

Anglican Studies



THEOLOGIAN

PAUL

(c. 10 - 65 A.D.) "a man small of stature, with a bald head and crooked legs, in a good state of body, with eyebrows meeting and nose somewhat hooked, full of friendliness;

THOMAS CRANMER

July 2, 1489 – March 21, 1556) was the Archbishop of Canterbury during the reigns of the English kings Henry VIII and Edward VI. He is credited with writing and compiling the first two Books of Common Prayer which established the basic structure of Anglican liturgy

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN

(1801-1890), Anglican Priest, RC Cardinal, divine, man of letters, leader of the Oxford Movement, and "the most illustrious of English converts to the RC Church".

N.T. Wright

The current Bishop of Durham, U.K. - A voice of orthodoxy and evangelism in the Church today.

Justification

by Waeshael

To Paul, *justification* was the third in a series of events that defined the Jewish Christian's standing with God. First is the *preselection* of a Nation or an individual by God and the *implanting* of the *seeds of faith* by the Spirit.

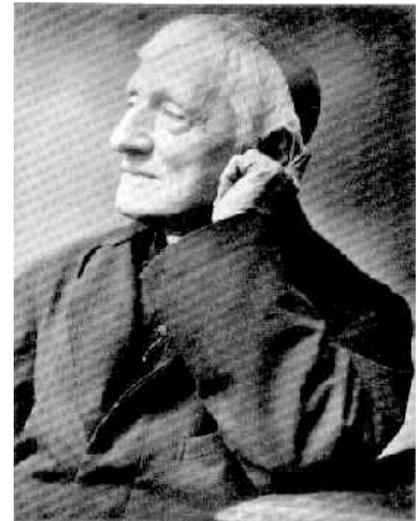
Second the awakened Nation or individual is *drawn* to the Church, which is the body of Christ, where individuals respond to the gospel news that *Christ is Lord and king*, and they commit to following Christ. This is the "Call".

God then declares him/her righteous, and gives the *faith of justification*, and the *Holy Spirit*, by which the laws of God and the way of Christ are revealed - this is the third event. The believer is brought to fear the *final judgment* and begins to eliminate sin from his/her life, and eventually becomes holy. At the *final Judgment*, Jesus Christ weighs in the balance the godly works done by each believer during his lifetime; judges him/her, and determines what reward or punishment should be given. Those condemned are punished with outer darkness. Those justified are rewarded with eternal life, and go on to rule over the Nations. In the Apostolic Church, we have faith of being justified at the end, and we hope for salvation. And so the motto for this study group is "Faith for the Hopeful".

Articles on faith, and commentaries on the New Testament by WAESHAEL can be found at <http://www.orderstvincent.org/adsl.html>

<http://www.orderstvincent.org/smp.html>

John Henry Newman



Newman on justification (while he was yet an Anglican Priest)

Justification is "the glorious Voice of the Lord" declaring us to be righteous. That it is a declaration, not a making, is sufficiently clear from this one argument, that it is the justification of a sinner, of one who has been a sinner; . . . it is a declaration about the past, it is a declaration about the present.

For example; in the fourth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul makes justification synonymous with "imputing righteousness," and quotes David's words concerning the blessedness of those "whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered," and "to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Righteousness, then, is the name, character, or estimation of righteousness vouchsafed to the past, and extending from the past to the present as far as the present is affected by the past. It

is the accounting a person not to have that present guilt, peril, odiousness, ill-repute, with which the past actually burdens him. If a wrong has been done you, and you forgive the offender, you count it as though it had not been, you pass it over. You view him as before he did it, and treat him as on his original footing. You consider him to have been what he has not been, fair and friendly towards you;

Again: In the eighth chapter of the same Epistle, St. Paul says, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." [Rom. viii. 33.] Here justification is contrasted with accusation; accordingly it is a judicial word, and is, therefore, concerned with the past. It comes upon the past, and takes up man in his natural state, as found a sinner. Whatever blessings besides are intended for him, still it is the commencement of blessing, and if so, is necessarily, in the first place, a declaring, whatever it may do afterwards. It is, as being a judicial act, an act concerning the present as influenced by the past; they who have sinned are criminals, and they are justified from what they have done.

There are many collateral arguments leading us to the same conclusion. For instance; St. James says "that Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness; and he was called the friend of God." No one can doubt that these phrases are synonymous with being justified; justification, then, is a "calling," that is, a declaring, accounting, treating as the friend of God. That he also was the friend of God, and well-pleasing to Him, is certain too; but his justification was his being declared so.

Again; the Jews considered they were justified by the rites of the Law, such as circumcision, observing the Sabbath, paying tithes, and the like; and St. Paul says, "By the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified." Now, the Jews did not consider such works made them holy, but made them holy towards God, or recommended them to Him; and St. Paul condemns them for substituting them for

holiness. The Apostle goes on to say, that the only true justification is the being made holy or renewed; does not this imply, from the very nature of the case, that renewal is not just the same thing as justification, but that in which God justifies men, instead of justifying in the observance of rites? What the Jews thought justification through ceremonies to be, that gospel justification really is, acceptableness; and as the word was attached to circumcision among the Jews without being synonymous with it, so it attaches to renewal now, without standing for it, or being an equivalent expression.

The same distinction is seen in passages where mention is made of being "counted worthy of eternal life:"—for instance, when our Lord speaks of those "which shall be accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead" [Luke xx. 35; xxi. 36.] or bids us watch and pray that we "may be accounted worthy to escape all these things which shall come to pass;" and when St. Paul speaks of our "being counted worthy of the kingdom of God," [2 Thes. i. 5.] no one can deny two things;—on the one hand, that those who are counted worthy, are worthy (for our Lord says in the Apocalypse, "They shall walk with me in white, for they are worthy;" [Rev. iii. 4.]) on the other, that to be "counted worthy" does not, in the very sense of the words, mean to be worthy, though it implies it, but means a declaration of that which really is, though, or rather because, it is declared. In like manner, justification, as such, may properly be a declaration, though it involves in fact a gift of righteousness.

Our Lord's justification, as St. Paul terms it, which took place upon His resurrection, to which I referred just now, supplies another illustration. Christ differs from us in this, that He was the true and eternal Son, we sons only by adoption; He holy by nature, we made holy beyond nature; but He does not differ in His justification, which, simply considered, was what I have been showing ours to be, an open acknowledgment of Him by the

Father as righteous and well beloved, yet not nominally such (God forbid) but really. St. Paul, who in one place says that Christ was "justified by the Spirit," explains himself elsewhere by saying that he was "declared [Note 3] to be the Son of God, with power, according to the Spirit of Holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." With this agree the words of the Psalm, "I will declare the decree; the Lord hath said unto Me, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." As then, Christ's justification did not supersede but implied His inherent righteousness, yet was in itself distinct from it, and a testimony to it, so is our justification God's announcement, concurrent with His own deed so announced; yet in our case, preceding, not following, His deed, because we are but made righteous, and not as Christ, righteous from our birth.

It would seem, then, in all cases, that God's word is the instrument of His deed. When, then, He solemnly utters the command, "Let the soul be just," it becomes inwardly just; ...

Almighty God not only chose Abraham, but spoke over him the promises which in due time were to be accomplished. The twelve tribes had each its own character and history stamped on it from the first. When the royal line of the Messiah was to be begun in Judah and renewed in David, on each patriarch in turn did Providence inscribe a prediction of what was to be. Such as this is justification as regards an individual. It is a sort of prophecy, recognizing God's hidden election, announcing His purposes before the event, and mysteriously working towards their fulfillment;

On the whole then, from what has been said, it appears that justification is an announcement or fiat of Almighty God, which breaks upon the gloom of our natural state as the Creative Word upon Chaos; that it declares the soul righteous, and in that declaration, on the one hand, conveys pardon for its past sins, and on the other makes it actually righteous. That it is a declaration, has been made evident from its including, as all

allow, an amnesty for the past; for past sins are removable only by an imputation of righteousness. And that it involves an actual creation in righteousness has been argued from the analogy of Almighty God's doings in Scripture, in which we find His words were represented as effective. And its direct statements most abundantly establish both conclusions; the former, from its use of the word justification; the latter, from its use of the word just or righteous; showing, that in matter of fact, he who is justified becomes just, that he who is declared righteous is thereby actually made righteous. Lastly, as I have said, both doctrines are laid down in our Articles: the former in the eleventh Article, the latter in the thirteenth.

For the complete lecture, go to:

<http://www.newmanreader.org/works/justification/lecture3.html>

Newman on Righteousness

As far as the name is concerned, there is a general agreement among all parties; it is called "righteousness." But this is not the question; nor, again, what the meaning of the name is, which all allow to be equivalent to acceptableness, or acceptable obedience, though one school of opinion puts a second sense upon that word, and understands it also to mean an obedience which is short of acceptable, or a righteousness of sanctification. Nor is it now the question what is meant by justification, which some take for accounting, others for being made, righteous.

But the question is, what is that which is named righteousness? what is that object or thing, what is it in a man, which God seeing there, therefore calls him righteous? what is the state in which a justified person is, or that which constitutes him righteous in God's sight? just as one might ask what is really meant when it is said that a man is alive, what is the thing denoted by Scripture in saying that God "breathed into Adam the breath of life"?—the sense of the word breath being indisputable.

Now Luther, as we have seen, considers it to be Christ's obedience imputed; the Roman Schools consider it to be the new and spiritual principle imparted to us by the Holy Ghost.

But before entering upon the subject, I wish to insist that there really must be, as I have said, in every one who is justified, some such token or substance of his justification; I insist upon it, because many persons will try to slip away from so plain a truth. They so greatly dread our priding ourselves on anything that is good in us, that one cannot assert that there are distinctions between the justified state and the state of nature, without being at once accused of treating these as meritorious causes; therefore, I will insist on the point at the hazard of being tedious.

It is certain, then, that all men are not justified; some are, some are not; what is it they differ in? To justify is to account or declare righteous; this is God's act; this is a movement of the Divine Mind, and altogether external to the subject of that justification. If the only real difference between a justified man and a man unjustified, be Almighty God's thoughts concerning him, then those who are justified are justified from eternity, for God sees the end from the beginning. They are in a justified state even from the hour of their birth; before their conversion, while they are wallowing in all sin and unholiness, they are justified, if justification be an act of the Divine Mind and nothing more,—a conclusion which has before now been maintained. Yet, unless we go these lengths, we must allow that there is a certain distinctive state of soul to which the designation of righteousness belongs. What, then, is the criterion within us, which God sees there (of His giving surely, but still given) the seal and signature of His elect, which He accepts now, which He will acknowledge at the last day?

In asking, then, what is our righteousness, I do not mean what is its original source, for this is God's mercy; nor what is its meritorious cause, for this is the life, and above all the death of Christ;

nor what is the instrument of it, for this (I would maintain) is Holy Baptism; nor what is the entrance into it, for this is regeneration; nor what the first privilege of it, for this is pardon; nor what {133} is the ultimate fruit, for this is everlasting life. I am not inquiring about anything past, or anything future, or anything on God's part, but of something present and inward. We should not say that animal life consisted in being born, or in having parents, or in breathing, or in sensation, or in strength, or in a certain period of years, or in God's will, or in God's attributes, or in God's knowledge of us. We should feel that nothing past, or to come, or external, could be a fit account of that which we call animal life, and that all answers so framed were beside the mark.

It would be intelligible, for instance, to say that life consisted in the presence of the soul; but whether we said this or anything else, in any case we should fix on something in us, not out of us. And in like manner, when I ask what is that called righteousness, which God first clothes us with as with a robe, then looks upon and accepts, I do not ask why God so looks upon it, but what it is He looks upon.

1. This being the case, we may pronounce that Luther's answer to the question—viz., that Christ's obedience imputed to us is our righteousness—is in itself no answer at all, and needs explanation before it will apply. Properly speaking, I suppose it means, not that Christ's obedience imputed, but that the imputation of His obedience, is our righteousness. Christ's obedience in the days of His flesh, centuries since, must be brought near to the soul of the individual; therefore that present applying or imputing of His obedience must be meant, when it is called our righteousness, not what is past. But that applying or imputing is the act of God; and the question now before us is, not what is God's act in justifying, but what is the state of the justified soul. It is perfectly intelligible to say that Christ's obedience is the procuring, or the meritorious cause of our righteousness; but to say that our present state of being ac-

counted righteous is nothing else than the fact of Christ's having obeyed the Law eighteen hundred years since, if literally taken, is like saying that our animal life consists in the creation of Adam, or that the pangs of guilt consist in the fall of Satan, which are words without meaning.

For the same reason, it is no answer to the present question to say that a state of justification consists in the forgiveness of sins, or in acceptance, or in adoption, all these being God's acts, and as little in point here, as if I said that obedience was divine aid.

Again: if it be laid down that our justification consists in union with Christ, or reconciliation with God, this is an intelligible and fair answer; and then the question will arise, what is meant by union with Christ? It may or may not be possible to explain it; if we consider Scripture to be silent on this point, then we shall say that justification consists in an unknown, unrevealed, mysterious union with Christ; if we do not allow that there is a mystery, then we shall be bound to say what that union does consist in.

For the same reason, to say with Roman divines, that justification consists in spiritual renovation, whether correct or incorrect, is perfectly intelligible. It is a real answer.

And Protestants, who say that it lies in Christ's obedience, seem to have felt this; for when pressed, they have sometimes said that faith is the discriminating mark of justification, or that in which it consists. But for the most part, only when they were pressed; for though such an answer, whether correct or not, is clear and apposite, yet they seem to have feared that it was all one with saying that faith had merit, or an intrinsic expiatory power in the remission of sins. At the same time, this has not hindered some of them from so resolving the question; and as it is the only serviceable answer which I can find on the Lutheran side of the question, I shall make use of it.

These then are the two views which at first sight come into consideration, whether our state of justification, or

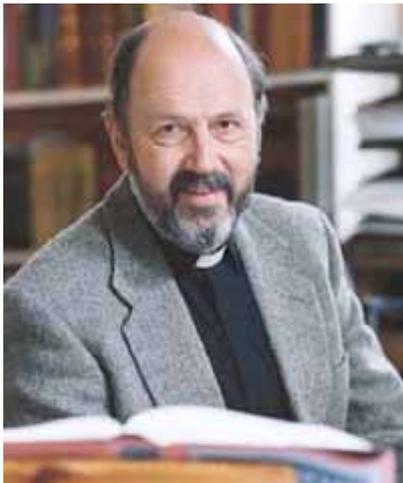
righteousness in God's sight, consists in faith or in renovation.

Now, however intelligible each of these answers may be, neither will be found sufficient and final. I mean, neither seems to pursue, and, I conceive, neither does pursue, the inquiry so far as it might; neither traces up the criterion of a justified state to its simplest and most elementary form. When Faith is said to be the inward principle of acceptance, the question rises, what gives to faith its acceptableness? Why is faith more acceptable than unbelief? cannot we give any reason at all for it? or can we conceive unbelief being appointed as the token, instrument, state, or condition (it matters not here which word we use) of justification? Surely not; faith is acceptable as having a something in it, which unbelief has not: that something, what is it? It must be God's grace, if God's grace act in the soul, and not merely externally, as in the way of Providence. If it acts in us, and has a presence in us, when we have faith, then the having that grace or that presence, and not faith, which is its result, must be the real token, the real state of a justified man.

Again: if we say that justification consists in a supernatural quality imparted to the soul by God's grace, as Roman writers say, then in like manner, the question arises, is this quality all that is in us of heaven? Does not the grace itself, as an immediate divine power or presence, dwell in the hearts which are gifted with this renovating principle? It may or it may not; but if it does, then surely the possession of that grace is really our justification, and not renewal, or the principle of renewal.

And thus, by tracing farther back the lines of thought on which these apparently discordant views are placed, they are made to converge; they converge, that is, supposing there to be vouchsafed to us, an inward divine presence or grace, of which both faith and spiritual renovation are fruits. If such a presence be not vouchsafed, then certainly faith on the one hand, renovation on the other, are

the ultimate elements to which our state of righteousness can be respectively referred in the two theologies. But if it be vouchsafed, neither Protestant nor Romanist ought to refuse to admit, and in admitting to agree with each other, that the presence of the Holy Ghost shed abroad in our hearts, the Author both of faith and of renewal, this is really that which makes us righteous, and that our righteousness is the possession of that presence. (John H. Newman)

N.T. Wright, Bp. of Durham**On Justification**

The future verdict, when it is positive, can be denoted by the verb 'justify'. This carries its full forensic sense, rooted in the ancient Jewish belief that the God of Israel, being the creator of the world and also the God of justice, would finally put the world to rights, in other words, that he would conduct a final Assize. On that day there will be 'glory, honour, immortality and the life of the age to come' for all who do right (Romans 2.7); in other words (verse 13) they will be justified, declared to be in the right. This ought to have highlighted long ago something which I believe has played too little part in discussions of Paul: justification by faith, to which I shall come in a moment, is the anticipation in the present of the justification which will occur in the future, and gains its meaning from that anticipation. What Augustine lacked, what Luther and Calvin lacked, what Regensburg lacked as a way of putting together the two things it tried to hold on to, was Paul's eschatological perspective, filled out by the biblical fusion of covenantal and forensic categories. But before we get there I want to address a question which Paul seldom touches explicitly but about which we can reconstruct his thought quite accurately. This is just as well because it has played an important role in protestant discussions of soteriol-

ogy and lies, I think, at the heart of today's controversies about justification.

...

'Those he called, he also justified'. In other words, Paul uses 'justify' to denote something other than, and logically subsequent to, what we have often thought of as the moment of conversion, when someone who hasn't before believed the gospel is gripped by the word and the Spirit and comes to believe it, to submit to Jesus as the risen Lord. Here is the central point in the controversy between what I say about Paul and what the tradition, not least the protestant tradition, has said. The tradition has used 'justify' and its cognates to denote conversion, or at least the initial moment of the Christian life, and has then debated broader and narrower definitions of what counts. My reading of Paul indicates that he does not use the word like that; and my method, shared with the reformers, insists that I prefer scripture itself to even the finest traditions of interpretation. The fact that the Christian tradition has since at least Augustine used the word 'justify' to mean 'become a Christian', whether broadly or narrowly conceived, is neither here nor there. For Paul, 'justification' is something that follows on from the 'call' through which a sinner is summoned to turn from idols and serve the living God, to turn from sin and follow Christ, to turn from death and believe in the God who raised Jesus from the dead. This points on to my fifth and final point, to which we shall come shortly.

...

I hope I have said enough in this short section to convince you of two things. First, my understanding of how Paul supposed someone became a Christian is, I think, basically orthodox and indeed reformed. God takes the initiative, based on his foreknowledge; the preached word, through which the Spirit is at work, is the effective agent; belief in the gospel, that is, believing submission to Jesus as the risen Lord, is the direct result. My

central point is that this isn't what Paul is referring to when he speaks of 'justification'. But the substance of what reformed theology, unlike Paul, has referred to by means of that word remains. Faith is not something someone does as a result of which God decides to grant them a new status or privilege. Becoming a Christian, in its initial moment, is not based on anything that a person has acquired by birth or achieved by merit. Faith is itself the first fruit of the Spirit's call. And those thus called, to return to Philippians 1.6, can be sure that the one who began a good work in them will complete it at the day of Christ.

...

What then is 'justification', if it is not conversion itself, not the establishment of a 'relationship' between a person and God, but something which is, at least logically, consequent upon it? This is where confusion inevitably creeps in. I have argued again and again that Paul uses *dikaioo* and its cognates to denote something other than conversion itself; but several critics have not listened to this, but have imagined that what I say about Paul's use of the *dikaioo* word-group is my proposed description of his theology of conversion; and they have then charged me with all kinds of interesting heresies. To make this clear, let me use instead a near-synonym, and speak here not of 'justification' but of 'vindication', recognizing that this is itself controversial. My proposal has been, and still is, that Paul uses 'vindication' language, i.e. the *dikaioo* word-group, when he is describing, not the moment when, or the process by which, someone comes from idolatry, sin and death to God, Christ and life, but rather the verdict which God pronounces consequent upon that event. *dikaioo* is after all a declarative word, declaring that something is the case, rather than a word for making something happen or changing the way something is. (Nor do we need to get round this, as many have done, by saying that when God declares

something to be the case he brings it into being; that's not the point here.) And if we work backwards from the future vindication I spoke of earlier I believe we can see what this declaration amounts to, and why Paul insisted on it, especially in Romans and Galatians. The language of vindication, the *dikaioo* language, is as we've seen law-court language. Law-court imagery is appropriate because God is the God of justice, who is bound to put the world to rights, has promised to do so, and intends to keep his promises. But the means by which he will do so, from Genesis 12 onwards, is through the covenant he has made with Abraham; so that God's covenant faithfulness on the one hand, and God's justice on the other, are not two quite different things, but closely interlinked. Both are indicated, as we have seen, in the phrase *dikaiosune theou*. When we talk of God's vindication of someone we are talking about God's declaration, which appears as a double thing to us but I suspect a single thing to Paul: the declaration (a) that someone is in the right (their sins having been forgiven through the death of Jesus) and (b) that this person is a member of the true covenant family, the family God originally promised to Abraham and has now created through Christ and the Spirit, the single family which consists equally of believing Jews and believing Gentiles. I submit that this way of lining things up draws together the various categories which are otherwise left untidily around the place: forensic in Luther versus adoption in Calvin, law-court versus incorporative in Schweitzer and Sanders. Once you grasp Paul's underlying covenantal theology these dichotomies are overcome. My first main point in this subsection is therefore that these two things – declaring sinners to be in the right, with their sins forgiven, and declaring someone to be a member of the single multi-ethnic covenant family – go very closely together in Paul's mind, and that to point out the importance of the latter (belonging to the family) in passages like

Romans 3 or Galatians 3 in no way undermines the importance of the former (being one of those now declared 'in the right' in God's law-court). The underlying point here is crucial: the reason God established the covenant with Abraham, according to scripture in general and Paul in particular, was to undo the sin of Adam and its effects and thereby to complete the project of the good creation itself. Thus God's declaration of forgiveness and his declaration of covenant membership are not ultimately two different things. I freely grant that some of those who have highlighted the importance of the Jew-plus-Gentile point in Paul have used it as a way of saying that Paul is therefore not after all interested in God's dealing with sins and putting sinners in a right relation to himself. But just because people draw false inferences one way, that is no reason why we should draw them the other way.

...

What then is this vindication, this *dikaiosis*? It is God's declaration that a person is in the right; that is, (a) that their sins have been forgiven, and (b) that they are part of the single covenant family promised to Abraham. Notice that opening phrase: God's declaration that. Not 'God's bringing it about that', but God's authoritative declaration of what is in fact the case. This is the point, of course, where some have accused me of semi-Pelagianism. That might be so if I intended to denote, with the word 'justification', what the tradition has denoted. But I don't. Paul, I believe, uses vindication/justification to denote God's declaration-about someone, about (more specifically) the person who has been 'called' in the sense described above. Vindication is not the same as call.

And we now discover that this declaration, this vindication, occurs twice. It occurs in the future, as we have seen, on the basis of the entire life a person has led in the power of the Spirit – that is, it occurs on the basis of 'works' in Paul's redefined sense. And, near the heart of Paul's theology, it occurs in the present as

an anticipation of that future verdict, when someone, responding in believing obedience to the 'call' of the gospel, believes that Jesus is Lord and that God raised him from the dead. This is the point about justification by faith – to revert to the familiar terminology: it is the anticipation in the present of the verdict which will be reaffirmed in the future. Justification is not 'how someone becomes a Christian'. It is God's declaration about the person who has just become a Christian. And, just as the final declaration will consist, not of words so much as of an event, namely, the resurrection of the person concerned into a glorious body like that of the risen Jesus, so the present declaration consists, not so much of words, though words there may be, but of an event, the event in which one dies with the Messiah and rises to new life with him, anticipating that final resurrection. In other words, baptism. I was delighted yesterday to discover that not only Chrysostom and Augustine but also Luther would here have agreed with me....

Second, it emerges that justification, for Paul, is not (in Sanders's terminology) how one 'gets in' to God's people, but about God's declaration that someone is in. In other words, it is all about assurance – as we should have known from reading Romans. I've said it before and this is the place to say it again: if we are thinking Paul's thoughts after him, we are not justified by faith by believing in justification by faith. We are justified by faith by believing in the gospel itself – in other words, that Jesus is Lord and that God raised him from the dead. If, in addition, we believe in justification by faith itself, we believe that, amazingly considering what God knows about us, we are now and for ever part of the family to every member of which God says what he said to Jesus at his baptism: you are my beloved child, with you I am well pleased. Third, it follows at once that justification is the original ecumenical doctrine. The first time we meet justification, that is, in Galatians 2, it is about people from different cultures and traditions sharing

table-fellowship on the basis of nothing other than their shared faith in Jesus as Messiah and Lord. Once we relocate justification, moving it from the discussion of how people become Christians to the discussion of how we know that someone is a Christian, we have a powerful incentive to work together across denominational barriers. One of the sad ironies of the last four hundred years is that, at least since 1541, we have allowed disputes about how people become Christians – that which we thought was denoted by the language of justification – to divide us, when the doctrine of justification itself, urging us to unite across our cultural divides, went unheard. Not that there are not large and important problems in ecumenical relations. I am horrified at some of the recent Anglican/Roman statements, for instance, and on things like the Papacy, purgatory, and the cult of saints (especially Mary), I am as protestant as the next person, for (I take it) good Pauline reasons. But justification by faith tells me that if my Roman neighbour believes that Jesus is Lord and that God raised him from the dead then he or she is a brother or sister, however much I believe them muddled, even dangerously so, on other matters.

...

It is time to turn back again, following the old sola scriptura principle, to the source and origin of one of the great doctrines of the New Testament: that when, through God's effective call (sola gratia) in the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ (solus Christus), someone comes to believe that He is the risen Messiah and Lord, God thereupon (sola fide) declares in advance what He will declare on the last day when He raises that person from the dead: this person is in the right, their sins have been forgiven, they are part of the single, true, worldwide covenant family promised to Abraham, the sign of the coming new creation and the counter-sign to the boast of Caesar. Justification is ultimately about justice, about God putting the world to rights, with his chosen and called people as the

advance guard of that new creation, charged with being and bringing signs of hope, of restorative justice, to the world. Let's put the justice back in justification; and, as we do so, remind ourselves whose justice it is, and why. Soli Deo Gloria! Having thus stolen Luther's slogans, I thought I might end with 'Here I stand'; but let me rather say it in Paul's language. **hode hesteka; ai I lo ou dunamai.**

Thomas Cranmer



The Anglican Homily of Salvation

was ascribed to Thomas Cranmer by Gardiner. In addition the homilies Of The True Lively and Christian Faith and Of Good Works have also been ascribed to Cranmer. In the XI article of Religion of the Anglican Faith, there is a reference to at least the first of these homilies and perhaps all three. The Article itself refers to a "Homily on Justification" which may include the three homilies.

Cranmer said

"[T]his is the strong rock and foundation of Christian religion... this whosoever denieth is not to be counted for a Christian man."

Cranmer describes Christ's merit in three ways: a "satisfaction" or sacrifice as amends for our sins; a ransom-price to atone for our unrighteousness and God's righteous claim against us; as righteousness, fulfilling the law which we break,

and by whose righteousness we law-breakers are accredited law-keepers: "Christ is now the righteousness of all them that truly do believe in him. He for them paid their ransom by his death. He for them fulfilled the law in his life. So that now in him, and by him, every true Christian man may be called a fulfiller of the law: forasmuch as that which their infirmity lacked, Christ's justice hath supplied." Christ's entire life, including his obedience to the law, was "for us" and for our justification.

Justification for Cranmer means not that we are made essentially or intrinsically righteous but that we are pronounced righteous: "to justify" means "to pronounce, declare or exhibit as just" (imputed righteousness). In this, he would depart from Osiander and other advocates of essential righteousness (or imparted righteousness). There is no essential righteousness even among the Elect. Faith is an "acceptance of the facts and doctrines of Christianity, but it also involves " a sure trust and confidence in God's merciful promises", which necessarily expresses itself in life and conduct. [This] ...true lively and Christian faith ... avails for justification"..." Faith is passive in relation to the work of God. It is only the hand which takes, or the vessel which can be filled (but) "it is lively and stirreth inwardly in the heart, ... it is lively and fruitful in bringing forth good works". Faith is passive in the sense that it cannot create but can only receive the justifying righteousness which is the gift of God Himself. But faith is active in the sense that receiving righteousness it necessarily impels to those works which are not merely the accompaniment but the expression and outworking of justification. Cranmer saw clearly that at all costs there must be avoided the dissemination of a comfortable notion that we have only to believe the creed and we can do as we like.

But for those who do not understand, or perhaps do not want to understand the "by faith only" the inefficacy of

works is an obvious and facile excuse for their absence.

Faith is no more to be regarded as a work or virtue than...hope. It is to be renounced as a work, ...as any other work. Faith says "It is not I that take away your sins, but it is Christ only." We are saved by faith, but we are also saved by hope, or charity, or repentance, or all of these things. The word only he uses simply as an equivalent of "without works."

If we do good works with the intention of justification or earthly reward, those works are not just "dead" but an abomination in God's sight. The particular "good work" of fasting is acceptable to God for three reasons only: to chastise the flesh, to make the spirit more fervent in prayer, and to witness (to God alone) our "humble submission to his high majesty." Almsgiving and tithing are other good works that are truly opportunities to serve God, but the works follow justification and not vice versa. Good works are a fruit of the Holy Spirit working in us: "For as the good fruit is not the cause that the tree is good, but the tree must first be good before it can bring forth good fruit; so the good deeds of man are not the cause that maketh man good, but he is first made good by the Spirit and grace of God that effectually worketh in him, and afterward he bringeth forth good fruits."

Cranmer insists that where there is a true faith there is a necessary compulsion to good works. It is not just that faith applauds or advises or even encourages works. Works are the necessary consequence. This is the truth for which James contends though Cranmer doesn't refer to this passage, instead he finds his scriptural evidence in John 1, and the more especially in Hebrews 11.

John 1:1-3

"1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."

Hebrews 11:7

"7 By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith. {moved...: or, being wary}"

Hebrews 11:8

"8 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went."

Good works are therefore a test by which a true faith can be discerned from a false. "The trial of all these things is a very godly and christian life."

...works are so tied to faith that without faith there are no works.

This doctrine of faith was known by the Fathers.

As to the other dominical sacrament, the role of baptism in justification is that it removes original sin.

Ongoing repentance removes actual sins. Our justification by Christ is therefore, through the gift of repentance, repeatedly effectual.

Dr. William Forbes, First Bishop of Edinburgh: "Justifying faith, to speak distinctly and theologically, is nothing else than a firm and sure

assent of the mind produced by the Holy Ghost through the word; by which we acknowledge as most true all that God has revealed in holy Scripture ...

"Very many of the Fathers assert that we are justified by faith only. But if all these and other like passages which might be found, be read fairly and honestly, the reader will plainly see that the Fathers by the word only, or alone, never thought of excluding simply all works of faith and grace from being causative of justification and eternal life:

[These works seem to be acceptable: All works done of man, WITH faith in Christ and God's preventing [previous] grace: But there is NO absolute necessity of outward works even of grace, as outward works of charity or repentance, the receiving of the Sacraments, &c.

No boasting in our own works, of whatever kind or whensoever done they may be, [before or after receiving faith] whether of the outward or inward kind."]

Again: This conclusion then, that good works are necessary to salvation not only by reason of their being necessarily present, but also by reason that they are in some degree causative thereof, and that works no less than faith are in their own way referred to salvation, is admitted, as we have shewn, to be most true by very many of the most learned Protestants. Again: "The more rigid Protestants do very ill in rejecting the commonly received distinction of justification into primary and secondary. For to say nothing now of that first justification, which consists in the remission of all precedent sins and the gift of sanctifying grace" [so are joined in the Baptismal Office these two expressions of 'washing' and 'sanctifying'] "we must necessarily acknowledge and admit a secondary or posterior justification, which consists in the progression, increase, and perfecting (according to the state of life) of that justice which has been given in the first instance, and in the remission of those faults into which even the just fall daily. Of this the Scriptures speak. (Apocal. last ch.) He who is justified, let him be justified still. (Qui Justus est, justificetur adhuc.) &c.' Ib. p. 168.

The authority granted the two Books of Homilies is largely derived from the Thirty-Nine Articles. Article 35, accepted by the Episcopal Church, states that it "declares the Books of Homilies to be an explication of Christian doctrine, and instructive in piety and morals." To the extent that the Articles are accepted as authoritative, one can claim similar

authority for these Homilies. The problem is that the Articles have a confused and confusing status in the Episcopal Church in America.

Cranmer's views on the sacraments are consistent with his understanding of justification.

46 Hooker will later affirm that sacraments are "an outward sign of an inward and spiritual grace"; in these Homilies, there is an early foreshadowing of this when a sacrament is described as "a visible sign of an invisible grace," and "the outward word and element to preach to the receiver the inward and invisible grace of God." This language is itself an echo of St. Augustine, who regarded the sacraments as "holy signs."

47 Cranmer believed that the sacraments were means of grace and yet would not wish to reify grace. Grace is the promises of God extended to those who have faith, including adoption, forgiveness and salvation. The gospel promises do not point to the sacraments as special means of this grace, but rather the sacraments are really visible showings of the gospel promises, as preaching is an audible showing of the same promises. The sacraments display and confirm the gospel promises, and strengthen the faithful, but they do not add any special blessings that cannot be obtained any other way. They do not "add grace" to the gospel.

48 In his Answer to Gardiner, Cranmer writes: "And although Christ be not corporally in the bread and wine, yet Christ used not so many words, in the mystery of his holy supper, without effectual signification. For he is effectually present, and effectually worketh not in the bread and wine, but in the godly receivers of them, to whom he giveth his own flesh spiritually to feed upon, and his own blood to quench their great inward thirst."

49 As to the other dominical sacrament, the role of baptism in justification is that it removes original sin.

50 Ongoing repentance removes actual sins. Our justification by Christ is

therefore, through the gift of repentance, repeatedly effectual.

In "An Homily of Good Works, and First of Fasting," the Sixteenth Homily, the role of good works in our justification is revisited. Augustine is quoted: "Good works go not before in him which shall afterward be justified; but good works do follow after, when a man is first justified." Three reasons for doing good works are given: first, to show our obedience to God; second, to bear witness to our justification, and third, that others, seeing our good works, may glorify God.

Good works, including fasting, are thus set within the context of prior justification or revealing the justification of those doing the works; the Law is not the reason Christians fast, and New Testament examples are cited of doing good works for the wrong reason: "The Pharisee directed his works to an evil end, seeking by them justification, which indeed is the proper work of God, without our merits" (on Luke 18:9). Those works which are done seeking justification are described as "evil and abominable": "They have their reward; that is, they have the praise and commendation of men, but of God they have none at all (Mt. 6:2). For whatsoever tendeth to an evil end is itself, by that evil end, made evil also." This is consistent with the theology of the first Book and pushes against the role of good works in justification even more vociferously—that works that are not done purely for one of the three reasons above are akin to "eating and drinking damnation upon ourselves" (1 Cor. 11:29) by receiving the Eucharist unworthily. If we do good works with the intention of justification or earthly reward, those works are not just "dead" but an abomination in God's sight. The particular "good work" of fasting is acceptable to God for three reasons only: to chastise the flesh, to make the spirit more fervent in prayer, and to witness (to God alone) our "humble submission to his high majesty." Almsgiving and tithing are other good works that are truly opportu-

nities to serve God, but the works follow justification and not vice versa.

Good works are a fruit of the Holy Spirit working in us: "For as the good fruit is not the cause that the tree is good, but the tree must first be good before it can bring forth good fruit; so the good deeds of man are not the cause that maketh man good, but he is first made good by the Spirit and grace of God that effectually worketh in him, and afterward he bringeth forth good fruits."

Waeshael - comments

This is the thrust of the Anglican ideas of justification and righteousness, ideas supported by the founders of the Church of England, and also the Bishops of London who, in the 16th c., codified the Anglican beliefs. These are not the beliefs of the Protestant churches. The divines who founded the Church of England were not Dutch, German, nor French. They were English, and their ideas were unique.

"They kept the meat and potatoes of Roman Catholicism but discarded the P's - no Pope and no Purgatory." - WAESHAEL

If you read only Protestant literature, you cannot expect to know God's plan of salvation.

So, you may have been misled into thinking that the Jews have been excluded from salvation. That there is nothing you need to do beyond baptism. That it is futile to try to get right with God, that you are a sinner for ever, broken and without any merit before God. Any of these ideas contradict Paul. And I expect that Jesus would like to have a long talk with you.

So, start reading the Church Fathers, and the best Anglican authors now, - before it's too late. And come to:

"Faith for the Hopeful" - The Adult Education discussion group at St. Luke and St. Paul in Charleston, 180 Coming Street, Sundays 10 - 11 A.M., year round.