subjects, which neither Scripture, nor our ordinary language, ever designate by the term justify. For, to begin with our language, is it not to treat a man as just, to esteem and to revere his virtue, to propose him to oneself as a model, to propose him to others, to be glad to deal with him, etc.? However, one does not express this by saying that one justifies him. One does not do it at least, if one does not want to convey that this destroys some accusation.

I say the same thing of Scripture. God treats us as just, when he protects us against the violence of our enemies, when he answers our prayers, and fills us with his favors. Above all he treats as just those whom he receives in his Heaven, and whom he admits to the contemplation of his face. Consequently, if justify were the same thing as treat as just, Scripture would not fail to say that God justifies his Children in all these occasions. That is however what it never says. It says neither that God justifies the Blessed in Heaven, nor that he justifies those whom he delivers from some danger, or whom he honors with some favor. Thus, even in regard to the Just, there is some difference between treating him as just, and justifying him.

But the principal use that one claims to make of this explanation, is to use it to discover the nature of the Justification of the Sinner: And it is in this regard especially that it seems unbearable to me. I have three reasons to make this judgment.

The first, that this manner of speaking, to treat as just, does not correspond at all to the idea of the Justification of the Sinner, such as Scripture represents it to us, and such as those who propose this explanation conceive it. They admit that the Justification of the Sinner is nothing else than the remission of sins; or at least, that the remission of sins is the principal part of it. But to remit, or to pardon sins, is that to treat as Just? Is it not on the contrary to treat as Unjust and as Sinner, since it is only the Unjust and the Sinners, who have need of this grace? I would as well have someone tell me that to heal a sick person, is to treat him as healthy; that to clothe a naked person, is to treat him as well-dressed.

Secondly, to treat as just is an expression which, being applied to God, designates, not an action of a moment, but a constant and perpetual manner of acting. And indeed, it is true to say that God treats his Children as just during the whole course of their life, and especially during all eternity which they enter by their death. On the contrary, the Justification of the Sinner is an action of a moment, an action which passes, and which subsists no more as soon as it has been done. This is why Scripture often speaks of it in terms of past. For example, it is said in the Parable of the Gospel, that the Tax Collector returned justified to his house. And St. Paul says to the Corinthians, not that they are justified in the time that he writes to them, but that they have been. Such things you were; but you have been washed of them, but you have been sanctified of them, but you have been justified of them. I. Cor. VI.11. Those whom God has called, he has also justified. Rom. VIII.29.

Thirdly, I do not see any Passage which speaks of the Justification of the Sinner, and where the term justify is put for to treat as just. On the contrary, I see several of all orders, both of those which speak of the Justification of the Sinner, and of those which speak of that of the Just, to which it is impossible to give this meaning.

To see this very distinctly, one need only note that when two expressions are absolutely synonymous and equivalent, one can substitute one for the other without altering the meaning in the slightest, and without making the person who speaks say anything absurd, harsh, or forced. For example, in the Books of the Old Testament, to return to God, is to repent. One can therefore put the second of these expressions in place of the first, in all the places where this first is found employed; and in doing so, one will do no violence to the sacred Text.

If therefore justify were nothing else than to treat as just; and to be justified, than to be treated as just; it is clear that one could put the two latter of these expressions in all the places where the two first are found, and that the ones would come no less well there than the others. One could say indifferently, justify, and treat as just; be justified, and be treated as just. Let us see therefore if that is possible, and for this purpose, let us go through some of the places where Scripture speaks, either of justify, or of being justified.

Can one, first of all, substitute one of these terms for the other, in the places where it is said that man is justified before God, for example, Psalm CXLIII.2. and Rom. III.20? Can one say that man is treated as just before God? And would this manner of speaking be bearable? Could one say that man is treated as just, either by his works, or by his faith, as St. James says that he is justified by his works, and St. Paul that he is so by his faith? Could one say that we are treated as just by the Redemption which is in Jesus Christ, or by the obedience of Jesus Christ, as St. Paul says that we are justified by that?

If Scripture had said that we are justified because of faith, because of good works, because of the Redemption, or of the obedience of Jesus Christ, this explanation could have place. But that is not what it says. It says that we are justified not because of these things, but by these things. Consequently, this explanation cannot subsist.

Could one apply it to what is said in some places, that we are justified of our sins? Would it be possible to render these words by these, that we are treated as just of our sins?

Could one apply it to what God says, Isaiah LIII.11. My righteous servant shall justify many, by the knowledge they will have of my name? Could he have said, My righteous servant shall treat many as just, by giving them the means to know me?

Could one still understand in this manner, either what is said in Revelation, that he who is just must justify himself further; or what Daniel says, those who will have justified many, will shine forever like stars? Can one understand these two Passages as if one said, that he who is just must treat himself as just; and that those who will have treated many as just, will be crowned with all the glory of Heaven?

Could one apply this sense to what is said Jer. III.11. and Ezech. XVI.1.52. that Jerusalem has justified on one side Sodom, and on the other Samaria? Is it not true that to treat as just, is a thing which has no relation with what these two Passages contain?

Finally, if these two expressions, justify, and treat as just, were two synonymous expressions, with this sole difference, that the second is incomparably clearer and more intelligible than the first; would it be possible that the sacred Authors, who have had the occasion to employ these two manners of speaking, would have preferred the first, not once or twice, but always; and that there being such a great number of places where they have said justify, they would never have said treat as just? Would there not be something bizarre in this event? And does one not know indeed that natural, clear and easy expressions, are those which present themselves first to the mind? However, in the opinion that I am fighting it will have happened on the contrary, that the clear and natural expression will never have presented itself to the mind of any of the sacred Authors who have had the occasion to use it, and that on the contrary they will all have affected to use the obscure one. Is it easy to put into one's mind a thing so incredible? Above all, must one do it in favor of an opinion that one supports with no reason, either strong, or weak?



This seems remarkable to me. Indeed, the most pressing reasons do not fully convince the mind, when they have the disadvantage of being fought and counterbalanced by other reasons of equal force. If therefore one produced considerable ones to show that justify is to treat as just, I would not be surprised to see that one deferred to them. But I have not yet seen anyone who produced a single one, either strong, or weak, in favor of this opinion. That being so, would there not be injustice in obstinating oneself in this thought, which nothing supports, and which is fought by the considerations that one has just seen, and which without difficulty are not to be despised?

#### **CHAPTER IV. If To Justify Is To Declare Just**

Here then are already two explanations of this term that I cannot admit. There is a third that appears more natural. It consists in saying that to justify is to recognize as just, and to declare just. This explanation has great advantages over the two others.

I. It is more consistent with the sense that this term always has in our ordinary language. We never say that a man has been justified of a crime, either to say that he has corrected himself, or to say that he has been treated as just; but to say that he has been declared innocent.

II. This sense adjusts fairly well to the places in Scripture where it is employed on subjects different from that which makes up the matter of this Treaty. It is for example in this sense, and not in any of the two preceding ones, that one must take what Scripture tells us so often, that God is justified by men, that Wisdom has been justified by her children, that God detests him who justifies the Wicked, etc.

III. One cannot deny that one must understand in this sense what St. James says, that one is justified by works, as I hope to show in the sequel.

IV. It is still in this sense that one can take what St. Paul says so often, that one is not justified by one's works. Indeed, if one were justified by works in the sense of St. Paul, one would be so by a solemn declaration that God would make of the holiness and innocence of those whom he would justify in this manner.

All this seems to induce that St. Paul has taken this term in this sense, when he maintained that it is by Faith that one is justified. For what appearance is there that on this occasion he has taken this term in a sense different from that which it constantly has in the other places of Scripture, and in our ordinary language?

However, I admit that I cannot accept this explanation. There are two things that oppose it. One, that it does not at all correspond to the idea that St. Paul gives us of our Justification. The other, that if one admits it, it will be true to say that St. Paul has given a sense to this word that no one else has given to it but him alone.

To see both more distinctly, one must recall the distinction that I have already touched upon in another place. I have said that there is a double Justification, that of the Sinner, and that of the Just. The first consists in the remission of sins, which

God grants us by imputing to us the satisfaction of his Son, which we embrace by Faith; as I hope to show in the sequel. The second consists in recognizing as just by an inherent Justice, perfect or imperfect, general or particular, those who truly are so, to declare them such, and to treat them as such.

That being supposed, I say that in truth this explanation, which one gives to the term justify, corresponds well enough to the idea that one should have of the Justification of the Just; but it is certain that it does not at all correspond to the idea of the Justification of the Sinner, such as we conceive it, and such as Scripture represents it.

I maintain first, that one could not find an example, either in the language of men, or in Scripture, provided one excepts the Epistles of St. Paul, which are those in question, where the term justify signifies to pardon sins. This is enough for me. For finally it is not at all believable that St. Paul employs this expression in an extraordinary sense that no one has ever given to it. And moreover, given this, it would be very inappropriate to produce the other places of Scripture to clarify what St. Paul says, since in this supposition St. Paul would have taken this term in a sense very far from that in which the rest of the sacred Authors have used it.

I maintain secondly, that to pardon sins is something completely different from declaring just. Indeed, to pardon sins is so little to recognize as just, and to declare just, that it is on the contrary to suppose that the one to whom one pardons them is a sinner.

One will perhaps say that, to be sure, to pardon sins is not to declare just by an inherent Justice; but that nothing prevents that it might be to declare just by an imputed Justice, and that is what one understands when one says that to justify is to declare just.

But I have two things to reply. The first, that if by to justify St. Paul has understood to declare just by an imputed Justice, he has employed this expression in a sense that no one but him has ever given to it. For who has ever thought to say to justify to say to declare just by an imputed Justice? When we say that a man has justified himself, or that he has been justified by others, of the crimes of which he was accused, we never understand that he has been declared just by an imputed Justice. We always understand that he has made his innocence appear, that he has convinced either his Judges or the Public of it.

I say the same thing of Scripture. When it says that men have justified God, that Wisdom has been justified by her Children, that God manifested in flesh has been justified in Spirit, it does not speak, closely or distantly, of an imputed Justice; it always speaks of an inherent Justice. It has still the same thought when it says that he who justifies the wicked is an abomination to the Eternal.

Let one put aside, in a word, the places where St. Paul assures that one is justified by Faith, and which being those in question, cannot be produced on either side; it is

certain that one will not find a single one where to justify is to declare just by an imputed Justice: which, as I have already noted, is enough to destroy this opinion.

I add secondly, that to pardon sins in view of the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ is indeed to impute this satisfaction, and consequently to make just by an imputed Justice: but I maintain that it is something completely different from declaring just by an imputed Justice. To make just and to declare just are two very different things. The second visibly supposes the first. One declares just only those who are so, or whom one wants to convey are so; and no one is so, if he has not become so. It is therefore necessary first, that God make a Sinner just, as he does by imputing to him the Justice of his Son: it is only after that that he can declare him just by an imputed Justice; as he declares just by an inherent Justice only those whom he has regenerated by his Grace. Thus this declaration of Justice will be posterior to Justification, far from constituting its essence, as is claimed.

To make what I have just touched upon a little more evident, I pray my Reader to consider, that as to declare a man a sinner is not to make him a sinner, but to convey that he is one; as also, to declare just by an inherent Justice is not to spread in the soul the habit of Justice, but to convey that one possesses it; similarly, to declare just by an imputed Justice is not to confer, or communicate this imputed Justice, but to convey that one actually has it.

As therefore the one whom one declares a sinner was so before one declared him such; as the one whom one declares just by an inherent Justice was so before this declaration; it is equally necessary that the one whom one declares just by an imputed justice had this Justice before one declared him just. Consequently, if to justify, in the sense of St. Paul, were nothing else than to declare just, it would be necessary that one be justified before being declared just, and that thus one had been justified before being justified; which would be absurd and contradictory.

## **CHAPTER V. That To Justify Is To Discharge From An Accusation, And To Absolve In Judgment.**

The considerations that I have just touched upon, are such that I cannot persuade myself that to justify is nothing else than to declare just. I believe therefore that it is necessary to look for another explanation of this manner of speaking, which on one side better corresponds to the idea that Scripture gives us of our Justification, and on the other can be applied to all the places where this term is found employed.

I am persuaded that this expression always designates, directly or indirectly, the action of a Judge properly or improperly so called, who pronounces on civil or criminal trials; either in giving a favorable verdict to one of the Parties, or in discharging it from the condemnation, and from the punishment, to which one wanted to subject it.

I am greatly mistaken if this explanation does not encompass all the significations of the term justify, and does not even mark all that they have, on one side in common, and on the other particular. But it is necessary to clarify it a little more.

I have said first, that Justification has an essential relation to the action of a Judge properly or improperly so called. By a Judge properly so called, I understand every Superior clothed with a Jurisdiction, to which those whom he absolves are subjected. Such is God, the supreme Judge of the World; and such are Magistrates, both sovereign and subordinate. By a Judge improperly so called, I understand those who pronounce without authority on the crime or on the innocence, and generally on the rights of others. Such are Individuals, either several together, or each separately.

The term justify designates the function of both. For as to the first, it is said that God justifies men, that Judges justify the Accused, etc. And as to the second, it is said that a man has been justified by the Public of a crime of which he was accused. It is even said that men justify God, and it is in this sense that Claudian has said,

*Abstulit hunc tandem Rufini pœna tumultum, Absolvitque Deos.*

And before him David, cited by St. Paul Rom. III.4, had said: So that you might be found just in your words, and that you might gain your case when you are judged.

The reason is that men set themselves up as Judges of one another; and what is unbearable, they have the audacity to want to be the Judges of God, either to absolve him, or even to condemn him. Thus, when they pronounce in his favor, Scripture says that they justify him.

I have said secondly, that this Judge properly or improperly so called, pronounces on trials, either civil or criminal. No one is ignorant of this distinction. Everyone knows that Judges pronounce, sometimes on civil trials, where it is a question of what one calls mine and thine, sometimes on criminal trials, where it is a question of knowing if the Accused is guilty or innocent.

The term justify designates in our ordinary language only the action of a Judge who pronounces on a criminal trial. But in Scripture it designates indifferently the action of a Judge who decides trials of both of these two orders. It is true that one of these uses is more ordinary than the other: but one finds examples of both.

Grotius claims that it is a question of the decision of all sorts of trials, in these words of Deuteronomy XXV.v.1. When there will have been a dispute between some, and they will come to judgment so that they might be judged, one will justify the just, and one will condemn the wicked. But this example does not appear decisive to me, and the thought of Grotius does not appear to me without difficulty.

I put more stock in the one he claims to find in the prayer that Solomon made for the Dedication of the Temple, I Kings, VIII.31.32. When someone will have sinned against his neighbor, and one will have deferred to him the imprecation of the oath to make him swear, and this imprecation of the oath will have arrived before your

altar in this house here; Hear them, you from the heavens, and execute what the imprecation of the Oath will bring, and judge your servants in condemning the wicked, and rendering to him according to what he will have done, and in justifying the just, and rendering to him according to his justice.

But the example which appears to me the most decisive, and which it is astonishing that Grotius has not produced, is that of II Sam. XV.4, where it is reported that Absalom wanting to win the heart of the Israelites, said to all those whom he encountered, O that I might be established Judge over the country! Then every man who would have a lawsuit, and would be well-founded, would come to me, and I would justify him.

In all the other places of Scripture, where this manner of speaking is found employed, it designates the function of a criminal Judge, who pronounces on the crime, or on the innocence of an Accused.

But it is important to note, that such a Judge can pronounce in two ways in this sort of occasions. He can absolve the Accused, and he can also condemn him. The Greeks often employ in this second sense the term which corresponds in their Language to that of justify. They say justify, to say condemn, declare guilty, subject to punishment: to which Mr. Morus claims that in some manner corresponds the term justify, which is truly no longer in usage, but which meant not long ago, among us, to execute a decree of condemnation to death.

Be that as it may, the term justify never has this sense, either in the Hebrew Language, or in the Greek of the New Testament, or in our ordinary Language. It always means, not to condemn, but to absolve. Thus it designates, not every function of a criminal Judge, but uniquely this function which consists in discharging the Accused of an accusation brought against him.

I have said thirdly, that this word designates directly, or indirectly, the action of a Judge, who does what I have just indicated. It designates it directly, when the action expressed by this term is attributed to the Judge himself, as when it is said that God justifies Sinners, that Judges justify the Accused, etc. But it designates it indirectly, when it expresses the action of a person distinct from the Judge, who bears him efficaciously, or inefficaciously to justify the Accused.

This second sense is much less natural than the first, but it is hardly less in use, either in Scripture, or in our ordinary language. We say every day of a man accused of a crime, that he has justified himself of it, that his Lawyer, that the Witnesses have justified him of it, to say that what this Accused has done to defend himself, what his Lawyer has said for him, what the Witnesses have deposed in his favor, have borne his Judges to absolve him.

In this same sense Scripture says that Faith justifies us, to say that it obtains from God the grace of justification. It attributes this same effect to the death of Jesus Christ, and maintains that our works are not in a state to produce it.

In this sense again, or at least in a sense very close to it, it says to justify oneself, to say to excuse oneself, even without success. It is thus that the holy man Job understood it, when he said IX.20. If I justify myself, my own mouth will condemn me. It is thus that it is said Luke X.29, that a Doctor of the Law wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus Christ, Who is my neighbor? And in Chapter XVII.15 of the same Gospel, this great Savior says to the Pharisees; It is you who justify yourselves before men.

Finally, in a sense which has some relation to this one, Scripture has said to justify, to say, to make appear less wicked, and that not in extenuating the sins of those whom one justifies in this manner, but in carrying oneself to more horrible excesses. It is thus that one must take what Ezekiel and Jeremiah have said of Jerusalem, maintaining that she has justified, one Sodom, the other Samaria. Ezech. XVI.51. Jer. III.11. One finds even this manner of speaking in the Authors that one names Classics, witness this Verse of Lucan:

*Et Mutina, & Leucas, puros fecere Philippos.*

All that I have just said shows clearly that the term justify always has a secret relation to the functions of a Judge, who pronounces on a dispute submitted to his Tribunal. This is what takes place principally in the Writings of St. Paul, where this word always designates the action of the supreme Judge of all men, who discharges those who appear before him of the accusations brought against them, and of the condemnation that they have merited. This is what appears from several considerations.

First, because he opposes justification, on one side to accusation, and on the other to condemnation, as to its contraries, saying Rom. VIII.32.33. Who is it who will bring accusation against the elect of God? God is the one who justifies? Who is it who will condemn? Christ is the one who is dead. This is what one can clarify by two similar Passages. One is that of Job IX.20. If I justify myself, my own mouth will condemn me. The other is that of Matt. XII.37. You will be justified by your words, and by your words you will be condemned.

II. The same thing appears from the fact that St. Paul is accustomed to say that one is justified before God. Indeed, this expression insinuates that the one who is justified appears before God, as an Accused before his Judge.

III. That appears from the fact that he makes Justification consist in the remission of sins, as I hope to show in the sequel. Indeed, the remission of a sin is without difficulty the action of a Judge, or whatever it may be, of a Sovereign.

IV. That appears from the fact that he expresses the same thing by saying that God does not impute sins. For finally, to impute sins, and not to impute them, is an action that visibly belongs to a Judge.

V. Finally that appears from the fact that he makes exemption from condemnation a consequence of our Justification before God, saying to the Romans VIII.1. that there is no more any condemnation for those who are in Jesus Christ.

## **CHAPTER VI. In What Justification Consists. Two Ways In Which One Can Claim To Be Justified.**

What I have just said will suffice regarding the terms. I now come to the thing itself. I have said that to justify is always to absolve, and to discharge from an accusation. But as this can be done in two ways, there arise two different Justifications. One can call the one a Justification of Justice, and the other a Justification of Grace. Some claim to say the same thing, by saying that there is a double Justification, one Legal, the other Evangelical. But it is certain that they are mistaken. These two distinctions are very different, there being such Legal Justification, which would be a Justification of Grace, if it had place. This is what I hope to show in the sequel.

Holding therefore to the first of these distinctions, I say, that the Justification of Justice consists in declaring false and slanderous the accusation with which the Accused was charged; and that that of Grace on the contrary consists in acknowledging that the Accused is guilty and deserves to be punished, and nevertheless in discharging him, by grace, from the punishment that he has deserved.

The first can be double, general, and particular. For as to justify is nothing else than to discharge from an accusation, there can be as many ways of justifying as there can be accusations brought. A man can first of all be accused of a particular crime, for example, of a homicide: and as it is very possible that he may be accused of it unjustly, nothing prevents that he might be justified of it, without the Judge pronouncing on the rest of the actions for which he is not being investigated. This is what one can call a particular Justification. It is spoken of in some places of Scripture, but always on the occasion of the Judgments that Judges pronounce on their Tribunals; and never, that I know of, on the subject of what God does in our regard. It is not that there are not examples of this sort of judgments: but it is that this name is never given to them, although it could have been.

The general Justification has for its subject the whole mass of actions. This one is also double, because indeed there is a double Justice, which the Judge can recognize. I speak moreover of an inherent Justice; the imputed, as everyone understands well enough, belonging to the Justification of Grace, of which we are not yet speaking. There is a Legal Justice, and an Evangelical Justice, one perfect, the other imperfect. Legal Justice is an entire and absolute conformity, of thoughts, of words, and of actions, with the Law of God, which is the Rule of it. This moreover entails two things. One, that one has never committed sin, neither great, nor small. The other, that the good actions that one has done, were perfectly good, and were not stained by the least defect.

Evangelical Justice is that which makes what one calls good people. It consists in doing all that God has commanded us; but in such a way that there are always defects in what one does that is most accomplished, and that besides one falls from time to time into various faults, from which one rises by repentance.

That supposed, I say that one can be accused before God of lacking one or the other of these two Justices. To be justified in Justice of the first of these two accusations, it would be necessary to be perfectly Holy. And as there is no one on Earth, who can boast of being so, there is no one who can be justified in this manner. Whence comes what David says: If you look at iniquities, Lord, who will stand? And in another place: Enter not into Judgment with your Servant, for no living being will be justified before you.

To be justified of the second of these accusations, it is not necessary to be without sin. It suffices to be what we call a Good Man, and it is certain that there are always such in the world. When God declares that a man is so, he justifies him; and it was thus that he justified the holy man Job, when he said that he was a right and complete man, fearing God, and withdrawing from evil.

These are the principal species of what I call a Justification of Justice. Someone will perhaps say that the latter should rather be called a Justification of Grace, because it is by pure grace that God is content with it. But it is easy to reply, that there is indeed a difference between declaring that a man is just by a sincere Justice, but imperfect, and being content with it. The second is an effect of the Mercy of God, but the first is an act of his Justice. For it is Justice which declares things such as they are, and we suppose that the just, whom God justifies in this manner, is truly such as God declares that he is.

I come now to the Justification of Grace. It consists, as I have already said, in discharging from punishment those who confess that they have deserved it. This is what often happens in the World, for example, when the Prince grants grace to a Criminal. But then one is not accustomed to employ the term justify to designate it. Indeed, one never says that, either the Prince who grants the grace, or the Judges who verify it, justify the Accused: it is an expression that one never employs in these occasions. But Scripture uses it often in this sense; and it is thus in particular that St. Paul understands it, as one will see in the sequel.

That supposed, I say first, that there is no dispute among Christians on the Justification of Justice. We all agree, by the grace of God, first, that it can happen that a Child of God, that a Sinner even, that a Villain, may be accused of a crime that he has not committed. In this supposition, nothing prevents that God might justify him of it by making known that he is innocent in this regard, however guilty he may be in all others. Secondly, we all agree that if a man is accused vaguely and indefinitely of being a sinner, it is impossible that he be justified by a Justification of Justice. The reason is, that all Christians agree that there is no one in the world who is not a sinner, and who consequently is not worthy to perish. Thirdly, we agree that



there are in the world Children of God, who are just by an inherent Justice. We agree that this justice is sincere and true, although it is imperfect and defective. We agree finally, that God can declare it such as it is, and these are indeed things which suffer no difficulty.

On the subject of the Justification of Grace, we agree that God grants it charitably to those very ones who would deserve his condemnation, pardoning them their sins, and exempting them from the punishment that it would be just that they suffer. We agree further, that to obtain this Justification of Grace, it is not at all necessary to accomplish the ceremonial Law, and that although its observance was necessary before the coming of the Savior of the World, it is no longer so presently. This is on what all Christians are in agreement.

But first these Christians, who agree on all these things, are divided on many others, which are so many parts or circumstances of our Justification. They are not in agreement, either on the designation of the sins that God pardons us, or on the time at which he pardons them, or on the manner in which he pardons them, or on what leads him to pardon them, or on what he requires of us before granting us this grace; there being on all this various contentions, which it will be necessary to try to clarify in the sequel of this Work.

Secondly, if there is no longer today any dispute on this subject, it was not the same in the time of the Apostles. One contested then various things, which pass today for indubitable. There were some that were contradicted by the unbelieving Jews, others by the Judaizing Christians, and others finally by the Disciples of Simon the Magician, and perhaps by orthodox Christians in all the rest, but erring very dangerously on this.

As the disputes that one had then on this subject with these three orders of Adversaries, are the matter of almost all that St. Paul, St. James, and some other Apostles have written on this subject, it is good to try to put in all their light the Questions that were agitated then in the Church. This is what will shed much light on our subject, and I do not even see how it would be possible to do without it. How indeed could one, either know what one must believe on this matter, if one did not understand what the Apostles have written about it; or understand what the Apostles have written about it, if one did not know what was the true state of the Questions that they undertook to clarify? This is why I am going to begin with that.

## **CHAPTER VII. What Are The Questions That St. Paul Treats, When He Speaks Of Justification.**

There are two principal Truths, that St. Paul proves strongly in various places of his Epistles. One, that one is Justified by Faith; the other, that one is not so by Works. That gives reason to believe that there were in his time people who maintained the contrary, and who claimed that one is justified by Works, not by Faith. Thus it is good to research on one side who were these Adversaries that St. Paul fights, and on the other what could be their thought.

Several have already noted, that one must not imagine that the Questions that the Apostle treats are precisely those which are today agitated among Christians. As far as one can judge, the Questions of then were very different from those of today. By all appearances, St. Paul had to deal with two diverse orders of Adversaries, the unbelieving Jews, and some Pharisees who made profession of being Christians.

Everyone knows that the unbelieving Jews rejected absolutely the Gospel, and maintained that there was only the Law of Moses, which could lead to salvation. As for what concerns the manner in which the Law can save men, here is apparently the one that they imagined. They believed first, that there were good people who observed very exactly this Law, and who consequently could be justified by a Justification of Justice, and obtain the glory of Heaven by means of their good works.

It seems that this was the sentiment of that Young man who addressed himself to Jesus Christ to know from him what there was to do to possess eternal Life. For when the Son of God had said to him, If you want to enter into Life, keep the Commandments, and he had taught him that these Commandments were those of the Decalogue, he replied immediately, that he had observed all these things from his youth. These were still the sentiments that Jesus Christ attributed to the Pharisee of the Parable, and who contenting himself with thanking God that he was not like the rest of men, did not say a single word to him to ask him for the remission of sins.

One will perhaps have difficulty believing that one could have thoughts so false. But one will overcome this repugnance, if one considers that besides that there were Jews who exaggerated with excess the forces of Free Will, they reduced the meaning of the Law to so little a thing, that it is not astonishing that they imagined that there were those who accomplished it perfectly.

First, they believed that the Law forbade no other crime than those of which it spoke by name and expressly. Thus they imagined that the sixth Commandment forbade no other crime than homicide, the seventh than adultery, the eighth than theft, and so on for the rest. Secondly, they imagined that each of these Precepts condemned only the external Act, and did not speak at all of the internal movement of the soul.

People prejudiced by these two imaginations, without speaking of the others that one could add to them, could easily persuade themselves that they accomplished perfectly the Law of God, and that thus they could subsist before his Tribunal by the holiness of their works.

I add, that this Law that they imagined to accomplish was not only the moral, but also the ceremonial, and which consisting only in sensible and external things, was much easier to observe than the moral. Thus there is no doubt that these works, by which they figured to be justified, were the moral and the ceremonial conjointly.

But there is on this subject an important remark to make. One can consider in two ways the works prescribed by the ceremonial Law, as Duties, and as Remedies. God

had commanded to practice them: they were consequently Duties, that one could not neglect without offending the Legislator who prescribed them. They were besides Remedies, destined to efface in some fashion the sins that one had committed, as one will see in the sequel.

Those of whom we speak now, considered these ceremonial works only in the first of these two regards. They looked at them only as works, commanded by God, and whose observance was agreeable to him. Thus they believed that they justified in the same manner as the works prescribed by the moral Law; and indeed, to be justified in that time by a Justification of Justice, it was necessary necessarily to have accomplished the ceremonial Law as well as the Decalogue.

But although one should not doubt that there were Jews who imagined being justified in this manner, it is necessary to hold for certain that no one believed that there were only these perfect ones who could be saved. No one doubted that God granted grace to several Sinners. But to what did they think that God granted this grace? It was principally to the observance of the ceremonial Laws, to the Ablutions, to the Purifications, to the Sacrifices, above all to the one that one offered the day of the Feast of Propitiations. And it must not be found strange: there were various places in the Law, which promised expressly the remission of sins to those who would offer the Sacrifices that it prescribed.

Thus there is no doubt that the Jews believed that there were Righteous ones who were justified by their works, without having need of the grace and the mercy of God; and that besides these there were those who, being sinners, obtained the remission of their sins by the exact observance of the Ceremonies. And it is on both of these two points that St. Paul undertakes to disabuse them.

But these unbelieving Jews were not the only Adversaries, that St. Paul had on his hands. He had also to deal with certain false Doctors, half Jews, and half Christians, who maintained that not only the converted Jews, but the Gentiles themselves who embraced the Faith, could not be saved, if they did not observe the ceremonial Law. Here is what St. Luke tells us about it in Chapter XV.1 of the Book of Acts. Now some who had come down from Judea were teaching the Brothers, saying; If you are not circumcised according to the usage of Moses, you cannot be saved. And in verse 5, St. Paul and Barnabas explain the thing more distinctly, saying to the Apostles, that those who had come to Antioch were some of those of the Sect of the Pharisees who had believed, and that they said that it was necessary to circumcise the Gentiles, and to command them to keep the Law of Moses.

As these, on one side did not reject the Faith, and on the other pressed with all their force the observance of the Ceremonies, it is very believable that they attributed Justification to both of these two causes, and that they maintained that one was justified, partly by Faith, and partly by the Ceremonies of the Law.

There were therefore four Questions whose clarification occupied the Apostle St. Paul. The first, If it is possible to be justified by works, either moral, or ceremonial,

and that by a Justification of Justice, which consists in declaring that the one whom one justifies has never violated the Law. The second, If the observance of the Ceremonies can by itself obtain for the Sinner the remission of his faults, and make by that a species of Justification, which would be at the same time Legal, and of Grace; Legal, because one would obtain it by doing what the Law prescribes; and of Grace, because it would confer the remission of sins on those who by committing them had deserved to perish. The third, If the Observance of the Ceremonies is necessary under the Gospel; and the fourth, If it concurs with Faith in the work of our Justification.

In the clarification of the first and the second of these Questions, St. Paul had in view only the unbelieving Jews alone, or at most some Pagans, who could have similar imaginations. In the third and in the fourth, he had to fight these badly-converted Pharisees who making profession of Christianity overturned its foundations by the errors that they added to it.

As far as one can judge by the attentive consideration of the Epistles of St. Paul, he has principally in view the first of these Questions in his Epistle to the Romans; the second, in his Epistle to the Hebrews; and the third and the fourth, in those that he writes to the Galatians, to the Philippians, and to the Colossians.

In his Epistle to the Romans he attaches himself principally to two things. First, to prove that it is impossible to be justified by works, either moral, or ceremonial, which he understands, if I am not mistaken, of a Justification of Justice. Secondly, to prove positively that one is justified by Faith, which he understands of a Justification of Grace. He employs the two first Chapters, and a good part of the third, to prove the first of these Truths. He employs the end of the third, and the four following, partly to prove the second, and partly to defend it against the Objections of his Adversaries.

Here indeed is how he has fallen on this matter. He has said to the Romans, that he has wished to see them at home, and to preach to them the Gospel. He has added, that neither the splendor of their City, nor the contempt that one had everywhere for the Truth and for those who announced it, would prevent him from going to render them this good office; because, however prejudiced, that the Unbelievers could be against the Gospel that he announced, he was so far from being ashamed of it, that he regarded it as the unique organ of the salvation of men. For, he says, I do not take to shame the Gospel of Jesus Christ, seeing that it is the power of God unto salvation to every believer, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Rom. I.15.

As the particular character of this Apostle is to advance nothing of which he does not immediately give the proof, he justifies what he has just said by pointing out that this Gospel of which he speaks, discovers to us the unique means of subsisting before the Tribunal of God. For, he says, in it is revealed fully the Justice of God from faith to faith, according to what is written, Now the Just will live by faith. Rom. I.16.

But as this itself is not evident enough, he undertakes to give proofs of it to which it would be impossible to resist. For this purpose he supposes that one can imagine only three ways, by which one can subsist before the Tribunal of God. The first, in maintaining, or to better say in showing, that one has never violated his Law. The second, in proving that if one has violated it, one has expiated the crimes that one has committed, one has, I say, expiated them by practicing the means that the Law itself indicates for this purpose. The third, in showing that although one has violated it, one has obtained the abolition of the excesses that one has committed, one has, I say, obtained it by applying to oneself by Faith the very perfect satisfaction of Jesus Christ.

He extends himself very amply to prove that the first of these three ways is impracticable, there being no one who has not sinned. This is what he shows with regard to the Gentiles in Chapter I, and with regard to the Jews in all of Chapter II, and in a good part of III.

He says nothing, or almost nothing, on the second of these three ways, but in exchange he speaks enough about it in other places, as I hope to show in a moment. One could only relate to this what he says of Circumcision, from verse 9 of Chap. IV until 16. Still it is not impossible to explain it otherwise.

But he extends himself very amply to prove that the third way, which is the one that the Gospel proposes, is the only one which gives us the means of subsisting before the Tribunal of God. He gives two proofs of it in Chap. IV. One is taken from the example of Abraham, and the other from a very beautiful passage taken from Ps. XXXII.

In Chap. V, he shows first, that there is only Justification by Faith, which establishes peace and calm in the Conscience, which sustains us in our afflictions, and which inspires in us an entire confidence in the mercy of God. Then he clarifies what he has said about it, by showing that the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ has no less efficacy to save us, than the sin of the first man had to lose us. In the two following Chapters he shows, that far from this Doctrine opening the door to Libertinism, as one accused it of even then, there is none more proper to repress vice, and to inspire in us the love of Holiness.

That is the goal of St. Paul, in the six or seven first Chapters of his Epistle to the Romans. Let one take the trouble to read them; one will see that all that the Apostle says there, tends uniquely to that. It would be easy for me to justify it, by going through these Chapters verse by verse. But as this would lead me extremely far, and as besides everyone can see it easily for himself, I hope that one will not find it inappropriate that I dispense myself from undertaking it.

I come now to the second Question that St. Paul has undertaken to treat. It is the one which consists in knowing, if the Sacrifices, and the other Purifications, that the ceremonial Law prescribed to the Jews, were in a state to make them subsist before the Tribunal of God, as the unbelieving Jews imagined it. This is what he clarifies

admirably in various places of his Epistles, but above all in the one that he writes to the Hebrews.

He says with this design, first, that the Law has not been given to vivify, Gal. III.21. On the contrary, he calls it II Cor. III.6.7 a letter that kills, and a ministry of condemnation. And this must not only be understood of the moral Law, and of the threats that it makes to those who will not observe exactly its Precepts, but also of the ceremonial Law, and of its Purifications. Indeed, he says in just so many words, Heb. X.3, that there was made in the Sacrifices a commemoration of sins reiterated from year to year. This is why he calls elsewhere this same ceremonial Law, an obligation that was against us, Col. II.14, because indeed every time that one offered its Sacrifices, or that one employed some other of its Purifications, one recognized oneself as a sinner, and worthy to suffer the death that one made the victim suffer.

With this same design he says, that it is impossible that the blood of bulls and of goats takes away sins, Heb. X.4. And because one could object, that the Law attributed often enough to the Sacrifices the power to take away and to expiate certain sins, and promised pardon of them to those who would offer them, he responds two things.

The first, that the Sacrifices took away sins only in a very imperfect manner, not conferring on the Sinner an internal and spiritual purity, but only a typical and external purity, or as he calls it, a carnal purity, which only resulted in giving the right to enter into the Tabernacle. Gifts, he says Heb. IX.9.10, and sacrifices were offered, which could not sanctify as to the conscience the one who performed the service, only ordained in meats, and drinks, and diverse washings, and carnal ceremonies, until the time that this be rectified. And at Verse 13 he adds, that the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ash of the heifer, of which one made aspersion, sanctified those who were soiled as to the flesh.

The other thing that he responds to this objection, is that if the Sacrifices contributed something to make the Sinner obtain the remission of his faults, and to free him from the eternal punishment that he deserved, which indeed one cannot deny, they did not do it by themselves, and by their own virtue, as they would have done if they had truly satisfied the Justice of God; they only did it by referring the Sinner to the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, which they represented, and whose virtue they applied to all those who offered them with good dispositions, of which the principal is Faith. This is the sense of this Apostle, when he says Gal. III.24, that the Law was a Pedagogue to bring men to Jesus Christ; and that before Faith came one was kept under the Law, being enclosed under the expectation of Faith, which was to be revealed, verse 23, and Heb. X.1, that the Law had only the shadow of the good things to come, and not the living image of the things.

I pass to the third Question, which consisted in knowing, If the Christians, above all the Gentiles converted to the Faith, were held to observe the Ceremonies of Moses. As this Question was the most agitated, it is also the one that St. Paul treats with

more care, and in more places. He says various things on this subject, Eph. II.v.11-22. Phil. III.2-11. Col. II.v.8-23: but above all in his Epistle to the Galatians, which he employs almost entirely to the clarification of this Question.

He relates first at some length what happened on this subject at Antioch between him and St. Peter. This is on what one can see all of Chap. II of his Epistle to the Galatians. He says that Jesus Christ has freed us from the yoke of the Law, and has effaced this obligation that was against us. From which he concludes, that there would be imprudence in subjecting oneself to it all anew. He shows that the two wives of Abraham, Sarah and Hagar, were the types of the two Covenants, of that of the Law, and of that of the Gospel. He says that the first engendered only slaves, whereas the second makes free men.

And because his Adversaries did not tire of objecting that the ceremonial Law must be very useful and very salutary, since it came from God, the Author and the source of all sorts of good; he responds, that it is true that God had established it, but that it was not to last always: it was to serve the Church, during its infancy, as a severe Pedagogue, and proportioned to the state in which it found itself, reserving to treat it otherwise when it would come to a more advanced age. He says that these were shadows, which could be of some use during the absence of the body; but which could only be very useless since this body had appeared, and that one could boast of possessing it.

There remains only the fourth Question, which consisted in knowing, If the Gentiles could be justified without observing the Ceremonies. But as this Question was decided by all that had been said on the second and on the third, St. Paul has extended himself less on it than on the others. He nevertheless does not fail to say various things on this subject, which are all decisive.

He points out that Abraham was justified before having been circumcised, which shows clearly that Circumcision should not be necessary to obtain this grace. He says Gal. V.6, that in Jesus Christ, neither circumcision nor the foreskin has any virtue, but the faith which operates by charity. He represents to the Galatians, that since God had given them his Spirit in a time when they did not observe the Ceremonies, and long before the false Doctors had undertaken to alter their faith, he had clearly shown by that that their conversion was agreeable to him, and that thus he regarded them as his children, Gal. III.2.5. Finally, he maintains that the Law was not in a state to justify; and this is what he proves in Chapter III from verse 10 until 13.

In a word, let one suppose that St. Paul had the design to prove the four Truths that I have indicated, and which were all contested, either by the unbelieving Jews, or by the Judaizing Christians, one will not find a single word in all that he says which does not have this effect, and which does not go right to this goal; nothing which is not convincing and demonstrative. On the contrary, whatever other design one attributes to him, the most considerable part of what he says will be useless to him.

Is this not enough to conclude that the sense that I attribute to him, is the one that he effectively had in his mind?

### **CHAPTER VIII. What Are the Works, of Which St. Paul Says That They Cannot Justify Us.**

What I have just said teaches us very distinctly what are the works of which St. Paul speaks, when he says so often, that they cannot justify us before God. One is quite divided on this Question. Some claim that these works, of which the Apostle speaks, are uniquely those that the ceremonial Law prescribed to the Jews; Circumcision, Sacrifices, Ablutions, and the other Rites of the same order. Others admit that this Apostle speaks also of works prescribed by the moral Law; but they make two Classes of these latter. Some are done without faith, and by the forces of Nature alone. The others are the productions of Grace, and the natural consequences of Faith. They say therefore that it is the first that St. Paul excludes, not the second.

On the contrary, our Theologians maintain that St. Paul speaks of all sorts of works without exception, and this is what appears to me incontestable after what one has seen in the preceding Chapter. He speaks first of ceremonial works, as it appears, both from the occasion that he had to enter into this Dispute, and from what he says to decide it. For as to the first, St. Luke relating the birth of the Contentions which divided the Church on this subject, says, as one has seen, that some Pharisees, who had embraced the Gospel, having come from Jerusalem to Antioch, were saying to the Gentiles who had believed, that it was impossible that they should be saved, unless they were circumcised, and observed the Law of Moses, Acts. XV. And as to the second, one has only to see what St. Paul says Rom. IV.9.10.11.12. Gal. III.23.24.25, all of Chapter IV of the same Epistle, and the beginning of V, to be convinced that it is principally at the works prescribed by the ceremonial Law, that this Apostle looks.

But it is certain also that he speaks of the works prescribed by the moral Law. This is what the most celebrated Doctors of the Roman Communion confess, and they even prove it by several very solid reasons.

The first, that the Law, of which St. Paul says that the works that it prescribes are incapable of justifying us, is the one that makes sin known. No flesh, he says, will be justified by the works of the Law, for by the Law is given the knowledge of sin, Rom. III.20. As therefore it is the moral Law that makes sin known by forbidding it, it is of this that one must recognize that the Apostle speaks.

II. In this same place St. Paul makes a collection of the principal places of the Old Testament, which reproach the Jews with their most horrible excesses; after which he adds at v.19, Now we know that all that the Law says, it says to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth might be closed, and that all the world might be guilty before God. Evident proof that the Law of which he speaks is the one that these crimes had violated, and consequently that it is the moral Law that he has in mind.



III. St. Paul does not only prove that the Jews cannot be justified by their works. He shows still the same thing on the subject of the Gentiles, and employs for this a good part of Chapter I of his Epistle to the Romans. But how does he prove it? Is it by showing that they did not observe the ceremonial Law? Not at all. It is by proving that they violated the natural Law. How after that can one deny that the works, of which he says that they cannot justify us, are those that the moral Law prescribes?

IV. Finally Salmeron notes, that it is not permitted to distinguish, where the Word of God does not distinguish at all. From which he concludes that St. Paul speaking in general, sometimes of works simply, sometimes of works of the Law, one must not restrict what he says to ceremonial works.

It is therefore certain that the works that St. Paul excludes, are as well the moral as the ceremonial. This is also what most admit. But they claim that these moral works, of which this Apostle speaks, are only those that one does without Faith, and by the forces of Nature alone. This is what I cannot admit. Here are the reasons that prevent me from it.

1. St. Paul maintains that to be justified by works, one must accomplish all the Law. See Gal. V.3, and Jas. II.10.11. And indeed if one violates a single point of the Law, one is subject to the curse, and consequently not in a state to be justified by it. As therefore even the Faithful whom Grace has regenerated do not accomplish the Law perfectly, as they stumble in many things, according to the remark of St. James, it is clear that they cannot be justified by works, in the manner in which St. Paul understands it.

II. One can strengthen this first reason by this other consideration, that, according to St. Paul, all that the Law says, it says to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth might be closed, and that all the world might be guilty before God. As therefore the Law makes this effect with regard to the regenerated Faithful, as well as with regard to Sinners, it is clear that the sense of this Apostle is, that even the Faithful are not justified by their works, in the manner in which he understands it, and that thus even the works done by Faith do not justify.

III. St. Paul speaking of Abraham, already called and received into the Communion of God, maintains that this Patriarch could not be justified by his works, but by his Faith. What shall we say then that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh? Certainly if Abraham has been justified by works, something to boast about, but not toward God. Rom. IV.1.2. Since therefore Abraham was not justified by his works in the very time that Grace gave him the strength to do them, it is clear that the works from which St. Paul takes away the power to justify us, are even the works done with Faith, and by the help of Grace.

IV. According to the Defenders of this sentiment, St. Paul and his Adversaries agreed that man is justified by his works; and what divided them, is that the false Doctors maintained that man is justified by all sorts of works, of whatever nature they might be; instead of which St. Paul said that one is so only by the works done by Grace

alone, and directed by Faith. But 1. what does one see in the discourse of St. Paul, which gives place to this thought? Does one find there any of the things that this Apostle should have said, if he had had the design to prove the Thesis that one attributes to him? 2. Would he have explained himself as generally and as universally as he has done, if he had had the design to take away the power to justify us, not from all sorts of works, but only from some? 3. What interest did the false Doctors have in maintaining that one could be justified without Faith? Did they reject Jesus Christ? Did they not make profession of believing in him? And is it not certain on the contrary that their error consisted in that they associated Moses with Jesus Christ, and made an unreasonable mixture of the Law and the Gospel?

V. Finally, either these false Doctors believed that the works done without Faith were good, or they recognized that they were criminal. If they believed them criminal, what appearance is there that they would give them the power to justify us? And if they esteemed them good, whence comes it that St. Paul disputing against them, says nothing to prove the contrary to them? Whence comes it that he exhausts himself in scattered reasonings, without ever coming to this point, which alone made the decision of the controversy?

All this persuades me that St. Paul speaks of all sorts of works without distinction. And one must not object, that if that were so, he would not call these works works of the Law. For first, he does not always explain himself in this way: he speaks sometimes of works generally, and without distinction. See Rom. IV.2.4.5.6. XI.6. II. Tim. I.9. Tit. III.5. And besides, it is not at all strange that he employs this manner of speaking to designate all sorts of works without distinction, there being none truly good, which is not prescribed and commanded by Law. Thus I am persuaded that if this term of Law is added to make some restriction, which I want neither to affirm nor deny, it is uniquely to convey that this Apostle speaks, neither of sins, nor of indifferent actions, nor even of what the Traditions of men had prescribed, but uniquely of what God himself had commanded; nearly in the same sense in which St. Paul speaks to Titus of the works of Justice that we might have done, and by which he maintains that we are not at all Saved. Thus it is the same thing as if he said, There is no work which justifies us, not even those that God has commanded most formally in his Law.

#### **CHAPTER IX. Of Another Question Agitated in the Time of the Apostles.**

These are the principal Questions that St. Paul has treated in relation to Justification. There is another which occupied the four Authors of the Epistles that one commonly calls Canonical, I mean St. Peter, St. John, St. James, and St. Jude. It had for its subject the necessity of Sanctification, which, as everyone knows, consists partly in abstaining from sin, and partly in applying oneself to the practice of good works.

It appears clearly by the reading of most of these Epistles, that the holy Men who wrote them, press with all their force the necessity of this double Duty. They show that it is impossible that those who neglect it are of the number of the Children of

God, that they have any communion with him, that they are the Vessels of his Grace during this life, and the Heirs of his Glory in the life to come.

That is not all. They explain themselves in a manner, which makes understand clearly enough that there were in their time people who maintained the contrary, and who carried themselves to this excess of impudence, as to say that one can save oneself, not only without doing good works, but further in plunging oneself into all sorts of impurities.

One asks who could be the Defenders of a Doctrine so detestable; and it is on this that one is divided. Several believe that they were the bad Christians, who abusing what Scripture tells us of the mercy of God, and of the infinite efficacy of the blood of his Son, and perhaps drawing false consequences from what St. Paul had said on the subject of Justification, maintaining that it is Faith, and not works, which makes this effect, imagined that the practice of good works is not at all necessary to save oneself, and that it suffices for that not to doubt the Truth.

The others have believed that those that these Apostles had principally in view were the Disciples of the famous Simon the Magician, who made themselves known some time later under the name of Gnostics, or of Knowers, and who perhaps already carried it then. It seems at least that St. Paul alludes to this knowledge of which they boasted, speaking to Timothy of a knowledge falsely so named, of which he says that certain false Doctors of his time prided themselves very inappropriately. I Tim. VI.20.

What makes this second sentiment very plausible, is first, that it is beyond doubt that after Simon the Magician had been rejected, and perhaps excommunicated by St. Peter, not only did he set himself up as Head of a Party, but wanted even to pass for a God. He maintained, as St. Irenaeus teaches us Bk. I. Chap. XX, that it was he who was the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; that he had appeared as Father among the Samaritans, as Son among the Jews, and as Holy Spirit among the other Nations.

Having found a Prostitute, named Helen, in a place of debauchery at Tyre, he led her everywhere with him, and maintained that "she was the first conception of his Spirit, by which he had engendered the Angels and the Archangels, who have made the World. That these ungrateful and unnatural Children not knowing him, and setting themselves up as Tyrants of the World that they had built, and not wanting to pass for Children of anyone at all, that is to say apparently wanting to pass for eternal, and independent, had seized their Mother, had done her a thousand outrages, and had enclosed her in human bodies, of which one was no sooner destroyed by death, than they substituted another for her. That in the time of the war of Troy, it was this famous Helen, who was carried off by Paris; that then after several other transmigrations she had been reduced to the necessity of prostituting herself in Tyre, to have something to subsist on."

He added, "that this unworthy treatment had obliged him to descend from Heaven to come to set her at liberty, and to save those who would put their confidence in

him, and in her. That to possess this salvation one needed only two things, to know the Truth, and to put one's hope and one's confidence in him, and in his Helen. That as to what concerns works, one must not trouble oneself about them. That everything is indifferent in itself; and that if the Prophets have represented certain actions as bad, and others as praiseworthy, it is that they were inspired by the Angels Creators of the World, and rebellious to their Father, that thus one must not trouble oneself with what they have said, but do without scruple all that comes into the mind." *Prophetas autem à mundi fabricatoribus Angelis inspiratos dixisse prophetias, quapropter nec ulterius curarent eos hi qui in eum, et in Selenen ejus spem habeant, et ut liberos agere quæ velint, secundum enim ipsius gratiam salvari homines, sed non secundum operas justas. Nec enim esse naturaliter operationes justas, sed ex accidentia, quemadmodum posuerunt qui mundum fecerunt Angeli, per hujusmodi præcepta in servitutem deducentes homines. Quapropter et solvi mundum, et liberari eos, qui sunt ejus, ab imperio eorum qui mundum fecerunt, repromisit. IREN. Lib. I. Cap. XX.*

It is certain secondly, that the Defenders of this abominable Doctrine made a Sect, which soon divided itself into various Branches, each of which had its particular name, which it took from its Founder; and which, dividing themselves on the particular designation of these Angels Creators of the World, agreed on what there was most detestable, I mean on the indifference of actions.

This Sect lasted a long time in the World, as appears by all that remains to us of monuments of Antiquity. But what is considerable, is that it began to produce itself in the time of the Apostles. This is not contested. But that being so, it is difficult to believe that those among the Apostles, who were writing in the time that this detestable Heresy was beginning to make its greatest ravages, have said nothing of it; and that fighting, as they do, other errors lighter and more supportable, they absolutely neglected this one.

Besides, there are a hundred things in the second Epistle of St. Peter, in the first of St. John, and in those of St. James and of St. Jude, to say nothing of the beginning of the Apocalypse, which visibly regard this. This is what Hammond has shown, both in his Notes on these Epistles, and in the first of his Dissertations on the Episcopate. It is true that as he was very attached to this thought, he has somewhat exceeded, relating to the Gnostics some places which do not speak of them. But there are a great number which designate them in a manner so clear, that one must do them a terrible violence to relate them elsewhere.

It is not moreover necessary to say, with Grotius, that what one finds on this subject in the second Epistle of St. Peter, and in that of St. Jude, regards particularly the Carpocratians, who appeared only after the death of the Apostles, and to maintain, to plaster over this, that these two Epistles are not the work of these two Apostles, but of two Bishops of Jerusalem, who lived in the following Century. There is, I say, no necessity to have recourse to such imaginations, since one finds in the Heresy of

Simon, who lived constantly in the time of the Apostles, all that Grotius notes in that of Carpocrates.

Be that as it may, this supposed, one has no trouble explaining these four Epistles, above all the first of St. John, and rendering reason for almost all that one finds there, as everyone can notice for himself by the simple reading of the sacred Text.

In particular I have already said, in my Treaty on good works, that as far as I can judge, this is the key to this place of St. James where he maintains that one is justified by works, and not by Faith alone.

Let one suppose indeed people who believed that one can neglect the practice of good works, and carry oneself to the most horrible excesses, without renouncing salvation, and that to attain to it one needs nothing else than to know the Truth, or to better say, than to believe blindly all the extravagances that Simon the Magician put forth, and to put one's hope and one's confidence in him, and in his Helen, as we have just seen that there were people who believed it in the time of the Apostles. Let one suppose, I say, only this, and let one judge after that if there is anything at all incredible in saying, that it is against these horrors that St. James wants to warn the Faithful to whom he writes, when he maintains to them that Faith alone does not suffice to be saved, and that good works are also necessary for it.

One will perhaps say, that if St. James disputed against the Disciples of Simon, he would not allege to them the Old Testament, of which these Heretics did not recognize the divinity. But it is easy to reply, that St. James does not have so much the design to dispute against these Erring ones, as to immunize the Faithful, to whom he writes, against the venom of their seductions. Thus these Faithful being persuaded of the divinity of the sacred Books, nothing prevented him from seeking there the proofs of what he said, as have also done St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude, of whom one cannot doubt that they had these Heretics in view in what they have said on this subject.

All that persuades me that there is nothing more natural than to explain in this manner what St. James says in this place. But as everyone does not admit this, and as it is annoying to make the sense of Scripture depend on a Hypothesis which can be contested, I will add that it is not difficult to give a reasonable sense to all that this Apostle says, without abandoning the ordinary suppositions.

Let one suppose therefore that there were in this time in the Church people who thought, neither of dogmatizing, nor of raising Altar against Altar. Let one suppose that interpreting badly what St. Paul had said on the subject of Justification by Faith, they imagined that a Faith absolutely sterile in good works, that is to say a purely speculative persuasion of the Truths of salvation, suffices to be the Child of God on Earth, and the Heir of his glory in the Life to come.

That supposed, I ask first, if such an error did not merit that St. James employ thirteen verses to refute it. I ask secondly, if in all these thirteen verses there is a

single word which does not admirably make this effect, and does not prove demonstratively the truths opposed to such an error.

Thus everything is reduced to knowing, if it is believable that there were in the time of St. James people prejudiced by these imaginations. But, besides that I do not see anyone at all who denies it, and that most even posit it expressly; besides that, I say, it is evident by all of Chapter II of the II of St. Peter, by all that of St. Jude, and by the eagerness that St. John shows in all his 1st Epistle to prove that Communion with God, that Faith, that Regeneration, are incompatible with Vice, it is evident, I say, that there were then in the World people who maintained the contrary. Whether one puts these people in the Church, or outside the Church; whether one makes them orthodox for all the rest, or heretics; this is what does not matter to me at all. It suffices for me that there were then such people. This alone supposed, nothing is more natural than to believe that it is to them that St. James looks in this place.

All that would not have the least difficulty, and I am persuaded that no one would have refused to admit it, if instead of saying that one is justified by works, and not only by Faith, St. James had contented himself with saying that it is impossible to please God and to save oneself, without applying oneself to the study of Piety. Who is it who would have dared contest a truth so indubitable?

The embarrassment has uniquely come from the fact that, to express this, St. James has used the term justify. But is it difficult to persuade oneself that by justify this Apostle understands to recognize as just, to declare just, to treat as just? Is it more difficult to believe that a sacred Author has said justify to say recognize as just etc. than to believe that another sacred Author has said to make wicked, HIRSCHIAH, to say to regard as wicked, to declare wicked, and to treat as wicked? This is however what Solomon has done, Prov. XVII.v.15. He who justifies, Matsdik, the wicked, and he who makes wicked, Marschiah, the just, are both an abomination to the Eternal.

#### **CHAPTER X. That What Has Just Been Said Gives an Easy Means of Reconciling St. Paul and St. James, on the Matter of Justification.**

AFTER what one has just read, one will not have much trouble reconciling St. Paul and St. James. I admit that this does not appear all at once without difficulty. Everyone knows that St. Paul has said in various places, that man is justified by Faith, and not by works. One need only read Chapters III and IV of the Epistle to the Romans, and II, III, and IV of the Epistle to the Galatians to be convinced of it. One will see that St. Paul not only says it, but proves it with all his strength. On the contrary St. James maintains, that one is justified by works, and not by Faith alone. Do you not see, he says, that man is justified by works, and not only by Faith? Jas. II.24.

One asks how it is possible to reconcile these two Apostles, whom one should not suspect of having truly contradicted each other, since they were led both by the same Spirit. Many have worked on this, but in different ways. All have claimed that these two Apostles do not speak of the same subject, and that one treats of one

thing, and the other of another; and indeed, it is not possible to reconcile them otherwise. But one does not agree on the manner in which one must take to show it. My design is not to examine now all that has been said with this purpose. Others have done this, and nothing obliges me to undertake it. I will content myself with saying in two words what I think on this subject.

I believe therefore that the most natural and the easiest way is to say first, that the Propositions that St. Paul and St. James undertake to prove have nothing at all opposed, nothing that they do not both admit. Secondly, that the Faith of which St. Paul speaks, is very different from that of which St. James speaks. Finally, that these two Apostles have taken the term justify in two different senses. These three Truths supposed, one will see very distinctly that these two Apostles did not contradict each other at all.

The first appears clearly by all that has just been said in the preceding Chapters. St. Paul had the design to prove these four Truths. I. That no one is justified before God by a Justification of rigor, which consists in declaring that the Accused has never violated his Law. II. That no one can obtain the remission of sins by the works prescribed by the ceremonial Law. III. That Christians are not held to observe this ceremonial Law. IV. That the observance of the Ceremonies, far from justifying us, does not even concur with Faith to make us obtain the remission of sins.

That is what St. Paul wants to prove, and that St. James is very far from contesting with him, saying nothing that shocks it in the least in the world. The only thing that this Apostle proposes to show, is that good works are necessary, and that it is impossible to be saved without doing them. Is this moreover a thing that St. Paul has ever denied? Does he not affirm it on the contrary on every page of his Epistles? Does he not say there in just so many words, that without sanctification no one will see the Lord? Does he not say there that God will render to each according to his works? And that we must all appear before the Tribunal of God, to receive in our bodies according to what it will be found that we have done of good or of evil? Or to better say, is this not a capital Truth, and formally attested by all the sacred Authors, and repeated on every page of their holy Writings?

In this regard therefore there is no opposition between these Apostles. I have said secondly, that the Faith of which they speak is not the same. This is what cannot be contested with me. For first, it is beyond doubt that the Faith of which St. Paul speaks, is a living Faith, and accompanied by the practice of good works. That appears from the fact that he calls it, sometimes a Faith operating by Charity, sometimes the Faith of the Elect of God; two titles which prove invincibly what I claim. That appears from the fact that he says so often, that the Faith of which he speaks, is that which makes us live spiritually. The Just, he says, will live by his Faith. And elsewhere, speaking of himself: I am crucified with Jesus Christ, and I live now not I, but Jesus Christ lives in me; and what I live in the flesh, I live in the Faith of the Son of God, who has loved me, and who has given himself for me. Gal. II.

It is by this same that he responds to the objection that was made to him, maintaining that the Doctrine that he was putting forth, opened the door to Libertinism. He proves the contrary by showing by various considerations, that the Faith of which he speaks, is inseparable from piety, and incompatible with vice. This is the subject of all of Chapter VI of the Epistle to the Romans, and of the first part of VIII. This is also what he proves in the five last verses of Chapter II of the Epistle to the Galatians; to say nothing of the other places of his holy Writings, where he establishes this Truth. But it is not necessary to extend ourselves on this subject, there being no Christian, of whatever Sect he may be, who does not admit that the Faith of which St. Paul speaks, is a living Faith, and operating by Charity.

It is no less certain that the Faith of which St. James speaks, is a dead Faith, and sterile in good actions. This is what appears by all the sequence of his discourse. Witness verse 14, where he proposes the Question, which he has the design to treat in the following verses. My Brothers, he says, what will it profit, if someone says that he has Faith, and he does not have works? Will Faith be able to Save him? That is explicit: but verse 17 is no less so. Likewise also Faith, if it does not have works, it is dead in itself. I say the same thing of verse 18. Even someone will say, You have Faith, and I have works: Show me then your Faith without works, and I will show you mine by my works. See also verse 20, where he repeats the same thing. Finally this Apostle attributes to the Demons themselves the Faith of which he speaks, witness these words of verse 19. You believe that there is one God, and you do well: the Devils believe it also, and tremble. Who can, after all that, doubt that this Apostle speaks of a dead Faith?

All that is demonstrative. However one nevertheless objects to us, that according to us, dead Faith is at most only a false Faith, incapable consequently, I will not say of justifying us all alone, but further of contributing anything at all to our Justification. From which one concludes that it is not of this that St. James speaks, since he speaks of a Faith which justifies us, not to be sure all alone, but conjointly with works. Indeed, this Apostle says at verse 22, that Faith operated with the works of Abraham, and that it has been rendered complete by works.

But it is easy to respond, that one can understand four things by a false Faith. I. A Faith which embraces only falsehoods, and such is the Faith that Heretics have for their errors. II. A Faith feigned and disguised, when one pretends to believe what God has revealed to us, and one mocks it internally. III. A Faith which limits itself to speculative Dogmas, and which not doubting their truth, takes no care to observe the Precepts that God has added to these Dogmas. This is the one that our Theologians call, some dogmatic, others historical. IV. The one that they call a Faith for a time, and which embracing all the speculative Truths, and some practical Truths, rejects also some others; or whatever may be the case, does not receive them all with enough submission.



The title of false Faith belongs properly to the first two species, and I admit that one would be wrong to claim that St. James spoke of them. But this is also a claim, that one must not attribute to anyone at all. He speaks by all appearances of the third alone, or at most of the third and of the fourth. Now it is certain that this third is a false Faith, only because it does not have all the essence and all the perfection of the true. But it is not at all so like the first ones. It embraces nothing which is not true. It does not reject it internally, in the time that it makes an external profession of it. It has some persuasion of it, although this persuasion that it has of it is not as strong as it should be, and does not entail this full and entire submission to the first Truth, which makes the perfection of divine Faith.

One must therefore distinguish two things in this Faith, what it has, and what it lacks. What it has, is common to it with justifying Faith. For indeed, one finds in justifying Faith this persuasion of the revealed Truths, which makes up all that there is of good in historical Faith, but one finds it there with what is lacking to the latter. And indeed, when historical Faith becomes justifying, as happens often enough, the first is not destroyed, and the soul does not lose the persuasion of the Truth that such a Faith gave it, but in retaining it it acquires what was lacking to it.

Thus it is very easy to understand how St. James was able to say first, that the Faith of which he speaks is rendered complete by works; and secondly, how he was able to assure that it operates conjointly with works. Indeed, a Faith without works becomes a perfect Faith, when one begins to do them: and besides, what subsists of the first Faith in a soul which acquires justifying Faith, and which begins to do good works, is not useless to it to procure for it the Grace of Justification, above all the one of which St. James speaks.

Nothing therefore is more true than what I have said, that the Faith of which St. James speaks is very different from that of which St. Paul speaks, and that thus there is nothing surprising in seeing that St. Paul attributes to the second a power, that St. James takes away from the first. There is in that, neither contradiction, nor opposition.

But that is not all, and this removes only a part of the contradiction that one imagines to see between St. Paul and St. James. The latter does not only say, that Faith alone does not justify us; he says further, that one is justified by works, which St. Paul strongly denies. Thus, all that I have just said does not fully remove the difficulty, and one must necessarily add to it what I have just now assured, that these two Apostles take the term justify in two extremely different senses. This is what one is going to see in the following Chapter.

## **CHAPTER XI. Continuation of the same subject. That St. Paul and St. James do not take the term "to justify" in the same sense.**

I have already said in various places that there is a double Justification, that of the Sinner, and that of the Righteous. The first is of pure grace, and consists in discharging a Guilty person from the punishment he deserved. The second is an act

of justice, and consists in declaring righteous one who truly is so. But as one can be righteous in two ways, perfectly and imperfectly, the Justification of the Righteous is divided in two. First, there is a total and absolute Justification, which consists in declaring someone perfectly Righteous, and pronouncing that the person in question has perfectly fulfilled the Law. There is another Justification, which can be called limited, and which consists in declaring someone Righteous with a sincere Justice, which is true but imperfect, and which being unable to withstand the examination of God's Justice, subsists before the Tribunal of his mercy and goodness. Such is that of the true Children of God on Earth.

Taking the matter another way, one can say that there is a triple Justification. First, there is the Justification of the Sinner. There is the Justification of the perfect Righteous. Finally, there is the Justification of the imperfect Righteous. With that established, I say that when St. Paul maintains that man is justified by Faith, he always speaks of the Justification of the Sinner. When he maintains that no one is justified by his works, he means it of the Justification of the perfect Righteous. And when St. James assures that one is justified by works, he speaks of the Justification of the imperfect Righteous. If I prove these three Propositions, the difficulty will be fully resolved, and it will clearly appear that these two Apostles do not contradict each other.

The first seems to me incontestable. Indeed, I know no one who does not agree with it. It appears throughout St. Paul's discourse. He says that the Justification of which he speaks is that which justifies the Wicked. "To him," he says, "who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the wicked, his Faith is imputed as Righteousness." Rom. IV. 5. How could he make it more clearly understood that the Justification of which he speaks is the Justification of the Sinner? This also appears from the fact that he makes it consist in the remission of sins. "David," he says, "declares the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." Rom. IV. 6-7. Only the Justification of the Sinner consists in the remission of sins, as will be seen subsequently. It is therefore of this alone that the Apostle speaks. Finally, St. Paul speaks of a Justification that he attributes to the saving virtue of the Blood of Jesus Christ. "Being," he says, "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God has ordained from all time as a propitiation through faith in his blood." Rom. III. 23-24. Now who does not see that this concerns only the Justification of the Sinner?

I said secondly that when St. Paul maintains that no one is justified by his works, he speaks of the Justification of the perfect Righteous. This is what I believe I have proven in Chapter VII. Thus I can dispense with giving new proofs.

Someone might perhaps say that it is difficult to persuade oneself that St. Paul, saying on the one hand that one is justified by Faith, and on the other that one is not by works, has taken this term "to justify" in two different senses. To this I respond

two things. First, that it is rather common for sacred Authors to take a term in a same discourse in two different senses. For example, Jesus Christ used the term "death" in two very different senses when he said to the one who asked permission to bury his Father, "Let the dead bury their dead." Similarly, St. Paul in Chapter XI of his Epistle to the Hebrews means by Faith sometimes dogmatic Faith, sometimes justifying Faith, sometimes the Faith of miracles. Thus, one will say nothing incredible when maintaining that this Apostle did the same thing on this occasion.

I add secondly that if this causes any difficulty, one can take the matter differently. One can say that this Apostle takes the term "to justify," or "to be justified," in a general sense, which equally designates the Justification of the perfect Righteous and the Justification of the Sinner. By "to be justified," this Apostle simply means to subsist before the Tribunal of God, and to avoid the condemnation with which the Law threatens all those who violate it. This sense equally designates these two Justifications. Thus one can say that this is St. Paul's meaning, and by taking it in this way, one absolutely resolves the objection.

I come to the third Proposition I have advanced, which is undoubtedly the most important. I said that when St. James speaks of Justification, he speaks of that of the imperfect Righteous. And this seems to me incontestable. Indeed, he speaks neither of that of the perfect Righteous, nor of that of the Sinner. He does not speak of that of the perfect Righteous, as appears firstly from the fact that there is no such person on Earth. This is indeed what all of Scripture attests, and what this Apostle in particular recognizes, saying that we all stumble in many things. But this also appears secondly from the example of Rahab, which St. James produces, and who was far from having been perfectly righteous all her life, as would be necessary to be justified in this way, for she had been a prostitute and an idolater. It also appears from the example of Abraham. For besides that this Patriarch had been an idolater in Chaldea, he fell into various faults even after he had entered the path to Heaven. Thus his piety, though eminent, had its defects; and consequently he could not be justified in this manner that I have called total and absolute.

St. James speaks just as little of the Justification of the Sinner. This clearly appears from the example of Abraham, which this Apostle presses with all his might. He says that Abraham our Father was justified by his works when he offered his Son Isaac on the altar. In whose mind can it fall that St. James's meaning is that Abraham obtained the remission of his faults only at that moment, and only then made his peace with God? Who does not know that when this Patriarch gave this great proof of his piety, God had long since received him into his Covenant? According to Petau, it had been no less than fifty-five years since he had left Chaldea to obey the order God had given him. He had always lived since that time in an exemplary manner, and all of sacred History bears witness to his piety. St. Paul himself praises him in relation to all that time. Thus it is impossible that St. James, saying that this Patriarch was justified when he set about immolating his Son, meant that it was then that he

obtained from God the remission of his sins, and that he entered into his Communion.

He undoubtedly speaks of the Justification of the imperfect Righteous, which consists on one side in all that this Righteous person does to persuade others and to convince himself that he is truly righteous; and on the other, in all that God does in his regard to show that he regards him as righteous, declaring him such, and treating him as such. This appears from these words, "Show me your Faith without your works, and I will show you mine by my works"; and especially from those of verse 23: "The Scripture was fulfilled, saying, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him as righteousness, and he was called the friend of God." For, after all, this is visibly said in allusion to what God said when Abraham set about immolating his Son: "Now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your Son, your only one, from me." Thus, to be justified, in this passage, is to be declared righteous by God's own mouth.

Someone might perhaps say that it is impossible for the Justification of which St. James speaks to be the Justification of the Righteous, since he produces the example of Rahab, who was justified only in passing from the state of sin to the state of grace. It is supposed that this Woman converted only when she hid Joshua's Spies. This is the whole foundation of the objection. But this supposition is very uncertain, and even unlikely. She herself says that what persuaded her that the Eternal is the true God is what he had done in favor of the Israelites, opening a passage for them through the Red Sea, and giving them victory over the Kings of the Amorites; Josh. II. 9-11. Thus, nothing prevents that as soon as she learned of these wonders, she was persuaded and believed, which was sufficient to make her obtain the remission of her sins.

What she did some time later, hiding Joshua's Spies, was a beautiful proof she gave of the firmness of her Faith, and it is true to say that she justified herself by this. But what God did in her favor, some time later, exempting her from the Ban of Jericho, was a new Justification, a new testimony that God rendered of the sincerity of her Conversion. Thus she was justified doubly, both by her action and by the reward she obtained for it; which is undoubtedly sufficient to justify St. James's reasoning, who finds in it a proof of what he maintains.

I have thus shown that St. Paul and St. James do not speak of the same Justification. St. Paul speaks sometimes of that of the Sinner, sometimes of that of the perfect Righteous; and St. James speaks only of that of the imperfect Righteous. That being the case, can one maintain that they contradict each other? Would it not be necessary for that not only that they affirm and deny the same thing, but also that they take in the same sense the terms which they use to affirm and to deny it? Not doing so, and taking these terms in such different senses, it is clear that they do not contradict each other.

## **CHAPTER XII. Answer to an Objection.**

It appears from all that I have just said that the Errors that the Apostles combated were very different from those that are maintained today, and that thus the Questions that these holy Men treated have nothing in common with those that presently divide Christians: which it seems that many Authors have not perceived. Indeed, they act as if they supposed that the Apostles intended to prove to their Adversaries the same Truths that are contested today; which, as has been seen, is very far from the truth.

But, one will say, if that is so, it will follow that it is impossible to decide our Disputes by the authority of the Apostles. It will follow that there is either bad faith or ignorance in producing on both sides what these holy Men have said on this matter. It will follow finally that our Questions, being unable to be decided by Scripture, must remain eternally undecided.

But I do not admit any of these consequences. Although the Questions that the Apostles treated are very different from those that occupy us, it is not to say that what they said thereupon cannot be decisive for us. This is what two considerations clearly show.

The first is that the Apostles did not content themselves with refuting the Errors of their Adversaries: they also explained positively and exactly the nature of Justification. They marked in what it consists, and how it is done; and what they said for this purpose is more than sufficient to decide our controversies, as I hope to show subsequently. Thus, even if this part of their Writings, which tends to refute the Errors that were in vogue in their time, were of no use for the clarification of our Disputes, it is not to say that the other, which positively explains the thing, could not be very useful to us.

But I add secondly that as Truths are linked with one another, if what the Apostles opposed to the false Doctors of their time does not directly and immediately overturn the Errors that are circulated today on this matter, it nevertheless does this effect indirectly, and by good consequences. This is what I hope to show in its place. Meanwhile, one can understand it by two examples. St. Paul strongly combats, in Chapter XI of his First Epistle to the Corinthians, various abuses that had crept into that Church on the occasion of the celebration of the Eucharist, and which by the grace of God no longer appear among Christians. Does it follow from this that what he said in that place serves nothing to clarify the Questions that are agitated today on this Sacrament? And is it not true on the contrary that it is alleged on both sides? In Chapter XV of the same Epistle, he amply refutes the Error of those who denied the Resurrection. Should one conclude from this that what he says for this purpose is useless for the clarification of the Questions that are presently agitated? Not at all. One need only read the Authors who have treated the Common-Place of the Resurrection to see the advantages that one draws from that passage. Again, even though the Disputes that occupied the first Christians are very different from

those that occupy us presently, it does not follow at all from this that what the Apostles said to decide the former cannot serve us very usefully for the decision of the latter. This is what will be seen in the following Book.

## **TREATISE ON JUSTIFICATION. SECOND BOOK. ON THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE SINNER.**

### **CHAPTER I. In what the Justification of the Sinner consists.**

I will not dwell any longer on the Questions that were agitated in St. Paul's time. I pass to those that presently divide Christians, and which thereby touch us in some way more closely. And as I have already said that there is a double Justification of which Holy Scripture speaks to us, that of the Sinner and that of the Righteous, I will try to explain as clearly as possible the nature and properties of both, beginning with the first, on which there is the most division.

To find more happily in what the Justification of the Sinner consists, I am persuaded that the best is to gather all that Holy Scripture tells us about it in various places. This will be the way to form an idea of it, which will discover its nature to us.

I. There is no doubt that our Justification is an action of God. This is what Scripture makes us understand in various places, but particularly in Chapter VIII of the Epistle to the Romans. "Those whom God has predestined," says St. Paul, "he has also called, and those whom he has called, he has also justified." And below: "Who shall bring an accusation against God's elect? God is the one who justifies."

II. It is certain that those whom God justifies are Sinners. Indeed, St. Paul says expressly, Rom. IV. 5, that one believes in him who justifies the wicked. And the Savior of the World, in the Gospel, before assuring that the Publican went away justified to his house, has him say to God, "Lord, have mercy on me, who am a sinner."

III. Scripture says that it is from our sins that God justifies us. Witness what St. Paul says to the Corinthians: "Such were some of you; but you were washed from them, but you were sanctified from them, but you were justified from them." I Cor. VI. 11. And speaking to the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia, "Be it known to you that the remission of sins is offered to you in Jesus Christ, and that from all that from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses, whoever believes is justified by him." Acts XIII. 38-39.

IV. It is certain that God justifies us from our sins, not by declaring that we have not committed them, but by pardoning them. This is why Justification and the remission of sins are two terms that Scripture employs indifferently and to designate the same thing. This appears from the Passage of Acts XIII, which I have just reported, and where St. Paul explains what he has just said, that the remission of sins is offered to us in Jesus Christ; he explains it, I say, by adding that one is justified by him from all that from which one could not be justified by the Law of Moses. This also appears from Chapter IV of the Epistle to the Romans v. 6-8, where St. Paul, wanting to prove what he has just said, that we are justified by Faith and not by works, produces the

testimony of David in Ps. XXXII. "David," he says, "declares the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works, saying, Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute his sin." What would be the force of this proof if to justify, to forgive sins, and not to impute them, were not the same thing?

That being so, one should not be surprised that our Justification is not spoken of, either in the Lord's Prayer or in the Apostles' Creed. If the word Justification is not found there, can one deny that the thing itself is found, since the remission of sins is spoken of in both? Hence Matthew and Luke, reporting the Lord's Prayer, express the Article of the remission of sins, one by these terms, "Forgive us our sins," the other by these, "Forgive us our debts." The foundation of the metaphor is that as when a Creditor forgives a debt, he renounces the right he had to pursue its payment; so when one pardons an outrage, one renounces the right one had to punish it, or to pursue its punishment.

VI. But in what properly consists either this pardon or this remission? This is what no one ignores, provided one limits oneself to what this word means in our ordinary language. When we say that we forgive a man who has offended us, we mean that we want neither to take revenge on him, nor to pursue in Justice its punishment, nor even to harbor resentment for it. This is why we ordinarily say, to express all this, that we forget the past, to say that we want to act the same as if in the truth of the matter we no longer remembered it.

There is no doubt that Scripture means it in the same sense, when it says that God forgives us: And this is all the more certain, because it is on the conformity found between these two actions that Jesus Christ bases various things he says in his Gospel. He has us say, in the Prayer he has taught us, that we pray God to forgive us in the same manner that we forgive those who have offended us. And in one of his Parables he represents God and an inexorable man, as a Master who forgives a large sum to one of his servants; and as a servant who after having received this grace, refuses to grant a similar one to one of his Fellow servants, who owes him only very little.

God does therefore in our regard what we do in regard to those to whom we forgive the outrages they have made us. As therefore on these occasions we stifle all the resentment we had of them, and do not think at all of taking revenge, God similarly does two things when he forgives us: He exempts us from the punishment that we have deserved by sinning; and, notwithstanding our unworthiness, he always loves us tenderly and effectively, showering us with all sorts of blessings. David was looking at the first of these two things when he said to God in Ps. XXXII, "I said, I will make confession of my transgressions to the Eternal; and you have taken away the penalty of my sin." St. Paul similarly says that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Jesus Christ. And for the second, this same Apostle says to the Romans that being justified by Faith, we have peace toward God. And God himself

through the mouth of the Prophet Hosea, "I will heal their rebellion, and will love them freely, and my anger is turned away from them," Hosea XIV. 4.

VII. The Roman Church distinguishes two sorts of punishments that we deserve, temporal and eternal; and maintains that when God receives us in grace, he exempts us only from the latter, and leaves us the former to endure. But she is mistaken, as it would be easy to show if the matter were germane to this place. When God justifies us, he exempts us from all sorts of punishments, as St. Paul clearly makes us understand, saying that there is now no condemnation for those who are in Jesus Christ. And besides, the expressions that Holy Scripture uses on this subject visibly tend to make us conceive the most full and perfect remission that it is possible to imagine, saying that God removes our sins as far as the East is removed from the West; that he throws them behind his back; that he plunges them to the bottom of the Sea; that he dissipates them, as when the Sun dissipates a cloud; that he erases them from his Book; that he erases them from his memory; that one will seek them, but will not find them. All this clearly shows that the remission he grants us of them is full and entire, and that thus it leaves us no punishment to suffer.

VIII. That is therefore what God does when he grants to Sinners the grace of Justification. But, someone will perhaps say, does he do only that? And must one believe that the remission of sins is the whole Justification? This is something on which there seems to be some diversity of opinions among our Theologians. There are those who explain themselves as if they believed that Justification and the remission of sins are only one thing, and that these two terms have the same meaning. Others say that the remission of sins is only a part of Justification, and that this latter term entails, besides the pardon of our faults, that other grace that Scripture calls our Adoption, and by which God receives us in the number of his Children. That is not all. They also say that it encompasses the rights we have to the possession of the celestial Heritage. Thus one asks which of these two opinions is the true one.

This Question seems to me so little important that I cannot resolve to decide it. It is, in my opinion, only a Question of words. It is agreed on both sides that when God receives us in his grace, he does three things in our favor. I. He forgives us our sins. II. He receives us in the number of his Children. III. He gives us thereby the same incontestable rights to the celestial Heritage. It is also agreed that these three graces are inseparable, and that God never grants one without accompanying it with the two others. Indeed, God never forgives sins except to those who have Faith: this is what we will see in the following Chapters. It is certain on the other hand that Faith makes us become the Children of God. This is what St. John teaches us in Chapter I of his Gospel. "To all who received him, he gave them the right to be made children of God, namely to those who believe in his name." Finally, it is certain that the principal right we have to the celestial Heritage is our Adoption. Witness what St. Paul says about it in Rom. VIII: "If we are children, then we are heirs." Thus it is



impossible to believe without obtaining the remission of sins, without becoming the Children of God, and the Heirs of his Heaven.

Consequently, the whole Question that can remain on this matter is to know if the term Justification jointly designates these three graces that God grants us and that Faith procures for us; or if it means only one. But is that a Question that deserves to stop us? Let one therefore do as one wishes. Let one take this term in whichever of these two senses, provided only that one warns either the Reader or the Listener. After that I do not believe that one should be blamed for it.

But, one will say, which of these two senses is the one in which Scripture employs this manner of speaking? I answer that it is quite certain that it means the remission of sins by our Justification. But I do not believe it possible to solidly prove either that it means this grace alone, and by exclusion of the two others; or that it means all three together, and jointly. If someone shows me the contrary, I will come back without difficulty from my error.

I have nothing to say on the subject either of Adoption or of the right we have to the celestial Heritage. But I still have various very important reflections to make on the Remission of sins. They will be found in the following Chapters.

## **CHAPTER II. Whether when God justifies us, He pardons not only our past sins, but also those we will commit in the future.**

There have been some of our Theologians who have maintained that the Remission of sins that God grants us, when He shows us grace, concerns not only our past sins, but also those we have not yet committed, and into which we may fall in the future. Mr. Witsius attributes the opposing view to Mr. Claude alone, who indeed strongly maintained it in one of his Letters. But if Mr. Witsius had taken the trouble to read, on one side the "Reversal of Morality" published by Mr. Arnaud, and on the other the "Apology" of Mr. Jurieu, he would have seen that these two Antagonists, who are so opposed in everything, nevertheless agree in this, that the view of those who say that God pardons sins before they are committed is little followed among us; and they not only agree on this, but prove it. Indeed, Mr. Arnaud does not fail to reproach us for what some of ours have said on this matter. But he adds, page 222, that it is not necessary to refute this error since the most skilled among us reject it; which he proves in that same place by express passages from Calvin, Zanchius, an English Author cited by Thomson, Robert Abbot Bishop of Salisbury, and Rivet. Mr. Jurieu produces these same Authors, and adds the Theologians of England deputed to the Synod of Dort, and Amesius. Mr. Pictet has just declared himself on this page 722 of his Theology; and I do not doubt that one could find several others, if one wanted to take the trouble to look for them. See in particular Baxter, Method Theol. Part. III. page 343. Here, by the way, is their thought.

They are careful not to deny that the Justification that God grants us has some Relation to the sins into which one may fall in the future. They merely hold that when God receives us in His Grace, He does not actually pardon future sins; but that

He obligates Himself to do so, not absolutely, but on condition that we implore His grace with faith and repentance. Thus, three things must be distinguished: granting in advance the pardon of future sins; obligating oneself to pardon them whatever one may do; and promising to pardon them provided one believes and repents, and not otherwise. I know no one who maintains the second; several believe the first; and those of whom I am presently speaking hold the third. They hold, in a word, that God never grants the remission of future sins, but only promises it, and even promises it only conditionally, that is to say, by means of faith and repentance.

It is true that they do not believe that an express and particular repentance is necessary to obtain the remission of small sins, which they call "quotidianae incurisionis," as one might say sins of each day, and from which they believe that the most righteous are never fully exempt. But they believe that the great sins, into which the Righteous sometimes fall, as the example of David and that of St. Peter justify, are pardoned only after they have repented of them specifically and expressly, so that if they died without repenting of them, they would perish.

It is this latter view that has always seemed to me the most true. Indeed, three things are noted in Scripture.

The first, that it never says that God has pardoned anyone for sins they had not yet committed; and one can be assured that it has never said this, considering that the Defenders of the opposing view do not produce any place where it says so, as they would undoubtedly do if they could.

The second, that Scripture on the contrary always represents the Remission of sins that one has not yet committed as a grace to come, which it does not announce, but which it promises. "They will be mine," says the Lord of Hosts, "when I set apart my most precious jewels, and I will spare them, as a Father spares his Child who serves him." Malachi III. 17. He does not say that he has already pardoned them, but that he will pardon them in the future. St. James similarly, speaking of the sick, says that the prayer of faith will save them, and that if they have committed sins they will be forgiven.

The third, that it promises this grace only conditionally, namely, provided that one believes and repents; and what seems to me incomparably stronger, is that it declares very clearly that if the Righteous fallen into crime do not repent of it, they will be punished very severely. For example, Rom. XI. 22. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God, namely the goodness toward you, if you continue in His goodness, otherwise you too will be cut off." There on one side is a conditional promise "if you continue in His goodness"; and on the other, a threat for those who do not fulfill the condition, "otherwise you too will be cut off." There is something similar in what Jesus Christ says to the Man born blind: "Go, and sin no more, lest a worse thing happen to you." And in what this great Savior says to the Pastor of Ephesus, Rev. II. 4-5. "I have something against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen, and repent, and do the first works;

otherwise I will come to you shortly, and will remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent." See also verses 14, 15, 16, and III. 3.

There are two things in all these passages, an express order to repent, and extremely strong threats in case one persists in impenitence. And do not both of these two things clearly show that far from God having granted these people the remission of these new sins into which they had fallen after their conversion, He only promises to grant it to them in the future conditionally, namely, provided that they believe and repent?

First, there is something absurd, and opposed to all notions of common sense, in promising as a future good, a grace already received and actually and in fact possessed. Promises are the foundation of hope; and hope has as its object, not the present, but the future: for as St. Paul says, "Why would someone hope for what he sees?" Above all, there is something unbearable about promising it conditionally, making the fulfillment of this promise depend on this condition, and threatening not to execute it in case one does not do what is prescribed. Thus God doing both, promising the Remission of sins to fallen Righteous, promising it to them under the condition of repentance, and threatening to destroy them if they do not repent; it is evident, it seems to me, that when God makes them either these promises or these threats, the Remission of sins of which He speaks has not yet been granted to them.

One will perhaps say that what God promises in this way is not properly the pardon of sins, but the confirmation, and above all the manifestation, the Feeling, and the certainty of this grace. But the threats that He adds to these promises clearly show the contrary. What does God threaten these fallen Righteous with? Is it with some trouble in their conscience? Is it with the loss of His consolations? Not at all. He threatens to cut them off from the mystical Trunk of the good Olive: "Otherwise you too will be cut off." He threatens them with death: "If the righteous turns from his righteousness and does iniquity... he will die for these things." Ezek. XVIII. 24. Thus the threats determining the meaning of the promises, it is evident that the latter have precisely the meaning that I have given them, and not the one attributed to them.

I cannot leave these threats without making another reflection on them. Two things clearly show that God proposes by them to inspire fear in the fallen Righteous, and to lead them in this way to rise from their fall. One is that this is the natural effect of threats; the other, that St. Paul explains himself openly on this subject. For in the very place that I have cited, he says, "Do not be elevated by pride, but fear." It also appears that this fear that God proposes to excite thereby is a reasonable and deliberate fear, since He Himself reasons, if I dare say so, or at least proposes reasoned motives to give birth to it.

It is nevertheless true that the view I am combating completely annihilates deliberate fear. For after all, there would be something ridiculous about fearing in this way an impossible evil, especially an evil whose impossibility is metaphysical,

such as the punishment of a sin already pardoned. To punish a sin already pardoned is a true contradiction. For to pardon is not to punish; and to punish is not to pardon. Consequently, if future sins were pardoned, a fallen Righteous fearing to be punished for his fall would fear a metaphysically impossible evil; and what is considerable, he would fear it with a deliberate fear, which is ridiculous.

Indeed, I do not deny that one cannot fear an impossible evil, provided that it is with an indeliberate fear. This is what happens to those who cast their eyes on a precipice, where strong barriers prevent them from being able to fall. What I deny is that one can, and especially that one should fear, with a deliberate and reflective fear, an impossible evil, especially when its impossibility is metaphysical, as is that of the punishment of a sin already pardoned. And if this fear is so ridiculous, is it conceivable that God works to give birth to it? Is it even worthy of Him to threaten with an evil that He has never done, that He has no will to do, that it is even impossible, I say absolutely impossible, for Him to do?

One will perhaps say that it is easy to turn this reason against the Perseverance of the Saints. Indeed, it is, according to us, impossible for a fallen Righteous not to rise again through repentance; and yet God threatens to destroy him if he does not repent. Thus He makes him fear an evil that cannot happen to him.

I answer that there are two great differences between these two Dogmas, which both make the objection, which is very pressing against the first, not at all so against the second.

The first is that the impossibility that exists for a fallen Righteous to die in impenitence is by no means a metaphysical impossibility, like that which exists for an erased sin to be punished. The first does not at all come from the nature of the thing itself. It comes solely from the free will of God. Thus there is no consequence to be drawn from one to the other, and it is very possible that the fear of one of these evils is just, and that that of the other is not.

Secondly, the Dogma of the Perseverance of the Saints, as our Theologians pose it, does not prevent this Proposition from being true: "If a fallen Righteous does not rise again through repentance, he will inevitably perish." There is consequently a solid reason to fear. But this same Proposition is false in the Hypothesis that I am combating. For even if this fallen Righteous never rose again, and died in impenitence, he would be saved, if it is true that all his sins, past, present, and future, were pardoned to him when he was justified.

Let us suppose indeed that this fallen Righteous died in impenitence. I say that it would be impossible for him to be damned, since he could only be so because of some sin; and all his sins without exception having been pardoned to him, there is none that could operate his damnation. Thus fear can be just in the Hypothesis of the Perseverance of the Saints, without being so in that which poses the remission of future sins.

I cannot help asking my Reader here to weigh well this Consequence, which, as I have just said, arises from the Dogma that I refute. It is not only necessary; it is frightful and unbearable. Who indeed could digest this absurdity, that a man who would die in impenitence would nevertheless be saved? To maintain such a Paradox, is this not to overturn all of Holy Scripture, which says so often that Sinners who die without repenting inevitably perish? Thus this alone, that this follows from this Hypothesis, should make it more than suspect.

One will perhaps say that this is only an impossible Supposition; and I indeed admit that it is such in our principles. For if one supposes that it is absolutely necessary to repent after sin to be saved, one sees well that it is impossible for an Elect fallen into crime to die without repentance, and that God must of all necessity give it to him before allowing him to leave the world. But I do not see on what one can base saying the same thing in the Hypothesis that I refute.

In our principles, a man who after having committed a great crime would die without repenting of it, would die in a state of sin, and consequently would perish. But in the opposing Hypothesis, he would die in a state of grace. Thus repentance being necessary only to put the Sinner in a state of grace, and to make him obtain the remission of sins, and the one of whom we speak having obtained it, and being actually at peace with God, it is clear that he can do without repentance; and consequently, however impossible this supposition may be in our principles, one has no reason to consider it as such in the principles that we reject.

### **CHAPTER III. Where the same thing is proven by other reasons.**

As the Question that I have treated in the preceding Chapter seems to me extremely important, I hope that one will not find it wrong that I give still new proofs of the view that I have tried to establish. This is what I will do in this Chapter.

I. First, the reasons of Mr. Pictet seem to me demonstrative. He says that a sin that has not been committed, does not exist; and that not existing, it does not deserve punishment. And if it does not deserve to be punished, how can it be pardoned? For who does not know that pardon is nothing other than the exemption from the penalty that one deserved?

II. He says secondly that God never grants the remission of sins except to those who confess them, who repent of them, and who humbly ask Him for pardon. This is indeed a Truth that Scripture attests in various places, which it is not necessary to report. As therefore there would be something ridiculous about confessing to God sins that one has not committed, that one even intends not to commit; as it is impossible to repent of them seriously; and as finally no one ever thought of asking God for pardon for them; it is evident that God never pardons them in advance, and that He waits to do so, not only until they have been committed, but also until one has risen from them through faith and repentance.

I know what is answered. It is said that as the pardon that God grants us is a general pardon, it is also preceded by a general repentance; that is to say, a keen sorrow,

which is formed not only by the feeling of past sins, but also by the consideration of that depravity of our nature, with which one foresees that it will be necessary to struggle during the whole course of life; and that such a sorrow is sufficient to obtain the remission of sins.

But it is easy to reply first, that this destroys the view of our Theologians, who commonly hold that there is this difference between the small sins into which the Righteous fall each day, and the enormous faults that it sometimes happens that they make, that it takes only a general repentance to obtain the remission of the first; whereas it takes an express and particular one for the second. Nothing will be more false than this Doctrine, if general repentance is sufficient to erase all sorts of sins without exception.

Moreover, do we not see that when this latter misfortune happens to the Faithful, God never fails to raise them from it by an express and particular repentance, as appears from the example of David, and from that of St. Peter? Evident proof that particular repentance is necessary to obtain the remission of these great sins.

Finally, I say that to detest, not only the source and principle of certain sins, but these sins themselves, is not to repent of them, either expressly or confusedly. One detests the sins of others, and one does not repent of them. And moreover one detests, not only the sins into which one fears to fall, but also those into which one hopes not to fall. Thus to say that one detests, either the depravity of nature, or the sins to which it may lead us, is not to say that one repents of them, either expressly or confusedly.

III. Mr. Claude adds that the opposing Hypothesis seems to belie itself in its parts. For, he says, on one side it establishes that God has actually pardoned sins; and on the other, that He nevertheless does not spread in the conscience of the Sinner the Feeling of His pardon, but on the contrary that He spreads there the feeling of His anger; that is to say, that He does not give the feeling of what is, but that He gives the feeling of what is not: which is very embarrassing. OPUSC. Vol. V. page 59-60.

IV. What can we answer, in this supposition, to the invectives of Mr. Arnaud? What will be more true than what he claims in his whole Book, that we establish a monstrous alliance of the state of grace, and the most enormous sins? For is it not true that the state of a man actually justified of all his sins is the state of grace? If therefore the most enormous sins into which the Righteous falls have already been pardoned to him, is it not certain that in committing them, and during all the time that follows these sins, and that precedes his repentance, he is in a state of grace, and that thus this state has nothing incompatible with the most horrible excesses? Thus one cannot defend this Hypothesis, without admitting to Mr. Arnaud that all that he has said is true, and that those who have answered him by disavowing this view, have prevaricated.

V. I add that one cannot deny that the opposing Hypothesis is very appropriate to throw one into relaxation and license. In the way that most men are disposed, they

would not have much repugnance to commit useful and pleasant sins, if they were quite sure that not only will they be pardoned, but that they already are. If therefore all Sinners were once imbued with this thought, who can doubt that they would easily be carried to the greatest excesses? Thus this alone makes this Hypothesis more than suspect.

VI. It is also certain that it is very appropriate to slow down the ardor that is so necessary to our prayers, to put them in a state to obtain the favors of God. Nothing leads us more effectively to make all our efforts to rekindle our zeal, than the persuasion we are in that this zeal is absolutely necessary to ask successfully. One neglects oneself when one is persuaded that however one asks, one will infallibly obtain. If therefore one knows that however languishing our prayers may be, they will very certainly obtain what they ask, which is the point, who will excite himself to ask as he should? Self-interest at least will not lead to it, which is much. For after all, why make useless a means that God uses effectively for our salvation?

VII. But that is not all. Not only will one not excite oneself to ask with ardor and eagerness; most will not ask at all. For, they will say, why take the trouble to ask for what one already has? It is what one does not have, that common sense wants one to ask for; not what one has already received: and the benefits obtained oblige us indeed to gratitude, but not to prayers that tend to obtain them. No one thinks of asking God, either for the creation, either of his soul, or of the matter that makes his body, or for his conception, or his birth, or his Baptism, or Regeneration, when one is persuaded that one has received it; but each is content to thank God for all these graces. Why then would we amuse ourselves by asking God for the remission of already pardoned sins?

I do not see what one could reasonably oppose to such objections. Thus, it is hard to understand why it is that one is so jealous of a Dogma that seems only appropriate to produce unfortunate effects: especially if one considers how weak are the proofs on which it is supported. This is what one will see in the following Chapter.

Before finishing this one, I will add that one of the things that should make the view that I refute suspect, is that I know no Sect that has maintained it, except that of the Mohammedans. Here is what Mr. Prideaux says in the Life of Mohammed, page 137. In the 48th Chapter of the Koran Mohammed introduces God, giving him a long and general amnesty for all his past and future sins.

#### **CHAPTER IV. Where objections are answered.**

I. It is said that when God justifies us, He communicates to us actually all the rights that Jesus Christ has acquired for us by His blood. As therefore Jesus Christ has acquired for us the right to the remission of future sins, as well as that which we can have to the remission of past sins, one concludes that both are pardoned to us at once.

I answer that there is a big difference between what Jesus Christ has acquired for us by His death, and what His Father communicates to us actually by the grace of

Justification. What Jesus Christ has acquired for us is properly the right to the remission of sins. But what God communicates to us actually in justifying us is not the right to the remission of sins, at least of past ones: it is the remission itself of these sins. It is only the remission of future sins, of which He communicates the right to us in justifying us. Even then He does so only under the condition of faith and repentance.

Secondly, Jesus Christ by His death has acquired for us the right to the remission of sins only under the condition of faith and repentance; in accordance with what He Himself said: "As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him may not perish but have eternal life." Whereas in Justification, God communicates to us actually the remission of past sins; not conditionally, but absolutely; not on the charge that we believe and repent, but because we believe and repent indeed. For the condition being fulfilled, the right which was previously only conditional becomes absolute.

Finally, God communicating to us actually and absolutely, in Justification, the remission of past sins, He communicates to us, with respect to the remission of future sins, only a conditional right to receive it actually, as soon as having committed them we come to rise from them through faith and repentance. All this is muddled and confused in the objection, and this is what makes for the embarrassment. But being thus untangled, there is nothing that causes the least difficulty.

II. Much is made of what St. Paul says in Rom. VIII: "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Jesus Christ." But I do not see what consequence one can draw from this passage.

First, St. Paul says expressly, in this very verse, that those of whom he speaks are those who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. I now ask according to what was David walking when he committed his adultery and his homicide. Is it according to the Spirit? Who would dare to say so? Undoubtedly he was walking according to the flesh. One cannot therefore apply to him what St. Paul says, and consequently the proof that one draws from it is not solid.

Secondly, is it not to be sheltered from all condemnation, to have committed no sin, either great or small, of which one has not obtained the remission, and of which one should fear being punished? And is this not what one can say, according to us, of all those who are in Jesus Christ, and who walk, not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit? Does it take anything else to verify what the Apostle says? And why then is he made to say more?

One would perhaps have some reason to press these words, if this Apostle had said, not "There is now no," but "There will never be any condemnation." Having said the first, and not the second, I do not see what consequence one can draw from this passage.



III. One also presses these words of the same Apostle: "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also freely give us all things with Him?" Rom. VIII. 31. But one does not take notice of St. Paul's expression. He does not say that God has freely given us all things, but that He will freely give them to us. From this, by the way, one can well conclude that He will grant us in future the remission of sins, when we ask Him for it as we should; but not that He has already granted it to us.

IV. We are objected to with what God says through the mouth of Jeremiah, and which St. Paul reports Heb. VIII. 12. "I will be appeased as for their iniquities, and will remember their sins no more." But from the fact that God speaks of remembering these sins, it is evident that He speaks of past sins, and not of future sins: One foresees the future, and one remembers the past.

V. It is also said that according to St. Paul Heb. IX. 12, Jesus Christ has acquired for us an "eternal Redemption." But what! Will this Redemption not be eternal, unless God pardons us in advance the sins that we have not yet committed? Is it not enough that He pardons them to us when we pray to Him for it? Does this not suffice to make us enjoy eternally the Redemption that Jesus Christ acquired for us by the effusion of His Blood?

VI. Finally, it is said that if God pardoned us only past sins, this remission would not procure for us a solid consolation. For, one says, what good is it to me to know that my past sins are pardoned to me, if I have no reason to assure myself that those that I will commit in the future are the same?

I answer that there is every reason to console oneself in knowing on one hand, that future sins will be pardoned, provided there is faith and repentance; and on the other, that God will not permit us to die, after having committed these sins, without repenting. It is so true that this is sufficient, that if there is any difficulty in this matter, as there undoubtedly is much, it consists much more in showing that what we maintain on the Perseverance of the Saints is not apt to give rise to security, than in proving that there is not enough to serve as the foundation for a solid consolation.

## **CHAPTER V. That God justifies us in consideration of the Satisfaction of His Son.**

I have shown in the preceding Chapters that our Justification consists principally in the remission of sins. As it is therefore certain that it is God who pardons us these sins, there is no doubt that it is He who justifies us. One can doubt as little that if He does so, it is by a movement of goodness, or better said, by an effort of clemency, charity, and mercy toward us. These are Truths with which all Christians agree.

But one asks if there is not, either in ourselves or outside us, some other cause which contributes, in its way, to the production of this effect. And this is what makes all the difficulty there may be on this matter.

If one looks closely, one will see that there are four different things to which Scripture attributes our Justification, saying that it is by them that we are justified, or that we obtain the remission of sins. The first is the Blood of Jesus Christ, or, which comes to the same thing, His Death, His Passion, and the Redemption that this death and this passion have operated. The second is Faith; the third is Repentance, or Conversion; and the fourth is our good works. This is what must be tried to clarify, researching with some care what is the manner in which each of these causes contributes to the production of this effect.

As for the first, Scripture says quite often that we are justified, and that we obtain the remission of our sins, by the death of Jesus Christ. Here are some places where it explains itself formally on this subject. "Being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God has provided from all time as a propitiation through faith in His Blood, to demonstrate His justice through the remission of past sins according to His patience." Rom. III. 23-24. "As by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one man many will be made righteous." Rom. V. 19. "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." II Cor. V. 21. "The Blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin." I John I. 7. "To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His Blood... to Him be glory and power forever and ever." Rev. I. 6.

But, one says, how do the Blood, Death, Passion of Jesus Christ operate our Justification, or, which comes to the same thing, procure for us the remission of our sins? This is something on which Christians are very divided.

First, the Socinians make the death of Jesus Christ only a very indirect and distant cause of our Justification. They say that this death was an authentic confirmation of the truth of the Gospel that this great Savior had announced, it not being conceivable that He would have wanted to suffer such a cruel death if what He had preached had been false. From this they conclude that God granting the remission of our sins only to Faith, which the death of Jesus Christ generated, it is not strange that Scripture tells us that it is by this death that this grace is conferred on us.

They add that the obedience that Jesus Christ rendered to His Father, in suffering death, was rewarded with the power that He received from Him to pardon sins, and to work effectively to generate in the souls of men the dispositions necessary to receive this grace.

But first, if the death of Jesus Christ had contributed to the production of this effect only in such a distant and indirect manner, it is inconceivable that Scripture would attribute it to Him so often, and that it would explain itself on this subject in such a strong manner. Moreover, if the first of these two reasons were sufficient to be able to say that the death of Jesus Christ makes us obtain the remission of sins, one could say the same thing of that of the Apostles and the Martyrs, which Scripture never says. It says on the contrary that there is only Jesus Christ who is our Redeemer,

that there is no other name by which we must be saved than the name of Jesus. And as for the other reason, nothing is more false than what we are told, that it is in dying that Jesus Christ obtained from His Father the power to pardon sins. He had this power during the whole time of His mortal life, witness what He says to the Paralytic, "Take courage, my son, your sins are forgiven"; and witness above all what He adds to respond to the secret murmurs of the Scribes and Pharisees, "Which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of man has on earth the power to forgive sins, Rise (He said to the Paralytic) take your bed, and go to your house." Matt. IX. 2, 5-6.

The Remonstrants come a little closer to the Truth. I admit that they do not recognize that Jesus Christ has satisfied for us, properly and accurately speaking. But they admit nevertheless that His death has expiated our sins, having been a propitiatory Sacrifice, which has appeased the anger of God that we had irritated, and which has obtained from His goodness that He show us grace.

But first, it seems to me that they are wrong to represent Satisfaction and propitiatory Sacrifice as two things so incompatible that they exclude each other. It is very certain that the death of Jesus Christ was a propitiatory Sacrifice, and the Remonstrants prove it solidly against the Socinians, who deny it. But it is clear that it expiated our sins only by satisfying for them to the celestial Justice, and by paying it what was due to it.

Whoever says a propitiatory Sacrifice, says first a transfer of the sins of the one for whom it is offered, to the Victim that is offered. Hence the ceremony expressly prescribed by the Law, to put the hands on the head of the Victim, and to confess the sins that one intended to expiate. Here are the very terms of the Law. "Aaron placing his two hands on the head of the living Goat, will confess on it all the iniquities of the Children of Israel, and all their forfeitures according to all their sins, and will put them on the head of the Goat. The Goat therefore will carry on itself all their iniquities." Levit. XVI. 21-22. If therefore Jesus Christ has expiated our sins, it is necessary that He has been charged with them, that He has borne their penalty, and that thus He has satisfied for them to the Justice of God.

Moreover, it is impossible to conceive how Jesus Christ could have appeased the anger of God, irritated against us, otherwise than by satisfying for us. Indeed, this could only be done in one or the other of these two ways: either so that the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, if I dare say so, inspired in God the will to pardon us, in the same manner in which one appeases men, making love succeed hate, and compassion resentment; or by disinteresting Justice, which cannot consent that crime remain unpunished.

One cannot say that the death of Jesus Christ appeased God in the first of these two ways. For besides that this would accord very badly with the immutability of His will, it is certain that the death of Jesus Christ so little generated in God the will to pardon us, that it is itself an effect of this will; God having given us His Son, and having

ordered Him to expiate our sins by His death, only because He intended to show us grace.

It is therefore necessary to resort to the second way of appeasing God, and to say that the death of Jesus Christ did not excite His mercy; that it only disinterested His Justice, by substituting the Innocent in the place of the Guilty that it pursued; which is in nothing different from a true Satisfaction.

Moreover, Scripture makes us understand that Jesus Christ has properly and truly satisfied the Justice of God by His death. It is true that it does not employ the term Satisfaction, but it employs a great number of equivalents, which say quite clearly the same thing.

It says first that Jesus Christ has redeemed us: and because one could respond that this word sometimes designates a simple deliverance, as when it is said that God redeemed His People captive in Egypt; to anticipate this evasion, Holy Scripture says expressly that we have been redeemed by price. I Cor. VI. 20; VII. 23. It even marks this price, saying that we have been redeemed, not by corruptible things, like silver or gold; but by the precious Blood of Jesus Christ as of the Lamb without blemish and without spot. I Peter I. 18. Finally it says that Jesus Christ has given His soul, and given Himself as a ransom for us. "The Son of man," He Himself tells us, "has come to give His soul as a ransom for many." Matt. XX. 28. "He gave Himself as a ransom for all," says St. Paul I Tim. II. 6. "Death intervened for the ransom of transgressions," says the same Apostle, Heb. IX. 15. All this shows that it is a matter here of a Redemption properly so called, and which was made by paying a price; not of a simple deliverance, similar to that of the Israelites captive in Egypt.

II. It does not only say that Jesus Christ died for us, which Socinus eludes without difficulty, saying that He died for our good, and that His death is useful and advantageous to us. It also says two other things that are much more formal. One, that Jesus Christ died for our sins, which would be absurd if one understood it in the sense of Socinus. The other, that He died in our place; for this is what the term of the Original which Scripture uses in various places entails, and particularly Matt. XX. 28; Mark X. 45.

III. It says that Jesus Christ has reconciled us to God by His death, and it is clear that it does not simply mean, as Socinus does, that the death of this great Savior made the hatred that men had against God cease; but also that it appeased the anger of God, which the crimes of men had provoked. This is what appears from the very places where Scripture speaks to us of this Reconciliation, and particularly from these words of St. Paul, Rom. V. 8-10. "God commends His love toward us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified in His blood, we shall be SAVED FROM WRATH through Him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son; much more, being already reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." It is from the wrath of God that we are guaranteed and put under cover by the Reconciliation of which St. Paul speaks.

It does not therefore consist simply in making the hatred of men cease, but also in appeasing the just anger of God, in accordance with what the Prophet said, "Eternal, You have appeased Yourself toward Your earth. You have withdrawn all Your great anger, and have restrained Your indignation." Ps. LXXXV. 2, 4. This is also proven by all the passages that say that Jesus Christ has expiated our sins, and that His death was a propitiatory Sacrifice; which would have no meaning if it were not true that it appeased the anger of God, which pursued us.

IV. It says that Jesus Christ has borne our sins in His body. And one must not imagine to elude this by saying that Jesus Christ has simply removed our sins, making them cease by the conversion that He recommends to us by His Word. It appears that Scripture wants to make us understand something more, since it says, not only that Jesus Christ has borne these sins, but also that He has charged Himself with them, and has taken them upon Himself. Is. LIII. 4. That the fine that brings us peace was put upon Him, v. 5. That He has borne our sins in His body; that He has borne them on the tree. I Pet. II. 24. These are so many expressions that have no relation to what Socinus makes them say, and which visibly entail that Jesus Christ has suffered the penalty that our sins deserved.

V. It says that Jesus Christ was struck and afflicted by God, Is. LIII. 4; that He was wounded for our forfeitures, and bruised for our iniquities, v. 5; that the Lord has made the iniquity of us all come upon Him, v. 6; that He put His soul as an offering for sin, v. 10, that He was made sin for us, II Cor. V. 22; that He was made a curse for us, Gal. III. 13. There again are very vivid and formal expressions, which moreover would have no meaning if Jesus Christ had not borne the penalty of our sins.

VI. Finally, I do not believe that one should neglect a reflection that all our Theologians have made. If the death of Jesus Christ had not served to appease the anger of God, and to disinterest His Justice; if it had had the same use as that of the Martyrs; Jesus Christ would have shown much less firmness and constancy than a great number of these Martyrs, who appeared so gay and satisfied among the tortures. To leave therefore to this great Savior all the glory of a consummated Virtue, and not to put Him below those who were nothing before Him, it is necessary to recognize that God appeared angry to Him, not against His Person, but against our sins, with which He had voluntarily charged Himself.

I admit that this matter would deserve to be expanded a little more. But besides that others have already done so, I ask my Reader to consider that it concerns my subject only indirectly, and that I speak of it only incidentally, and by occasion. All this makes it that it would not be just to dwell on it.

## **CHAPTER VI. Whether the Righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to us.**

This is what is real and important in this Question. Another is made of it, which in my opinion is only a dispute about words, at least in what it has distinct from the preceding. One asks, whether when God justifies us, He imputes to us the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, and whether it is in this that Justification consists.

Before saying what it is, it is good to note that Scripture never says, in so many words, that God imputes to us, either the Righteousness, or the Satisfaction of His Son. It does indeed say that Faith is imputed to us as righteousness. It also says that as by one offense guilt came upon all men to condemnation, so by one righteousness which justifies us, the gift came upon all men to Justification of life. It says that as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many will be made righteous. But it never says expressly and formally that God imputes to us the Righteousness, Obedience, or Satisfaction of His Son.

From this, by the way, I conclude that there may well be a real dispute on the truth or falsehood of what is meant by saying that the Righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to us; but that there should not be one on the expression itself. It would undoubtedly be necessary to retain it, if it were found in Scripture. All those who recognize the authority and divinity of this sacred Book would be obliged to defend this way of speaking, which it would have authorized, and if I dare say so, canonized, by the use it would have made of it. But Scripture not having used it, this cannot be the legitimate matter of a dispute, provided that otherwise one agrees on the truth, or the falsehood of the sense in which it is understood.

Everything therefore reduces to knowing what is the sense in which one understands that God imputes to us the Righteousness of His holy Son. I am very mistaken if those who cannot bear that we say it, do not imagine that we understand it in a sense very far from our thought. Many imagine that our sense is that there is in us no other Righteousness than the imputed; that the Faithful are as wicked and as corrupt in themselves as the Impious; and that all the difference there is between these two orders of persons is that God imputes the Righteousness of His Son to some, and not to others. This is the idea that it seems Becan has of our Belief.

Others seem to believe that to impute an action to someone is to judge, to think, to esteem, that he has done it. And it is certain that to say in either of these two senses that God imputes to us the righteousness of His Son, would be to say an unbearable absurdity. For as to the first, who does not know that according to us there is a double Righteousness, the imputed, and the inherent, which are both found together in the Faithful? And as to the second, we are careful not to maintain that God judges, or thinks, that we have done what only Jesus Christ has done, although it is for us that He did it.

When we say that God imputes to us the Righteousness of Jesus Christ, our sense is that He treats us the same as He would treat us if we had satisfied His Justice ourselves. Our sense is that if we are discharged from the condemnation we deserve, it is in consideration of the Satisfaction that Jesus Christ has presented for us to His Father. Our sense is that one sees here the same thing that happens in the world, when the Surety pays for the principal Debtor. When that happens, the Creditor does not imagine that it is the Debtor who pays from his own money. He knows that it is the Surety who pays for him. But although he knows it, he nevertheless

discharges the Debtor by virtue of the payment made by the Surety, in the manner in which he would discharge him if the Debtor had paid himself. This is all that we mean, as can be seen in all our Authors, and particularly in Baxter Meth. Theol. Part. III. page 308.

Consequently it is indeed true that the Socinians, who deny that Jesus Christ has satisfied for us to the celestial Justice, act consequentially in disputing with us the truth of our Belief on this subject. But those who confess the Satisfaction of this great Savior cannot quibble with us on this, and that for two main reasons. The first, because our thought is at bottom different in nothing from theirs, it being certain that in saying that the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ is imputed to us, we mean nothing other than what they themselves mean, in saying that it is in view of this Satisfaction that God discharges us from the punishment we deserve. The second, because this expression is quite appropriate, and nothing is more natural than to understand it in this sense.

This is what can be clarified by the example of the first sin. The Roman Church, which is the one that seems to have the most aversion for imputed Righteousness, nevertheless believes that the sin of the first Man is imputed to his Descendants, and that there is none of them who is not punished for it by death. If it believes that God can, without harming His Justice, impute the sin of Adam to those who did not commit it in their own person; if He can punish them for it, and indeed punishes them for it; why will He not be able to impute to us the Satisfaction of His Son, and exempt us in consideration of it from the punishment that we deserve?

We are not, by the way, the first who use one of these two things to clarify the other. St. Paul did it before us. Witness these words from Chapter V of his Epistle to the Romans. "As by one offense guilt came upon all men to condemnation, so also by one justifying righteousness, the gift came upon all men to justification of life. For as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many will be made righteous."

Moreover, the Roman Church claims that God imputes to us the superabundant satisfactions of the Saints. It also believes that by means of what it calls Confraternities, there is a certain communication of merits, which makes common to all what is done and suffered only by some. Believing this, as it does, why does it find it so strange that we maintain that God imputes and communicates to us the merits of His Holy Son?

## **CHAPTER VII. What is the Righteousness of Jesus Christ that God imputes to us.**

Jesus Christ did two things during His life. He first fulfilled the Law, loving God sovereignly, adoring Him, respecting Him, obeying Him, and doing in a word all that this supreme Legislator has commanded us. He has moreover satisfied for us the Justice of God, by the bloody Sacrifice of His Death. One calls the first of these two things that Jesus Christ did, active Righteousness; and the second, passive

Righteousness; because the first consisted in acting, and the second in suffering. All our Theologians agree that the second is imputed to us. Several say the same thing of the first; but there are also those who deny it, particularly Piscator, Tilenus, Wendelin, and some others.

These do not deny that we profit in several ways from the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ. They do not even deny that it was absolutely necessary that Jesus Christ be perfectly holy and righteous to be able to expiate our crimes, since if He had not been so, His Satisfaction could not have been accepted by God. This is indeed something that cannot be contested. But what they deny is that Jesus Christ fulfilled the Law in our place, and that God reputes us righteous, devout, charitable, sober, continent, etc., because Jesus Christ was so. Here are their principal reasons.

I. It is impossible that Jesus Christ did for us what He had to do for Himself. And indeed, if He had had to suffer death by some obligation that was born of the qualities of His Person, or of some of His actions, He could not have suffered it for us and in our place; as we see in the world, that no one does for others what he must do for himself. Let one see, for example, if a man who, having only a thousand Crowns, owes them to his Creditor, can in paying them to him discharge at once his own debt, and that of a third party which is quite similar; and all the more reason, those of several third parties, who are in the same case? Let one see if a Vassal, who is obliged to serve his Lord in time of war with a certain number of people, can, in doing precisely what he is bound to do, discharge thereby one or several other Vassals, from a similar service that they owe?

All theologians that I know of allege this when it comes to giving a reason for a very certain Truth, namely, that it was necessary that Jesus Christ be holy and innocent, to be able to be our Mediator. How, they say, could He have paid for others what He would have owed for Himself? One can even say that it is St. Paul who provided them with this reason, when he said to the Hebrews VII. 26-27. "It was fitting that we should have such a High Priest, who is holy, innocent, undefiled, separate from sinners, and exalted above the heavens, who had no need (like the High Priests) to offer sacrifices daily, first for His own sins, and then for those of the people."

If therefore Jesus Christ, as man, owed from His own account to observe the natural Law, and consequently to love God, adore Him, revere Him, obey Him, etc., it is clear that He could not do all this for us. Who can however deny that He owed it, that He was obliged to it; and that if, by an impossible supposition, He had not done it, He would have sinned? For after all this subjection is essential to the intelligent Creature, and there would be a contradiction in posing one that had no Law, and who was entitled to do what it pleased.

I know what is answered. It is said that the hypostatic Union elevated the human Nature of Jesus Christ to a degree of dignity and excellence, which put it above all sorts of Laws. But nothing is more false than this thought. The hypostatic Union did not destroy the properties of the Natures that it joined. Thus human Nature always



remained finite in every sense, and consequently in an entire dependence on the divine. It depended on it, both physically and morally: physically, since it subsisted only by the influence of the Divinity, which supported it; and morally, since it followed its direction, and recognized its authority. Also St. Paul says in so many words, that Jesus Christ was made subject to the Law: "When the fullness of time had come, God sent His Son, made of woman, made subject to the Law." Gal. IV. 4.

If the hypostatic Union elevated in this way the human Nature of Jesus Christ and put it above the Laws, how was it possible that the Father commanded Him anything whatsoever? What difference indeed is there between Commandments and Laws, if not that Laws are general Commandments, addressed to all; and Commandments, particular Laws addressed to one? It is nevertheless true that the Father made Commandments to His Son. "I have received," says this Son Himself, "this commandment from my Father."

Others say that, in truth, it is essential to man to be subject to the Law; but that Jesus Christ having made Himself man voluntarily, nothing prevents His obedience from being able to be imputed to us. But this Response is not solid. The manner in which one contracts the obligation makes no difference to it. Whether it be voluntary, or involuntary; whether it comes from birth, or from an engagement into which one enters of one's own motion; it will always have the same effects. This is what appears from the two examples that I have produced. Although a Debtor voluntarily borrows from his Creditor, he is no more entitled to claim that his payment serves at the same time for his own discharge, and for that of another, than if he were born a Debtor. I say the same thing of a Vassal. A man absolutely free, who would subject himself voluntarily, would not be better able to serve for himself and for another jointly, than if he were a Subject by birth. In whatever way, and by whatever principle, one is obliged to something, one is equally unable to do it for others, if one does it for oneself.

II. The second proof of these Theologians is taken from this Maxim so certain, and so incontestable, that Jesus Christ has discharged us from the obligation to do ourselves, and to suffer in our own person, all that He has done and suffered for us. This is what our Theologians have been accustomed to press against the Roman Church. They say that Jesus Christ having fully and perfectly satisfied for us the Justice of God, He has discharged us thereby from the necessity of satisfying Him ourselves. Nothing would be weaker than this proof, if Jesus Christ had left us the obligation to do ourselves what He has already done for us.

As therefore the Satisfaction that He has presented for us to His Father frees us from the obligation we were in to satisfy ourselves; if He had fulfilled the Law for us and in our place, we would no longer be bound to make it the Rule of our actions. And as we do not sin in not suffering the penalties that we have deserved, we would not sin either in not doing what the Law requires of us. This being visibly absurd, it follows that Jesus Christ has not obeyed for us, and in our place, the Law of God.

It is answered that it is also true that Jesus Christ has freed us from the yoke of the Law, and that if we observe it, it is freely and voluntarily, and not to be obliged to it, like the rest of men. But nothing is more false than this answer. If we obeyed only because we want to obey, and not at all because we are naturally and indispensably obliged to it, we would not sin in refusing or neglecting to obey, which one cannot say without impiety.

We obey, it is said, because we want to obey. I want that to be so. But are we bound to want it? Or is it something that depends so much on us, that we have the right to want it, or not want it, as we please? To say the second is visibly to establish Libertinism, and to overturn all the Morality of Jesus Christ. To say the first is to let the proof stand. For after all, Jesus Christ not only obeyed His Father: He also wanted to obey Him, and this will to obey Him made a considerable part of His Holiness and His Righteousness. If therefore He has discharged us from the obligation to do all that He has done for us, He has discharged us from the obligation to want to obey God, since He wanted it for us, and in our place.

Thirdly, I would like to know if, as one claims that Jesus Christ has discharged us from the obligation to obey the Laws of His Father, one also believes that He has freed us from the obligation to obey His own. I have difficulty believing that one can digest such an extravagance. However if one does not, it is necessary to recognize that the Law of God still subsists. For after all, the Precepts of Jesus Christ are in nothing different from those of His Father, and there would be moreover something ridiculous in thinking that this great Savior had freed us from this yoke, only to recharge us with it immediately.

The truth is that the moral Law no longer subsists as a Covenant, which says, "Do these things, and you will live." But it subsists always, and will subsist eternally, as a Rule of our actions; which makes it commonly called the eternal Law, the immutable and indispensable Law. See M. Turretin, Loc. XI. quest. 24.

Others say that if we obey the Law, it is not that this Law has any authority over us, it is solely because it teaches us that what it ordains is pleasing to God, and that being such, gratitude does not permit us to neglect it.

But this is no more true than the rest. For first, why must we have gratitude for the benefits of God, except because the eternal Law obliges us not to lack it for those from whom one has received some grace, especially graces of the nature of those that God gives us? But if the eternal Law subsists in this respect, why would it not subsist in all the others? Is it more sacred and more inviolable in what it ordains to have gratitude for benefits, than in what it wants one to love sovereignly what is sovereignly lovable, that the creature obey its Creator, etc.?

Secondly, is it not true that gratitude for the benefits of God made one of the most considerable parts of the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ? This is what cannot be contested. If therefore this Righteousness is imputed to us, and if being so it discharges us from the natural obligation that we had to it, we will no longer be

bound to have gratitude for the benefits of God, since this is a duty that Jesus Christ has fulfilled for us.

Thirdly, if there were only the gratitude that we owe to God that engaged us to obey Him, it would follow that one would sin every time one obeyed Him by some other principle, or at least, that the action that one would do thereby would not be good. For how could an action be good that one would not do by the only principle, by which one is bound to do it? Consequently also, it would not be to do a good action, to do one by a movement of that love, which is called pure, and which is formed in the soul by the consideration of what God is in Himself. As this would be ridiculous, what we are told cannot be true.

Finally, if gratitude were the only motive that should lead us to do good, and to abstain from evil, it would be the only one that Scripture would propose to us. It would at least be the only one that it would propose to the Faithful. This is not, however, what it does. It does indeed press this motive, but it also makes all the others count. It very often employs the fear of punishment, and the consideration of the temporal and eternal misfortunes, to which one exposes oneself by neglecting the study of piety. It employs the consideration of our own dignity, which we debase by sinning. It even insists on the justice of each of the particular duties that it recommends. So true is it that gratitude is not the only motive that should lead us to do what God wants!

What I have just said undoubtedly suffices to put in all its light the force of the second proof, and the weakness of the answers that are opposed to it. But as these answers suppose that the moral Law no longer subsists under the Gospel, and the instances that are opposed to them tend to show the contrary; that moreover this Question is of the utmost importance; it will do no harm to stop a bit to clarify it. This is what we will try to do in the following Chapter.

### **CHAPTER VIII. Digression, where one explains in which sense the Law subsists, and does not subsist, under the Gospel.**

I suppose first that when one asks if the Law subsists under the Gospel, one is not speaking of the ceremonial Law, which Jesus Christ abolished, having shown its fulfillment in His Person and in His actions. It concerns solely the moral Law contained in the Decalogue, explained first by the Prophets, and then by Jesus Christ and by His Apostles.

I suppose secondly that when one asks if this Law still subsists today, one can mean three things, because indeed the words that one uses to propose this Question can receive three meanings. The first, if the Law still teaches us today what is holy and just and consequently pleasing to God. The second, if the Law presently obliges Christians. The third, if the Law still expresses today the duty prescribed by a Covenant, by virtue of which we can be saved by doing all that it ordains, abstaining from all that it forbids us; in accordance with these two Clauses: "Do these things,

and you will live"; "Cursed is whoever is not permanent in all that is written in the Book of the Law to do it."

The first and the third of these meanings have no difficulty. It is beyond doubt that the Law subsists in the first, and no longer subsists in the third. This is certain, and it is not worth the trouble to prove it. Everything therefore reduces to the second meaning, which consists in knowing if the Law still obliges Christians today.

But unfortunately, this second meaning is obscure; which comes partly from the fact that the expression that one uses to make it understood is metaphorical; partly from the fact that it is equivocal, even in the proper sense. It designates three diverse things, which it would be good not to confuse.

When one asks if the Law obliges, one asks first if one can without sinning do the contrary of what it ordains. One asks secondly if one can violate it in any of its Articles, without perishing eternally. Finally one asks if one can be saved without conforming one's life to it, not indeed exactly and perfectly; but in a manner that makes a sincere and true Holiness, though imperfect.

The last of these meanings seems to me to have no difficulty. It is certain that if one does not fulfill the Law in the manner that I have indicated, it is impossible to be saved: for nothing is more true than what St. John the Baptist says: "The axe is laid to the root of the trees, and every tree that does not bear fruit is going to be cut down, and thrown into the fire"; and Jesus Christ: "If your Righteousness does not surpass that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." And St. Paul: "Without Sanctification, no one will see the Lord." Also this Apostle teaches us elsewhere that what Jesus Christ has done and suffered for us tends to this, that "the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." Rom. VIII. v. 3.

The second meaning is no more difficult to decide. Two things are certain on this subject. One, that a man who would renounce the benefit of the Gospel, a man even who without positively renouncing it would neglect to avail himself of it, could not avoid the condemnation with which the Law threatens all those who do not fulfill it perfectly. The other, that the Gospel promises salvation to those same who violate the Law, provided that they believe and repent sincerely and effectively.

There remains therefore only the first meaning. But this one itself seems to me to have no difficulty. For after all, who can doubt that it is to sin, to do the contrary of what the Law prescribes, since, according to St. John, sin consists only in that alone? "Sin," he says, "is that which is against the Law."

But, one will say, whence does it come that one cannot even today violate the moral Law, without offending God? I answer that this does not come from the fact that this Law was imposed on the Israelites on Mount Sinai: this concerned that People, but does not concern us. What one asks comes solely from the fact that God, who is the absolute Master of His Creatures, has wanted the observation of this Law to be

the duty of all men without exception, and that He has sufficiently made known this will. This is what He has done by two ways, by the natural Light, and by the Revelation, both of the Old and the New Testament.

I say first by the natural Light, for this is what St. Paul teaches us Rom. II. 14-15. "The Gentiles who do not have the Law, do naturally the things that are of the Law, and having no Law, they are a Law to themselves; as thus be that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience likewise bearing witness, and their thoughts between themselves accusing, or also excusing."

I say secondly, by the Revelation contained in the Old Testament, because there are in this sacred Book, of the divinity of which one has all possible certainty, various places that show that God has resolved to punish the violation of this Law in the person of those same who have never heard speak of Moses.

I say finally by the Revelation contained in the New Testament, where there are a thousand places that clearly make understood the horror that God has always had, and that He will always have, for the infraction of His Laws.

Here one will doubtless ask, what is it then that Jesus Christ has discharged us from? I answer that this Question can concern first the converted Jews, and secondly the Gentiles.

For the first, Jesus Christ has discharged them I. from the heavy yoke of Ceremonies. II. From the curse that the moral Law pronounced against all those who do not observe it exactly, putting them in such a state, that even though they do not do all that the Law prescribes, they will nevertheless be saved in doing what the Gospel requires.

For the Gentiles, who have never been subjected to the Law of Moses, and who consequently could not be freed from it, they are exempted from the necessity of perishing in not exactly observing the natural Law to which they were submitted, salvation being offered to them, as to the Jews, by means of faith and repentance.

It is good to see a bit in this place if there is any truth in what is said, that the Law no longer subsists as a Ministry of condemnation. To do this it is only necessary to disentangle what is obscure and confused in this Question. To condemn, is I. very often to disapprove, to declare criminal, and contrary to the will of God. It is II. to make known what sin deserves. III. It is to subject to punishment, unless one finds some means of guaranteeing oneself from it. It is finally to subject to punishment absolutely, peremptorily, and without hope.

It is certain that the Law does not condemn in this fourth manner, since the Gospel offers us a remedy, an asylum against the condemnation of the Law. But as for what regards the first three meanings, it is certain that the Law condemns today as much as ever. It disapproves crime, and makes known its irregularity. It discovers what it deserves. Finally it makes seen what the Sinner will infallibly suffer, if he does not have recourse to the Grace that God offers us in His Gospel.

This is, if I am not mistaken, what is most important to note on this Question, and which seems to me moreover so evident, that I would fear to abuse the patience of my Readers, if I amused myself in giving proofs of it. I return now to the imputation of the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ, which this incidental Question had made me leave for a moment.

**CHAPTER IX. Where one takes up again the matter of the imputation of active Righteousness. Some other proofs which those who do not admit it use.**

III. To say that the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to us, is to say that the passive is useless to us; as to say that God makes us a present of the passive, is to say that we can do without the active. The reason is that the Law does not demand jointly, and all at once, that we do all that it ordains, and that we suffer all that with which it threatens those who transgress it. It is content with one, or the other indefinitely; and provided at least that we do the first, it will discharge us from the second.

If therefore Jesus Christ by His active Righteousness has fulfilled the Law for us and in our place, He has put us thereby in the state in which we would be, if we had fulfilled it ourselves. And as, if we had fulfilled it ourselves, we would not be bound to suffer what those who have violated it deserve; it is clear that in fulfilling it for us, He has discharged us from the obligation to suffer the penalty that we deserve. Consequently, this being posed, His Satisfaction is useless to us.

This will appear more clearly by another consideration. The active Righteousness of Jesus Christ had two parts. He abstained from evil, and He did good. If the first is imputed to us, as the Defenders of the opposing view are careful not to deny, it must be said that as the imputation of what is positive puts us in the same state in which we would be, if we had done it ourselves; also the imputation of what is negative, I mean that Jesus Christ abstained from violating the Law, puts us in the state in which we would be, if we had never violated it. As therefore if we had never violated the Law, we would have had no need for Jesus Christ to satisfy for us; it is clear that if this part of the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to us, His Satisfaction serves us nothing.

I say roughly the same thing about the Satisfaction. If God imputes it to us, it is not necessary that He impute to us the active Righteousness. The Satisfaction of Jesus Christ has undoubtedly expiated, not some particular order of our sins, but all our sins without exception. "His Blood cleanses us from all sin," the Apostle St. John tells us. Now there are two sorts of sins, those of commission, and those of omission. If Jesus Christ has expiated the sins of omission, He has put us in the same state in which we would be, if we had done all that God has commanded us. And if the death of Jesus Christ puts us in the state in which we would be if we had done all that God has commanded us, what need did we have for His active Righteousness to come still make the same effect?

In a word, each of these two remedies, taken apart, was sufficient to heal our ills; and consequently it is inconceivable that the eternal Wisdom, which does nothing useless, employed them both.

IV. The principal reason that one has for wanting that the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ be imputed to us, is that it is not sufficient that Jesus Christ has freed us by His death from the obligation to suffer eternal death, which we have deserved: it was also necessary that He merit for us Heaven and its glory, to which we had no right; and this is what one wants Him to have done by the holiness of His actions.

There would be many remarks to make on all this; but I will content myself with these three. The first, that I do not see why it is impossible that God give us part of His Glory, unless Jesus Christ has merited it for us. Is it not sufficient that the Satisfaction of this great Savior has removed the obstacles, which prevented the Goodness of God from spreading itself on us? And indeed, why could God not do in favor of man reconciled to Him by the Sacrifice of His Son, what He has done in favor of the Angels, to whom He has given gratuitously Happiness? And if He could, is it not very believable that He did? Is it not indeed very difficult to persuade oneself that, being able to exercise His liberality in giving us gratuitously Happiness, He has preferred to sell it, if I dare say so, to His Son, requiring of Him for this effect an exact observation of His Laws during nearly thirty years?

Secondly, if Jesus Christ has merited for us Heaven by the actions of piety and holiness that He did during the whole course of His life; it will indeed be true to say that Heaven is the reward of the actions of this great Savior: but it will not be true to say that it is the reward of ours. This consequence is necessary, and cannot be contested.

But if that is so, whence does it come that Scripture, on one side, never says that the felicity of the Saints is the reward of the actions of Jesus Christ; and on the other says so often that it is the reward of our own works; that it is the price that God reserves for us in consequence of our combats; that it is the harvest that we gather after having sown by our good works? Is there not something very extraordinary in this procedure? And can one not be surprised to see that the Holy Spirit, who says so often what is not, never says what is?

Finally, if the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ has merited for us the glory of Heaven, this glory will be absolutely equal in all those who will possess it. For after all, Jesus Christ has not merited more for one than for another. Now it is certain that this glory is very unequal, and this is a Truth so clearly attested by all of Holy Scripture, that it is astonishing that there has been found anyone who could resolve to contest it. What is there, for example, more formal than the Parable, which compares what God will do on the last day, to what a King would do, who having put his Finances in the hands of his Servants, to make them profitable during his absence, would give on his return to each of these Servants the governance of so many Cities, as they have gained Talents? What more formal than what the Apostle

St. Paul says, that "other is the glory of the Sun, other that of the Moon, other that of the Stars; that one Star is different in glory from another Star; and that it will be the same in the Resurrection"? I Cor. XV.

If the glory of all the Blessed were absolutely equal, it would happen that the more a Faithful is advanced in Holiness on Earth, the less he would be rewarded for it in Heaven. The reason is that according to all Theologians, Grace and Glory do not differ in nature, but only in degree; so that Grace is a Glory begun, and Glory a Grace consummated. Let us imagine therefore that each of the Blessed possesses a hundred degrees of this Felicity, of which Grace is the beginning, and Glory the consummation. Let us imagine on the other side two dying Faithful, of whom one has received only one degree of Grace, and the other has ten. I say that this being posed, the first will receive 99 degrees of felicity in the Life to come, and the second will receive only 90. Thus the most imperfect will be more rewarded than the most perfect; which is absurd, and unbearable.

I know that one objects the Parable of the Workers, who after having worked unequally, receive the same payment at the end of the day. But I also know that several have shown that this Parable does not designate what will happen in the Life to come, but only what has happened on Earth, when God has called the Gentiles, and has even preferred them to the Jews. Thus there being no doubt that glory is unequal, and Scripture saying moreover that it will be proportioned to our actions, it is clear that it is not the immediate reward of the actions of Jesus Christ; but rather the gratuitous reward, and in no way merited, of the feeble efforts that Grace gives us the means to make for the service of God.

V. One also says that what makes the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to us, is that it is equally impossible, on one side, that God receive us in His Grace, and admit us to the possession of His Glory, if we have no Holiness; and on the other, that He be content with a holiness as imperfect as ours. This makes, one says, that not being able to accept our holiness, it is necessarily necessary that He impute to us that of His Son.

But nothing is easier than to see the weakness of this reason, and consequently the uncertainty of the induction that one draws from it. Indeed, our holiness has no more essential part, and that God requires of us in a more indispensable manner, than Repentance and Faith; I mean, justifying Faith, which accepts the promises of grace that God makes us in His Gospel, and which embraces the Merit of His holy Son. This Faith and this Repentance have undoubtedly their defects, and notwithstanding these defects, God does not fail to accept these two Virtues, without covering them with the perfection of the Faith and the Repentance of Jesus Christ. Why then does one not want that He can do the same thing with regard to our Charity, our Humility, and the rest of our Virtues? Is there anything more impossible, or more unworthy of Him, in one than in the other?



## **CHAPTER X. Where one examines the Reasons of those who hold that the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to us.**

These are the reasons of those who believe that God imputes to us only the Satisfaction of His Son. Here now are those of the Defenders of the opposing view. They produce several; but there is only a single one, which seems to have something a bit pressing. Yet it is easy to see that it is not convincing.

I. It is the one that one takes from these words of St. Paul, Rom. V. 19. "As by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one man many will be made righteous." One supposes that it is necessary to take the term obedience in all its extent. Thus Jesus Christ having obeyed His Father during the whole course of His life, and in all that He did of holy actions, one concludes from this that it is by all these actions that we are justified, and that thus His active Righteousness is imputed to us.

But one should not be content to suppose what serves as a foundation for this reason; one would have to prove it: and I do not see that one does so. Indeed, it is very possible that by this obedience of Jesus Christ, of which St. Paul speaks, one should understand only that which He rendered to His Father in suffering the death of the Cross. This is where we are led by what this Apostle says to the Philippians, that this great Savior "was obedient to the death of the Cross." Above all what he says Heb. V. 8, that "He learned obedience by the things He suffered." And Heb. X. he explains thereby what the Prophet had said in Psalm XL. "You have not wanted sacrifice, nor oblation, but You have appropriated a body for me. Behold, I come in order to do, O God, Your will." St. Paul having reported these words, adds to make the application: "By which will we are sanctified." But he does not stop there, he continues, and here is what he adds: "Namely by the offering once made of the Body of Jesus Christ." It is by this that this Apostle maintains that we are sanctified.

All this shows that the Apostle himself restricts to the death of Jesus Christ this obedience, by which he wants us to be justified. This is why Mr. Amyraut paraphrases thus these words. "As a single man, in disobeying the prohibition that had been made to him to touch the tree of Knowledge, has made it so that all this great multitude of people who have communion with him, have all become sinners, and guilty by the same means, so a single man, in obeying the Commandment that had been made to him to die on the tree of the Cross, has made it so that all those who will want to have communion with him, will all become righteous and absolved, however great their multitude may be." Thus this proof, which, as I have already said, is the principal one, has nothing that should pass for demonstrative.

II. The others are much weaker. One makes much of what Jesus Christ said in St. John, that He sanctifies Himself for His Elect. But besides that He could have sanctified Himself for us, that is to say, for our good, without having done it in our place; besides that, I say, this sanctification, of which He speaks in this place, is not the one with which we are presently concerned. His meaning is that He has

consecrated Himself, that He has devoted Himself, that He has prepared Himself, for the great Sacrifice of His Passion; that He has omitted nothing of what could make it more effective and more pleasing to God. This is the true meaning of these words, which, as everyone sees, in no way shock the other view. This also makes it that there are few who press this.

III. One presses what St. Paul says Rom. VIII. 3-4. "What was impossible for the Law, inasmuch as it was weak in the flesh, God having sent His Son in the form of flesh of sin, and for sin, has condemned sin in the flesh, so that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." One claims that it is Justification that fulfills in us this Righteousness of the Law, of which St. Paul speaks. But this is what it was necessary to prove, not to suppose without proof. It is much more believable that St. Paul speaks of sanctification, as appears from what he says in so many words, that this Righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit. This is also how Gomar and Mr. Amyraut understand it.

IV. One says that Jesus Christ had to do for us all that was necessary to save us; and that moreover to save us, it was necessary not only to expiate our sins by His Satisfaction, but also to merit for us Heaven by the holiness of His Works. But this is what one can justly deny. God being always ready to make men happy, provided that their sins do not oppose it, it was sufficient to save them to expiate their sins, after which, this obstacle removed, the goodness of God could only spread itself on them, and make them part of His Glory.

V. One says that it is a certain truth, that there is a Righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to those who are justified. One adds that the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ is not a Righteousness, and that thus it is necessary to recognize that His active Righteousness is imputed to us.

But first, this objection proves nothing, because it proves too much. Indeed, those who make it do not claim that there is only the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ which is imputed: they maintain that God imputes both to us, the passive as the active. However, if there is no passive Righteousness, as this objection poses, it will be true to say that there is only the active that is imputed.

I add that nothing prevents one from giving the name of Righteousness to all that makes us formally righteous. Thus the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ making this effect, there is nothing absurd in calling it a Righteousness.

VI. Finally one says that it is necessary neither to divide, nor to separate Jesus Christ; that it is necessary to receive Him entire, and in this manner accept the holiness of His actions, jointly with the merit of His death. But nothing is less pressing than this thought. It is not necessary, I admit, to separate what has been united in Jesus Christ. But it does not follow from this that all that has been found in this great Savior is imputed to us. Neither His Natures, nor His Person, nor His Offices, nor His

natural actions, nor His miraculous actions, nor a hundred other things, are imputed to us, although they have been united to His sufferings.

After all these reflections, I make no difficulty in admitting that the reasons of those who maintain that there is only the passive Righteousness of His Son that God imputes to us, seem to me the most pressing. This view has moreover this considerable advantage, that it is directly opposed to Libertinism, which one cannot deny that the opposing view seems to favor. Thus it seems to me the most worthy of being embraced.

It is true that it is not by far as followed among us as the opposing view, and this is what one can say most specious to combat it. But if the great number is for those who want the active Righteousness of Jesus Christ to be imputed to us, those who are of another opinion are in no way despicable, either with regard to their reputation, or even with regard to their number. Indeed Baxter, who follows the opposing view, nevertheless admits that Olevianus, Ursinus, Piscator, Pareus, Scultetus, Alstedius, Wendelin, Cameron, and the Theologians of Saumur, Wotton, and Gataker, have maintained the contrary. One can add to this Tilenus, and perhaps others who are not known to me.

## **CHAPTER XI. That Faith justifies us. What is the Faith that makes this effect.**

I will not dwell any longer on the first of the causes, to which Scripture attributes the work of our Justification. I pass to the second, which is Faith. Scripture tells us very often that we are justified by this Virtue. This is at least what St. Paul asserts in various places of his Epistle to the Romans, and of his Epistle to the Galatians. I do not report them, there being no one who has not noticed them in the reading of the sacred Writings.

This is also a truth which is in no way contested. But one asks first, what is this Faith, of which St. Paul speaks when he says that it is it which justifies us. This is something on which one is rather divided.

There are those who believe that it is necessary to understand by this, not that Theological Virtue, which we ordinarily designate by this name; but the celestial Doctrine, which this Virtue embraces, and which is sometimes designated by this expression in the holy Books. Witness what St. Paul says Gal. I. 23, that the Faithful had heard said on his subject "that he who persecuted the Christians formerly, announced THE FAITH, which he destroyed before." And in Chapter V of the Book of Acts it is said that "the number of the Faithful multiplied in Jerusalem, and that several of the Priests obeyed the Faith."

What one says, that the word Faith is often taken in this sense in the holy Books, is incontestable. But I am persuaded that this is not the one in which the Apostle takes it, when he says that one is justified by Faith. I am persuaded that he means that one

is justified by the acts of this Virtue that we call Faith, and whose Nature I have tried to make known in the Treatise that I have published on this subject.

What convinces me of this is first, that this Apostle is not content to say that one is justified by Faith; he also says that one is justified in believing. Witness these words from Chapter XIII of the Book of Acts: "Let it be known to you that in Him (in Jesus Christ) is offered to you the remission of sins, and that from all that from which you have not been able to be justified by the Law of Moses, whoever believes is justified by Him." And Rom. III. 22. "The Righteousness of God, which is by Faith in Jesus Christ, toward all, and upon all those who believe." And Rom. IV. 3. "What does Scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him as righteousness." And v. 5. "To him who does not do the works, but believes in Him who justifies the wicked, his Faith is imputed to him as Righteousness." See also Rom. IV. 24, and Rom. X. 9, 10, 11.

St. Paul therefore takes for the same thing, to be justified in believing, and to be justified by Faith. Thus the first of these expressions undoubtedly designating the acts of this Virtue that we call Faith, there is no doubt that it is also these same acts that he means, when he says that it is Faith that justifies us.

But that is not all. This Apostle is not content to say that it is in believing that one is justified; he also gives various proofs of this: and what is considerable, these proofs conclude, not in favor of the Evangelical Doctrine, but in favor of Faith. He makes much of Rom. IV. 3, what sacred History says of Abraham, that "he believed God, and that this was imputed to him as righteousness." Now who does not see that it is of the act of Faith that is spoken of there, and not of the Truth that it embraces?

He presses again in various places what the Prophet Habakkuk had said, "The Righteous will live by his Faith"; and it is visible that this Prophet speaks only of the Virtue of Faith. For after all, if he meant the Doctrine, he would not call it, as he does, the Faith of the Righteous; but simply the Faith, or the Faith of God, or the Faith in Jesus Christ.

One can report to this the Types that have represented Faith, for example, the look that the wounded Israelites cast on the bronze Serpent to be healed, following what Jesus Christ says in the Gospel: "As Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Desert, so it is necessary that the Son of Man be lifted up, so that whoever believes in Him may not perish, but may have eternal Life." It is without difficulty, that this look of the Israelites figured the act of Faith, and not the Doctrine of the Gospel. And this is what the Son of God manifestly regards, when he says John VI. 40. "This is the will of Him who sent me, that whoever contemplates the Son, and believes in Him, has eternal Life."

To say something more pressing, there is no doubt that when Jesus Christ says in the Gospel, that whoever will believe in Him will not come into condemnation, but has passed from death to life, He does not display to us the same Truth that St. Paul proposes in saying, that one is justified by Faith. It is however incontestable that

Jesus Christ attributes this effect, not to the Evangelical Doctrine, but to Faith. This is what clearly appears from the fact that He always employs the term of believing, of contemplating Him, of receiving Him, etc. See John III. 15, 16, 18, 32; V. 24; VI. 38-40.

But to return to St. Paul, if this Apostle meant by Faith the Doctrine of the Gospel, he would oppose to it, not works, but the Law itself. Indeed, what he would want to prove would be that it is not the Law, but the Gospel, that saves men. To express this, it was necessary to say, not that one is not justified by works, but that one is not justified by the Law. However St. Paul almost always says that one is not justified by works. Does it not clearly appear by this, that his thought is very different from the one attributed to him?

I know what is answered. It is said that there is a Metathesis in this expression of St. Paul, and that he says that one is not justified by the works of the Law, to say that one is not justified by the Law of works. But I have two things to reply.

The first, that one cannot deny that this Figure is a bit extraordinary, and very different from the manner in which one is accustomed to express oneself. This being so, it is necessary to believe, either that St. Paul did not use it at all, or that he used it only very rarely. Indeed, expressions that are not natural are always rare, and do not come back as often as the proper ones. However if this answer is valid, two things will have happened that are rather incredible. One, that absolutely speaking, this way of speaking will be very frequent; the other, that it will be much more so than the natural one. For after all, there are incomparably more places where the Apostle speaks of the works of the Law, than of those where he speaks of the Law of works. Would this have happened, if these two ways of speaking were synonymous?

Moreover, even if one could admit this Figure in the places where St. Paul speaks of the works of the Law, one could not do so in those where he speaks simply of works, without saying anything of the Law, as he does Rom. IV. 2, 5, 6. There is no Metathesis in these places, and consequently nothing obliges us to imagine one in the others.

Finally, one cannot deny that it is the same thing in Scripture, to be saved by Faith, and not by works; and to be justified by Faith, and not by works. It is nevertheless true that when Scripture employs this first way of speaking, as it does quite often, it opposes to the Faith by which it says that one is saved not the Law, but works, without speaking of Law. For example, Ephes. II. 8-9. "You are saved by grace, by faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one may glory." And II. Tim. I. 9. "God has saved and called us by a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His set purpose, and the grace that has been given to us in Jesus Christ before the eternal times." Likewise Tit. III. 4-5. "When the kindness and love of God our Savior toward men has clearly appeared, He has saved us, not by works of righteousness that we had done, but according to His mercy."

It appears by all these passages, that it is to works that St. Paul removes the power to save us: from which one can conclude, that it is to these same works that he removes the power to justify us; and that thus there is no Metathesis in what he says, that no one is justified by the works of the Law.

## **CHAPTER XII. That the Faith which justifies us is not the Observance of the Precepts of Jesus Christ**

What one has just seen persuades me that the Faith which justifies us is something entirely different from the Gospel. Some claim that by this Faith one should understand not only the persuasion of what Jesus Christ reveals to us, but also the observance of what He prescribes. If they were content to say that true Faith is necessarily followed by the observance of the precepts of Jesus Christ, that it is the principle and source of Holiness, that it is incompatible with the practice of vice, they would say nothing that is not very true. But this is not their thought. Their meaning is not that Faith and Holiness are two things that go together. They say that it is only one and the same thing, conceived and expressed differently, so that the practice of good works is this Faith which, according to all of Scripture, makes us obtain the remission of sins. And in this it is certain that they are mistaken.

For first, this is not the idea that Scripture gives us of this Virtue. If it had a place, Faith would include all Virtues; whereas Scripture makes of it a particular Virtue, which it distinguishes from all others. It distinguishes it from Hope and from Charity, saying that "these three things remain, Faith, Hope, and Charity, and the greatest of the three is Charity." I Cor. XIII. It distinguishes it from the Confession of the Truth. "If you confess Jesus Christ with your mouth, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Rom. X. It distinguishes it from Repentance. "Repent, and believe in the Gospel." Mark I. 15.

Above all, this appears from what the Apostle St. Peter says in Chapter I of his II Epistle. He declares first that he addresses those who have obtained a Faith of equal value with him; which shows that he speaks of justifying Faith, of the Faith of God's Elect. A moment later, he exhorts them to add to this Faith virtue, Knowledge, temperance, patience, piety, brotherly love. What meaning would all this have if Faith included all these Virtues?

If that were so, if obedience to the Commandments of Jesus Christ, and the practice of good works, internal and external, were included in this Faith that God requires of us, one could not say that one believes, without saying that one obeys His holy Precepts, and that one does all that He has commanded. Consequently, when the Father of the lunatic Child says to Jesus Christ, "I believe, Lord, but help my unbelief"; when again each of us says in reciting the Creed, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, etc.", the meaning would be, "I observe the commandments of God, and I do all the things that He has ordered me." As there would be something ridiculous about understanding it in this way, it is necessary to recognize that Faith is distinct from Obedience, although it is necessarily followed by it.

If that were also the case, when the Eunuch having said to Philip, "Here is water, what prevents me from being baptized?" Philip answered him, "If you believe with all your heart, it is permitted to you"; the meaning of these words would be that this Catechumen was in a state to receive Baptism, provided that at that very moment, and before the celebration of this holy Ceremony, he did all that Jesus Christ has commanded us. And when the Eunuch answered him that he believed, his meaning would have been that he was observing exactly these sacred Rules. Who, however, would dare to maintain that this was the meaning, either of the Evangelist, or of the Eunuch?

It is reported in Chapter IX of St. John, that Jesus Christ having encountered in the Temple the Blind Man whom He had healed, asked him if he believed in the Son of God; and that the Blind Man having asked Him to tell him who was this Son of God, in whom he should believe, and learning that it was the one to whom he was speaking, answered, "I believe, Lord." But to whom would it be possible to persuade, either that Jesus Christ was thereby asking this Blind Man if he was observing His Precepts, of which it is certain he had no knowledge; or that the Blind Man was boasting of observing them, saying that he believed?

It is therefore certain that the Faith of which Scripture speaks so often is a particular Virtue, distinct from all others. Thus it is believable that it is this Virtue alone, and not a composite of all those that Grace produces in us, that St. Paul means when he says that it is by Faith that we are justified. For what appearance is there that in this particular occurrence the Apostle takes this term in a sense different from the one it has in all the other places of the sacred Writings, and even in the Epistles of St. Paul?

But there are still other considerations that prove the same thing. For first, if the Faith that justifies us included the observance of the Precepts of Jesus Christ, to be justified by Faith and to be justified by works would be the same thing. What difference indeed is there between works and the observance of the Precepts of Jesus Christ? Consequently, if Faith is in no way different from this observance of the Precepts of Jesus Christ, to say that one is justified by Faith is to say that one is justified by works. But is it conceivable that that is so?

If that were so, this Apostle and his Adversaries were in agreement on this, that it is solely by works that one is justified, and their difference consisted in knowing what are these works that justify us; the Adversaries of St. Paul claiming that they are the works that the Law prescribes, and St. Paul those that the Gospel recommends. But if that were the true state of the Question, whence does it come that it appears nowhere in the Writings of St. Paul? Whence does it come that he never says that the works that justify us are not those that the Law requires, but solely those that the Gospel prescribes? Whence does it come that instead of opposing works to works, he always opposes works to faith, and faith to works? Can one understand such an extraordinary procedure?

I have moreover shown that when St. Paul maintains that one is not justified by works, he speaks not only of ceremonial works, but also of moral works; and not only of those that are done without Faith, and by the forces of Nature, but also of those that are done with the help of Grace, and under the direction of Faith. If that is so, he does not believe therefore that we are justified by the observance of the Precepts of Jesus Christ.

But further, if the observance of the Precepts of Jesus Christ were what justifies us, it would be impossible to be justified before having observed them; and consequently after having believed, and repented inwardly, one would remain for a considerable space of time in the state of sin and damnation. This is also a consequence that the Defenders of this view admit. But I hope to show the contrary in one of the following Chapters.

### **CHAPTER XIII. Three other ways of explaining the nature of justifying Faith, of which the last is the true one.**

Besides these two explanations of the nature of Faith, which I have just examined in the preceding Chapters, there are two others that I cannot admit. One is that of some of our Theologians, who confusing the direct act of Faith with the feeling that we have of it, make this Virtue consist in the persuasion that one has of the actual remission of one's sins. The other is that which makes it consist in a particular application that one makes to oneself of what is general in the promises of the Gospel, so that one assures oneself that one is of the number of those to whom they are addressed.

But I can admit neither the one nor the other. Not the first, because indeed the certainty that we have of the remission of our sins is not Faith itself, but one of its consequences. For as God promises the remission of sins only to Faith, it is necessary to know that one has this Faith, to assure oneself that one has obtained this grace. Thus it is necessary first to believe; then to feel one's Faith, and to be quite sure that it is a living and true Faith; and finally to conclude from this that one has obtained the remission of sins. Consequently the first act of Faith, which a Sinner who converts himself makes, precedes this certainty; which clearly shows that it is distinct from it.

Moreover, one who does not have true Faith does not fail to be persuaded that he has obtained the remission of sins; witness the majority of those who have only a temporary Faith; witness in a word all those who flatter themselves wrongly, and who not having Faith, falsely imagine having it. One still does not have this certainty, who nevertheless does not fail to have Faith; for example, these timid Souls, who have a worse opinion of their present state than they should have.

The second idea is no more correct. For after all, by this particular application of the promises of God, of which one speaks, does one mean a conditional application, or an absolute application? My meaning is that it is necessary that this application consists either in assuring oneself that one will be saved, provided that one believes,



or in assuring oneself absolutely that one will be saved, because one is quite sure that one believes.

The first is not sufficient to obtain the remission of sins. Most would obtain it, if that alone were necessary. How many very great Sinners are there who do not doubt it at all? And indeed how can one doubt it, if one has some persuasion of the truth of the holy Gospel, of which this Truth is the substance?

The second supposes Faith: for how can one assure oneself absolutely that one will be saved, except by being quite sure that one has true Faith? Thus this absolute assurance is a consequence of Faith, and consequently it cannot be Faith itself.

Leaving aside therefore these explanations, it is necessary to hold to the one that I proposed in my Treatise on divine Faith. I could content myself with referring my Reader to it; but as it is very possible that what I am presently writing may be read by someone who has not seen this other Treatise, I will repeat here in two words what I have said more fully, and with more extent, in that other place.

I say therefore that the principal act of Faith consists in accepting the offers that God makes us in His Gospel. It is certain indeed that when God has it announced to us, He has offered to us thereby all His graces, but above all the Remission of sins; witness these words of St. Paul to the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia: "Let it be known to you that in Him (Jesus Christ) is offered to you the remission of sins, and that from all that from which you have not been able to be justified by the Law of Moses, whoever believes is justified by Him." Acts XIII. Witness again what this Apostle said to the Corinthians: "We are Ambassadors for Jesus Christ, and as if God were exhorting through us, we beseech you through Jesus Christ to be reconciled with God." II Cor. V. 20-21.

It is certain, secondly, that if one rejects this offer, one throws oneself thereby into the necessity of perishing; in accordance with what St. Paul said to these same Jews: "It was indeed to you that it was necessary first to announce the word of God; but since you reject it, and you judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn toward the Gentiles." Acts XIII. 46. And St. John: "Whoever does not believe makes God a liar; for he has not believed in the testimony that God has given of His own Son. And this is the testimony, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son." I John V. 10-11.

It is certain, thirdly, that one accepts this offer by means of Faith; witness these words of St. John: "To all who received Him, He gave them this right to be made children of God, namely to those who believe in His name."

All this shows that to believe in Jesus Christ is properly nothing other than to accept the offer that God makes us of His Son, and that the Son Himself makes us of His merit and the fruits of His passion.

But what is it to accept this offer? One would say, to see the manner in which some of our Theologians explain themselves on this subject, that it is nothing other than

to consent to this goodwill of God, to wish to be saved by His Son, to want His merit to be imputed to us.

But it is difficult to persuade oneself that this is the meaning of these Theologians. For after all if the acceptance of the merit of Jesus Christ, which makes the principal act of true Faith, consisted only in that alone, it is evident that all those who would consent to the merit of Jesus Christ being imputed to them, would have true Faith, and consequently would be justified and would save themselves.

Can one however doubt the contrary? Indeed, is it not incontestable that at least those among the Orthodox who have temporary Faith, want to be saved by Jesus Christ, and consent to His merit being imputed to them? Can one even contest it with regard to those who have only the degree of historical Faith? Is it possible that a man who has some persuasion of the Truths of salvation, and who knows on one side that he is a sinner, and on the other that he can be saved only by Jesus Christ, does not wish to be saved by His means?

Let one represent to oneself a Sinner plunged in vice, and not thinking at all of correcting himself. Let one suppose only that he has some persuasion of the Truths of salvation, and that he is a Christian roughly in the same manner in which a Turk is a Mohammedan. Let him hear a Preacher who offers him the merits of Jesus Christ. Is it conceivable that he rejects them, and says to himself, either, "I do not want to be saved, I want to perish, and be eternally damned"; or, "I do indeed want to be saved, but I do not want to be saved by Jesus Christ, and I do not care either about His death or His merit"? Does one see any so furious as to have such thoughts? And whatever the case may be, must one believe that all those who do not have them are true Faithful, and obtain by that alone the remission of their sins?

I do not know what others will think of it, but for myself I declare that nothing seems to me more absurd than such an imagination. I even go further: I maintain that nothing is more pernicious, nothing more appropriate to throw Sinners into security, and to give birth to this false peace, which loses each day so many miserable ones. With what fright indeed could people be agitated who are preoccupied with this thought, that it is only necessary to consent to be saved by Jesus Christ, to be so indeed; and that that alone, without any other act, either internal or external, suffices to make them obtain the entire remission of all their sins?

To not set such dangerous traps for Sinners, and to not throw oneself into such absurdities, it is necessary to recognize that to accept the offer that God makes us of His Son, is not simply to consent to be saved by Him; that it is something more: and that although such a consent is absolutely necessary, it is far from sufficing to procure us this great good.

What is it then that must be added to it, one will doubtless say? It is necessary in a word, that the acceptance be in accordance with the nature of the offer that is made to us. Now there are two sorts of offers. All indeed have this in common, that they

require the acceptance of the good offered, and there is none that is not null, and that has its effect, if the one to whom one offers this good rejects it. But there are those that demand only that alone, and others that besides this demand something else.

When I make a present to one of my Friends, it is an offer of the first order. I wish that he receive it; but if he persists in rejecting it, I do not claim to force him to it. When on the contrary a Prince wanting to oblige rebellious Subjects to return to their duty, offers them his Amnesty, on the charge that they lay down their Arms within a certain time; or when a Master taking a Domestic into his wages, obliges himself to pay him well, provided that he serve him faithfully, it is an offer of the second order, and which requires something more than a simple consent.

One could give a hundred other examples of it; but as each can imagine them himself, I content myself with saying that in order to make the offers of the first order have their effect, it suffices that one accept the good that is their subject; but that in order that one can prevail oneself of the second, it is necessary to accept, not only the good offered, but also the condition under which it is offered; and that if someone said that he accepts the offer, but that he does not want to fulfill the condition, not only would he be unjust, but he would make himself ridiculous.

Who would not mock, for example, a Buyer, who seeing that a Merchant offers him his merchandise at the price that he marks to him, would say that he accepts the merchandise, but that he does not claim to pay for them?

This is so clear that I would fear to abuse the patience of my Readers, if I insisted on it more. It will suffice to note that the offer that God makes us of the merits of His holy Son, is an offer of this second order. He requires not only of us that we accept these merits; but also that we take a strong resolution to renounce our vices, and to apply ourselves to the study of piety. In a word, He requires at the same time Faith and Repentance; and there are a thousand places in the Holy Books, where this second condition is expressly stipulated.

True Faithful accept it. They recognize that it is just, that it is necessary; they submit to it with pleasure, they take the resolution for it, and execute it afterward in good faith; this is why it is not surprising that they prevail themselves of the offers that God makes them. But those who do not have true Faith always do one or the other of these three things: either they reject this condition; or they do not think about it; or in accepting it at first, and taking the resolution to execute it, they forget it a little time later, and whatever the case may be they do not fulfill it. That being posed, must one be surprised if they do not prevail themselves of the goods that God offered them?

#### **CHAPTER XIV. How it is that Faith justifies us. Views of the Roman Church, of the Socinians, and of the Remonstrants, on this subject.**

One has just seen what is the Faith that justifies us. It is now necessary to research how it is that it produces this effect. This is something on which one is extremely divided.

The Roman Church, which by to justify means to spread in the soul the supernatural habit of Charity, says that Faith justifies us by meriting, by a merit of congruity, that God accord us this grace. But I have already shown that it badly explains the term to justify; and moreover, what it says on this subject concerns in part the matter of Grace, in part that of Merit. Thus nothing obliges me to dwell on it.

The Socinians and the Remonstrants take the thing differently. They say that Faith justifies us, because God is content with it by pure grace; "and that instead of being able to require of us an exact obedience, and without stain, to all the Precepts of His holy Law, He voluntarily obliges Himself to receive us in grace, provided that we believe in His Son, and that we observe His Precepts; not indeed with an achieved exactitude, but with sincerity, and in such a manner that sin does not reign in our hearts."

They say that God does with regard to the Sinner, roughly what Creditors sometimes do with regard to an insolvent Debtor. They discharge him of what he owes them, provided that he pay a part of it, for example, the third or the quarter. This is what they call Acceptilation, which is a term of Law, which properly means this.

They base themselves principally on the fact that Scripture says quite often that Faith is imputed to us as Righteousness.

But first, this proof is not convincing. To impute as Righteousness is an expression that can mean two things. One is to regard an action as righteous, that is to say as good, laudable, and virtuous: And this is how it is said in Ps. CVI that the action of Phinehas, which appeared so violent, was imputed to him as Righteousness, to say that it was approved and rewarded.

This meaning cannot have a place in our subject, because to justify us it takes something more than a good action; it takes erasing past sins: which the best actions cannot do.

Secondly, to be imputed as Righteousness is to take the place of Righteousness, it is to make one be treated as one would be if one were righteous. It is in this sense that the Apostle takes this expression when he says that Faith is imputed as Righteousness, as clearly appears from one of the places where he uses it. "To him," he says, "who does the works, the salary is not imputed to him as a grace, but as a thing due. But to him who does not do the works, but who believes in Him who justifies the wicked, his Faith is imputed to him as Righteousness." Rom. IV. 4-5.

This is what will not be contested. Thus everything reduces to knowing why it is that Faith takes the place of Righteousness.

The Socinians and the Remonstrants say that it is because God is content with it by pure grace, although He could require a perfect Righteousness. But the Text does not say it, and has nothing that is opposed to its being understood in the sense that our Theologians give it, namely, that Faith takes the place of Righteousness for us, because embracing the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, it makes us be treated in several respects, as we would be if we had a perfect Righteousness. Thus this Text having nothing opposed to the sense that we give it, it is very inappropriately that one objects it to us. It says only what is recognized on both sides, and it is silent on what is contested.

We have moreover three principal reasons not to admit this explanation of the Socinians and the Remonstrants.

The first, that they take the term Faith in a sense very different from the one in which Holy Scripture employs it. They understand by it the observance of the Precepts of Jesus Christ; whereas Scripture clearly distinguishes these two things one from the other, as one has seen in one of the preceding Chapters.

The second, that to take it thus, God would pardon sins only to those who would have observed for some time the Precepts of His holy Son; which is very false, as I hope to show in the future.

The third, which is the principal one, is that this view does not recognize the efficacy of the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ to confer on us the remission of sins, although, according to all of Scripture, it is the principal cause of it.

On the other side, Scripture clearly tells us two things. One, that we are justified by the Redemption of Jesus Christ; by the Obedience of Jesus Christ; by the Righteousness of Jesus Christ. The other, that what Jesus Christ has done and suffered for us is useful only to those who believe in Him; and that in believing in Him, one unites oneself to Him, one becomes the same plant with Him. Is this not enough to give us occasion to persuade ourselves that if Faith justifies us, it is in applying to us the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, which is the foundation and the principle of this grace?

One can confirm all that I have just said by this consideration. It is that if God were content with Faith, and with the works that are its fruits, as with a part of what is due to Him, it would be true to say that it is because of Faith, and in consideration of Faith, that He would justify us; whereas in supposing what we believe, it will indeed be true to say that we are justified by Faith, but not that we are justified because of Faith. Does one not therefore have reason to persuade oneself that we enter better into the true meaning of Scripture than the Socinians and the Remonstrants, since Scripture never says that we are justified because of Faith, but always that we are justified by faith? This conformity of the Language of Scripture

with our Belief, is this not a proof of the conformity of the meaning of the sacred Book with ours?

**CHAPTER XV. What terms must be used to express the efficacy of Faith, with relation to Justification.**

I come now to our Theologians. There are some of them who believe that our Justification was done from all eternity, or at the latest when Jesus Christ died on the cross. But most hold that it is done only when the Sinner comes to believe and to repent. I leave the first, whose view I propose to examine in the future. I stop with the second, who are the great number.

As much as I can judge of it, they all agree on these Truths.

I. That God justifies us in pardoning our sins, and consequently in discharging us from the punishment that we had deserved, and to which we had subjected ourselves in sinning.

II. That when God pardons us, He does it in consideration of His Son, who has expiated by His death these same sins that God pardons us.

III. That God imputes the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, and consequently pardons sins, only to those who embrace this Satisfaction, and apply it to themselves by means of a living Faith.

IV. That thus the acts of such a Faith must necessarily precede the remission of sins, so that God never accords this grace except to those who actually believe in His Son.

V. That these acts are necessarily, and infallibly, followed by the impetration of this grace, so that God never refuses it to any of those who truly believe in His Son.

VI. That God commands us to make these acts, that He requires them, that He stipulates them.

VII. That if the acts of our Faith are followed by the remission of our sins, it is in no way that they merit this grace, and that God cannot refuse it to them in justice; it is solely because He has established from all eternity this Law, that the acts of our Faith, and the remission of our sins, should be two things that should never be separated: and that as those who will not believe will never obtain the remission of their sins; also all those who will believe will infallibly obtain this grace.

I do not believe that among these seven Propositions, there is a single one with which all our Theologians do not agree.

But although they are in agreement on this, they have still not been able to agree on the terms that must be employed to designate the efficacy that they all unanimously attribute to Faith, with relation to Justification. This means that they are in agreement on the thing, and that they dispute concerning words; and, which is pitiful, one sees those who regard this dispute as extremely important.

But as it is easier to deplore this misfortune than to remedy it, it is necessarily necessary to enter into this controversy, however vain and frivolous it is; and to research, not what must be believed on this subject, but how it is that one must express oneself.

There are two terms, which would seem to me quite convenient to express the efficacy of Faith with relation to our Justification, because they are extremely clear, and everyone attaches to them the same ideas; but which no one, that I know of, uses on this subject; that of occasional Cause; and that of Cause without which the thing is not done, *Causa sine qua non*.

There are two others, which are more in use, but which are also a bit more obscure, and which one understands very differently; that of Condition, and that of Organ, of Instrument, and of instrumental Cause.

One knows well enough what an occasional Cause is. It is a Cause that does not physically produce its effect, but which gives to the true Cause the occasion to produce it; which does not prevent this occasion from being able to be followed necessarily and infallibly from the production of this effect. This is what happens every time that there is some immutable Law that wants it thus.

This is how the new Philosophers explain the power that the Soul has over the Body, and that which the Body has over the Soul, which are both so inexplicable in the common Hypotheses. How indeed can one conceive that the Body, which has nothing in common with the Soul, can act upon it, as we see that it does? The only solution that one has been able to find until now for this great difficulty, is to say that in truth, the acts of the Soul and the movements of the Body have no natural connection, and which comes from the things themselves; but that God having made at the beginning a Law, which holds that these two things must follow each other reciprocally, and that such movement of the Body must be followed by such a thought of the Spirit, and such thought of the Spirit by such movement of the Body, one of these things does not come to happen sooner, than the other is produced immediately afterward.

Thus, in this Hypothesis, if I voluntarily move my arm, it is not that my will is the physical Cause of this movement; it is only that it is the occasional Cause of it.

Cannot one say the same thing of Faith, with relation to the remission of sins? Cannot one say that God having wanted from all eternity that the act of Faith be followed by the impetration of this grace, He has obligated Himself thereby to accord it to all those who would come to believe, and in the very moment that they would believe; and that being as constant in His resolutions as we know that He is, He does always at the appointed time what He has resolved to do? Is there not even all the more reason to say it, as it is more certain that it is God who pardons us our sins, than it is that it is He who moves my arm, when I have the intention of moving it? Indeed, this second Proposition is contested, whereas the first is not, nor can it be.

To say this incidentally, is this not to say that Faith is the occasional Cause of our Justification?

But here is an image, which one should receive with all the less repugnance, as it has been made expressly to make known to us the efficacy of our Faith. No one is ignorant of the History of the bronze Serpent. The Israelites stung by the fiery Serpents had only to cast their eyes on this Figure, to be healed on the spot. And the Son of God teaches us in His Gospel that this was an excellent Type of what He Himself does, in favor of those who seek in Him the remedy for all their ills.

I ask now what was the efficacy of the look that one cast on this Serpent. Was it a physical Cause of the healing that one obtained thereby? There would be something ridiculous in thinking it. It is beyond doubt that it was only an occasional Cause of this effect, God having obligated Himself to heal miraculously all those who would fixedly attach their eyes to this object that He presented to them. This is what suffers no difficulty.

Why therefore would one find some in persuading oneself that it is roughly the same with the thing represented, as with the Type that figured it?

By the way, in taking it thus, there is this convenience, that one is not bound to enter into the tiresome and embarrassing discussions, where one finds oneself engaged when one wants to know how it is that Faith can act on God, and oblige Him to pardon sins to those who make the acts of it. In the Hypothesis of occasional Causes, nothing is easier than to say that Faith does not properly act on God; but that God having voluntarily determined Himself from all eternity to accord the remission of sins to those who will believe, and persisting always in this determination, He does not sooner see that the Sinner believes, than He carries Himself of Himself to accord him this grace.

I say roughly the same thing of the term *Causa sine quâ non*. One calls thus this sort of improperly called Causes, which, although they do not really produce their effect, do not fail to be so necessary to its production, that if they are lacking, the effect is never produced. Such is, for example, the proximity of fire for burning. Let us imagine, on one side the most ardent fire, and on the other the most combustible matter. If one keeps them distant from each other, this matter will not burn. Thus proximity, which of itself has no efficacy, does not fail to be an improperly called Cause of the burn, because without it the fire will not burn.

Why therefore could one not give this same name to Faith? Why could one not say that it is one of these Causes, without which the effect is not produced?

I have difficulty believing that anyone maintains that these two terms give a false meaning, and say what is not. One will say only, perhaps, that they are a bit general, and express only a part of the truth. That could be, above all with regard to the second. Let us see therefore if the two others can be of some use on this matter.



## **CHAPTER XVI. That one can give to Faith the name of Condition.**

I begin with the first of these terms, which is that of Condition; and I note first that our most celebrated Theologians have made no scruple about using it on the subject of Faith.

I do not speak incidentally of the Disciples of Cameron, and generally of those who are called Universalists. Each knows that those of this order all maintain that Faith is the Condition of the new Covenant. I speak principally of those who are named Particularists, both Supralapsarians and Infralapsarians. I say that the ones and the others have unanimously given this name to Faith.

This is what has been done in particular by Martyr on Rom. VIII. 17. Pareus de Justif. lib. IV. cap. 2. p.m. 949. Scharpius Curs. Theol. tom. I. col. 697 & 920. The Theologians of England deputized to the Synod of Dort, on Art. I. Thes. Heterod. 8. and on I. Thes. 2 & 3. Piscator, Exeg. Doct. Christ. cap. 9. Aphor. 7. Vendelin Theol. Christ. Lib. I. cap. 19. Thes. 6. Expl. 3. Maresius Colleg. Theol. Loc. X. n. 33. Turretin Loc. XII. Quaest. 3. per tot. M. Pictet, Theol. Christ. Lib. VIII. cap. 25. n. 3. without speaking of the others that it would be easy to add to this, if one wanted to take the trouble to look for them.

One will see by the way that they had reason to do it, if one considers what one is accustomed to understand by the term Condition. There are two sorts of them. Some are indeed necessary, but are not sufficient. There are others that are at the same time sufficient and necessary.

For example, it is necessary almost everywhere to have a certain age to exercise certain Offices; but this age, although necessary, does not suffice. On the contrary the will of the Prince suffices, and is necessary in an absolute State. One could perhaps call the first, *Conditiones sine quibus non*. But as it is certain that Faith is in no way of this order, being infallibly followed by Justification, I do not dwell on it.

The conditions followed infallibly by the effect can be added to offers, to promises, to threats, and to conventions. But as the third usage does not concern us, I leave it, and stopping with the others, I say that by a Condition properly so called, one ordinarily means any action, or to explain myself in a more general manner, any event, on which one makes the effect of an offer, of a promise, of a convention, depend in such a way, that this event being posed, the effect must follow, and not otherwise.

By the way, one does not concern oneself with the nature of the event, that one calls a condition. Sometimes it is a fortuitous event, and which depends, neither on the one who makes the promise, nor on the one to whom it is made; as when a Merchant says, If such a vessel comes to port safely, I will give so much to the poor. Sometimes it depends on the one who makes the promise; as if a Prince said to a Commoner, If I resolve to ennoble you, I will not stop there, I will give you such an Office. It is thus that God Himself said Deut. XXXII. 41. "If I sharpen the blade of my sword, and my hand seizes judgment, I will turn vengeance on my adversaries." Very often also it

depends on the one to whom the promise is made; as when a Master says to his Servant, If you serve me faithfully, I will give you such a reward.

Sometimes the fulfilled condition gives a strict right, and properly so called, to the thing promised; and this is what happens every time that there is some proportion between the good promised, and the condition prescribed, as there is between the services of a Servant, and the wages that a Master obligates himself to give him. Sometimes it is only an imperfect right, and founded not on commutative justice, but on the fidelity of the one who promises; as when a Father promises a present to his Child, provided that he knows his lesson well. Sometimes still the condition is the principal foundation of the right that one has to the thing promised, as in the first of the two examples that I have just cited. Sometimes it is nothing other than an external circumstance of the foundation, as in the second.

Such being the idea that one ordinarily has of a condition, it is not at all surprising that most of our Theologians give this name to Faith. Indeed, it is on it that God makes depend the effect of the offers, of the promises, and of the engagements, into which it has pleased Him to enter in our favor in His Covenant, and which are so many names that His Scripture gives to what He does in our regard, when He calls us to the participation of His Grace.

There is no offer that does not depend at least on one condition, which is the consent and the acceptance of the one to whom one makes it. It is even necessary that this consent be future. For if it has preceded, as happens when the good is asked for by the one who is to receive it, one does not say that the one who does it, offers it, but only that he accords it. Often even there are other conditions distinct from consent, as when a Merchant offers his merchandise to a Buyer on condition, not only that the Buyer be content with them, but also that he pay for them, and that he give such or such a price for them.

As therefore St. Paul teaches us Act. XIII that God offers us the remission of sins, on the charge that we believe in His Son, that is to say, on the charge that we accept this offer; nothing was more natural than to say that Faith is the condition under which this offer is made to Sinners. Here are the very words of Cocceius in one of his Letters to Conrad Bergius, which is the XIII of those that one finds in the VI Volume of his Works. "*Scio ex altera parte fidem non esse omnium. Esse item de aliis hominibus Dei consilium, non quidem salvandi cum electis, aut sine causa damnandi, sed non obstante quod sub maledictione & ira sint, tamen multis beneficiis afficiendi ad Deum quærendum, & poenitentiam & fidem sollicitandi, & vocandi, atque simul justitiam & vitam sub conditione fidei offerendi.*"

What God does to oblige us to follow His vocation, is also called a promise. God makes us hope for all His favors, and particularly the remission of sins. But how? It is provided that we have Faith, and not otherwise. This can be clarified by the example of the contrary, which is the threat. As there are absolute threats, and conditional threats, there are also promises of these two orders.

The threat that God made to the first Man after his sin, announcing to him that the Earth would be cursed on his account, was absolute; and the one that He had made to him before, that he would die if he ate of the forbidden fruit, was conditional.

It is the same with promises. The one that God made to Noah, to no longer send a Flood, was absolute. The one that He makes in the Decalogue, to give a long life to submissive children, is conditional. I say the same thing of the two promises that God makes in His Gospel; one, to accord the remission of sins, to those who will believe; the other, to give Faith to His Elect. The first is conditional, and the second absolute.

There are indeed in Scripture promises and threats, which, although expressed absolutely, do not fail to be conditional. Witness this promise, "My name will be in Jerusalem forever"; and this threat, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh will be overthrown." But I do not believe that there is an absolute promise, which is expressed under condition. Thus salvation being promised to Faith, and by means of Faith; and Scripture saying, sometimes, "If you believe, you will be saved", sometimes, "Believe, and you will be saved", sometimes, "He who believes will not come into condemnation", there is no doubt that this is a conditional promise.

Especially if one considers that this promise is supported by a threat against the Unbelieving: "He who does not believe is already condemned, and the wrath of God remains on him." And if this promise is conditional, who can doubt that Faith is the condition of it? "*Fit applicatio per verbum promissionis conditionatum, Si credes salvaberis*", says Cocceius de Foedere n. 184.

Finally what God does in our regard is called in Scripture a Covenant. Now according to the Cocceians, the Covenant is composed of four acts, which are, the promise; the stipulation of the duty, which is nothing other than the condition of this promise; the acceptance, or the acquiescence to this stipulation, which they call in terms of Law the Adstipulation; and the right that the one who fulfills the condition acquires to the thing promised, and which they call Restipulation. See M. Braunius Doct. Foederum pag. 248 & 249.

I cite only Cocceians, and the reason I have for doing so, is that they are extremely rigid, being for the most part Supralapsarians. Indeed, if these same admit conditions, not indeed in the Decrees, but in the offers, in the promises, and in the Covenants; what should one think of the others, whose sentiments are gentler and more moderate?

## **CHAPTER XVII. Where one examines the Reasons of those who say that Faith is not a condition.**

Let us now see the reasons for not wanting Faith to be a true condition. Four are produced. The first, that the condition properly so called, when it is fulfilled, is the cause and the foundation of the right that one has to the thing promised under this condition; which one cannot say of Faith: for after all it is not this Virtue, but the

merit of Jesus Christ that it embraces, which is the cause and the foundation of the right that we have to the remission of sins. The second, that what God does in our regard in calling us to the participation of His grace, is called not only in Scripture a Covenant, but also a Testament. Now, one says, Testaments are absolute, and do not depend on any condition. The third, that Faith, far from being a condition of the Covenant, is on the contrary one of the goods that this Covenant makes hope for. The fourth finally, that Faith being a gratuitous gift, that God accords us, it is impossible that it be a condition that God requires of us.

But nothing seems to me weaker than these reasons. For as to the first, one can understand in two ways what we are told, that the condition is the cause and the foundation of the right that one has to the thing. One can first understand that it is the only, or at least the principal cause; the only, or the principal foundation. Secondly, one can understand that this fulfilled condition contributes something to acquire for us this right, not as principal cause, or as principal foundation; but only as an external circumstance but necessary to make the principal cause have its effect: roughly as local proximity is necessary to make fire actually burn combustible matter.

If it is in the first sense that one understands that the condition is the cause and the foundation of the right, one is mistaken. This can happen sometimes, it must be admitted, but it is not perpetual. There are a thousand occasions where the contrary appears. For example, it is said in Law, that there is no Donation, without Acceptance; and indeed Donations are null, if they are not accepted. Acceptance is therefore a necessary condition to avail oneself of a Donation. Would one say however that it is the only, or even the principal foundation of the right that one has to the thing given? Is it not the will of the Donor, which alone sustains this quality?

In this sense therefore, the Maxim is false. But if one understands it in the second, it is true, but does nothing against us. For who can doubt that Faith contributes something to acquire for us the right that we have to the remission of sins? Who can doubt that a Faithful has more right to it than an Unbeliever, even if one supposes that this Unbeliever is elect? "To all who received Him," says St. John, "He gave them the right to be made children of God, namely," he adds, "to those who believe in His name." It is therefore by Faith that one acquires this right.

But it does not follow from this that it is the only, or even the principal foundation of this right. It comes to us first and principally from the will of God. It comes to us secondly, from the merit of Jesus Christ. But as the merit of Jesus Christ is imputed only to those who believe, it is true to say, that Faith is necessary, not as foundation of the right, but solely as condition, as circumstance necessary to make the principal Cause act, or if one wishes, to apply its virtue.

Whatever the case may be, one cannot deny that Faith has some efficacy to procure for us the remission of sins, since Scripture says that it is it which justifies us, and

which saves us. How indeed could one say that it is the organ of our Justification, if it had no influence on the production of this effect?

The second reason is still weaker than the first. It is said that the Gospel is a Testament, and that Testaments are always absolute. But first, this second Proposition is not true. Nothing is more ordinary than to see conditional Testaments. What is more frequent than what one calls Substitutions, by which one institutes a second Heir, in case the first dies without children, or even in case he repudiates the Heritage? One can even say that there is no Testament that is not conditional, there being none whose effect does not depend in some way on the acceptance, or the repudiation, both of the Heir, and of the Legatees. Thus what one supposes is not at all true.

But I add secondly, that not everyone agrees with what we are told, that the Covenant that it has pleased God to treat with us is the same thing as His Testament. This is something with which the Cocceians do not agree. See M. Vander Wayen, *Summ. Theol. Christ.* cap. IV. n. 198. 199. He maintains that the Testament of God is His eternal Counsel, or, as we ordinarily speak, His Decree; whereas the Covenant is a Convention made in time between God and us. He even obligates himself to show in the future, that the consequence that one draws from the view opposed to his to prove that Faith is not a condition, is not at all just. Heidegger says the same thing, *Exercit. Bibl. Diss.* VI. n. 4.

For myself I admit that I have some repugnance to believe that the word Testament can designate a simple Decree, but I believe that it can designate a revealed Decree, and manifested by an absolute promise. As therefore God has done three things, that He has promised the remission of sins under the condition of Faith; that He has obligated Himself to give Faith to His Elect; finally that He has revealed this resolution by a great number of promises, which one finds in Scripture; I believe that the first of these three things is what Scripture calls the Covenant of Grace, and that the two latter joined together are what this same Scripture names a Testament.

Let us however pose the contrary. Let us imagine that the New Testament, and the Covenant of Grace, are the same thing. Let us imagine that all the Testaments of men are absolute. What will one conclude from it? Is it, that God does not impose any condition on us? Not at all. It would be necessary for that to suppose that what God does in our regard, must have all the properties of a Testament, in order that Scripture can give it this name. But what could be more ill-founded than such a supposition? Who does not know that in order for a Metaphor to be just, it is not necessary that the subject have all the qualities of the thing whose name one gives it, and that it suffices that it have some of them? And indeed, why would one be better founded to maintain that what God does in our regard has no condition, under the pretext that a Testament does not have one; than to maintain that it has one, because Covenants ordinarily have them, and that what God does in our regard is as well a Covenant as a Testament?

It is said thirdly, that Faith could not be a condition of the Covenant, since it is one of the things that God promises by this Covenant, obligating Himself to give Faith. But this is what it was necessary to prove; for one was not ignorant that neither the Cocceians, nor the Theologians of Saumur, agree with it. According to both, Faith is not what God promises to man by His Covenant: it is the duty that He stipulates, and that He requires of men. And indeed St. Paul teaches us, Rom. X, that instead of Moses describing thus the Righteousness that is by the Law, that the man who will do these things will live by them, the Righteousness that is by Faith says thus, "If you confess Jesus Christ with your mouth, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." It is not that I deny that God promises us Faith; I know that He promises it: but I maintain that it is by His Testament, not by His Covenant.

It is said finally, that it matters little whether it is by the Covenant of Grace, or by some other Revelation, that God promises Faith; provided that one admits that He promises it, and operates it in us by the efficacy of His Spirit. That alone, one says, suffices to make it not be a condition. But this is something with which our Theologians do not agree. They maintain that nothing prevents the same thing from being a condition, and a gratuitous gift. This is what Pareus maintains against Bellarmine, de Justif. lib. IV. cap. 2. pag. m. 977. and Valaus against Corvin, Loc. comm. pag. 363.

And indeed, I do not see on what one can base oneself to claim the contrary. If there were something absurd in saying that a gift of Grace can be a condition, this absurdity would consist, either in that God would require of us a thing that He does in us, or in that He would make our salvation depend on what depends only on Him.

And can one find anything absurd in either of these two things, without giving the victory to Pelagianism? Do we not hold that God requires of us all that He does in us? Do we not hold on the other side, that it is on Him and on His Grace that our salvation depends, and that it is in this that our happiness consists?

#### **CHAPTER XVIII. That this dispute is nothing more than a misunderstanding, or at most a dispute about words.**

After the clarifications I have just given on this Question, one will easily see that there is no real dispute on this subject, and that those who argue about it do so only because they do not understand each other, taking the same terms in different senses. Some understand by a condition, the sole, or at least the principal foundation of the right one has over things promised conditionally. Others take this term in a much broader sense, understanding by this expression anything without which one cannot obtain a good, and with which one obtains it infallibly, whether what produces this effect is the foundation of this right, or a simple circumstance of this foundation. Similarly, by the Covenant of Grace, some mean God's absolute promises, others His conditional promises. Taking these terms so differently, it is not at all strange that, although agreeing on the substance, they contradict each

other in appearance, and seem to affirm and deny the same thing. The dispute would be real if those who say that Faith is a condition, without which one cannot obtain the remission of sins, imagined that it merits this grace, or that without meriting it, it obtains it by itself, and independently of the merit of Jesus Christ, so that God in granting it would regard only the goodness and dignity of this action; if they still believed that it was an action that depended so much on us that it was not a gift of Grace. In all these suppositions, one would be right to find fault with making it a condition. But assuming that Faith is a gift of God, which merits absolutely nothing, and that if God grants it the remission of sins, it is solely because He has resolved never to refuse this grace to any of those who will embrace in this manner the merit of His holy Son, I do not see what one can find fault with in this sentiment. This is therefore only a simple misunderstanding; and one of the things that confirms me most in this thought is what I have just read in the Pacific Considerations of Mr. Witsius, on the Disputes of the Antinomians. An English Theologian, named Daniel William, had noted after Mr. Baxter, that there are two kinds of Instruments, physical and moral. He had added that no one would dare to imagine that Faith is a physical instrument, either of Justification or of Salvation; and that if it is a moral instrument, it will undoubtedly be a condition. From which he had concluded that these two terms, properly understood, designate the same thing. Mr. Witsius, who is one of those who do not approve of calling Faith a condition, having reported the actual words of this Theologian, acknowledges that there is nothing in all this that is not Orthodox, and that if there is any diversity between his sentiment and that of Mr. William, it concerns only the signification of two terms, neither of which is from Scripture. After which he concludes: *Mea sic est ratio: qui solam Christi justitiam eam esse agnoscit, qua coram Deo consistimus, eamque fide recipi ut nostra sit, atque ita nos fide justificari, non aliqua fidei dignitate, aut causalitate, ut loquuntur, nedum merito, neque illius substitutione in locum perfectae obedientiae, sed virtute gratiosae ordinationis Dei, qua constituit se propter justitiam Christi justificaturum credentes, eum ego Theologum ne sivit Deus ut hoc nomine heterodoxias postulem, quod ille fortassis fidem conditionem justificationis vocare malit, ego instrumentum.* Wits. Animad. Iren. Cap. X.

This is the Judgment of this wise and judicious Theologian, to which I wholeheartedly acquiesce. But perhaps this is not what everyone will do. There will be those who will say that the true meaning of the term condition is not the one we give it, but only the one given to it by those who defend the opposite view; that thus it is we who are wrong, and they who are right. If this is said to me, I have two things to reply.

The first is that, given this, the dispute will at most be a dispute about words. What other name indeed can one give to a dispute that consists only in knowing what is the true meaning of an expression, especially an expression that is not found in Scripture? And what can be more unworthy of wise people than to dispute about words?

The second thing I answer is that those who make this objection to me will be very ill-founded in this very dispute about words, however vain and frivolous it may be. Indeed, it is certain that the meaning of terms depends on usage, and that this is the only rule by which one must decide this kind of contestation. It is certain, secondly, that we are not concerned here with the grammatical meaning of the term condition, but with its theological meaning. Thus, everything comes down to knowing what meaning Theologians give it. Now, it is certain that Theologians take it in the sense that we give it. This must be so, since they give this name to Faith, however persuaded they are that it is a gift of Grace, and that it is not, on the other hand, either the sole or the principal foundation of the right we have to the remission of sins. They therefore take this term in the sense I have given it. I am consequently justified in maintaining that this sense is the true one. For, after all, the true theological sense of an expression is that which Theologians are accustomed to use. Thus, Theologians using the term condition in this sense, it must be recognized that this sense is the true one.

Here then are three incontestable Truths: I. When one disputes to know if Faith is a condition or if it is not, this contestation is only a pure misunderstanding, which comes only from the fact that some take the terms in one sense, and others in another. II. If, with the misunderstanding removed, there remains some diversity of sentiments, this diversity amounts only to a dispute about words. III. In this very dispute about words, those who give to the term condition a meaning that does not suit Faith are very ill-founded.

Someone may perhaps say that if this dispute is as I have just represented it, I was wrong to dwell on it for so long. But it is easy to answer that it is not a waste of time to show that one should no longer employ it in disputes of this nature. And moreover, those who know the manner in which I have been reprov'd on this occasion, will not find it amiss that I should have stopped a moment to justify myself.

#### **CHAPTER XIX. Whether Faith serves in our Justification as an Instrument.**

This is what I had to say on the first quality given to Faith, which is that of condition. I now come to the second. It is said that it is an Instrument of our Justification. On which I first remark that this expression has at least this inconvenience, that it is figurative. Indeed, Faith is not an Instrument properly so called. In our ordinary language, this word principally designates the tools that serve Artisans for their works. Thus, a pen is the instrument used for writing; a brush is that of a Painter; a chisel and a hammer those of a Sculptor; an axe and a saw those of a Carpenter, etc. In a word, an Instrument properly so called is always a body distinct from the one who uses it to act; which it is obvious cannot be said of Faith, which far from being a body, is not even a substance, being nothing other than a simple act of one of our faculties. But as it serves the soul in a manner that has some relationship, though somewhat confused and distant, with the manner in which an Instrument serves the one who handles it, it can be called an Instrument; but this will only be on the



condition that one does not claim to make this expression pass for literal, but only for metaphorical.

It is known moreover how inconvenient metaphorical expressions are in the didactic Style. It has been a long time since Aristotle decided that it would be important to banish them from it, and it would be desirable that this Decree had been executed as religiously as several others that this Philosopher pronounced, and which were not nearly as important. We would have many fewer disputes, especially in Theology, which of all the Sciences is perhaps the one that has suffered the most from the non-observance of this Rule.

The term Organ has in our usage a somewhat broader meaning than that of Instrument. We use it to designate the parts of our bodies that are necessary for certain functions. Thus we say that the eye is the organ of sight; that the ear is that of hearing, etc. That being so, it seems to me that it suits Faith a little better than that of Instrument. Nevertheless, one cannot deny that it is improper. An organ is something durable and permanent: it is a part of the body attached to its Whole. Faith, on the contrary, is a passing act, and which no longer subsists a moment after it has been done. It is therefore not an organ properly so called.

Let us use it nonetheless, however improper and inconvenient it may be; but beforehand let us remember that one can imagine that Faith is the Instrument of our Justification, either in the hands of God, or in the hands of man. Indeed, the Instrument has an essential relation to the principal Cause that handles it, and one can imagine two Causes of our Justification. I. God who grants it to the Sinner. II. The Sinner himself who asks it of God, and who obtains it from His infinite mercy.

One cannot say that Faith is in the hands of God an Instrument to justify us. Justification is an act that proceeds from God immediately, and for the production of which He needs no Instrument. It consists, as has been said, in the remission of sins. And who does not know that the remission of sins is not a work that is done by Instruments, but by the internal acts of God's will, sometimes expressed, but not always, by external signs? Thus I do not believe that one can say that Faith is in the hand of God an Instrument, which serves Him to justify us.

It is not quite the same with the other regard. In stopping at it, Faith has some activity in relation to Justification. One can even say that it has two; one, in relation to the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, which it embraces; the other, in relation to God, from whom it obtains this inestimable favor.

Faith serves, in two ways, to apply to us the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ. First, insofar as it is a condition that God has imposed on those who claim that He imputes to them this Satisfaction of His Son. Secondly, because in its manner of acting it is an attachment of the soul to this great object, which has some conformity with the manner in which the hand seizes certain things, holds them firmly, and makes use of them.

In particular, nothing seems to me more similar to what happens on this occasion than what happens in a Combat, when a Soldier seeing an Enemy who is going to pierce him with a dart, seizes his shield, covers himself with it, and thus repels the dart that is thrown at him. It is the same on this occasion. Divine Justice is ready to overwhelm the Sinner, and to unleash its harshest blows upon him. The Sinner, to protect himself from it, opposes to it the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, as an impenetrable shield. Thus Faith, by which he applies this Satisfaction to himself, is to him the same thing as is the hand of the Soldier with respect to the shield which he seizes, and which he holds firmly, to cover himself from the darts that seek him.

As for the activity that Faith may have with respect to God on this occasion, I believe that it is reduced to two things. The first, that God having voluntarily established this Law, that every man who believes will obtain the remission of his sins, it is absolutely necessary, either that this Law be violated, which is impossible, or that this man obtain on the spot the pardon of all his sins. In this respect then, the efficacy of Faith is purely objective, and is in no way different from that of occasional Causes.

The second thing that makes the efficacy of Faith in this respect is that, considered in itself and in its nature, it is, on the one hand, very pleasing to God; and on the other, very worthy of being chosen to serve as a condition to the new Covenant. I do not give the reasons, so as not to repeat what several have already said, and moreover everyone can see it well enough by himself.

There then is the sense in which Faith can, or cannot, be called either an Organ or an Instrument. Whatever the case may be, I do not believe that the two qualities, of Condition and of Instrument, should be opposed in such a way that one imagines that they have something incompatible. In my opinion, nothing prevents one from saying that Faith applies to us the Merit of Jesus Christ, both as a condition and as an instrument. I even believe that one of the reasons why God chose it to be a condition is that it was suitable to serve us as an instrument in the manner I have indicated.

To see this more distinctly, it must be noted that there are two sorts of conditions that can be imposed. Some have of themselves no efficacy to procure for us the goods that one makes depend on them. Such was, for example, the color of the Sheep that were to belong to Jacob, by the Treaty he made with his Father-in-law. For, apart from this Treaty, this color gave Jacob no more right over the Sheep it marked than over the others. But there are also conditions that have of themselves some efficacy to procure the goods to which they are attached: as when one says to a Child; I will give you this apple, provided that you snatch it from my hand. The effort that the Child makes to snatch this apple has of itself some efficacy to make him have it, although without the promise it does not give him all the necessary right to have it legitimately. It is thus that God gave the possession of the Land of Canaan to the Israelites, on condition that they conquer it from the natural Inhabitants. It is

thus that He promises His Children what is necessary for them to maintain themselves, on condition that they work to acquire it.

I say then, that Faith is a condition of the second order with respect to the Merit of Jesus Christ. It is obvious that it has of itself some efficacy to apply it to us; for, as I have already said, by it we attach ourselves to it, we consent to Jesus Christ being ours, we wish it. But also, on the other hand, this would not suffice if God had not voluntarily established this Law, that one must believe to be saved, and that one will be, provided that one believes. Thus it is at the same time an Organ and a Condition.

It is not the same with Repentance. It is indeed a necessary condition for obtaining the remission of sins, as I hope to show in the following Chapter. But it is not an organ that applies to us the Merit of Jesus Christ. And this is, if I am not mistaken, one of the reasons why Scripture says indeed that Faith justifies us, but nowhere says that Repentance produces the same effect.

**CHAPTER XX. That Repentance is necessary to obtain the remission of sins. Whether it is necessary for this that it be accompanied by actual Amendment.**

I have said several times that the remission of sins is the principal part of Justification. That being so, one cannot deny that Repentance is necessary to be justified before God, since it is not possible to obtain without it the remission of sins. Indeed, Scripture attests so formally to this Truth, and inculcates it so often, that one would have to put its authority under foot to call it into doubt.

But as one does not agree on the meaning to be given to what Scripture tells us about it, and as one can have very different ideas of this Repentance, which is regarded as necessary to reconcile us with God; it is good to try to disentangle all this a little, and to put this Truth in its light.

When one says that the Sinner repents, one can understand three things by this expression. The first, that this Sinner has a lively sorrow for his faults, and that he would strongly wish never to have fallen into them. The second, that besides this sorrow, he has love for this God, whom he reproaches himself for having offended, that he humbly implores his grace; that he embraces with a lively Faith the Merit of his Holy Son, and takes a strong resolution to live henceforth in a different manner than he has lived. The third, that not only does he do all these acts, and take in particular the resolution to correct himself; but that he executes it in good faith afterward, abstaining from the sins into which he has fallen, and practicing the good works that he has neglected: Which necessarily requires a considerable space of time, it not being possible that the occasions to abstain from most sins, and to do a number of good works that is even moderately large, should present themselves all at once.

That being so, one asks first, which of these three senses is that in which one can say that Repentance is necessary to obtain the remission of sins. And this is answered very differently.

First, all Christians agree that Repentance taken in the first of these senses, that is to say the sorrow one has for the evil one has done, on the one hand is absolutely necessary to obtain from God that He show us grace, and on the other is not enough without the other acts of which I have spoken. This is proved by the example of Cain, and by that of Judas, who both had a very lively sorrow for their faults, and who notwithstanding this sorrow did not fail to perish.

One agrees secondly, that Repentance taken in the second of these senses is necessary, and that if any one of the internal acts that I have indicated is missing, it is useless, and serves for nothing. As I have proved it in my abridged Morality, I do not dwell on it at present.

One agrees thirdly, that Repentance taken in the last of these senses, meaning by that the union of internal acts and actual Amendment, is necessary, at least in this sense, that if one Survives the internal acts, and does not amend oneself, it is a vain and useless repentance, to which God has no regard. This too is something I have proved in my abridged Morality.

But one asks if when a Sinner comes to repent in the second sense, doing all the internal acts that I have indicated, God grants him at that moment the remission of his faults, without waiting for him to do the external acts that make up what is called Amendment; or if He waits for this Amendment to appear, to show grace to this Sinner. It is on this that opinions are divided.

The Socinians and the Remonstrants take the latter of these two positions, and it is on this foundation that they maintain that late Repentance, however sincere, may be useless. Mr. Bull has been suspected of being of the same opinion, and there were indeed various things in his Apostolic Harmony that gave some reason to attribute this thought to him. But he justified himself in his Responses to Messrs. Tullie and Gataker. He had even explained himself clearly enough on this subject in his Harmony, page 349 and 350, where he shows that Grotius is of the same opinion as him.

Be that as it may, the Roman Church, the Lutherans, and the Reformed, are of an opinion opposed to that of the Socinians and the Remonstrants, and hold that from the moment the Sinner repents inwardly, and does the acts I have indicated, God never fails to receive him in his grace, without waiting for him to prove the sincerity of his conversion by his external conduct. This is why they hold that the Repentance of the Dying is never useless, provided it is sincere.

It is true that they believe it is extremely difficult, or perhaps even impossible, for the Sinner himself to be well assured of his reconciliation with God at the very moment this grace is granted to him. The reason is that, although he is strongly

resolved to correct himself, and to live better than he has done, he is not quite sure if he will execute this resolution, or if it will vanish, like those of so many Sinners, who after having formed very fine designs at the time they believed they were going to die, plunged back into vice as soon as the danger passed. But as God sees very distinctly if their Repentance is sincere, or if it is not, and as He does not need to learn it by the sequel of their actions, we believe that from the very moment that the Sinner comes to feel it, God seeing its sincerity, receives it, and justifies the Sinner, giving him afterward the knowledge and the feeling of the grace that He grants him.

This Question seems to me extremely important, and I am surprised to see that our Theologians either say absolutely nothing about it, or say only a word in passing. I touched on it in my Treatise on the Death of the Righteous, Book IV. Chapter VIII. and in that on divine Faith, Book III. Chapter X. But as this is its true place, I am going to dwell on it for a moment.

I say then first, that the truth of what we maintain appears clearly from several places in sacred History, which show that the remission of sins has been granted various times to Sinners at the very moment they came to believe and repent, and long before they could have justified the sincerity of their Conversion by sensible and external works.

I. It is reported II. Sam. XII. 13. that after Nathan had made to David the just reproaches that his adultery and his homicide deserved, this Prince acknowledged his fault, and said with sensible marks of a very lively sorrow, I have sinned against the Eternal. It took no more than that to lead the Prophet to reply to him, Also the Eternal has passed over your sin. There is the pardon that is granted to the first movements of Repentance, and which does not wait for this Repentance to have produced the fruits, which appeared some time after.

II. The manner in which this Prince speaks of this grace, or of some other similar one, shows again the same thing. Here is what he says in Ps. XXXII. I said, I will make confession of my transgressions to the Eternal; and you have taken away the penalty of my sin. He puts no middle between his confession, and the pardon that God grants him. He indicates that these are two things that have followed each other immediately.

III. The example of Manasseh is still quite decisive. Never did a man carry crime further. He committed an infinity of excesses, for the punishment of which God permitted the Babylonians to besiege him, take him, and shut him up in a narrow prison. It was then that he recognized himself, and had recourse to God. As soon as he did, he obtained his grace. As soon, says the sacred History II. Chron. XXXIII. 12. 13. As soon as he was anguished, he besought the Eternal his God, and humbled himself before the God of his Fathers. He thus made request, and God was moved by his prayers, so that He heard his supplication, and caused him to return to Jerusalem to his Kingdom. He afterward did excellent things: he reestablished the

Worship of God, and served Him himself in a very edifying manner. But before doing so, he had obtained God's pardon.

IV. What can one imagine stronger than the Parable of the Pharisee and the Publican? The latter implores God's mercy in a corner of the Temple. He strikes his chest, and says: O God, be appeased towards me, who am a sinner! What happens? He withdraws justified to his house, says the Son of God. That means that the remission of his sins was granted to him at once, and that God did not wait for him to have proved the sincerity of his Faith, and the truth of his Conversion, by a long series of good works.

V. The Parable of the young Prodigal proves again the same thing. As soon as he throws himself at his Father's feet, and confessing to him the disorders of his past conduct, begs him to receive him among the number of his Servants, this tender Father raises him up, embraces him, forgives him, and makes a feast day of the day of his arrival. What can one conclude from this, if not that God acts in the same way with Sinners, and that as soon as they implore his mercy, He receives them in His peace, and showers them with His favors?

VI. But what can one imagine more decisive than the example of the Sinner woman, that St. Luke reports in Chapter VII of his Gospel? She throws herself at the feet of Jesus Christ, waters them with her tears, and wipes them with her hair. Without waiting for her to do anything else, and before rising from the table, Jesus Christ says to her: Your sins are forgiven you, your Faith has saved you, go in peace.

VII. St. Matthew reports in Chapter IX of his Gospel, that Jesus Christ having come to Nazareth, a Paralytic lying in a bed was presented to him. He did not wait for this miserable to have done a great number of good works, to grant him the remission of his sins, and to say to him, Take courage, my Son, your sins are forgiven you.

VIII. The example of the good Thief proves again the same thing. He converts on the Cross; and on the Cross itself Jesus Christ says to him: Today you will be with me in Paradise.

IX. Who can likewise doubt that these three thousand men, whom St. Peter converted on the day of Pentecost, and who were baptized at that very moment, received then the remission of their sins? Would the Apostles have administered this holy Ceremony to them, if they had not believed that they could have the Faith and the Repentance, which are so necessary to receive it with fruit?

It will perhaps be said that these are only particular examples, such therefore that one cannot base constant and perpetual Rules on them. But, besides the fact that the Parables tend to make known what happens ordinarily, and that thus the two that I have reported are something more than particular examples; besides that, I say, I will be content with less for the opposite opinion. Let someone indeed produce to me a single example of a man who, having truly believed and sincerely repented, was rejected by God and could not obtain His grace; and I will yield. But if not one

can be alleged, is there not a manifest injustice in rejecting those I have produced, on this sole pretext, that they are only particular examples?

### **CHAPTER XXI. Where one continues to prove the same thing.**

I believe then that from the moment we make an act of Faith and of Contrition, provided that this Faith and this Contrition are sincere and true, God, who sees with the utmost evidence if they are, and if they are to be followed by the good works which are their fruits; God, I say, from that moment forgives us our sins, and receives us in the number of His Children, and of the Heirs of His Heaven.

Thus these good works are indeed, in truth, necessary and inseparable consequences of Justification: they are also certain and infallible marks, by which one can know if one has been justified, there being no doubt that when one applies oneself to them as one should, one can conclude from that very fact that one has made one's peace with God; as on the contrary one can hold as constant, that if after having imagined oneself to believe and to repent, one stops there, without adding to it the practice of good works, one has never ceased to be the object of God's hatred and vengeance. But, although good works are, on the one hand the consequences, and on the other the Characteristics, of what makes one obtain the remission of sins; they are in no way conditions, the execution of which must necessarily precede it, still less Causes that produce it.

If it were otherwise, one would have to say one or the other of these three things: either that God waits to pardon sins, until one has done all the good works that one is capable of doing, and consequently until one comes to die; or that He grants this grace only after one has done all sorts of good works; or finally, that He grants it only after one has done a certain quantity of them, for example, twenty, thirty, forty; or that one has done them for a certain space of time, for example, for three months, for six, for a year, etc.

One will not say the first. If one said it, one would commit oneself to maintaining that no one is justified except in the last moments of life; which is so visibly contrary to several formal Decisions of Scripture.

One will say as little the second. How many Righteous are there who never have the occasion to do certain works? For example, they are so poor that they are in no way in a state to help those who need it. They have so little power that they could not give the least help to those who are oppressed. They have neither Father nor Mother; thus they could not do a hundred things that they would do if those who brought them into the world still lived. No one has offended them, and consequently they do not have the occasion to forgive. Must one then believe that this prevents them from being justified?

If one reduces oneself to the third, one cannot help doing one or the other of these two things; either indicating the precise number of good works that one must do, and the duration of the time during which one must apply oneself to them; or admitting that if one does not know it, no one can know if his sins are forgiven him.

For how would it be possible to know it, if one does not know what is necessary to obtain this great grace?

I am persuaded that there will be none bold enough to determine either the precise number of works that must be done, or the time during which one must apply oneself to them. On what could one base oneself if one undertook it? On the other hand, to say that no one can be assured that he has obtained the remission of sins is to formally contradict Holy Scripture, which makes us understand very clearly that one can know with certainty that one has made one's peace with God, as our Theologians have proved a hundred times against the Roman Church, which denies it.

But that is not all. It will be very difficult, not to say impossible, to give a reason for the choice that God will have made, either of the precise number of good works that will have to be done, or of the time during which one must apply oneself to them. Suppose, for example, that God wanted one not to be able to be justified until after having done thirty good works. Why did He choose this number of thirty, rather than that of 29, or of 31? Does one see in this any vestige of His Wisdom? Is it moreover conceivable, in this supposition, that God has only hatred for a man who does the twenty-ninth of his good works, and that He begins to love him only when he does the thirtieth? Does this conduct have much conformity with the idea that we all naturally have of the supremely perfect Being?

I would like to know what is the state of this man whom we suppose converted, believing, repenting, loving God above all and his Neighbor as himself, gentle, humble, patient, etc.; but who has not yet been justified. Is he in a state of sin, or in a state of grace? To say that he is in a state of grace is to grant me what I ask. To say that he is in a state of sin is to say the most absurd thing in the world. For how can one conceive that a man who does his duty so exactly is in a state of sin? Is this, moreover, what St. Peter used to say? In truth I perceive that God has no regard to the appearance of persons, but that in every Nation he who fears Him, and applies himself to justice, is agreeable to Him. Acts X. 34. 35. This man, of whom we speak, fears God: this is what we suppose. It has been some time since he applied himself to the study of piety. He exercises himself in the practice of good works. However, he is not yet agreeable to God. How can one reconcile such a Paradox, either with the most common notions of piety, or with St. Peter's maxim?

Can one deny, on the other hand, that such a man is truly regenerated? For in what else can one make Regeneration consist, than in what we suppose in him? But if he is regenerated, is he not a Child of God? And if he is His Child, is he not His Heir, and the Co-heir of Jesus Christ? Must he not reign eternally in His Heaven?

## **CHAPTER XXII. Where Objections are Answered.**

NOTHING therefore seems more absurd to me than the opinion of those who maintain that God waits to forgive sins until one has exercised oneself for some time in the practice of good works. But, they say, isn't this what Holy Scripture decides



quite clearly? Witness what God says to the ancient People through the mouth of Isaiah, I. 16.17.18. Wash yourselves, cleanse yourselves, remove from before my eyes the malice of your actions; cease to do evil, learn to do good, seek justice, relieve the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead the cause of the widow. Come now, says the Eternal, and let us debate our rights. Though your sins be as crimson, they shall be made white as snow; though they be red like scarlet, they shall become white as wool. Witness also what he says through the mouth of Ezekiel, XVIII. 21. 22. If the wicked turns away from all the sins he will have committed, and keeps all my statutes, and does what is just and right, truly he shall live and not die. All his transgressions that he will have committed shall not be held against him, but he shall live because of the justice to which he will have devoted himself.

I answer I. that, as will be seen more distinctly later, Justification involves various acts, among which there are those that come only as a consequence of good works. One can indeed consider it, either as granted to each Believer, or as notified and manifested to his conscience, or finally as solemnly published on the last Day before all humankind assembled. Here we are properly concerned only with the first of these acts: for as for the other two, there is no doubt that they follow good works, and even follow them quite far. Thus, to be able to conclude from these passages the opposite of what we maintain, it would be necessary to prove that they speak, not of the last two of these acts, but of the first. That, however, is something I believe impossible. On the contrary, the passage from Ezekiel, which is objected to us, visibly regards the last of these acts, and indicates what will be done in the life to come. Indeed, the Prophet says two things there, which do not permit us to doubt it. One, that the person in question will live, and not die; which must undoubtedly be understood of eternal life and death. The other, that his sins will not be reproached to him, which concerns the Judgment.

But I want these passages to be able to be understood of the first act. It suffices to verify them that God never grants the remission of sins except to those who, on the one hand, are strongly resolved to do good works, and who on the other will effectively do them, when they have the means and the opportunity. Only this was needed to give occasion to the Sacred Authors to express themselves as we see they have done.

If one is not satisfied with these two answers, I will add thirdly, that there is a great difference between saying that God will grant the remission of sins to those who will do good works, and saying that he will grant it only after one has actually applied oneself to this exercise. These passages do not convey the first, and say only the second.

Finally, one can say that good works are necessary, not to obtain the remission of sins, but to not fall from it after having obtained it; to avail oneself of it, and to gather its fruit. Indeed, if by a supposition, which I believe impossible, a justified Believer came to no longer do absolutely any good works, he would perish without difficulty;

according to what John the Baptist used to say, that every tree which does not bear fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. To protect oneself from this great misfortune, one must apply oneself to this exercise. Thus the practice of good works does not fail to have some necessity in relation to the remission of sins, although it follows the reception of this grace. And that being so, should we be surprised if the Prophets require it of those to whom they give hope that their sins will be erased?

One objects secondly, the places in Scripture that promise the remission of sins to Repentance. It is said that nothing is more essential to Repentance than Amendment; and that, moreover, Amendment consists partly in abstaining from the sins one had committed, and partly in doing the good works one had omitted. From which one concludes that good works are necessary to obtain the remission of sins, and that thus they must precede the actual reception of this grace.

I answer that there is a double Amendment, one interior, and the other exterior. It is amending oneself in a certain sense to rid oneself of the habits of vice, and to put in their place those of piety and holiness: and that is what is essential to Repentance, and what it is impossible to separate from it, even for a single moment. Exterior Amendment must also accompany it, I admit, but on condition that one has the time and the opportunities; which depends not at all on us. Thus the omission of it is not imputed before this time has come, and these opportunities have presented themselves.

Whatever the case may be, I deny that God waits for this exterior Amendment to forgive us our sins, and I maintain that the passages that are opposed to us do not prove it.

It is said thirdly, that this thought, that Repentance is never late, provided that it is true, is very apt to put Sinners to sleep; and that if one sees such a great number who defer from day to day their conversion, or even who put it off until the end of their life, it is only because they imagine that there will always be time to convert, which would not happen if they believed that late Repentance can be useless. From which one concludes that a sentiment which produces such pernicious effects cannot be true.

I answer first, that if there is a danger that our sentiment throws Sinners into security, there is no less danger that the opposite sentiment throws them into despair. For after all, what hope can remain for those who feel their death approaching, and who know with certainty that they are not converted, if they know besides that they have nothing to gain by repenting? Who does not know, moreover, that despair deserves to be avoided no less than security?

It will perhaps be said that the Socinians and the Remonstrants do not say positively that late Repentance is always useless, but only that one has no reason to be assured that it can be of any use; that God has never promised it anything, and that thus it depends on him to accept it, or to reject it. But I maintain that this does not destroy my objection. For if God has promised nothing to late Repentance, it is impossible

for one who has only a moment left to repent, to do it either with faith or with hope. And this being so, what other course remains for him to take but despair?

I add that there is this great difference between these two sentiments, that whereas the one I am combating leaves to Sinners, who are at the extremity of their life, no place, either to believe or to hope, ours does not infallibly produce security. It does not prevent Sinners from always having powerful motives to resolve not to lose a moment to repent. For indeed, to defer one's conversion on the pretext that the latest can be useful, is the procedure in the world most opposed to all the rules, I will not say only of Piety and Justice, but of Good sense, and Prudence; as an infinity of Authors have shown with the utmost evidence, and as everyone sees well enough by himself.

Finally, it will be said that it is easy to imagine cases where a Sinner could not obtain the remission of sins without doing external works: For example, a man who has an Enemy finds himself on his deathbed. This Enemy presents himself to be reconciled with him. Can the Dying man send him away without perishing? I say the same thing of an Unjust man, who is in a state to repair his injustices, and who is not sure that his Heirs will repair them after his death. Here then are external works that are necessary.

I agree: But I maintain first, that this is not perpetual, and that these cases themselves are quite rare, which means that nothing can be concluded from them in favor of the opposite sentiment. I add secondly, that it is even rarer that when these external actions are necessary, their production precedes the remission of sins. They are ordinarily preceded by internal movements, which are never produced without obtaining on the spot the grace of Justification. Finally, I say that if these external works are necessary, it is by accident, and because in the circumstances in which one finds oneself, their omission would be a sensible proof of the falsity of Repentance.

### **CHAPTER XXIII. Whether Repentance is a condition that God requires of those to whom he promises the remission of sins.**

THE Question I have just treated is without difficulty very real and very important: but it is not the same with this one. It is asked if Repentance being as necessary to obtain the remission of sins as we have just seen it is, one should call it a condition.

This is visibly only a pure question of words, since it concerns only the sole usage of a term which is not even in Scripture, which cannot be repeated too often. What, however, can be more trivial than this sort of Questions?

This one, moreover, can pass for sufficiently clarified by all that I have said on a similar Question, namely, whether one can give this same name to Faith. Nevertheless, as it is principally to the application that I have made of this term to Repentance, that some have been shocked, I hope that I will be permitted to stop a moment to see if there is in this as much harm as some imagine.

I say then first, that this Question being a pure Question of words, the only Rule by which it must be decided is Usage. And as it concerns here a matter of Theology, everything comes down to knowing if Theologians use this way of speaking on the subject of Repentance, and in relation to the remission of sins. Now this is something that suffers no difficulty. Those of our Theologians, who pass for the most exact, have not scrupled to say that Repentance is a condition without which one cannot hope for the remission of sins. See Pareus on Justif. Lib. IV. Cap. 2. pag. 949. and 962. Piscator Exeg. Doct. Christ. Cap. IX. Aphor. VII. pag. 210. 211. M. du Moulin Anat. Armin. Cap. XXVI. n. 20. Vendelin Theol. Christ. Lib. I. Cap. XIX. Thes. VIII. Expl. I. Scharpius Curf. Theol. Tom. 1. col. 697. Maresius Colleg. Theol. Loc. X. n. 33. M. Turretin Loc. XVI. Quest. VIII. n. 20. M. Le Blanc de Beaulieu in his Theses, Quomodo fides justificet. Thes. 30. 31. M. Baxter Meth. Theol. Part. 3. pag. 56.57. and 336. M. Claude Letter 19. Heidegger Exercit. Bibl. Diff. VI. n. 5.

It should not be found strange. Understanding, as they do, by this term condition, any event on which one makes depend in such a way the effect of an offer, or of a promise, that one obliges oneself to execute it as soon as this event is posed, and that one declares on the contrary that there is nothing to expect if it does not happen; there was nothing more natural than to say, as they have done, that Repentance is a necessary condition to obtain the remission of sins.

Indeed, Scripture has declared very often, and very clearly, on the one hand, that there is no grace for the Impenitent; and on the other, that all those who come to repent, will infallibly obtain the remission of all their sins. See in particular Proverbs XXVIII. 13. Isa. I. 15. 16. 17. 18. and LV. 6. 7. Ezek. XVIII. 30.31.32. and XXXIII. 11. Luke XIII. 3. Acts II. 38. and III. 19. and XXVI. 20. Rom. II. 4. 5.

It will perhaps be said that if it is permitted to say that Faith on the one hand, and Repentance on the other, are each a necessary condition to obtain the remission of sins, there will then be two conditions prescribed by the new Covenant.

To this M. Baxter answers, that this is not a consequence. His reason is, Faith and Repentance are two acts that enter into each other, and that consequently make only a single condition.

To see this more distinctly, which is very true, it must be noted that each of these two terms, Faith, and Repentance, can be taken in two senses, one narrower, and the other more extended. In the narrow sense, Faith is nothing other than the persuasion of what God reveals to us; and Repentance, than the sorrow one has for having sinned and offended God. And this sense is not at all that of Scripture, when it requires, either Faith, or Repentance, to obtain the remission of sins. It takes these two terms in a more extended sense, understanding by Faith, not the sole persuasion of the Truths of salvation; but a compound of this persuasion, and of one of its most natural consequences, I mean the acceptance of the Merit of Jesus Christ; and by Repentance, not contrition alone, but in general all that the Sinner must do to convert himself.

Now it is certain that, taking it thus, Repentance is included in Faith, and Faith in Repentance. For as for the second, who can doubt that Faith is one of the most essential parts of Conversion? And in whose mind could it fall that it would be possible to convert while remaining incredulous? And as for the first, I have shown in one of the preceding Chapters that the acceptance of the Merit of Jesus Christ, which makes justifying Faith, includes not only the acceptance of the good offered; but also that of the condition under which this good is offered, I mean that of the renunciation of our vices, which is nothing other than Repentance. Thus Repentance being comprised in Faith, and Faith in Repentance, these are not two conditions, but a single condition diversely expressed.

Someone will perhaps imagine that if God requires Faith and Repentance of those to whom he offers the remission of sins, this grace will not be fully and perfectly gratuitous. But in effect, four things show that this consequence is not at all just.

The first, that this condition is a duty to which we were indispensably obligated even without this, and which God could require of us without promising us anything. If then he promises us something on condition that we observe it, it is an effect of his goodness, for which we owe him the same obligation as if he required nothing of us.

The second, that there is no proportion between what God requires of us, and what he promises. What he requires consists only in some internal acts of our mind and our heart; and what he promises entails the total exemption from the infinite punishments that we were to endure during the whole extent of eternity, and the right to the possession of all the felicity and all the glory of his Kingdom. What proportion can there be between such goods, and the condition that God prescribes? And there being none, shouldn't what God grants us under this condition pass for gratuitous?

Thirdly, this condition itself is not at all useful to God, but is extremely so to those who fulfill it. Suppose that a man believes and repents: what good comes of it to God? Man, on the contrary, profits from it considerably, not only because he procures for himself thereby the remission of sins, and the other goods that depend on it; but also, because Faith and Repentance are in themselves extremely precious goods, and which we should seek with all possible care and eagerness, even if we should derive no other advantage from them than that of possessing them.

Let us imagine a Father, who seeing that his Son has contracted a bad habit, for example, of lying or of stealing, exhorts him to correct himself of it, and to bring him to it in a more efficacious manner, promises him that provided he succeeds, he will make him a considerable Present. Will it be said that this Present is not a gratuitous Present, on the pretext that the Child must do something to obtain it? I do not know what others will think of it: but for me, it seems that far from this diminishing the price of the Present, it increases it almost to infinity, and that in effect the Child is incomparably more indebted to his Father for making him this Present only under such a condition, than he would be if he made it to him absolutely. It is the same

with our subject, and everyone sees it well enough by himself, without it being necessary to make the application.

Finally, what doubt can remain to us in this respect in the mind, if we come to consider, that not only is this condition a duty to which we are naturally obligated; that not only does it have no proportion with the excellence of the good that God promises us; that not only is it just as useful to us, as it is useless to God: but also, that it is God who operates it in us by his grace, giving us this very Faith, and this Repentance, which he requires of us only to accommodate himself to our constitution, and to make it a free and voluntary action?

One very often sees in Places where Offices are venal, that the Prince wanting to confer one of them on one of his Subjects, gives him what is necessary to buy it. When he does so, can one doubt that the gift he makes him of this Office is as gratuitous, as it would be if the Office not being venal, he gave it to him without any price? This suffers no difficulty. God then producing in us by his grace this Faith and this Repentance, to which he grants the remission of our sins, can one doubt that this is a pure grace, and does one have reason to imagine anything that approaches ever so little to merit?

Some other objections are also made against this Truth. But as I believe I have destroyed them in Chapter XVII. I do not think it necessary to dwell on them at present. I am going only to examine what a modern Author has recently published against a place in my Treatise of divine Faith, where I had supposed this.

#### **CHAPTER XXIV. Whether one could say that God offers us the Merits of his Son, on condition that we renounce our vices.**

I had undertaken to clarify a rather difficult matter, and moreover extremely important. It is the essential difference that distinguishes justifying Faith from temporary Faith. Nothing is more necessary than to be well instructed on this: for after all, it is in this alone that consists the true means of knowing if one is in a state of grace; the error of those who falsely imagine themselves to be in it consisting only in that they take temporary Faith, or even historical Faith, for a true justifying Faith; which would not happen to them, if they knew very distinctly what makes the essential difference of these kinds of Faith.

I had noted that, according to all our Theologians, the Faith that justifies us is properly nothing other than the acceptance of the offer that God makes us of his Son, of the Merits of this Son, or of the goods that this Son has merited for us: for, to say it in passing, these three expressions come down to the same thing; and all the difference there is, is that the last is the most literal, and consequently the clearest. From this I had concluded that the principal difference there must be between true Believers, and those who believe only temporarily, is that they accept very differently this offer that God makes us, and that thus all the difficulty comes down to marking this diversity a little clearly.

This is what our most exact Theologians have undertaken to do, and what they have said thereon comes down to the same thing, although they express it with some small diversity. All agree that acceptance, to be good and valid, must conform to the nature of the offer. All agree also, that this conformity is found in justifying Faith, and that it is not found in temporary Faith: but they take different approaches to showing it. Some say that true Believers respond to the offer that God makes us of His Son, and that the Son makes us of himself and of his merit, that they respond to it, I say, by a similar offer, or rather, by an absolute and irrevocable gift that they make him of themselves, devoting and consecrating themselves to his holy service; which the others do not do: they want Jesus Christ to be theirs; but they do not want to be Jesus Christ's.

Others say that God offering us His Son as King, as Priest, and as Prophet, to govern us by his Kingship, to reconcile us to him by his Priesthood, and to instruct us by his Prophecy; true Believers accept him in these three respects; instead of which those who have only a temporary Faith, accept him in certain respects, and reject him in some others. They are willing to be redeemed by his Priesthood; they want to be protected and made fully happy by his Kingship; but they want neither to obey his holy Laws, nor to believe the most important of the Truths that he reveals. Thus they separate what God offers only conjointly.

I had proposed a third way of conceiving the act of true Faith, which seemed to me simpler, and more natural. It is the one that one could read in Chapter XIII. of this Book, and which consists in a word in saying, that when God offers us the Merits of his Son, he requires not only that we accept this great good; but also, that we renounce our vices, and to say everything in a word, that we truly and sincerely repent: Moreover, that true Believers accept this second condition; that they submit to it; that they fulfill it: but that all the others, either reject it, or do not think about it, or in any case do not execute it at all.

I had said that this third explanation is fundamentally the same as the preceding ones. For after all, what difference is there fundamentally between renouncing our vices, giving ourselves to Jesus Christ, and accepting him as King to obey him? Isn't this the same thing expressed differently? And doesn't all the difference that exists consist in that the first of these expressions has something more literal, and consequently clearer? Can one besides deny me that since God actually imputes the Merit of his Son, only to those who accept him as King to obey him, and who accepting him in this way devote and consecrate themselves to his service, he did not make the offer he had made them of this great Savior depend on this condition?

Suppose indeed that he had not done so, and that the offer not including this condition, it required only that one consent to be saved by the Merit of Jesus Christ. Isn't it true that, in this supposition, God could not in justice refrain from saving those who would give this consent, even if they did not do the rest? Since he does

not do so, can one refrain from concluding that God had offered them the Merits of his Son only under all these conditions?

All this shows that these three explanations come down to the same thing. However, nothing has been said about the first two; one has become attached to the third, and one has imagined that it considerably alters our Theology. One could not bear that I made Repentance a condition of the offer that God makes us of his Son. One has maintained that this offer is absolute, and that in particular Repentance could not be its condition, since it is one of the goods that this great Savior has merited for us.

But I have various things to reply.

The first, that I am neither the first, nor the only one, who has made Repentance a necessary condition to obtain the remission of sins. It was seen in the preceding Chapter, that our best Authors have no difficulty in holding the same language. In particular M. Van Mastricht, celebrated Professor of Utrecht, has not contented himself with saying the same thing, he has even employed the same expressions; as appears from these three places in his Theology, Lib. II. Cap. I.

He maintains in § 12. that the reception, or the acceptance of Jesus Christ, which makes the principal act of Faith, entails six things, of which the last is that one accepts him on the same terms, and under the same conditions, under which he offers himself to us; and that one of these conditions is, that we renounce ourselves.

In § 29. indicating the different ways, in which it happens that one does not receive Jesus Christ, he says that one of the principal ones consists in that although one receives him in some manner, one rejects the conditions under which he offers himself, and which are the abnegation of self, the mortification of the flesh, the contempt of the world, the application to holiness.

Finally in § 42. he says that true Faith is not content to receive Jesus Christ; but that besides that it accepts the conditions under which he offers himself to us, and of which the principal ones are the renunciation of ourselves, and the mortification of the flesh.

That being so, what justice is there in condemning this only in me alone? Is it that this Proposition is more dangerous in my Works, which are so little considerable in all respects, than in those of so many great Men, which are put each day in the hands of those who want to learn our Theology?

Besides, what difference is there between saying, as I do, that God offers us the remission of sins only on condition that we repent of them; and saying, as do all our Theologians without exception, that God offers his goods, neither to the Profane, nor to the Impenitent; but to those who sigh after his Grace, who hunger and thirst for Justice, who are labored and laden etc.? Indeed, either this is false, or it signifies only what I say.

If one does not mean that God offers his grace to Sinners only on condition that they repent of their sins, the meaning will be, that he permits his Gospel to be announced



only to the Elect alone, only to those even of these Elect who actually repent; which is so contrary, both to Scripture, and to experience, that one would have to have renounced shame to maintain it.

But let us not stop at Theologians alone. I have already said that in giving to Repentance the name of condition, I mean simply, that when God promises us the remission of sins, he requires of us Repentance as a preliminary so absolutely necessary, that he makes us understand, on the one hand that in fulfilling it we will obtain what he promises us, and on the other, that in failing in it it is sure that this grace will not be granted to us. But can one deny this without belying all Scripture, which has said it so often, and so clearly?

Isn't it even true that it has expressed this promise in the manner in which one is accustomed to express conditional promises? How did the Covenant of works, which was undoubtedly conditional, express the promise of the goods that it made hope for? Isn't it in these terms, Do these things and you will live? And what difference is there, from the side of expression, between this promise and that which Ezekiel made to the Jews of his time? Return, and turn away from each other's sins, and iniquity will not be your ruin. Ezek. XVIII. v. 30.

How can one make understood in a clearer manner that one promises only under condition, than by saying that one will do what one obliges oneself to do, that one will do it, I say, if such and such a thing happens, and not otherwise? And isn't it in this manner that God has expressed himself very often on our subject? For example, when he said Ezek. XVIII. 21. If the wicked turns away from all his sins... he will live and not die. And Luke XIII. 3. If you do not amend, you will all perish similarly.

Finally, if this threat that I have just reported is a conditional threat, as it is certain that it is, how can one deny that the promise that precedes it, is also a conditional promise? And if it is, how can it be that Repentance is not its condition?

## **CHAPTER XXV. Where one examines the Answer that some make to what has just been said.**

ONE will say without doubt, that in truth, the promises of the Gospel are stated in a conditional manner; but that they do not fail to be absolute in their sense, and that to express them naturally, they would come down to this: I have resolved to regenerate my Elect, to give them faith and repentance; and after having granted them this grace, to add to it that of the remission of sins, then that of Sanctification: and finally to glorify them eternally. Thus when God says to us, If you believe, if you repent, I will pardon your sins, the sense is, As soon as I will have given you faith and repentance, I will grant you the remission of sins.

I. But I have various things to reply. The first, that even if this perfectly corresponded to the idea that Scripture gives us of the promises that God makes us, I do not see how it would be possible to apply it to the idea of an offer which it also employs sometimes, and under which all our Theologians represent what God does with

respect to us when he calls us to the participation of his Grace. I have already said that there is no offer that is not conditional, and the effect of which does not depend at least on acceptance. Often even it depends on something else, and the offer requires other conditions; as when a Prince publishing an Amnesty, offers his grace to rebellious Subjects, on condition that they lay down their arms, and return to their duty. Thus what God does with respect to us, in calling us, being an offer, it is absolutely necessary that he make it under some condition.

But what is the condition under which he makes us this offer? It is not simply that we consent to it. If that were so, he would oblige himself to pardon the sins of all those who would not reject this grace, which one cannot say. For how many are there who would like to be justified, and who are not? It is necessary then that he require something else, and I see only Repentance and Faith that one can say that he requires, beyond consent and acceptance. And as Faith is in no way different from Acceptance, I speak of an acceptance conforming to the nature of the offer, it is necessary to reduce oneself to Repentance.

Besides, it is remarkable that God has the remission of sins offered, not only to the Elect, but also to a very great number of Reprobates. But how can he have it offered to them otherwise than under condition? Is there sincerity in offering it to them absolutely, at the time when he has no design to grant it to them? Instead of which provided that one poses that he makes them this offer only on condition that they believe and that they repent, no difficulty remains in it.

It is by this that the most rigid of our Theologians respond to the Objection that is ordinarily made to us thereon, See Gomar, *Operum* Tom. I. pag. 134. Scharpius *Curs. Theol.* Tom. I. col. 920. Curtius *de fundamento salutis* Sect. VII. n. 26. Vendelin. *Theol. Christ. Lib. I. Cap. 19. Thes. 8. Expl. I.*

Here in particular is what Gomar has said of it. *Verùm rursus Adversarii ex nostrorum de vocatione reprobatorum ad salutem sententiâ objiciunt inde sequi, scilicet si Deus non det iis potentiam credendi, quibus hoc præcipit, ut credant, ipsum simulate agere. Videtur enim, inquit, intendere salutem eorum, atque idcirco eos vocare, cum tamen eos reprobaverit, ac proinde salutis participes fieri noluerit. Sed negatur consequentia, quia non vocat primum ad salutem, nec absolutè, sed primum ad pœnitentiam & fidem, deinde ea conditione, non aliâ, ad salutem, si credant. Hac enim conditione promisit tantum.*

II. But let us leave there the idea of an offer, and stop at that of a promise. I have already noted, that it is quite true that Scripture expresses absolutely conditional promises, and threats; but I do not believe that it would be easy to find examples that justify that it expresses conditionally absolute promises or threats. There would be in that something bizarre, and irregular. Thus the promise that God makes us to pardon our sins being ordinarily expressed in a conditional manner, there is reason to believe that it is indeed so.

III. According to the Answer that I examine, the promises of Regeneration, of the gift of Faith and of Repentance, of the Remission of sins, and of Salvation, are equally absolute, there being none that depends on some condition. But if that is so, whence comes it that Scripture, which so often expresses the last two in a conditional manner, never does the same thing with regard to the first two? Whence comes it that it never makes depend on anything whatsoever what God declares that he will do in favor of his Elect, regenerating them, and giving them Faith and Repentance? Why does it never make God say, I will give you Faith and Repentance, if you are of my Elect, or if you are of the number of those whose sins my Son has expiated by the effusion of his blood, as it makes him say, I will pardon your sins, if you believe and repent? Does not this diverse manner of expressing the promises that God makes us, show clearly that they are not of the same nature?

IV. God very often commands us to believe and to repent; and to support this Commandment, he promises us to pardon our sins, provided that we observe it. But if this promise is absolute, and concerns only the Elect alone, how can it support this commandment? What indeed is this Consequence: God will show grace to his Elect, and will not show any to the Reprobates: Therefore you, Peter, John, and James, who do not know if you are Elect, or Reprobates, you must believe, and repent?

V. One cannot deny, that to call Sinners externally, is fundamentally the same thing as proposing to them the Clauses of the new Covenant. If then this Covenant has no general and conditional promise, if they are all absolute and concern only the Elect alone, to call men will be nothing other than to make them understand that God has obliged himself to regenerate his Elect, to give them Faith and Repentance, to grant them the remission of sins, and to save them. But if that is so, can one say that to call them is to promise them, either the remission of sins, or salvation? To promise, is to make understood to the one to whom one speaks, that one is resolved to grant him the promised good. But is it to make this understood to those whom one calls, if in calling them one says to them no other thing, if not that God will grant this good to the Elect?

VI. Above all how is it possible that the promises being absolute and particular to the Elect alone, they are ever accepted by those who are ignorant if they are of the number of those to whom they are addressed? Let us imagine a Sinner, who knows with certainty that he is a Sinner. Let us suppose that he is called, and that in calling him one says to him that God has resolved to regenerate his Elect, to pardon their sins, and to save them. How can he, how must he apply these promises to himself, and accept them, being absolutely ignorant if he is Elect or Reprobate, as it is certain that he is ignorant of it? In order that I can accept a promise, it is necessary that I know that it is made to me. Without that there is something ridiculous in accepting it, and that is something that everyone understands well enough by himself.

VII. What I would principally wish to know in this supposition, is where one can place the sin that a man who does not believe savingly commits against the Law that orders him to believe. Let us imagine once more the Sinner of whom we have just spoken. Let us suppose that one displays to him the promises that God makes to his Elect. Let us suppose that he regards them as certain and infallible. Let us suppose that he says to the one who proposes them to him: "I am very strongly persuaded of the truth of what you say. I do not doubt at all that God will execute sooner or later the Decree of his Election. I do not doubt that he calls his Elect efficaciously, that he regenerates them, that he gives them Faith and Repentance, that he pardons their sins, and receives them one day in his Heaven. Thus I am persuaded that if I am Elect, I will receive one day all these goods; and consequently, if you could convince me that I am of the number of these Elect, I would apply to myself at this very moment all these promises that you have just proposed to me. But as I have no reason, either strong or weak, to persuade myself that I am of this privileged small number; as it is at least as possible that I am a Reprobate, as it is that I am an Elect, I do not see how I can apply to myself any of these promises, without doing the most rash action in the world, and the most contrary to good sense". I would much like to know what one could reasonably oppose to a man who would explain himself in this way.

I declare at least that I am not at all satisfied with two Answers that have been made to it. The first, that what is lacking in this Sinner, is the confidence that he should take in Jesus Christ. The second, that if this Sinner is troubled by the feeling of his crimes, and ardently sighs after Jesus Christ, he can assure himself that he is Elect, and consequently believe in this great Savior. Indeed, one says, Jesus Christ promises to relieve those who are labored and laden, and to satisfy those who hunger and thirst for justice.

I cannot admit either one or the other of these two Answers. For as for the first, what does one mean by this confidence, that one wants this Sinner to have in Jesus Christ? Is it a simple persuasion of this speculative Truth, that Jesus Christ can save fully all those who truly believe in him? And isn't it true that this persuasion is found in all those who have not only justifying Faith, not only temporary Faith, but even dogmatic Faith? One can even say that it is not lacking in Demons!

Is it a particular application of this general Truth that this Sinner makes to himself, and which consists in saying that he will be saved, if he is Elect, and if he believes in Jesus Christ? But is it possible to have the persuasion of which I have spoken, without making this application to oneself?

Is it an absolute persuasion that one has of being one day saved by Jesus Christ? But on what will this persuasion be founded? Whence will one know that one is of the number of those whom Jesus Christ will save?

Is it finally a desire to be of this number? But is it possible not to feel this desire, if one has dogmatic Faith? What! to know that one is lost forever; to be assured that

one can save oneself only by Jesus Christ; and not to wish to be saved by his means! Are even the most foolish capable of such extravagance? And whatever it may be, can one without absurdity attribute it to all Sinners?

The second Answer is no better. Indeed, there are two sorts of movements that Grace excites in Sinners. The first are common to the Elect and to the Reprobates, to those who convert themselves truly and sincerely, and to those who remain in sin. The others are particular to those who convert themselves truly. The Theologians of England deputed to the Synod of Dordrecht put in the first rank the feeling of sin, the fear of punishment, the desire of salvation, the hope of pardon, etc. Those of the second order are Faith, the Love of God, the Resolution to correct oneself, etc.

I ask then which of these acts are those that one means by this labor and by this burden, by this hunger and this thirst for justice, which precede the formation of true Faith? Are they the first? If that is so, I maintain that one is wrong to say that the one who feels them has the right to conclude from it that he is of the number of the Elect, since, as has just been seen, it happens often enough that the Reprobates themselves feel them. If it is the second, one comes back to what I say, and it is permitted to assure oneself absolutely that one will obtain the remission of sins, only when one is quite sure that one truly repents.

I see only five certainties, true or false, that one can have of the remission of sins, one conditional, and the others absolute. One can I. assure oneself that one will obtain this grace, provided that one believes and that one repents. II. One can assure oneself that one will obtain it absolutely, because one promises oneself to believe and to repent some time after. III. One can assure oneself that one is going to obtain it, because one already believes, and one repents. IV. One can assure oneself that one obtains it actually in this very moment, because one is quite sure that one believes and that one repents. V. Finally one can assure oneself that one has obtained it, because one has already believed and one has repented.

The first of these certainties is the duty of all Sinners, and if they do not have it, it is their fault. The second is the folly of most Sinners, and Preachers make it the ordinary matter of their Invectives. The third seems impossible to me, because to have it it would be necessary that one believed and that one repented actually, and that however one had not yet obtained the remission of sins, which never happens, because one obtains this grace from the moment that one believes and that one repents. I believe the fourth still impossible, but for another reason. It is that to assure oneself that one obtains the remission of sins, it is not enough to know that one believes and that one repents: it is necessary besides that to know that this Faith is a living Faith, and this Repentance a sincere Repentance. And the means of knowing this, except by an applied examination, and which requires time, and care? Finally the last is the duty of Believers already converted, and it is their fault if they do not have it.

Let one judge after that if the two Answers that I have just examined satisfy in any manner my Proof; and let one see at the same time if it is possible to explain the first act of the Faith that justifies us, unless by saying that the promises that it embraces are conditional, and make nothing hope for except to those who accept, not only the advantages that they promise, but also the condition under which they promise them.

## **CHAPTER XXVI. Response to an Objection based on the Assumption that Repentance is one of the goods that Jesus Christ has merited for us**

BUT, they say, Repentance is one of the graces that Jesus Christ has merited for us by his death: It is therefore impossible that it is the condition under which God offers us this very Merit which procures it for us. For is it conceivable that God makes the Cause depend on one of its Effects, such that one must produce the Effects to have the Cause?

I answer that this reason, which is quite specious, is not at all convincing. First, if it has any force, it has just as much on the subject of Faith as on that of Repentance. Indeed, those who hold that Jesus Christ has merited for us the grace of Conversion, also hold that he has merited for us Faith, which is one of its most essential parts. That being so, it would be no less impossible that God should offer us the Merit of his Son under the condition of Faith, than under that of Repentance. However, there are very few Theologians who, notwithstanding this objection, do not hold that Faith is the condition of the new Covenant. They must therefore not believe it very pressing.

Secondly, I would wish that some attention be paid to this Dilemma: "Either these two Propositions, Jesus Christ has merited for us the grace of Conversion, and, Conversion is a necessary Condition to obtain the remission of sins that Jesus Christ has merited for us, are two contradictory Propositions, which destroy each other mutually; or they are such that nothing prevents them from being able to subsist together, and both be true. If it is the second, it is inappropriate to use the first to overturn the second. If it is the first, I ask why is it that one wants rather that it be the first that makes one reject the second, than that it be the second that makes one reject the first."

It is a certain and infallible Rule, that when it is a question of choosing between two contradictory and incompatible Propositions, one must prefer the more certain and more solidly supported, and reject the one that has neither the same certainty, nor foundations of equal solidity. Who does not see, however, the advantage that the second of these Propositions has over the first? Will one produce for me as great a number of formal Texts for the first, as it is easy for me to produce for the second? How many times has Scripture not said, that if one does not repent, if one does not convert, if one does not believe, one will not obtain the remission of sins, and that on the contrary one will obtain it if one fulfills these duties? And what does it have

as precise to prove that if God converts us, it is because Jesus Christ has merited our Conversion?

So if I can prove my Proposition more strongly and more demonstratively than one proves that which is opposed to me, what is one thinking in opposing it to me? Does one claim that a weaker proof should make more impression on my mind than a stronger one; and that it is acting reasonably to make less account of the certain than of the uncertain?

To say something a little stronger, I see nothing in Scripture which proves that Jesus Christ has merited for us the grace of Conversion. Not only does it not say so in so many words; but I do not remember having read anything in it that necessarily leads to it. Nothing, moreover, obliges us to believe it. Is it not very possible that Conversion is an effect of the pure mercy of God, which he grants to whom he pleases? Is this not even something that Scripture insinuates to us when it says that God has mercy on whom he wills, and that he hardens whom he wills; and when it assures that it is the eternal Father, who by his great mercy has regenerated us in living hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? I Pet. I. 3.

It seems, moreover, that those who maintain the contrary, represent God as similar to a greedy man, who never does anything for nothing, and from whom the smallest favors must be extracted by force of services and presents. But is that the idea that Holy Scripture gives us of him? Does it not give us reason to imagine him so good, so liberal, and so beneficent, that there is no grace that he does not grant with pleasure, provided only that sin does not oppose his liberalities? Let us suppose then sin erased by the Satisfaction of his Son. That alone being supposed, nothing will prevent him from granting to whom he pleases the most precious of his graces, and particularly that of Conversion.

No one among us believes that Jesus Christ has merited our Election. All our Theologians recognize that it is an effect of the free will of God. Why will one imagine that it is impossible that it is the same with Conversion?

Thus the Principle that serves as foundation for this Objection has nothing certain, which also means that many of our Theologians have no difficulty in rejecting it.

But I add, that even if one could not help but receive it, the consequence that is drawn from it would not be necessary. I indeed want it to be a certain and incontestable Truth, that Jesus Christ has merited for us the grace of Conversion. What can one conclude from it, if one does not suppose that this grace is one of those that God offers us, when he offers us the other goods that his Son has merited for us? And how will one prove such a supposition? Does one have some Text of Scripture that serves as its foundation? One indeed has some that say in so many words, that when God calls us, he offers us on the one hand the remission of sins, and on the other this Spirit of Sanctification and Adoption, which he grants to those who have already believed. See Acts XIII. 38. II. Cor. V. 19. 20. John VII. 37. 38. Gal. IV.

6. But I see none that makes us understand that God offers us the grace of Conversion.

I am even persuaded that one cannot say it without giving the victory to those who are called Semipelagians, and who believed that it is the Sinner himself who begins the work of Conversion, and that it is God who completes it. For, as has been seen in the preceding Chapter, every offer is conditional, and depends at least on the acceptance of the one to whom the good is offered. Thus, if God offered us the grace of Conversion, he would offer it to us on the charge that we accept it, and that we are willing that he convert us. Consequently our consent should necessarily precede the action by which God would convert us.

When we receive a good that is offered to us, there are always three different acts that follow each other. The first is the offer, the second the acceptance, and the third the donation. The donation comes only after the acceptance, as the acceptance is made only in consequence of the offer. Thus if God offered us the grace of Conversion, it would happen first that he would present us with this great good. It would happen secondly that we would accept it. It would happen finally that God would grant it to us: which absolutely overturns our Theology.

It will perhaps be said that this offer that God makes us of his Grace is an absolute offer, and requires of us neither acceptance, nor anything whatsoever. But, besides that an absolute offer is a pure contradiction, as I have already justified, I would much like to know how one can say that God absolutely offers the grace of Conversion to those among the Reprobates whom he has called externally. For as to offer is to make understood that one has the intention to give, it is absolutely necessary that to offer absolutely is to make understood that one wants to give absolutely. And in whose mind could it fall that God absolutely wants to give the grace of Conversion to those whom he has reprobated by an immutable Decree?

It is therefore impossible that God offers us the grace of Conversion. He indeed grants it to his Elect, but he offers it to no one; and it is to contradict oneself to suppose it. And let it not be said that since he offers us the Merits of his holy Son, it is necessary to recognize that he offers us the grace of Conversion, if it is true that this grace is one of the goods that Jesus Christ has merited for us.

I answer, that if by the Merits of Jesus Christ one means, either the sufferings, or the actions, by which he has merited, one cannot say that God offers them to us. For after all these are things past, and which no longer subsist: they are consequently things that cannot be offered. By the Merits of Jesus Christ one means the goods that this great Savior has merited for us, or to put it better, those of these goods which can be offered to us, such as are the Remission of sins, the Spirit of Sanctification, the Resurrection of the body, and eternal Life. As for what concerns the grace of Conversion, one can be assured that it is not at all offered to us, either because Jesus Christ has not merited it for us, or because having merited it, he operates it in us without offering it to us.



## **CHAPTER XXVII. Response to another Objection. Whether what I have said throws Souls into despair.**

This same Author makes another Objection to me, with which he appears penetrated, and which, as far as one can judge by what he says of it, is extremely dear to his heart. He says that my Method is fit only to cast the most good people into despair. Here are his words:

I have seen the desolating effect of this dangerous manner of teaching and exhorting, on the heart of persons whom I know from origin, since they touch me very closely; who have always been, and still are, without reproach among the Reformed, both before the Refuge, and since, and who have all their life had their salvation very much at heart. They have come, by the reading of the Books of which I speak and which follow this Method, to within two fingers of despair, and to say to themselves for several months, with inconceivable pain, and sadness: What use is it then to work so hard, since it does not please God that we be saved notwithstanding all our efforts, and whatever we may do? And this until, with the grace of God, I showed them another path in the Gospel, by a little Writing that I made expressly. Mor. Evangel. Tom. I. pag. 189.

There are various remarks to make on this Objection. The first, that in the page that immediately precedes the one I have just cited, one does not report my words exactly. I am made to say that God offers us the death of his Son, only on condition that we devote ourselves to good works. One then refutes them by this consideration, that good works cannot be in any manner the condition of Justice, since they are the fruits of Justice by Jesus Christ. Phil. I. 11.

I. But is that what I said? Did I speak of good works? Did I not say expressly, and in so many words, that the condition under which God offers us the merit of his Son, is that we renounce our vices? And who does not see the difference there is between these two things? The renunciation of our vices is an internal act, and, what is much more important, an act of a moment, which does not prevent one from being able to obtain on the spot the remission of sins. On the contrary, the practice of good works requires a considerable space of time. From which it is easy to conclude, that if the practice of good works were the condition under which God offers us the remission of our faults, those who do not have the time to do them, for example, those who repent only on their deathbed, would repent uselessly. Is that, moreover, an opinion that one can attribute to me? Have I not combated it with all my strength in the very place that is censured? Let one read Chap. X. of Book III: one will see to what degree I am far from it.

II. Even if I had said what is imputed to me, I do not see by what right one would accuse me of casting into despair persons who have always been, and who still are without reproach among the Reformed, and who have all their life had their salvation very much at heart. I admit that the Hypothesis, which is imputed to me with so little justice, produces this effect with regard to those who, having passed their life in

laxity and in license, come to repent on their deathbed. But it is not the same with those who have lived without reproach, and who have worked with care on the work of their salvation. These have fulfilled the condition that the Defenders of this opinion require. Consequently these persons, far from having reason to fall into despair, must assure themselves that they are of the number of the Children of God, and of the Heirs of his Heaven.

III. But I take very little interest in this Hypothesis, and I note this only because I am persuaded that one must render justice indifferently to all, and impute to no one except what he believes, or at most what necessarily follows from his Principles. Let us see then if what I said, that God offers us the Merit of his Son on condition that we renounce our vices, must cast anyone into despair.

I say that, to maintain this, it is necessary to suppose that the condition that I say God imposes on us, is an impossible condition. For if it is possible to fulfill it, I do not see whence despair could come. Does one believe then that it is impossible to renounce our vices? If one believes it, one must believe that it is impossible to repent, for the renunciation of our vices is the first part of Repentance. If that is still so, it is necessary that one imagines one of two things, either that no one is saved, or that one can save oneself without renouncing one's vices. And what more absurd, what more pernicious than these two imaginations? For who does not know on the one hand, that not only the renunciation of our vices, but what is much more, Repentance, Conversion entire, is absolutely necessary for salvation; and on the other, that whatever may be the case with Unbelievers and the Reprobate, all the Faithful, all the Elect, are saved?

IV. Let each one now judge of the reasoning that one makes these good Souls do, whom I am accused of having so greatly frightened. What use is it, they said, to work so hard, since it does not please God that we be saved, notwithstanding all our efforts, and whatever we may do? This reasoning is composed of three Propositions. The first, that these persons were making all their efforts, and all that they could to save themselves. The second, that although they did so, God did not want, according to me, that they be saved. The third, that this being so, it was of no use to them to work hard.

I admit that in supposing the first two of these Propositions, the third cannot be contested, at least in this sense, that to avoid Hell, and to save oneself, it is of no use to do all that one can, if all that one does does not prevent one from perishing. For in any case that same, which cannot prevent one from perishing, can make one less unhappy in Hell than one would be without it; which suffices to make this care not absolutely useless. But that is not what is at issue. It is a question, not of softening, in some sort, the misfortune of damnation, but of avoiding it; and I admit that it is of no use for this to do what one can, if in doing all that one can, God does not want one to save oneself.

Thus, everything comes down to knowing if I have given reason to believe that God does not want to save even those who do all that they can to not perish. To justify myself from this, it should without difficulty suffice for me to deny that I have said it, either directly, or indirectly, and to ask that one produce the place where one claims that I have put forward such a Paradox, or at least, from which it is possible to conclude it.

But I have something stronger to say: I declare then that, far from believing it, or having said it, it is an opinion that I detest, and that I believe directly opposed to the idea that we should all have of the Goodness and the Mercy of God. I am so far from believing that God wants to banish from his Heaven those who do all that they can to be received there, that I am persuaded on the contrary that among those whom he has received there, there is not a single one who has not done much less than he could have done. I am persuaded that there is not a single Saint in Paradise, who could not have done, both more good, and less evil, than he has done.

I know that there are Theologians who are of another opinion, and who believe that there is neither Just Person nor Sinner, who can do more good, or less evil, than he does. See Maccovius Coll. Miscell. Quæst. disp. 1. I admit further that that is what all the Defenders of what is called physical Predetermination must say. But nothing appears more frightful to me than such an opinion, and I subscribe wholeheartedly to the Decision of the Theologians of England, deputed to the Synod of Dort, who conclude their judgment on the III. & IV. Article by these words:

Thes. IV. Heterodoxa. Hominem non posse plus boni facere quam facit, nec plus mali omittere, quam omittit. Falsa sunt hæc, & absona, sive de homine irrogenito & animali intelligantur, sive etiam de renato, & gratia sanctificante suffulto.

Primum quod ad hominis naturalis statum attinet, quamvis non possit insitam suam pravitatem exuere, aut peccati generaliter sumpti dominium excutere, potest tamen multos actus externos cohibere, in quibus fræna laxat concupiscentiis suis. Vitiosa concupiscentia inclinât hominem impium ad omne malum, non tamen determinat, aut cogit illum, ad hoc vel illud malum, hic & nunc necessariò patrandum, ut hanc cædem, hanc rapinam, hoc adulterium. Hoc etiam inde constat, quod homines improbissimi sua scelera aggrediuntur non sine præviâ deliberatione, liberrimaque mediorum dispositione, quodque ad ipsum facinus jam accincti temperare sibi possunt, ex alterius reverentia aut præsentaneo periculi metu. Denique frustra ex legibus humanis pœnæ sceleratis intentantur, si nemo ea quæ admittit flagitia amittere potuerit. Quod autem ad actus suo genere bonos attinet, certum est ipsos irrogenitos omittere sæpissimè multas actiones morales externas, quas secundum operis substantiam potuerant præstare; ac ob voluntariam talium operum omissionem justissimè condemnari. Matt. XXV. 42. Esurivi, & non dedistis mihi ad comedendum: Sitivi, & non dedistis potum, &c.

Deinde etiam de renatis, ac verè sanctificatis, idem est asserendum, nempè quamvis sint à peccati dominio liberati, Rom. VI. 14. 18. Servi facti justitiæ, Rom. VIII. 1. & non

secundum carnem ambulent, sed secundum Spiritum, possunt tamen, idque liberè, extra rectum justitiæ tramitem gressus dimovere, etiam tum cum non transgrediuntur: itidemque cum labuntur, potuerant gratiæ vi ac subsidio per voluntatem liberam, hoc est liberatam, concupiscentiis suis restitisse, vitasse illa carnis opera manifesta, quæ Gal. V. 19. recensentur, fornicationem, immunditiam, iras, rixas, &c. Quis sanus dixerit Davidem non potuisse non perpetrare adulterium, & hoc patrato non potuisse illi, cui summam injuriam intulerat, non etiam pessima & deliberatâ machinatione ipsam vitam eripere? Verum ne longè exempla petantur, singulorum piorum conscientias appellamus. Quis non quotidie Deum orans, Remitte nobis debita nostra, simul agnoscit, sibi per Dei gratiam in promptu fuisse bona præstare officia, quæ tamen omisit, item tentatiunculas superare, quibus tamen cessit?

Let Mr. N. then reproach as much as he pleases the Defenders of physical Premotion with giving such thoughts, and consequently with casting souls into despair. But let him cease to accuse me of it, I who am so far from this Hypothesis, that there are very few that appear more dangerous to me.

If these Persons, of whom Mr. N. speaks, had done me the honor of consulting me, I would have answered them five or six things, which could have dissipated their doubts.

The first, that there is a contradiction in posing that a man does what he can and that God does not want to save him.

The second, that they are mistaken in imagining that they do what they can, since neither they, nor the greatest Saints, have ever done it.

The third, that although it would be just to do it, that is not so absolutely necessary that one cannot fail in it without perishing.

The fourth, that to save oneself it suffices to repent truly and sincerely, and to believe in Jesus Christ with a living Faith, and operating through Charity. That if they have such Repentance and such Faith, they are wrong to fear, and even more to despair.

The fifth, that they are engaged in a very gross and very dangerous error, if they imagine being able to save themselves without believing and repenting.

The sixth, that one abuses them, if one persuades them that they can banish fear, without assuring themselves, either that they have Faith and Repentance, or that this Faith and this Repentance are such as Scripture wants them to be. That is what it was necessary to tell them. Whatever else one has told them, one has deceived them.

## **CHAPTER XXVIII: Whether one can say that the Sinner is justified by his works.**

AFTER having examined what the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, Faith, and Repentance contribute to our Justification, it remains only to see if works do something in it. But before entering into this inquiry, I must warn my Reader that the question here is not to know if good works justify the Just: this is something that may be discussed later. The question is solely to know if they are in a state to justify the Sinner.

It is just as little a question of knowing if they can justify the Sinner with that kind of Justification that I call rigorous. From the very fact that we are dealing only with a Sinner, it appears clearly that it is impossible for his works to justify him in this manner. For how would it be possible for a man whose works merit condemnation to be justified by his works?

It is thus only a question of Justification by grace. It is, in a word, a question of knowing if works are, like Faith and Repentance, an absolutely necessary condition to obtain from God the grace of Justification.

To judge this with less fear of deceiving ourselves, we must recall a Distinction that we have already used. There are two sorts of good works. Some are certain internal acts, which always precede the remission of sins; for example, Faith, Contrition, recourse to the mercy of God, the hope of obtaining his grace, etc. The others are sensible and external works; for example, alms, and the other functions of Charity; those of Justice, Patience, Temperance, etc.

I do not remember having noticed that when one speaks of good works, one means these internal acts, and I do not believe that anyone has ever designated them by this expression. But whether I am mistaken in this or not, it is certain at least that these acts differ in no way from Repentance. Consequently all that I have said about Repentance applies by itself to these acts, and thus it is not at all necessary to dwell on them.

As for what concerns external actions, and generally all those that follow Conversion, one can consider them in two ways, either as simply resolved, or as executed. As resolved, they are absolutely necessary to obtain the remission of sins. The reason is that the resolution to do good works is an essential part of Repentance. It is not indeed repenting as one should, to be content with condemning the past, without forming the design to correct oneself in the future, and to live better than one has lived. Thus, just as much as Repentance is necessary to obtain the grace of Justification, just as much is the desire and the resolution to do good works.

As for what concerns execution, it is necessary in this sense, that it must absolutely follow our Justification, not only by right, the thing being just and reasonable; but also in fact, at least in this sense, that if one survives Repentance, and one has the time and the means to fulfill this Duty, one does not fail in it. For, as has been seen, the Repentance of a Dying person does not fail to be salutary, although it is not

followed by the good works that it must produce, provided that this comes only from the fact that one does not have the time to act otherwise. This being so, this omission will be involuntary, and God is too merciful to impute it to those who would be very glad if it could not be reproached to them.

But when after having believed oneself to repent one lives for some time, and having the means and the opportunity to do good works, one does none, it appears clearly that the Repentance that one has felt was a false and useless Repentance, which has obtained nothing from God, and has not prevented one from always remaining in the state of sin and damnation.

I do not deny therefore that good works are necessary in that sense. What I maintain is that these works are in no way the Causes of our Justification; that quite to the contrary, they are the consequences and the effects of it, according to this celebrated saying of St. Augustine: *Bona opera non præcedunt justificandum, sed sequuntur justificatum*. This is what I prove by three considerations.

The first, that if these good works justified us, one would be justified only after having produced them. Now this is what one cannot say, sacred History furnishing us with a very great number of examples of Sinners justified before having been able to do these works. I do not report them at present, having produced them in Chap. XX, where I have shown that we are justified immediately after the first act of our Faith.

I take my second proof from what Scripture tells us so often, that we are justified by Faith. If that is so, it is necessary that as soon as we come to believe, we are justified, and that our sins are forgiven us. Without that, one could say at most that Faith prepares us, or disposes us, for Justification; but not that it justifies us.

I know what people answer. Some say that this Faith which justifies us is the whole Doctrine of the Gospel; the Faith that one believes, and not the Faith by which one believes: others, that it is the observance of the Precepts of Jesus Christ, which includes the practice of good works. But I have already destroyed these two Answers, showing that the Faith which justifies us is something quite other than either the Doctrine of the Gospel, or the observance of the Precepts of Jesus Christ. Let one reread what I have said about it in Chap. XI and XII of this Book: one will see that I have put this Truth in its light.

My third proof is taken from what St. Paul tells us so often, that no one is justified by his works. This is what he repeats in various places of his Epistle to the Romans, and of his Epistle to the Galatians.

One answers, that St. Paul does not exclude every sort of good works, but only certain works, which he calls works of the Law; and that he means by this, either the works prescribed by the ceremonial Law, or the moral works done before Faith, and without the help of Grace.

But it has been a long time since our Theologians have shown the falsity of these two Answers. For as for the first, this Law, to the works of which St. Paul denies the power to justify us, is the one that gives knowledge of sin: No flesh, he says Rom. III. 20, will be justified before God by the works of the Law, for by the Law is given the knowledge of sin. He speaks of a Law that subjects all men to condemnation: We know, he says v. 19, that whatever the Law says, it says it to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be guilty before God. He speaks of a Law that says, Do these things, and you will live, Gal. III. 12. He speaks finally of a Law, from the curse of which Jesus Christ has freed us, Gal. III. 13. As it is only the moral Law, of which one can say all these things, it is evident that the works which, according to St. Paul, are incapable of justifying us, are not only those that were prescribed by the ceremonial Law, but also those that the moral Law has commanded us.

As for what concerns the other Answer, one need only read the first verses of Chap. IV of the Epistle to the Romans, to see that it is no more solid than the preceding one. St. Paul says first, that Abraham was justified by his Faith, not by his works, and proves it by these words of sacred History, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. As this was said of Abraham long after his Conversion, and consequently at a time when he acted only by the inspirations of Grace, it is clear that the works by which St. Paul denies that the Patriarch was justified are all sorts of works without exception, and not only those that one does only before Faith, and by the sole forces of Nature.

Secondly, St. Paul in this same place says that it is the Wicked whom God justifies. How could he say it, if he justified Sinners only long after they have renounced their sins, and apply themselves with all their strength to the practice of good works?

Finally in this same place he makes Justification consist, not in the approval that God gives to good works, but in the pardon of sins. David, he says, declares the blessedness of the man, to whom God imputes righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

All that shows the uselessness of these two Answers. One could make a third one much more plausible, by saying that when St. Paul maintains that no one is justified by his works, he is not speaking at all of Justification by grace, but only of Justification by rigor. But it is easy to reply, that if Justification by grace, and Justification by rigor, had this in common, that they were both done by good works, St. Paul would have been very careful not to deny as absolutely, and as often as he did, that it is our works that justify us. He would have admitted that it is works that produce this effect, and he would have limited himself to maintaining that they do not do it by their dignity, but solely because God wants to be content with them by an effect of his infinite mercy. That is what had to be said, and it is at the same time what St. Paul does not say. He absolutely denies that works justify us; and maintains on the other hand that if we are justified, it is by Faith that we are, and not by works.

Does it not appear clearly from this, that nothing is more true than what we maintain?

### **CHAPTER XXIX. Where Objections are Answered.**

VARIOUS things are opposed to what I have just said. First, one presses extremely what St. James says at the end of Chapter II of his Catholic Epistle, where he maintains that man is not only justified by his Faith, but also by his works. What is there, one says, more formal than these words? Was not Abraham our Father justified by works, when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? Do you not see then that man is justified by works, and not only by Faith? James II. 21. 24.

I have responded amply to this Objection in my Treatise on good works in general, and I have shown clearly enough there, it seems to me, that the Justification of which St. James speaks, is not the Justification of the Sinner, but that of the Just. I have shown the same thing in Chapters IX and X of the first Book of this Treatise, and I will say another word about it in the third Book. Thus I can dispense with dwelling on it at present.

One objects secondly, what the Savior of the World says, Matt. VI. 14. 15. If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you yours. But if you do not forgive men their offenses, your Father will not forgive you yours. By these words Jesus Christ requires the actual forgiveness of the outrages that have been done to us, as an absolutely necessary condition to obtain the remission of our faults. Thus, here is at least one good work that we must do, before we can be justified.

I answer, that this good work is an essential and inseparable part of Contrition. For indeed, it is impossible that a man who has offended God by preserving hatred and resentment against his Neighbor, repents of it sincerely, without stifling this resentment and without getting rid of this hatred. Thus, all that one can conclude from these words, is that Repentance, Contrition, is absolutely necessary to be able to claim the remission of sins; which we are careful not to deny.

One objects thirdly, that nothing is more similar to the Justification that God grants us during this life, than the Decree that he will pronounce on the last Day in our favor, there being no other difference between these two acts, except that one is secret and particular, and the other public and common to all the Children of God. As it is certain that the sovereign Judge will have regard for our actions when he pronounces our Absolution, which makes Scripture say that he will judge us according to our works; one concludes that he must look at them when he justifies us during this life, and when he forgives us our sins.

I answer, firstly, that it is not true that all without exception must be judged according to their works. Infants must be excepted, and those Adults who convert only in the last moments of their life. I add, secondly, that even those among the Faithful, who will be judged according to their works, will not be so in such a way that their works are the foundation of the Decree that the Son of God will pronounce



in their favor; but only in this sense, that the sovereign Judge will produce them to show the uprightness of his Judgment.

I know that this formidable Judge will make an exact inquiry into the actions of men, and particularly of the Faithful. But it will not at all be to learn thereby in what manner he should judge them. It will only be to convince all Mankind, that he is right to treat them as he does. Now this is what he would not show clearly enough, if he alleged only their Faith, which is so imperceptible, and so hidden in the depths of the heart. Something more sensible is needed, such as good works, especially external ones.

It is not the same with our Justification during this life. All that happens there, happens between God and us: the rest of the world is ignorant of it. As therefore God has no need of our good works to know the sincerity of our Conversion, since he sees it in itself, he grants us his peace as soon as his Grace has formed it in our hearts, and does not wait for it to be followed by the practice of good works.

One can say further, that the last Judgment resembles much more the Justification of the Just, than that of the Sinner. When God justifies a Sinner, he receives into his Grace a man who has always been his enemy, and who at this moment decides to implore his mercy. But when he justifies a Just, he recognizes as his Child one who has already been so for some time, and who has not waited until this moment to apply himself to the practice of good works. As he will only do this in his Judgment, and will condemn without pity those who will have deferred until this moment to repent; it is clear that it is very inappropriately that one goes to look in the last Judgment for the image of the Justification of the Sinner, and that one would find it much clearer in the Justification of the Just.

One objects fourthly, what St. Peter says on the subject of Cornelius the Centurion, Acts X. 34. In truth, I perceive that God has no regard for the appearance of persons, but that in every nation he who fears him, and devotes himself to justice, is agreeable to him. One says that a man must indeed be agreeable to God, when God grants him a grace as precious as Justification. Thus the Apostle saying that it is those who fear him, and who devote themselves to Justice, who are agreeable to him, he makes understood by that that it is those same ones that he justifies.

I answer that there are two sorts of persons, of whom one can say that they are agreeable to God. First, those who are already Just for some time, and who have made some progress in the way of Holiness. Secondly, those who having been Unjust until this moment, renounce their injustice, and become Just by a true Conversion. I add, that God justifies both, but differently. He recognizes the first as Just, declares them such, and treats them as such: this is what we call the Justification of the Just. He receives the second in grace, and forgives them all their sins: this is what we call the Justification of the Sinner.

That being supposed, I say that as Cornelius was already Just for some time, as I have proved in my Treatise on good works in general, all that one can conclude from what

the Apostle says in this place, is that when God poured out on Cornelius the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Spirit, he granted him thereby this Justification, which we call of the Just, which is very true. But it does not follow from that, either that he granted him then the remission of sins, which Cornelius had already received previously; nor that this grace is obtained by good works.

Finally, one objects to us these words of St. John in Chapter I of his Catholic Epistle: If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have communion with one another, and the blood of his Son Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. One says that it appears from this that God imputes to us the merit of Jesus Christ, and consequently that he forgives us our faults, only in consequence of our good works, since this Apostle makes us hope that the blood of Jesus Christ will purify us from our sins, only in the case that we walk in the light, that is to say in the case that we do good actions.

I could answer that the internal acts, which make the Conversion of the Sinner, are the first steps that this Sinner makes in the way of Heaven, and that thus it is true to say that he who makes them actually walks in the light; and if I stopped at this answer, I do not believe that it would be easy to convince it of falsity.

But indeed, I do not think that this is the meaning of St. John. I am much mistaken if the sins, of which this Apostle says in this place that the blood of the Lord Jesus purifies us, are not these sins of weakness and infirmity, into which the most just fall only too often. His meaning is, that if we apply ourselves strongly and sincerely to the study of piety, God will forgive us the involuntary faults into which we will fall and will wash them in the blood of his Son. He has the same thought as Malachi, when he introduces God who says: They will be mine, says the Eternal of Armies, when I will set apart my most precious jewels; and I will forgive them, as a Father forgives his Child who serves him. Mal. III. 17.

He does not say, I will forgive them as a Father forgives a rebellious child, who after a thousand excesses implores his grace; but as a father forgives a Child who applies himself actually to serve him, and who does his will, but does it only imperfectly. This is the meaning that Mr. Mestrezat gives to this place of St. John, and it is the one that will be given to it by all those who will read it with an attentive mind, and void of all prejudice.

### **CHAPTER XXX. When it is that God justifies us.**

THERE, if I am not mistaken, is the manner in which God justifies Sinners; for it is of them alone that it is a question, and we are not yet speaking of the Justification of the Just. We must now see when it is that he justifies them. This Question is quite important, as will be seen later. However, there is none among those that are agitated on this subject, on which one is more divided than on this one.

There are Theologians who maintain that our sins are forgiven us from eternity, and that indeed God receives us in his grace when he chooses us by the Decree of his Predestination. Others want him to have done it, when he informed the first of men that the Seed of the Woman was one day to crush the head of the Serpent. Still

others, when Jesus Christ died on the Cross, and when the eternal Father accepted the Satisfaction that this great Savior presented to him for our sins.

On the other hand, there are those who maintain that God waits to forgive us our sins, not only until we have repented of them, and have believed in his holy Son; but also until we have justified the sincerity of our Faith and of our Repentance by a long series of good works. There are even those who want God to wait to do it on the last Day, on which he will pronounce the Decree of our Absolution in the presence of all men and all Angels.

Before examining each of these Opinions in particular, it must be noted that one can consider Justification in nine different ways. I. As resolved by God, either in general, or with respect to each Individual. II. As revealed, not in truth with respect to each Individual; but in general, and with respect to a certain order of persons. III. As acquired by Jesus Christ, by the bloody Sacrifice of his death. IV. As offered - Jesus Christ died on the Cross, and when the eternal Father accepted the Satisfaction that this great Savior presented to him for our sins.

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As therefore God forgives us our sins in time, it is necessary that he resolved to do so from all eternity; and it is to this that I would refer what St. Peter says at the beginning of his I. Epistle, that the Faithful have been elected according to the Providence of God in sanctification of spirit, to obedience, and to the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. One can say further that this is sufficiently expressed by all the passages that teach us that God has resolved to save us, to adopt us, to regenerate us, to glorify us. For as it is impossible that God does this without forgiving us our sins, it is not possible that he takes the resolution to do us all these goods, without resolving to grant us this particular grace, to which all the others are attached.

II. It is certain that as the Covenant of Grace has nothing more essential than the promise of the remission of sins, God has made it hoped for by men whenever he

has made them some overture of the design that he had to withdraw them from this abyss of misery, where sin has plunged us all. Thus there is no doubt that he made hope for this grace to our first Parents, when he told them that the Seed of the Woman would one day crush the head of the Serpent.

He gave again the same assurance to Abraham when he told him that he would be his God, and that of his Posterity, after him; and when he assured him that all the Nations of the Earth would be blessed in his seed. All the Books of Moses, all those of the other Prophets, renew this promise in a hundred different ways; and one can say in a word, that it is, either expressed, or supposed, almost everywhere.

III. It is certain that this grace has been acquired for us by Jesus Christ, when this great Savior suffered the death of the Cross. This is what makes St. Paul say that he died for our offenses, and rose again for our justification; that we have in him redemption by his blood, namely the remission of sins according to the riches of his grace; that we are justified gratuitously by the redemption that is in Jesus Christ. On this foundation, St. John the Baptist calls him the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world; and he himself instituting his Eucharist, and distributing to his Apostles one of the Symbols of this Sacrament, says to them: This cup is the new Testament in my blood, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.

IV. It is certain that God offers us the remission of sins, when he has the Gospel preached to us. This is what St. Paul assures in so many words in that admirable Discourse that he made to the Jews of Antioch of Pisidia, and that St. Luke reports in Chapter XIII of the Book of Acts. Let it be known to you that in him (Jesus Christ) is offered to you the remission of sins, and that from all that of which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses, whoever believes is justified by him. This Apostle says something still more to the Corinthians. He is not content to say that God offers us this grace; he says that he presses us, that he solicits us to accept it. God was in Christ reconciling the World to himself, and not imputing their sins to them, and he has put in us the Ministry of Reconciliation. We are therefore Ambassadors for Christ; even as if God exhorted by us, we beg you for Christ that you be reconciled with God. II Cor. V.

V. It is certain that we accept by Faith the offer that God makes us of the remission of our sins. This is what appears from the first of the passages that I have just reported. After St. Paul has said that the remission of sins is offered to us in Jesus Christ, he adds, that whoever believes is justified by him; which shows that Faith responds to the offer that God makes us, and that thus it is the acceptance of it. The same thing appears from what the Apostle St. John says, that God has given the right to be called his Children to all those who have received Jesus Christ: namely, he adds, to those who believe in his name. Does it not appear clearly from this, that to receive Jesus Christ, and to believe in Jesus Christ, is the same thing? Finally one cannot deny, neither that to eat Jesus Christ is to receive him, nor that to eat him is to believe in him. It is therefore without difficulty by Faith that we receive him, and

that we accept the offer that the eternal Father makes us of his Person, and of his Merit.

VI. It is certain that God having justified the Believer and having forgiven him his sins, he confirms and ratifies what he has done, by treating this Believer as justified: which entails various things; that he does not punish him for any of the sins that he has forgiven him, that he takes him under his protection; that he watches over him as over his dear Child, that he showers him with all his graces, and does not cease to act in his favor, until he has led him into Heaven. Consequently, this act lasts during all the time that passes from the Justification of the Believer until his death.

VII. I say approximately the same thing of the act that follows this one. The Justification of the Believer is notified to him by all the proofs that he has of it. And as these proofs are taken from the effects that Grace operates in his heart, and from the actions that it gives him the strength to do, it is certain that the absolution of God is notified to him whenever any of these effects comes to be produced. It is by this that one must explain what St. Paul says, that the Spirit of Adoption makes us cry, Abba Father; and that this same Spirit bears witness to our spirit that we are Children of God.

VIII. It is certain finally that the remission of our sins will be published on the Day of Judgment, before men and before Angels. And it is to this that St. Peter looks when he says to the Jews: Amend yourselves, and convert yourselves, so that your sins may be erased when the times of refreshment will have come from the presence of the Lord, and when he will have sent Jesus Christ, who previously has been announced to you. Acts III. 19. 20. And St. Paul to Timothy: The Lord have mercy on the house of Onesiphorus, and grant him to find mercy toward the Lord on that Day. II Tim. I. 17. 18.

All that is certain and incontestable. Thus the Question comes down to knowing, When is it that God actually forgives us our sins; When is it that he executes what he has resolved thereon by his eternal Decree, and what he has promised by such a great number of Oracles; When is it that he discharges us from the obligation to suffer eternal death, which we contract, by sinning. This is what must be researched. But beforehand we must examine the five Opinions that one has thereon, and that I have indicated at the beginning of this Chapter. This is what will be done in the following.

#### **CHAPTER XXXI. That God forgives us our sins when we actually believe.**

OF the five Opinions that I have reported on the time of our Justification, the first three put it too early, the others too late. The Defenders of the first make it eternal; those of the second want it to be as ancient as the world; and those of the third place it at the time when Jesus Christ died.

The first confuse the Decree, with its execution. It is quite true that when God elected us, he resolved to forgive us one day our sins. But it is not to say that he forgave them to us then, as it is not true that he created us, that he called us

efficaciously, that he regenerated us, that he glorified us, when he resolved to grant us all these advantages, most of which are included in the Decree of Election, as well as that of the remission of our sins.

Besides, Scripture is so far from confusing Election with Justification, that not only does it separate them, but also puts Vocation between the two. Witness what St. Paul says: Those whom God foreknew, he also predestined... and those whom he predestined, he also called; and those whom he called, he also justified. Rom. VIII.

The second of these Opinions makes a similar equivocation. It confuses, not indeed the Decree, but in any case, the promise with its execution. It is true that when God promised our first Parents that the Seed of the Woman would one day crush the head of the Serpent, he thereby obliged himself to forgive us our sins; but it does not at all follow from this that from then on he forgave them to us actually, as it is not true that from then on he crushed the Demon under our feet, although he obliged himself to do so.

Besides, if it were necessary to say that we were justified from then on, because God promised then to justify us, why would one not say that this was redone every time that God renewed this promise? Why, for example, can one not say of the assurance that he gave to Abraham, that all the Nations of the Earth would be blessed in his seed, what one says of the promise that was made to Adam; one of these Declarations being neither more explicit, nor more solemn than the other?

As for what concerns the third of these Opinions, there is a great difference between accepting the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ in favor of those who would believe one day, and actually applying this Satisfaction to those who believe. God did the first when Jesus Christ died, I admit; but he did not do the second. He received the Satisfaction that his Son presented to him; but he received it with this express Reserve, to apply it only to those who would accept it by Faith. Thus, until it is actually accepted, it is not applied, and consequently one is not justified.

I could not therefore admit any of these Opinions. For, besides the particular reasons that I have just indicated on each, I have common ones, which have the same effect with regard to all.

I. The principal one is, that Scripture tells us in various places, that we are justified by Faith. That alone suffices to show that we were justified, neither from eternity, nor when God promised Adam that the Posterity of the Woman would one day crush the head of the Serpent, nor when Jesus Christ died; but only when we come to believe. For how could Faith justify us before existing, and before we ourselves existed?

II. Besides, Scripture promises the remission of sins only to those who will truly and sincerely repent of them. It even wants us to repent with the design of obtaining this grace. Witness what St. Peter says Acts III. 19. Amend yourselves, and convert

yourselves, so that your sins may be erased. How could it decide more formally, that the production of Repentance, that its acts even, precede our Justification?

III. I was saying in one of the preceding Chapters, that there is something absurd, in imagining that a Believer fallen into some sin, is justified from it before he rises from it by Repentance. But all that does not approach the consequences of the three Opinions that I am examining at present. If they are valid, one is justified before having done any act of Faith, and at the time when one indulges in the most enormous excesses. If one admits them, Manasseh was justified even when he was delighting in Magic, when he was immolating his Children to the false god Moloch, when he was making the streets of Jerusalem run with innocent blood. St. Paul was justified at the very time when he was persecuting the Church with such rage. He was in a state of grace, he was the Child of God, when he was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an oppressor, as he calls himself. What can one imagine more incredible?

IV. What I was saying, that one is not accustomed to ask for what one has received, still has the same force against this. Each Sinner must ask God for the remission of his sins. Does it not appear clearly from this that it has been granted, neither from all eternity, nor immediately after the sin of the first Man, nor when Jesus Christ died on the Cross?

V. The very manner in which Sinners ask for it, shows clearly that they do not claim to have received it. Here, for example, is what David says Ps. LI. 9. Purge me with Hyssop, and I will be clean. Wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. To speak in this way, is it not to make sufficiently understood that he was not yet clean of his sin; but that he hoped to become so by the pardon that he asked God for? See also Isaiah 1. 15. 16. 17. 18.

VI. But what seems pressing to me, is that Scripture always speaks of the remission of sins, at least with respect to Sinners whom Grace has not yet regenerated, it speaks of it, I say, as of a thing to come. I leave the passages of the Old Testament, which directly combat only the first two Opinions. I stop at those of the New. Jesus Christ says, Matt. VI. 14. If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you yours. Matt. XII. 31. Every sin, and every blasphemy, will be forgiven to men. John XX. 23. To whomever you will forgive sins, they will be forgiven.

One must not imagine that the Defenders of the third Opinion can elude these passages, by saying that when Jesus Christ spoke, he had not yet expiated our sins by the shedding of his blood. For at least what is reported in the third was pronounced after the death and resurrection of this great Savior, and the other two speak of what was to happen until the consummation of the World.

But besides all that, do we not see that long after the Ascension of Jesus Christ, the Apostles have always held the same language, and have spoken of the remission of sins as of a thing to come? What is there, for example, more formal, than what St. Peter says to Simon the Magician, Acts VIII. 22? Repent of this wickedness of yours,

and pray God, so that, if it is possible, the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. And St. James V. 15. 16. The prayer of Faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up, and if he has committed sins, they will be forgiven him. Confess your faults to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed from them.

It will perhaps be said, that Scripture sometimes speaks of the simple manifestation of things, in terms that seem to say that they are then truly done, and that thus one can understand all these passages, of the persuasion and the feeling that the Holy Spirit gives us of our reconciliation with God.

But I cannot pay myself with this evasion. It could have a place, if on the one hand there were only one or two places in the sacred Writings, where the remission of sins was promised to Faith and to Repentance; and on the other hand there were others, which expressly and formally stated that this grace is granted to us before we repent, and before we believe. But Scripture saying this nowhere, and saying the rest in an infinity of different places, one cannot deny that it is twisting this holy Book, and putting it to the rack, to maintain that it has explained itself in so many places in a manner so unnatural.

Besides, there are a great number of these passages, where it is visible that this interpretation cannot be applied. Can one, for example, make the application of it to what St. Peter says to Simon the Magician? Should this Impious man only ask God for the feeling of the remission of his fault? should he not ask for the remission itself? Can one apply it to what David says, Wash me, and I will be clean? Can one say that the meaning of these words is, Assure me of the remission of my sins, and I will not doubt it at all?

Would one dare to say, that when we say to God, in reciting the Lord's Prayer, Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who have offended us, the meaning is, Assure us that you have forgiven us, as we assure those who offend us? And when Jesus Christ having ordered us to make this request, adds, If you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you yours. But if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive you yours; would one dare to maintain that the meaning is, that if we do not assure our Neighbors of the sincerity of our reconciliation, God will not assure us of his? Has one ever given this meaning to these two places? and can one, without doing extreme violence to them?

Let one go through the other passages, where it is spoken of the remission of sins: one will see that it is necessary to understand them, not of the feeling of this grace, but of this grace itself.

Having examined in this way the Opinions of those who advance too much the Justification of the Sinner, it would now be necessary to consider the thought of those who delay it more than is necessary; as do firstly, those who want God to wait to grant us this grace until we have exercised ourselves for some time in the practice of piety; and secondly, those who want him to wait to justify us until the last Day.



But I have shown well enough the falsity of the first of these Opinions, in Chapters XX and XXI of this Book; and as for the second, this alone, that Justification precedes the actual practice of good works, shows clearly that it precedes all the more so the day of the last Judgment. And indeed there are a hundred places in the holy Books, which say formally that we are justified on Earth, and during life. For example, what Jesus Christ says in the Gospel, that the Publican returned justified to his house; what he says to the Sinner woman, Your faith has saved you, your sins are forgiven you; finally what St. Paul says to the Romans, Being justified by Faith, we have peace toward God: and to the Corinthians, Such things you were; but you have been washed from them, you have been justified from them. Thus, it is not necessary to dwell longer on this subject. All the more so because I do not see that anything whatsoever is produced that appears to have even a little force, in favor of the opposing Opinions.

#### **CHAPTER XXXII. How one can know if one has been justified.**

THERE remains only one Question for me to treat on the subject of the Justification of the Sinner. One asks, If those who have received this grace can have some certainty of it; and, supposing that they have it, on what it is founded. This Question is very important, and would undoubtedly merit that one stop a little to clarify it. But as I have already done so in my Treatise on Conscience, I will content myself with touching on it briefly, and making on this subject a small number of reflections, which will suffice in relation to the occasion I have to speak of it.

I say then first, that it is not impossible for the Believer to be sure of his Justification. This is what several things show clearly, especially the exhortation that St. Paul makes to the Corinthians to examine themselves, to know if they are in the Faith, and if Jesus Christ is in them; which would be vain and illusory, if with whatever care one examined oneself it would be impossible to know oneself.

But what will one do to succeed in this? I suppose that our Justification being an immanent act of God, it is impossible for us to know it in itself. I suppose further that one knows it, neither by immediate Inspirations, nor by extraordinary Revelations; and that thus there is only one way to be assured of it, which is to take note of what accompanies it in those who come to obtain it.

Now there are two orders of this sort of things that accompany our Justification. Some accompany it in such a way that, in truth, Justification is never without them; but also they can be found without Justification. The others on the contrary are so inseparable from it, that as one is never justified without them, also with them one never fails to be justified.

I put in the first rank the feeling of sin, and of the misfortunes to which it subjects those who commit it; the persuasion that one has that Jesus Christ alone can free one from it; the desire to be delivered from it by him, and consequently to have him for Savior and for Redeemer. I put in the second justifying Faith, true Repentance, true Charity. For as for the first of these movements, it is true that they always

precede Justification; but it is also true that they are not always followed infallibly by it. No one is justified without having felt them; but many feel them without being justified, witness those who have only a temporary Faith. Thus one cannot conclude from the fact that one has them, that one is justified, as one can surely and infallibly gather from the fact that one has the second. The first therefore do not suffice.

However, they are not useless. If one cannot conclude from their presence that one is justified; one can conclude from their absence, that one is not. For indeed it is impossible to be so, without being penetrated by the feeling of one's crimes and misery; without being persuaded that one cannot obtain deliverance from it except through Jesus Christ, without wishing to have him for Savior and for Redeemer. Provided that one makes only this use of them, I am careful not to reject them. What I cannot bear, is that one counts on these Characteristics in such a way, that one positively assures oneself that one is justified, for this sole reason that one finds them in oneself.

There are on the other hand certain things, from which in truth one can conclude very certainly that one is justified, but the absence of which does not prove the contrary. Such are all the Characteristics of an eminent Piety, and of an extraordinarily advanced Sanctification. One must stop all the less at this sort of marks, as they are useful only to those who have the least need of them. For indeed, who are those for whom it is most important to give the means to know themselves well? It is not the Saints of the first order, whose Regeneration is so advanced, and has characteristics so sensible and so marked, that ordinarily it is almost impossible for them to have the least doubt on this subject. It is weak and imperfect Christians, it is spiritual Children, who find in themselves so many failings, that they fear to deceive themselves in assuring themselves that they have taken the first steps in the way of Heaven. One must therefore not amuse oneself with giving the marks of an advanced Sanctification. One must stop solely at those which make known all true Sanctification, whether advanced or backward; and one has very little obligation to those who use it in another manner, and who speak only of loving without limits; of loving infinitely; of advancing the glory of God with all one's power during the whole course of life, and other similar things, which one cannot say of the greatest Saints without exaggeration and hyperbole. They can well say that a Child would be wrong to conclude that he is not a man, because he is not in a state to run as fast, and to carry such great burdens, as a man who is mature and vigorous. This Child would be wrong to reason in this way, it must be admitted. But he who would have given him occasion to make this bad reasoning, by defining man in general, An animal that runs extremely fast, and that carries great burdens, would be even more wrong than him.

Thus one must do one of two things; either declare that one gives only the Characteristics of an advanced Sanctification, and consequently that one gives what no one was asking for; or give the Characteristics, not of an advanced Sanctification, but of a sincere, true Sanctification, inseparable from Justification.

I conclude that the only marks to which one should stop, are those which have these two conditions. The first, that they are never found except in those who are truly justified. The second, that they never fail in any of those who are so. It is good further to add a third, which I believe no less necessary than the preceding ones: it is that these marks be easy to know and to observe wherever they are, which entails two things. One, that one characterizes them in such a clear manner, that no one can confuse them with what resembles them, and which does not produce the same effect. The other, that not only can one form a just and precise idea of them; but also, that one can feel them in oneself, or notice them in others, when they are found there effectively. Unless this is so, everyone sees well enough that they will be useless, especially for the common Believers, who ordinarily lack light, and who are those who need more help to know their present state.

If one examines on these conditions the marks of the state of Grace that some give, one will see that they are not at all suitable to make it known with certainty. For example, there are Authors who make much of the sensible sweetnesses that Grace pours into hearts, of the internal consolations, and of the spiritual joys, which are the consequences and the effects of the union of the Soul with God. But I do not believe that one should stop at them because indeed this mark has none of the conditions that it should have to give certainty.

It is certain first, that there is a very great number of true Believers, who feel nothing of the sort in themselves, and who quite to the contrary pass their life in perpetual anxieties and fears; whether by an effect of their temperament, or by prejudice, or otherwise. It is not very long since I had the occasion to assist a Young man, a Student in Theology, and of an exemplary life. He was troubled by a chest ailment, which carried him off a few days later. He made known to me his apprehensions; and when I wanted to know the reason and the foundation of them, he told me that he did not feel in himself these interior sweetnesses, of which I have spoken, and that he never heard in the depths of his heart this consoling voice of the Holy Spirit, which says internally to our Soul that we are the Children of God. I omitted nothing to disabuse him and to make him understand the wrong that he had to stop at such an uncertain mark. I proposed to him those that I will indicate later. I made him see that they were not of my invention, and that there is none that Scripture itself does not propose to us. I begged him to apply them to himself, and having obtained this, I convinced him by all that he answered to the questions that I put to him, that he had all possible reasons to assure himself that he was of the number of the Children of God. In a word, I did not leave him until he appeared to me absolutely delivered from his anxieties. A few days later, he died very Christianly.

Secondly, these interior sweetnesses are such, that many who are not justified boast of tasting them. There is no Sect where one does not find an infinity of Persons who glory in them. It will perhaps be said, that there is a great difference between the effects of Grace, and those of illusion and prejudice. I want it, and I am careful not to contest it. But is one in a state to mark exactly, and in a very intelligible manner,

what distinguishes these two sorts of feelings? Is one in a state to characterize them in such a way, that each one can discern them without fearing to deceive oneself? If that is so, why does one not instruct the Public, who would be so glad to learn it? for I do not remember having noticed anything of the sort in the Writings of any of those who have spoken of it. On the contrary, they almost all say, that these are things that one cannot express. And if one cannot, does it not appear clearly from this that this method is of no use?

Others make extremely valuable The esteem, the admiration, and the love, that one has for the Truths of Salvation, considering them as a Treasure of an infinite price, and preferring them to all that is great and eminent in the World. But can one deny that there is such an Errant, such a Jew for example, such a Mohammedan, such a Superstitious person, who believes to feel in himself, and who shows in his actions, more love and attachment for his Errors, than such a Believer of the lowest order shows for the Truths of Salvation? Does one not see every day, on the one hand obstinate Jews, who have themselves burned for their fantasies; and on the other weak and imperfect Christians, who succumb under much lighter temptations? Does one not see Superstitious people a thousand times more eager to promote their chimeras, than many Believers are for the Propagation of the Truth?

But let us leave aside the Errants. Let us stop at the Orthodox. Does one not notice among these latter, two different orders of persons? Some, who have only a temporary Faith; the others, who have a living and true Faith, but weak, languishing, and imperfect. Does one not see among the first, some of those who show much love for the Truth, who study it with application, who support its interests with much warmth, and who not only are eager to make it known to others, but also suffer various things quite unpleasant so as not to abandon its profession? Do we not see that the Son of God speaking of these people, says that they receive the Word with joy? and St. Paul, that they have been illuminated, have been made participants of the Holy Spirit, have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the age to come.

On the other hand does one not very often see, especially among the Simple and the Ignorant, weak and imperfect Christians who appear in some way inferior to many of those who, as I have just said, have only a temporary Faith? who have, both less eagerness to instruct themselves in the Truth, and less firmness to resist the violence of Persecutors?

Let us even imagine that these latter have in this respect some advantage over the former. Is this advantage so sensible, and so easy to mark, that the latter can count on it, and that the former cannot? Would one dare to undertake to indicate what there is more in some than in others, and say; The esteem and the love that those who have only a temporary Faith, have for the Truth, can go up to such a point; but not further: The coldness and indifference of true Believers can descend to this other point; but not lower: And there is such a distance from the highest degree of

perfection, to which temporary Faith can elevate itself to the lowest of those where justifying Faith can descend? I have difficulty believing that the boldest would undertake it. However, if one does not do it, one does nothing. Unless one does it, one will not be able to use this Characteristic.

The only ones that can be of some use, are those that I am going to indicate, and which are inseparable, not from an advanced Sanctification, but from a true Sanctification, whether advanced or backward.

### **CHAPTER XXXIII. Where one indicates the most certain marks, by which one can know if one is justified.**

I KNOW no more infallible marks of true Justification, than those that one finds in the three Virtues, which are the most essential to the Child of God, and the most closely linked with the grace of Justification; I mean, Repentance, Faith, and Charity. Indeed, it is equally impossible to find a Justified person who lacks these three Virtues; and to find a man who has these three Virtues, and who is not justified. Thus these two consequences are equally necessary: This man has Repentance, Faith, and Charity; Therefore his sins have been forgiven him: This man lacks these three virtues, Therefore his sins have not been forgiven him.

It is moreover very easy, on the one hand to form a clear and distinct idea of each of these Virtues, and of each of the Characteristics that make them known; and on the other, to see if these Characteristics are found in, what one feels. I have marked and explained them, in other Works. Here I will content myself with indicating them in a few words.

I say then first, that what makes known true Repentance, is I. the horror that one has for crime, and which is such, that one detests it above all. II. The principle of this horror, which is, not the sole apprehension of Hell; but the love that one has for the God whom this sin outrages. III. The extent of the Amendment which follows it, and which is such, that it does not let any habitual sin reign in the heart. IV. The care that one takes to repair the harm that one has done, when one can, and when one has the means.

The principal Characteristics of true Faith, are I. its extent, which consists in that it rejects none of the Truths, which are clearly contained in the Word of God. II. That it is not content to accept the gift that God makes us of his Son; but submits also to the conditions under which he is offered to us, and of which the principal is the renunciation of our vices. III. That it is operating through Charity, and inseparable from good works.

The principal Characteristics of the Love of God, which makes one of the branches of Charity, is, on the one hand, that this Love efficaciously brings us to do his will, according to what Jesus Christ says in the Gospel; If anyone loves me, he will keep my commandments; and on the other, that this Love prefers him to all, and that there is nothing that it is not ready to sacrifice to him.

Those of the Love of Neighbor are I. that it attaches itself, not to some of our Neighbors, but to all, without excepting even those who hate us. II. That one loves them not only in word, but in deed, and in truth. III. That one loves them as oneself, procuring for them and wishing them the same goods that we seek for ourselves.

Everyone sees how easy these Characteristics are to notice wherever they are found. They are moreover certain and infallible Characteristics; and what is considerable, Characteristics which are not of our invention; but which Holy Scripture indicates to us, telling us two things on their subject, and telling them in the clearest and most precise manner in the world: one, that one is very certainly justified, if one has them: the other, that it is sure that one is not, if one lacks them. How many times has it not said that God shows grace to all those who repent of their sins, who believe in his Son, who love him himself, and who love their Neighbors? How many times has it not declared that there is no grace to expect, either for the Impenitent and the Obstinate, or for the Incredulous, or for the Lukewarm, or for those who have hatred for their Neighbors? In a word, one cannot maintain that these marks of our Justification are deceptive and uncertain marks, without formally contradicting Holy Scripture.

Would one dare to say the same thing about the other marks that are proposed to us? Can one find them in Scripture as easily as one finds those that I have just indicated? Are they even as sensible, and as easy to notice wherever they are found, as Repentance, Faith, and Charity?

But here is a question that I would like to put to those who propose to us marks distinct from those that we indicate. Do they believe that one can notice theirs in those who have neither Repentance, nor Faith, nor Charity? Or do they claim that one never finds them except joined to these three Virtues? If it is the first, do they believe that one should count more on the presence of their Characteristics, than on the absence of those that I have proposed? Do they believe, for example, that a man who will always be ready to offend God by a known and deliberate sin, if he can avoid it only by renouncing a temporal interest that is dear to his heart; a man still engaged in one or in several habitual sins; do they believe, I say, that such a man should not cease to assure himself that he is justified, because he feels some love for the Truths of Salvation, and because he believes to taste sensible sweetnesses in meditating on them? If that is so, they are engaged in a dangerous error, and which goes to nothing less than a total overthrow of the Morality of Jesus Christ, as I have shown, both in the second Volume of my Essays, and in the first Treatise of my abridged Morality.

But if they want only that the principal reasons that one has to assure oneself of the remission of one's faults, are those that one takes from the certainty that one has of the sincerity of one's Repentance, of that of one's Faith, and of one's Charity; but that this does not prevent one from having some regard for the rest, especially for the love that one has for the Truth: if, I say, this is their thought, I am careful not to

reject it. I will even add that this love for the Truth can be such, that it will furnish us with an extremely strong proof of our Justification. It is if it is such, that one is not content to support the interests of celestial Doctrine against those who combat it by their Sophisms, or who oppress it by their Power; but that besides that, one is exact in practicing the duties that it prescribes to us. This is without difficulty a certain Characteristic of our Justification. But it is not different from those that I have indicated, there being no one who does not see that it is a necessary consequence of Repentance, of Faith, and of Charity, such as I have described them.

In a word, I maintain that one must receive my Characteristics, unless one finds better ones, and which being as easy to know, are easier to notice. As I do not believe that this can be, I hope that one will not find it amiss that I stick to those that I have proposed.

I do not doubt that three things will be objected to me. It will be said first, that it is impossible to perceive the Characteristics that I have given to Repentance, to Faith, and to Charity, until some time after the formation of these three Virtues; and that thus there will pass a time, during which the method that I give will be useless. It will be said secondly, that there are many people who imagine themselves to have true Repentance, true Faith, true Charity, and to notice in them even all the Characteristics that I have given to these three Virtues, and who nevertheless deceive themselves; from which one will conclude, that these marks are no surer than the others. Finally it will be said, that the marks that I give to Repentance, to Faith, and to Charity, are never found in those who are beginning, but only in those who are the most advanced.

I answer to the first of these Objections, that I know no means, which can give a complete certainty of the sincerity of Conversion, either in the moment that it happens, or even in the first days that follow it. I am persuaded that it is necessary to wait some time to be able to judge of it without fear of deceiving oneself. Until then one can presume that the Conversion is sincere, but one cannot be entirely assured of it.

I answer to the second, that if one asks for marks so sensible, that with whatever negligence one uses them, one cannot be deceived by them, I admit that I know none such. I maintain only two things. One, that the marks that I have indicated are such, that a quite mediocre precaution suffices to know oneself by their means, without running any risk of deceiving oneself. The other, that of all the marks that one gives, there are none that do not deceive, both more easily, and more often, than those that I have indicated.

I answer to the third, that I do not agree at all with what it poses. I maintain on the contrary, that whoever lacks, either Repentance, or Faith, or Charity, is not justified; and that moreover all Repentance, all Faith, all Charity, which does not have the Characteristics that I have given to these three Virtues, is a false Repentance, a dead Faith, a feigned and useless Charity. This is what I believe I have proved, on the

subject of Repentance, in my abridged Morality; on the subject of Faith, in the Treatise that I have published on this Virtue; and on the subject of Charity in the second Volume of my Essays.

**CHAPTER XXXIV. That the Doctrine of Justification, as just proposed, has all the Characteristics observed in the one that St. Paul describes.**

THERE, if I am not mistaken, is the true Doctrine of Justification, as the sacred Authors have proposed it to us. What confirms me in this thought is that I notice in Justification conceived in this way all the Characteristics that can be observed in the one that St. Paul proposes. There are four principal ones.

I. The first, that Justification, as St. Paul conceives it, tends principally to humble man, and to elevate God, to remove from the first all subject, even all pretext, to glorify and applaud himself; and quite to the contrary, to give to God all the glory of our Salvation. This appears from the whole course of St. Paul's reasoning, and especially from the following passages. Rom. III. 19. We know that whatever the Law says, it says it to those who are under the Law, so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may be guilty before God. v. 26. Where then is boasting? It is excluded. By what Law? Is it by that of works? No, but by the Law of Faith. Rom. IV. 2. If Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. Eph. I. 5.6. God has predestined us to adopt us to himself through Jesus Christ according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, by which he has made us acceptable in his Beloved.

II. The second Characteristic is, that the Doctrine of Justification, as St. Paul proposes it, is very suitable to console Consciences, and to give the greatest Sinners a holy confidence in the mercy of God. This appears from the following passages. Rom. V. 1. Being therefore justified by Faith, we have peace with God. v.8. God commends his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, shall we be saved from wrath through him. Rom. VIII. 30. 31. 32. 33. What shall we say then to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore who is risen. I Tim. I. 15. 16. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief. However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all patience, for an example to those who would come to believe in him for eternal life.

III. Thirdly, the Doctrine of Justification, as St. Paul proposes it, is not only suitable to console Consciences: It is also such that it does not give place to Security. This is what St. Paul proves at great length, and to which he devotes the whole of Chap. VI and the whole of VII of his Epistle to the Romans, and the end of Chap. II of his Epistle to the Galatians.



IV. But, although St. Paul's Doctrine is fundamentally directly opposed to Libertinism, it is nevertheless true that it was easy to imagine the contrary. This must be so, since not only was this one of the most ordinary Objections that the false Doctors made to St. Paul; but there is none that he takes so much care to destroy and refute: which he would have been very careful not to do, if this Objection had not had some plausibility and some color.

These are the principal Characteristics of the true Doctrine of Justification. Can one now refrain from noticing them in ours, as I have just proposed it?

Who does not see I. that it is very suitable to humble man, and to elevate God? It comes down to proving that none of all men, without excepting the most holy, could subsist before the Tribunal of God by his works; that for this it is necessary to have recourse to the infinite mercy of God, and to the merit of his holy Son, without there being anything on our part that should be associated with these two great Causes of our Salvation. And what can one imagine more suitable to annihilate man, and to glorify God?

Who does not see II. how this Doctrine is suitable to console Consciences, and to raise the hope of the greatest Sinners? According to our Principles, God offers his grace and his peace to the most execrable of all Sinners, and requires of them only Faith and Repentance. What more can one wish? Would one want indeed that he require nothing, and that he grant his grace even to those who would remain obstinate in Incredulity and Impenitence? But would it not be necessary to have lost all shame, to have such pretensions? Who does not know that one must overturn the whole Gospel, or recognize that Faith and Repentance are of an absolute and indispensable necessity?

Who does not see III. that nothing is less suitable than this Doctrine to authorize License? I have shown that to be justified, it is necessary to have Faith and Repentance. But what Faith? A living Faith operating through Charity; a Faith followed by the practice of good works, such that if what one regards as Faith does not produce them, it is only a shadow and a phantom of Faith, which serves absolutely for nothing to effect Salvation. What Repentance again? A Repentance followed by Amendment; a Repentance which brings us so effectively to detest sin, that one renounces it, that one abandons it, and that one lives quite differently than one had lived. Without such Faith, and such Repentance, no Justification, no Grace. What could be more suitable to prevent relaxation?

Who does not see finally that this Doctrine, although opposed fundamentally to Security and to License, nevertheless is such that, considering it only at first sight, and in a superficial manner, it seems to open the door to Libertinism? It makes the greatest Sinners hope for salvation, and teaches us that one is justified before God, not by works, but by Faith alone. And is it not true that the first thought that this gives rise to, is that works are therefore useless, and that one can abandon oneself without remorse to the greatest excesses? This consequence is very false, as we

have just seen. But as false as it is, it nonetheless has something that dazzles those who do not examine matters deeply.

All this shows that our Doctrine on this Article is fundamentally the same as that of St. Paul, and that thus it can only be true.

### **TREATISE ON JUSTIFICATION. BOOK THREE. ON THE JUSTIFICATION OF THE JUST.**

#### **CHAPTER I. On the Justification of the fallen Just. Whether it renews for him the remission of sins that had been forgiven him when God received him in his Grace.**

WHAT I have said so far concerned only the Justification of the Sinner. I must now say a word about that of the Just. But first it must be noted that there are two sorts of Just people. Some are Just people fallen into some sin. The others are Just people who persevere in Justice, and who continue always to walk in the way of Heaven. One must speak distinctly of both.

There are two sorts of sins, into which the most just can fall. Some are light and involuntary faults, which escape them in some way despite themselves, and which moreover do not prevent them from always remaining in the state of Grace, and always being the objects of God's love. Such are involuntary distractions, which come to them, either in praying to God, or in reading or listening to his holy Word. Such are certain indeliberate movements, which the flesh raises in the depths of their heart. Such the useless words, etc.

The others are positive transgressions of some of the Commandments of the Law. Such was the adultery and homicide of David, and such the denial of St. Peter.

It is not at present a question of the first of these sins. If they were included in the order of sins of the fallen Just, the fallen Just would have nothing to distinguish them from the persevering Just, there being none among these latter, who is exempt from these failings, according to what St. James says, We all stumble in many things. One must therefore limit oneself to sins of the second order, which put the Just in a state of damnation and death, and which would actually damn him, if he did not rise from them by Repentance.

I say then first, that these sins are never forgiven, until after the one who has committed them has implored in this regard the mercy of God with a living Faith, and with all the movements of a sincere Repentance. Until then, he always remains exposed to the indignation of God, always in a state of condemnation, as M. Jurieu has shown amply and exactly in his Response to the Overthrow of Morality.

I say secondly, that the pardon that God grants to this fallen and penitent Just, is of the same nature as that which he grants to Sinners who come to convert themselves, and that thus one can say of the one all that I have said of the other.

This suffices, and it is not necessary to repeat all that I have said to make the application of it to this particular subject. Each one can do it by himself.

Here one asks what are the sins that God forgives this fallen Just, and raised by Repentance. Is it only the sins into which he has just fallen? Or does he forgive him a second time, and all anew, those that he had committed formerly, and for which he had granted him remission when he had received him in his Grace?

This Question depends on another, which I do not remember having read in any of our Theologians, but which no Scholastic forgets. One asks, Whether sins, once forgiven, return when one falls back into them; or if, when that happens, the remission once granted always subsists.

All the Scholastics maintain that sins once remitted are so forever, and that God neither punishes them nor imputes them after having forgiven them. They prove it by the testimony of some Fathers, particularly of St. Chrysostom, of St. Prosper, and of Gelasius Bishop of Rome. But they prove it principally by two considerable places of Scripture. The first is found in Chapter XXXIII of the Revelations of Ezekiel. When I will have said to the wicked, You shall surely die, if he turns from his sin, and does what is just and right, none of his sins that he will have committed shall be held against him. The second is that of Rom. XI. 29. The gifts and the calling of God are without repentance.

They say further, that if sins once remitted could be punished later, it would be necessary to say that the remission that God grants us is not absolute, but conditional. It would be necessary to say that God grants it, only under this express condition, that we will not commit new sins in the future. Thus we would always remain subject to the curse of God, until the condition was fulfilled, and consequently during the whole course of life. This however appears opposed to what Scripture tells us concerning the peace that we have with God, as a consequence of our Justification, and with the manner in which it expresses the remission of sins, which it represents as full, perfect, and entire.

All this seems to me very solid and very reasonable. However, it must be admitted that there is a Parable in the Gospel which seems to say the contrary. It is that of the Servant, to whom his Master had forgiven ten thousand talents, and who learning later that this cowardly Servant, far from imitating his example, was constraining to payment, with all imaginable rigor, one of his Fellow servants who owed him only a hundred denarii, revoked the grace that he had made him, and ordered that he should be put in prison to remain there until he had entirely satisfied.

But it is easy to answer, that as there is no Parable all of whose terms must be pressed, the meaning of this one comes down to saying, that if we do not forgive our Neighbors, God will not forgive us. That is all that Jesus Christ wants to tell us. The rest should not be pressed.

One can also object to what Jesus Christ says to the Blind man whom he found in the Temple after having healed him. Go, he says to him, and sin no more, lest something worse happen to you. But one can answer, that to verify this, it suffices to say something that no one disagrees with: It is that relapses deserve to be punished more severely than first sins; because even though the atrocity of these two sorts of sins is the same when considering them only in their genre, it becomes unequal by the ingratitude of which the one who offends God after having been so favored makes himself guilty, and by the contempt of the commitments into which he had entered in making his peace with him. That makes sins committed in such circumstances merit a much more rigorous punishment, than if one had committed them before the grace of Conversion.

Moreover, if one supposes that sins once remitted are so forever, it is clear that they do not need a new pardon; and that thus when a fallen Just rises, God forgives him only this new sin, into which he had fallen.

## **CHAPTER II. On the Justification of the Just persevering in piety. That it consists first in the Progress that he makes in the way of Heaven.**

I WILL not dwell any longer on the Justification of the fallen Just. I pass to that of the persevering Just. One can understand by this three different things. I. The progress that the Just makes in inherent Justice. II. All that there is in the conduct and in the actions of this Just, suitable to persuade himself, and to persuade others, that he is truly Just. III. All that God does with regard to him assuming that he is Just, recognizing him as Just, declaring him Just, and treating him as Just.

I suppose that there is in the Child of God a Justice, a Holiness, which is called inherent, and which is distinct from the imputed. Scripture speaks of it often. For example, Zacharias says that God had promised us that being delivered from the fear of our Enemies, we would serve him without fear in holiness and justice all our life. Jesus Christ says similarly in the Gospel, that if our Justice does not surpass that of the Scribes and Pharisees, we will not enter into the Kingdom of God. And St. Paul assures that the new man is created according to God, in justice and true holiness. Hence it comes that the Faithful are very often called Just in Scripture, in the same sense in which they are named holy; as indeed Holiness and Justice ordinarily signify the same thing.

This Justice is not that particular Virtue, which renders to each his own. It is in general the Conformity of the state of the Soul and of its actions, with the Law of God and our duty. Thus, it consists partly in the supernatural habits of Sanctification and piety, that Grace has poured into hearts; and partly in the actions that are born of these habits. Habits, without actions, would be little. But one must not also imagine that one should, under this pretext, count habits as nothing. If that were so, the Child of God would not be Just when he does not act, for example during sleep, whereas his Justice is something fixed and permanent, which means that even if he died while sleeping, he would not fail to be saved.

This Justice is always imperfect, and has various failings, during all the time that we remain on the Earth. On the one hand it is not strong enough, nor rooted enough in the heart, to prevent the Believer from committing various sins; according to what St. James says, that we all stumble in many things: and on the other, the good actions, which are its effects, are never so perfect and so accomplished, that the eyes of God do not perceive in them various defects, which mean that we always need his indulgence, and the Merit of Jesus Christ, which makes St. Peter say, that the spiritual Sacrifices that we offer to God are acceptable to him through Jesus Christ.

But although this Justice is imperfect, it is nonetheless true. It is fundamentally what it appears. It even has that perfection, which is commonly called of parts, and which consists in the assembly of the actions necessary to make it agreeable to God, as I have tried to show in my Treatise on good works.

This imperfection of inherent Justice gives place to the progress that we are obliged to make in Piety, during all the time that we remain on the Earth. It is certain indeed, that the true Believer always advances in the way of Heaven. He walks from strength to strength, the Prophet tells us. His way, says the Sage, is like the light of morning, which always increases. It is even for this reason that Sanctification is represented to us in Scripture as a Race, as a Journey, which insensibly distances us from what we leave, and brings us closer to the goal toward which we tend. This is what suffers no difficulty.

It must only be added, that these Progresses entail two things. One, that one weakens one's bad inclinations, and that one corrects oneself of the habits of evil that one had contracted. The other, that one strengthens more and more the habits of Holiness, with which Grace had adorned the Soul. One makes Faith more lively, Hope more firm, Charity more fervent, and so on with the rest.

It must also be noted, that in one sense these Progresses are our work, which also means that Scripture exhorts us to them so often. Indeed, it is by working ourselves with all our strength, it is by exciting ourselves to live justly, as the Apostle St. Paul speaks, that we succeed in this great design. But as on the one hand these efforts are effects of Grace, which is the first and principal source of all the good that we do; that moreover, God pours new graces on those who make such good use of the first ones; it is true to say that it is he who is the first Author of the progress that we make in piety.

One must therefore neither attribute these progresses to our work in such a way, that one excludes the Grace of God; nor imagine also that Grace operates them in such a way, that we do absolutely nothing in them. We work on them, without doubt; but in such a way that Grace prevents our first efforts, operates them, gives them a happy success, and rewards them with new profusions. And God acts in them, not by leaving us in rest and inaction, but by making us act, and by operating in us the will and the accomplishment, as the Apostle St. Paul speaks.

Supposing then that this augmentation of inherent Justice can be called a Justification, which is not difficult to believe, it will be true to say in this sense, that God justifies the Just, and that the Just justifies himself. It will also be true to say that one is justified in this way, both by Grace, and by works, each of these Causes contributing in its manner to the production of this effect.

To clarify all this a little more, one can add, that there are two ways by which one can conceive how all this is done. Everyone knows first, that it is natural for habits to strengthen and fortify themselves more and more by repeated acts. This is what we notice every day, and which cannot be contested. Consequently, the good works that we do being the exercise of the Virtues that make our Holiness, it is of necessity that in proportion as we apply ourselves to doing them, our Virtues strengthen themselves, and consequently that our Sanctification advances.

On the other hand, our good works are very agreeable to God. They please him, and consequently invite him to pour out his favors on us. But among these favors are there any that are more useful to us, or that he grants us with more pleasure, than the graces of his Spirit? Thus these graces being without difficulty the source and the principle of all that we have of holiness, it is true to say that in proportion as we are fervent and assiduous in doing good works, in proportion we advance in the way of Heaven.

This second manner of conceiving what our good works contribute to the advancement of our Sanctification, has some relation to what the Roman Church teaches on this subject. It poses a Justification, which it calls second, and which it makes consist in the strengthening and augmentation of the supernatural habits, that the first Justification has poured into the Soul. It says that God strengthens these habits by new degrees that he adds to them, rather like by keeping on the fire water that was already hot, one gives it new degrees of heat.

This is something that we do not contest with it. But we cannot admit what it adds, that one properly merits, and by a merit of condignity, this strengthening of the supernatural habits. We cannot bear that one attributes to our works a merit of this order, because indeed such a merit is incompatible with Grace; according to what St. Paul says: If it is by grace, it is no more by works, otherwise grace is no more grace. And if it is by works, it is no more by grace, otherwise work is no more work. Rom. XI. 6.

But this is not the place to prove this Truth, which I have clarified enough in my Treatise on good works. I content myself with saying that I see no inconvenience in employing the term Justification to designate these progresses that Grace gives us the means to make in Holiness and in Justice. All that one can doubt, is if this term is ever employed in this sense in the holy Books. This is what I do not believe easy to decide. There is indeed a passage that can receive this sense, but which can also receive others. It is that of Revelation XXII.11. Let him who is just be justified still. I

see no demonstrative proof, which shows, either that the Holy Spirit designates by this the progress that one makes in piety, or that he designates something else.

One could say, in truth, that it is not believable that he understands it in the first of these senses, because if he did, he would say the same thing twice, wanting the Just to justify himself still, and the Holy to sanctify himself still. But it is easy to answer that these two terms may not be synonymous, although they both designate progress in Piety. Indeed, one can designate what is positive in Sanctification, I mean the love and practice of good; and the other, what is negative in it, I mean the renunciation of sin. It seems indeed that the term justify applies more properly to the first, and that of sanctify to the second.

Whatever the case may be, as I do not believe that one can prove this, I believe just as little that one can prove the contrary: thus I am persuaded that the best is to leave this Question undecided.

As for what concerns the other places of the sacred Writings, I see none that can receive this sense. In particular, it is not at all that of St. James, as I believe I have proved in the first Book.

### **CHAPTER III. That the Justification of the persevering Just consists, secondly, in what he does to prove that he is truly Just.**

I PASS to the consideration of the second thing that can be understood by the Justification of the persevering Just. I have said that this expression can designate secondly, all that there is in the actions of this Just suitable to persuade himself, and to persuade others, that he is truly Just.

When I say that what this Just does proves that he is truly Just, I speak directly and immediately of inherent Justice, and indirectly and by consequence of imputed Justice. My meaning is, that the actions of this Just show by themselves that he is a good man, that he fears God, that he loves him, that he has piety and probity, etc. From which one can conclude, by a second consequence, that he has obtained the remission of his sins, it not being possible that God has refused this grace to a man who possesses all these Virtues.

This is my thought, for the complete clarification of which it must be remembered that it happens quite often that one truly possesses Holiness and Justice, and that both the one who possesses it, and many others, doubt it, and suspect it of not being what it appears. The reason is, that there is a false Justice, which resembles in some manner the true one, which means that one is deceived by it, and that one very often takes one for the other.

This false Justice can be double. Often it is the effect of hypocrisy. The heart is filled with filth, but one hides it, and one covers oneself with a fine appearance of piety, which means that one deceives others, although one does not deceive oneself. Often also it is the effect of that Faith, which Scripture calls a temporary Faith, and which means that one abstains from some sins, for which one does not have much

inclination, and that one does externally some of the works that God has commanded; from which one concludes, inappropriately and without foundation, that one is truly Just and regenerated.

That being so, it is not strange that it sometimes happens that one does not dare to assure oneself, either of one's own Justice, or of that of others, and that one fears that it is not truly what it appears. Above all this has a place when this Justice is still weak and imperfect, as happens when one has not been long in the way of Heaven. It is then quite difficult to see the advantages that such a Justice has over that which is only an effect of temporary Faith.

Whatever the case may be, Scripture proposes to us no other sensible Characteristic, which makes known the true Justice of the Children of God, and which distinguishes it, either from that which is only an effect of hypocrisy, or from that which comes from a temporary Faith, than the constant practice of good works. For as for the first, here is what Jesus Christ says of it Matt. VII. 15. 16. Beware of false Prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Does one gather grapes from thorns, or figs from thistles? And for the second, Jesus Christ in the Parable of the Gospel represents temporary Faith as a grain sown in stony places, where it germinates at once; but as it has no root, it withers immediately. On the contrary, he represents justifying Faith as a grain sown on good earth, which brings forth much fruit.

It is not that all sorts of works produce this effect. For, as I have already noted, there are some that false-Just people themselves do, and which give them occasion to deceive others, and to delude themselves. Those which prove the sincerity of Justice, have three Characteristics. The first, that they are not only good in their foundation, and in their substance; but also in their circumstances, being done by a good principle, and tending to a good end: which one cannot say of those of the Wicked. It is true that this first Characteristic is not of great use for judging the actions of others; but it is extremely useful when it is a question of knowing ourselves.

The second is useful in all respects. It consists in that the works, which prove the sincerity of Justice, are not works of one or two kinds; but of all without exception, there being none, however opposed it may be to our most natural inclinations, that the good man does not do when the occasion presents itself.

The third finally, is that the good man does not only do good works sometimes, and from time to time; but constantly, and with perseverance.

Good works, which have these three Characteristics, are solid proofs of the sincerity of the Justice which is their principle. Consequently, if to justify is to make Justice known, there is no doubt that the good works of the Just justify him.

There are in Scripture some places, where the term justify is employed in a sense which has much relation to this one. For example, what is said Luke X. 29, that a



Doctor of the Law, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus Christ, Who is my neighbor? For example again, what Jesus Christ says to the Pharisees, Luke XVII. 15. It is you who justify yourselves before men; and what Job had said of himself: If I justify myself, my own mouth will condemn me. Job. IX. 20. But one has difficulty finding those where this term is employed to designate what I have just said that the Just does to make himself known to others, and to know himself.

It is not that the thing itself is not found expressed in various places, but it is that it is expressed there in another manner. This is, for example, what Jesus Christ makes understood, when he says, that we must let our light shine before men, so that men seeing our good works may glorify our Father who is in Heaven. This is again the meaning of St. Peter when he wants on the one hand, that we strengthen our calling and our election by our good works; and on the other, that our conversation be honest among strangers, so that instead of speaking ill of us as of evildoers, they may glorify God in the day of visitation for our good works which they will have seen.

But I see only two passages where one can say that this is designated by the term justify. The first is that of Revelation, Let him who is just be justified still. The second is that of St. James, at the end of Chap. II of his Catholic Epistle, where he says that man is justified by his works. Yet I have shown on the subject of the first, that although this meaning appears the most natural, one can give it another without doing it any violence. And for the second, many people claim that St. James does not speak at all of what we can do to persuade others, and to convince ourselves, of the sincerity of our piety. This is what they try to prove by these two reasons.

The first, that St. James takes as the same thing, to be saved, and to be justified, as appears clearly by the consideration of verse 14, where this Apostle proposes the Question that he is going to treat. My brothers, he says, what will it profit if someone says that he has Faith, and has not works. Can Faith save him? He therefore calls there to save, what he calls in the sequel to justify. It is however certain that our salvation does not depend on what others think on our subject, nor even on what we think of it. If we are Wicked, it will serve us nothing to be absolved and approved, either by others, or by ourselves. If we are Good people, we will not perish, even though we are condemned, and that we have a bad opinion of ourselves and of our state.

Their second reason is that St. James says that Abraham was justified by his works, when he offered his son Isaac on the altar. It is however true that then this Patriarch was not justified before men, since there were none who were present at his action.

But these two reasons do not seem convincing to me. Not the first; for although our salvation does not depend on what others think on our subject, it depends nevertheless in some manner on what we do to bring them to think well of it. We will indeed perish, if we do not fulfill the duty that Jesus Christ prescribes to us, when he orders us to let our light shine before men. And besides it is important for

us to know ourselves well, and there are circumstances where our salvation depends on it.

I add, that even if St. James spoke in this verse 14 only of our Justification before God, nothing would prevent him from being able to speak of the other in some of the following verses. Nothing is more ordinary for the sacred Authors, than to pass from one subject to another, and one could give examples by the hundreds, if the thing were necessary.

The second reason is no more solid. What Abraham did, in offering his Son, served first to convince himself of the sincerity of his piety; secondly, to convince his Son of it; thirdly, to persuade the Angels and the Demons of it, to say nothing of God, who said himself that it was then that he had known that Abraham loved him, but who says it only in a figurative sense, and by Anthropopathy. Finally, this has served to convince all those who have had some knowledge of sacred History.

On the other hand there are many Theologians, who claim that St. James speaks only of our Justification before men. But I am persuaded that the best is to say that this Apostle speaks, both of our Justification before men, and of what we do to convince ourselves of our piety, and above all of what we do to obtain from God that he regard us as his Children, and that he treat us as such. The first seems certain to me by the consideration of verse 18. Show me your Faith without your works, and I will show you mine by my works. I have moreover shown in the first Book, that one must explain in this same sense what St. James said of Rahab, that she was justified by her works, when she hid Joshua's Spies. The second is in itself quite plausible. And for the third, one will see in the following Chapter what one should think of it, or to put it better, one has already seen it in the first Book.

#### **CHAPTER IV. That the Justification of the Just consists principally in what God does with respect to him, and which supposes that he considers him as such.**

THERE remains for me to speak only of the third sense in which one can say that the persevering Just is justified. This sense includes all that God does with respect to him, and from which one can conclude that he regards him as Just. Consequently if he recognizes him as Just, if he declares him Just, if he treats him as Just, it is true to say that by all that he justifies him.

Nothing prevents us from giving this sense to this way of speaking. It is thus indeed that all the earth understands what is said so often in the holy Books, that we justify God, that we sanctify him, that we exalt him. We do all that, not by adding something to his Justice, to his Holiness, to the elevation of his Being; but by recognizing by our thoughts, by our words, and by our actions, the uprightness, the purity, and the sublimity of his Ways. Such being the style of Scripture, nothing is more natural than to believe that God justifies us by recognizing us as Just, by declaring us Just, and by treating us as Just.

I have noted in another place, that to render wicked, is the opposite of to justify. Scripture however employs the first of these expressions to say to declare wicked, and to treat as wicked. Why could we not give a similar sense to the term justify, whose formation is the same in the holy Language?

Everything therefore comes down to knowing if God does with respect to us all that I have just indicated. Now this is something that cannot be contested. For first, God recognizes as Just those who are truly so, and who consequently observe his Laws, and make them the Rules of their conduct. Would it indeed be possible for God to be mistaken in the Judgment that he makes of them? And must one not hold as constant that he sees us as we are, and that there is absolutely nothing, however hidden it may be, which is in a state to hide itself from his knowledge?

Secondly, there are occasions where he is not content to recognize as Just those who are truly so, but also he declares them such. This is what he did formerly with respect to Abraham, to Job, to David, and to some others. And this is what he will do on the last day with respect to all his Elect. He will then bear witness to their Piety. He will even make their praise. To each one, says the holy Apostle, will be rendered his praise.

Finally, he treats them as Just by all that he does with respect to them. First, by forgiving them these little sins, into which there is not a day that they do not fall; and forgiving them even, although they do not repent of them by name and expressly, but contenting himself in this respect with a confused and general Repentance. Secondly, he treats them as Just, granting them all the Privileges of the Just; suffering them in his Communion, honoring them with the dignity of his Children, guaranteeing them by his Providence from all the dangers that threaten them, and neglecting none of their interests, whether temporal, or spiritual, or eternal, but on the contrary making all things succeed to their advantage.

When I say moreover that God recognizes them as Just, that he declares them Just, and treats them as Just, I mean that he recognizes them as Just etc. not only of an imputed Justice, but principally of an inherent Justice. It is this second sense that one must have above all in mind, and it is also the one to which Scripture looks. See M. Witsius de Oecon. Lib. III. Chap. VIII. § 24. 25. 26.

The reason is, that this inherent Justice is absolutely necessary to save oneself. I admit that it is neither the meritorious Cause of Salvation, nor the Foundation of the right that we have to it. But it is certain that none of those who do not possess it before the end of their life, will ever be received in Heaven. If your Justice, said Jesus Christ, does not surpass that of the Scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. And St. Paul: Without Sanctification, no one will see the Lord. Eternal, said David to his God, who will sojourn in your Tabernacle? Who will dwell in the mountain of your Holiness? He who walks in integrity, who does what is just, and who speaks the truth as it is in his heart. Ps. XV. 1. 2.

If therefore we are not Just with this inherent Justice; if God does not regard us as Just, does not declare us Just, and does not treat us as Just, with a Justice which is in us, it is very certain that we will perish eternally. As therefore this inherent Justice consists principally in the care that we take to do good works, it is evident that to say that God recognizes us as Just, declares us Just, and treats us as Just, is to say that he recognizes, that he declares that we do good works, and that he treats us as it is worthy of his Goodness and his infinite Mercy to treat those who do them. Thus good works are with respect to this Justification, what the Satisfaction of Jesus Christ, received and embraced by Faith, is with respect to the Justification of the Sinner.

It must be added, that when God recognizes us as Just, declares us Just, and treats us as Just, my meaning is not that he recognizes us as Just etc. with a perfect Justice; but only with a true, sincere Justice, and such as is necessarily required to be of the number of his Children. He is careful, neither to recognize as perfectly Just, nor to declare such, those who are not so indeed: for, as the Apostle St. Paul says, Rom. II. 2, his Judgment is according to truth. It is not besides treating us as perfectly Just, to bear our defects, to forgive us our sins, to leave us during a quite long time on the Earth, the abode of vice and suffering, and to withdraw us from it by death. Thus all that one can say, is that he recognizes us as we are, declares us as we are, and treats us as we are; that is to say on the one hand, as truly Just; and on the other, as Just who are so only imperfectly.

I am persuaded that it is principally to this that St. James looks in the thirteen last verses of Chap. II of his Catholic Epistle. It is certain first, that he does not speak there of the Justification of the Sinner. This is what I have proved in the first Book, by two reasons that it is not necessary to repeat. It is certain secondly, that St. James has no regard for the progress that a Just can make in piety. What is there in all his discourse, that tends to that? And how would it be possible to draw this conclusion from any of the reasonings of this Apostle?

It is therefore necessary to recognize that the Apostle speaks partly of what we do ourselves to persuade, either others, or our own Conscience, of our piety; partly, but principally, of what God does with respect to us, regarding us as Just, declaring us Just, and treating us as Just. And in posing it in this way, one will find nothing obscure in this discourse of St. James, nothing that does not visibly tend to this goal.

## **CHAPTER V: Conclusion of this Treatise. That we are wrongly reproached that what we maintain opens the door to Libertinism.**

THERE, if I am not mistaken, is the true Doctrine of Justification. One now sees clearer than day, with how little reason it is accused of throwing men into Security, and of opening the door to Libertinism. But as this Accusation is atrocious, it is good to examine it with some care. This is how I am going to finish.

To judge this Accusation well, one must begin by proposing it in all its extent. Here is what it comes down to. It is said that it is to authorize License, to maintain that

we can save ourselves without renouncing our vices, and without applying ourselves actually to the study of piety. It is added, that this will be very possible, if it is true that we are justified by Faith alone; and here is how it is proved. "To be saved, it is necessary to have no other thing than to be justified. To be justified, it is necessary to have no other thing than to believe. For since one is justified by Faith alone, and not by works, it is clear that a man who will not do works, but who will believe, will not fail to be justified. Thus, works are not at all necessary to be saved; and consequently one can do none of them, and not renounce Salvation."

Some are content to respond, that "the principal reason which brings the true Believer to abstain from sin, and to apply himself to the practice of good works, is not the necessity that there is to take this double care to be saved; but the justice that there is in acting thus, either because absolutely speaking it is just to do good, and to abstain from evil, or because it is just to recognize in this manner the kindnesses that God has for us. Thus this motive not being destroyed by all that is said, that it is possible to save oneself without doing good works, this consideration will not prevent one from actually doing them."

There is without doubt some truth in this Response; but I do not believe that it suffices to absolutely remove the difficulty. For, as most people conduct themselves much less by justice than by interest, if it passed once for constant that one can save oneself without applying oneself to piety, it is certain that one would be very easily brought, both to neglect piety, and to plunge oneself into vice. Thus it is extremely important to see if there is some truth in what is claimed, that if what we say on the Subject of Justification is true, one will be able to save oneself without Holiness.

One imagines proving it by saying that, to be saved, it is necessary to have no other thing than to be justified; and by adding, that if our Opinion is received, one will be able to be justified without doing good works. But I admit neither the one nor the other of these two Propositions.

For as for the first, it is certain that Sanctification is no less necessary than Justification. It is St. Paul who teaches us this Truth, when he says that without Sanctification no one will see God. He is not even the only one who says it. Jesus Christ assures in so many words, that if our Justice does not surpass that of the Scribes and Pharisees, we will not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. There are a thousand other places in the holy Books, which say the same thing. I do not report them, because, on the one hand, everyone knows them; and on the other, because I have reported them in my Treatise on good works in general.

Someone will perhaps say, that it is beyond doubt that Justification is necessarily and infallibly followed by the possession of Salvation, as appears from what the Apostle St. Paul says: Those whom God has justified, he has also glorified, Rom. VIII. From which one will conclude, that Sanctification must not be as necessary as I claim. But this consequence is not at all just. It is equally true, both that it is impossible not to be saved, if one is justified; and that it is impossible to be so,

without Sanctification. Scripture attests as formally the one as the other. But what must be concluded from this, is that Justification and Sanctification are two graces which are never separated, and of which God never grants one while refusing the other. Thus, far from one being able to say, I am justified; Therefore, although I have no Sanctification, I will be saved; one must say on the contrary, I have no Sanctification; Therefore, it is certain that I am not justified.

The first therefore of the two Propositions, which compose the Objection that we are presently examining, is very false. The second is no less so.

It is said that if our Opinion had place, one could be justified without doing good works. But this is what we are careful not to admit. All that I have said in this Treatise, shows the contrary. For first, I have shown that the Justification of the Just, which is no less necessary to be saved than the Justification of the Sinner, is done by works, and that this is the meaning of St. James in Chap. II of his Catholic Epistle. Thus, at least in this sense, it is impossible to be justified without good works.

I say approximately the same thing of the Justification of the Sinner. First, I have shown that it is impossible to be justified in this way, without Repentance. And who does not see to what point it is impossible to repent savingly, without doing good works? Repentance is a Whole composed of a great number of acts, each of which is an internal work; and as for what concerns the external ones, they follow so necessarily true Repentance, that it appears clearer than day, that the one which is not accompanied by them, is a false and useless Repentance.

But let us stop at Faith. I have shown that "this Virtue is incapable of justifying us, if it does not include the design and the resolution to apply ourselves to piety, and if this design and this resolution are not firm enough to be followed by execution." I have shown that "Faith, which does not produce works, is a dead Faith, a false Faith, a vain shadow, a vain phantom of Faith, absolutely incapable of justifying us and of saving us." With what shadow therefore of plausibility can one say that, according to us, either the Just, or the Sinner, can be justified without good works, and all the more reason, by continuing to live in sin?

I admit that one cannot say the same thing in certain Hypotheses, which I have combated, both in this Treatise, and in the Treatise on divine Faith. Indeed, if one supposes with some, that justifying Faith is nothing other than an absolute acceptance of the offer that God makes us of his Son: if one says, with some others, that it is a particular application that one makes to oneself of what the promises of the Gospel have of general: if one says finally that it is, either a humble recourse to the Merit of Jesus Christ, or a firm confidence in his Grace: if, I say, one explains in any of these ways the nature of true Faith, it will be found that this Faith has nothing incompatible with the practice of vice. For who can doubt that there is an infinity of Sinners and of Vicious people, who do all that I have just indicated, and who do it without renouncing their vices, and without showing in their actions any love of

piety, any care to do good works? Thus, if that alone were needed to be justified, there is no doubt that one could be so without Piety and Holiness.

It is to this that I attribute, at least in part, the relaxation that one sees among us. One hears said each day, that we are justified by Faith alone. One hears said that this Faith consists in certain acts, that the greatest Sinners cannot doubt that they do, however engulfed they may be in vice. Must one after that be astonished, either if they imagine themselves to be justified, or if imagining it they persist in their bad course? Must one be astonished if Security is so ordinary?

It would not be the same if one were well instructed in the nature of true Faith, and if one knew that the promises that it embraces are all conditional; and that thus it accepts, not only the good that they make us hope for, but also the condition under which they make it hoped for; that it finds this condition just and reasonable, that it submits to it, that it obliges itself to it, and that finally it fulfills it. If those of whom I speak had well understood all this, they would see that they do not have true Faith, and that thus it is inappropriately that they flatter themselves with the hope of impunity.

But these Truths are too solid to find belief in most Minds, which let themselves be captivated, not by the evidence of things themselves, but by the inclination of their hearts. One will always prefer what flatters Concupiscence, to what can enlighten the Mind; and I greatly fear that one will not see end in our days this time of which St. Paul speaks, and during which he says that men will have itching ears, and will gather Teachers according to their desires.

God, who alone can remedy such great evils, may he wish to do it as soon as possible, and give us to fear him and to serve him quite differently than we do with our little subtleties. Amen.

END.