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Project Canterbury
A Harmony of Anglican Doctrine

by William Palmer [M]
 Aberdeen: A Brown, 1846.



IV. 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, especially the mystery of our redemption and salvation through Christ.

And so, considered in itself and in its essence, it is no other thing than the Catholic Faith (i.e. the faith of the Catholic Church), which of itself also beyond all doubt justifies a man, if all those other things which are necessary to justification are joined with it."Consid. Modest, p. 7.

And again: "Very many of the Fathers assert that we are justified by faith only. Orig. in cap. 3. ad Rom. circ. fin. &c. &c." (citing a great number of passages.) "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: but,

1. The law of nature, and the Mosaic law:
2. all works done of man's own power and will, without faith in Christ and God's preventing grace:
3. a false faith, or heresy; to which, and not to good works, they then oppose faith, (i. e. true faith:)
4. the absolute necessity of outward works even of grace, as outward works of charity or repentance, the receiving of the Sacraments, &c., (that is, when the possibility or opportunity is wanting), for in such cases faith alone suffices without external works; but yet not even then without those good affections of penitence and love to God, which are inward works: (contd. to 5.)

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Justification - Anglican Fathers

A Harmony of Anglican Doctrine (contd.)

5. all vain confidence and boasting in our own works, of whatever kind or whensoever done they may be, not only such as precede faith, but also such as follow it, whether of the outward or inward kind."Ib. p, 24.

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: and as for us, we think this controversy between the two sides vain and useless, and for the most part a mere logomachy."Ib. p. 130.

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.

V. And lastly, the same Bishop Forbes quotes a passage from the Book entitled "A Necessary Doctrine, &c.," set forth by the Bishops of the Church of England in the year 1543; to which Cranmer also himself appealed shortly before his death, as still retaining its force.

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Anglican Tradition

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The following is abridged from the article on Justification:

8 "All men since the fall of Adam are born in
 9 original sin, and further are born with
 10 concupiscence, and are guilty to everlasting death
 11 and damnation, from which they can in no wise be
 12 delivered by any strength or power that is in them
 13 . . . Wherefore God sent His Son to deliver us,
 14 and to be the very means of our reconciliation and
 15 of our justification. .. Albeit God is the
 16 principal cause and chief worker of this
 17 justification in us, yet so it pleaseth His
 18 wisdom, that man, prevented by His grace, shall be
 19 also a worker by His free consent and obedience to
 20 the same, in the attaining of his own
 21 justification, and so continuing, come to the
 22 perfect end thereof by such means and ways as God
 23 hath ordained.... Although Christ offered Himself
 24 on the Cross a sufficient redemption for the sins
 25 of the world, and hath made Himself an open way
 26 for all only by His own merit, and calleth all,
 27 yet, for all this, none shall be saved by Him but
 28 they that take such ways thereto as He hath taught
 29 and appointed; i.e., for them that are of age, and
 30 have use of reason before they be christened,
 31 God's will is that all such (if they will be
 32 saved) shall at hearing give stedfast faith and
 33 assent to His word, as St. Paul saith, 'He that
 34 cometh to God must believe;' and by that faith
 35 they must conceive repentance for their sins, with
 36 trust to have forgiveness of them by Christ. And
 37 joining thereunto a full purpose of amendment of
 38 forsaking sin and serving God as long as they
 39 live, they must then receive the Sacrament of
 40 Baptism. And this is the very plain ordinary way,

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41 by which God hath determined that men being of age
 42 and coming to Christendom should be justified. For
 43 as for infants, it is to be believed that their
 44 justification is wrought by the secret operation
 45 of the Holy Ghost in their baptism.... And this
 46 justification whereof we have hitherto spoken, may
 47 be called the first justification. But if it
 48 chance us after our baptism to be overthrown of
 49 our enemies and cast into mortal sin, then there
 50 is no remedy, but for the recovering of our former
 51 justification which we have lost, to arise by
 52 penance, therein proceeding with sorrow and much
 53 lamentation, with fasting, alms, prayer, and the
 54 doing of all that God requires: and so, being thus
 55 restored to our justification, we must go forward
 56 in our battle aforesaid, in mortifying our
 57 concupiscence and in our daily spiritual
 58 renovation, in doing good works and abstaining
 59 from sin, being armed with faith, hope, and
 60 charity; to the intent we may attain our final
 61 justification, and so be glorified in the day of
 62 judgment with the reward of everlasting life....
 63 -----
 64 Wherefore when we have once received our
 65 justification in baptism, or be restored thereunto
 66 by true penance, we must continually walk after
 67 Christ, bearing our Cross, and increasing in His
 68 grace by good works; and so doing, proceed, go
 69 forward, and increase in our justification,
 70 according to the saying of St. John, 'He that is
 71 just, let him be more justified.' For as the grace
 72 of God and the gifts thereof, i.e. faith,
 73 repentance, dread, hope, charity, and the like, do
 74 increase in us, so do we wax and increase in our
 75 justification. ...

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76 ... And therefore it is plain that not only faith,
 77 as it is a distinct virtue or gift by itself, is
 78 required to our justification, but also the other
 79 gifts of the grace of God, with a desire to do
 80 good works proceeding of the same grace. And
 81 whereas in certain places of scripture our
 82 justification is ascribed to faith, without any
 83 further addition or mention of any other virtue or
 84 gift of God, it is to be understood of faith in
 85 the second sense" (as explained in a former part),
 86 "wherein the fear of God, repentance, hope and
 87 charity, are included and comprised; all which
 88 must be joined together in our justification. So
 89 that no faith is sufficient to our justification
 90 or salvation, but such a faith as worketh by
 91 charity, as is plainly expressed by St. Paul in
 92 his epistle to the Galatians: and that also our
 93 good works that we do, being once justified, by
 94 faith and charity, avail both to the conservation
 95 and refection of the said virtues in us, and also
 96 to the increase and end of our justification and
 97 everlasting salvation..... And although we can
 98 never be justified without these gifts of the Holy
 99 Ghost, faith, repentance, hope, charity, with
 100 desire and study to bring forth good works, yet
 101 nevertheless we are justified gratis, inasmuch as
 102 all gifts or works, whereby our justification is
 103 wrought or accomplished, come of the free mercy
 104 and grace of God, and not of our desert: so that
 105 our pride and glory in ourselves, and our own
 106 worthiness, is utterly excluded. For we are not
 107 able of ourselves, as of ourselves, so much as to
 108 think any good thing; but our ability and
 109 sufficiency is of God."P. 363. ed. 1825.110 VI. Nor is the
 above doctrine at all at variance
 111 with the letter of the XXXIX Articles, whatever
 112 spirit they may be asserted by some to breathe. In
 113 them we find the following doctrine:. All men are

114 born in original sin, which deserves God's wrath
 115 and damnation: (Art. ix.) Have no power of
 116 themselves to please God, nor to prepare
 117 themselves to faith or calling on God. (Art. x.)
 118 The name of Jesus Christ is the only name given,
 119 whereby men must be saved. (Art. xviii.) In the
 120 Old and New Testament alike everlasting life is
 121 offered to mankind in Christ, who is the only
 122 Mediator; and the old Fathers looked forward by
 123 faith to the same salvation. (Art. vii.) They that
 124 be called of God, and through grace obey the
 125 calling, are justified freely, (Art. xvii.) and
 126 accounted righteous before God only for the merit
 127 of Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for their own
 128 works or deservings (whether of natural or legal
 129 justice); and so they are justified by faith only:
 130 (Art. xi.) and that in Baptism; (as is taught by
 131 the Homily on Justification referred to by the
 132 same Article, which uses indifferently the terms
 133 "baptized or justified.") And to such as thus
 134 "believe and are baptized," and are "regenerate,"
 135 or "Baptizati," there is no condemnation. (Art.
 136 ix.) They are conformed to the image of Jesus
 137 Christ; they walk religiously in good works. (Art.
 138 xvii.) Their good works please God. (Art. xii.)
 139 They may fall however after Baptism even into
 140 deadly sin; and yet be pardoned: they may after
 141 they have received the Holy Ghost depart from
 142 grace given, and fall into sin; and by the grace
 143 of God arise again and amend their lives, and be
 144 forgiven both by God and by the Church, through
 145 Penitence: (Art. xvi.) And so, at length, by God's
 146 mercy again walking religiously in good works they
 147 attain to everlasting felicity. Art. xvii.

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"The Institution," and "A Necessary Doctrine, &c.,"

agreed on by the Bishops in England,
A.D. 1537 and 1643:

"All those things which were taught by the Apostles, and have been by a whole universal consent of the Church of Christ ever since that time taught continually, and taken always for true, ought to be received, accepted, and kept as a perfect doctrine Apostolic." And in the same books it is declared, that all Christians must take the articles of the Creed, "and interpret all the same things, according to the self-same sentence and interpretation, which the words of Scripture do signify, and the holy approved doctors of the Church do agreeably entreat and defend." P. 222. ed. 1825.

III. From a Canon made by a Synod in England, A.D. 1571: Let Preachers above all things be careful that they never teach aught in a sermon to be religiously held and believed by the people, except that which is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testaments, and which has been collected from the same doctrine by the Catholic Fathers and ancient Bishops.

IV. From a work of Archbishop Bramhall, entitled "Schism Guarded:" "We do not only admit oral traditions in general, as an excellent introduction to the doctrine of saving truth, and a singular help to expound the holy Scriptures, but also particular unwritten traditions, derived from the Apostles, and delivered unto us by the manifest testimony of the primitive Church, being agreeable to the holy Scriptures. The Apostles did speak by inspiration, as well as write; and their tradition, whether by word or writing, indifferently, was the Word of God, into which Faith was resolved. St. Augustine setteth us down a certain rule, how to know a true genuine Apostolical tradition: 'Whatsoever,' saith he, 'the universal Church doth hold, which has not been instituted by Councils, but always received, is most rightly believed to have been delivered by Apostolical authority.'" Oxford ed. p. 382.

Amori Christi et Ecclesiae –
Glen C. Miller OSV

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VIII. From a Pastoral Letter addressed in the year 1839, by the Synod of the Scottish Bishops to the Clergy and Laity of their Church:

"We are specially guided to the truth as it is in Jesus, and guarded against the errors opposed to it, by the well matured system which gives to the uninterrupted succession of Catholic Tradition the regulated authority and just influence which belong to it. The external evidence of the authority and authenticity of Scripture is traditional; and it is in the history and in the uniform practice of the Christian Church that we ascertain, with certainty, matters of very considerable importance not expressly decided in Scripture, and which therefore, without the Tradition of the Church, would be doubtful, and liable to dispute. . . . The Church of England (as well as our own) has ever maintained the authority of Scripture in the clearest terms; but she requires us to take along with us, in reading and interpreting Scripture, all the necessary aids, by which we may best attain its import. In this view she has ever regarded not the spurious and fallacious traditions of the Church of Rome, but the pure and primitive Tradition of the Catholic Church." P. 14.

IX. Dr. Hammond, Chaplain to King Charles I, as cited by Dr. Thomas Brett, writes on the same subject as follows: Although Scripture is the most certain and safe rule of belief, yet there being no less veracity in the tongues than in the hands, in the preachings than the writings of the Apostles; nay, prior sermo quam liber, prior sensus quam stilus, saith Tertullian, (the Apostles preached before they writ, planted Churches, before they addressed Epistles to them,) on these grounds I make no scruple to grant that Apostolical traditions, such as are truly so, as well as Apostolical writings, are equally the matter of that Christian's belief, who is equally secured by the fidelity of the conveyance, that as the one is Apostolical writing, so is the other Apostolical tradition.

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Next then, the inquiry must proceed by examining what is the equal way of conveyance, common to both these, upon the strength of which we become obliged to receive such or such a tradition for Apostolical. And this again is acknowledged to be not by any Divine testimony; for God hath nowhere affirmed in Divine Writ, that the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans, consisting of so many periods as now it is in our Bibles, was ever written by that Apostle, nor are there any inward characters or signatures, or beams of light in the writing itself, that can be admitted, or pretended as testimonies of this, any more than the like may exact to be admitted as witnesses, that the Creed called the Apostles' was indeed in the full sense of it delivered to the Churches. It remains then that herein on both sides we rest content with human testimonies of undoubted authority, or such as there is not any rational motive to distrust, and of which alone the matter is capable. For as in the case of the question concerning the Epistle to the Romans, the only regular way of satisfying it is, first, by devolution, or appeal to the authority of those Fathers and Councils, to whom it was de facto sufficiently testified and approved, and so secondly, and by consequence, by appeal to the very original records and proofs of undoubted fidelity; so the way of trial of any tradition pretended to be Apostolical, whether it be such or no, is by devolving it to the same, or the like Fathers and Councils, which having occasion and facility to examine the truth of the matter by the records or testimonies of those Churches to which it was delivered, found it sufficiently testified by them, that it was in truth even as is pretended. Now then comes the upshot of the inquiry, what qualifications there are of a testimony or testifier, without which it or he may not be thus deemed credible, worthy to be believed by a sober Christian; and where these qualifications are to be found; which when we have once resolved, it will also be possible for us to pass some judgment of traditions duly styled Apostolical, which, as such, must be allowed to be the object of our faith.

And herein I shall hope also that the resolution will be unquestionable, if it be bounded by those three terms of Vincentius Lirinensis, universality, antiquity, consent." And again: Whatsoever one Church professeth to have received from the Apostle that planted it, is of itself sufficient, without the confirmation of all others, to beget and establish belief in him, to whom it thus testifies: whereupon Tertullian refers the inquirer to that Apostolic Church, that is next him, be it Corinth, if he live in Achaia, Philippi, or Thessalonica; Ephesus, if Asia; or if he be in Italy, Rome. But this is no further to be extended, than while we suppose, without inquiry, that other Apostolical Churches have received, and are ready to testify the same; which presumption or supposal must then cease, when upon inquiry we find the contrary. Works, vol. i. 3, 4. p. 545. And the same author, in another place: