

AN
APPEAL
TO THE
LIGHT,
OR,
RICHARD BAXTER'S
ACCOUNT
OF

Four accused Passages of a SERMON
on *EPH.* 1. 3. Published in hope either to
procure the convincing instructions of the
wise, or to humble and stop the erroneous
Resisters of the Truth.

Read *Joh.* 3. 20, 21, and *Jam.* 3.

L O N D O N,
Printed for Nevil Simmons at the Princes-Arms in
St. Paul's Church-yard, 1674.

An Appeal to the LIGHT, &c.

IN the Sermon accused by some having before opened 50 Blessings or Privileges of Believers through Christ, I named 20 counterfeit Privileges asserted by the Libertines called Antinomians, corrupting the Gospel of Jesus ! So many have since accused that Sermon, (though no one to my self) that I think it my duty to give this repetition of those 4 points which I hear they speak against.

I. I did assert that Christ's righteousness (even habitual, active and passive, exalted by his Divine righteousness) being the fulfilling of his Law and Covenant of Mediation, hath perfectly merited the Reconciliation, Pardon, Justification, Adoption, Sanctification, Glory, and all the good which ever we receive, to be given us freely in his own time, and on his own terms, by his new Covenant, by his Spirit, and by his Providence: and that we are as *justly* and *certainly* justified, pardoned and saved by and for this meritorious righteousness and sacrifice of Christ, as if we had done and suffered all our selves: and that he suffered for us, and in our stead, that we might not suffer, and fulfilled all righteousness for us that were sinners: and to these proper uses we have and need no other righteousness; and though it be not a Scripture phrase, we may truly say that thus Christ's righteousness is imputed to us.

But Christ did all this in the person of a Mediator; and not as our Delegate, Servant or Agent; nor full Representer of our persons; that is, his person, and the person of each sinner were not the same indeed, or in Law-sense, nor did God so judge them: God did not so impute our sins to him, as to take the very sins themselves to be his own sins; for then they would denominate him accordingly, and make him actually hateful to God as they do us, and his person would be corrupted by them: it is therefore ill language (and strictly not true) to say that Christ was not only an Ignorant, Infidel, Atheist, a Blasphemer, a Murderer, an Adulterer, a Lye, but the greatest Sinner in the World, and the worst Person, as having the sins of all the World, or elect, made in themselves his very sins. It was only the punishment which he underwent, as a voluntary sacrifice of propitiation. And it is not true that we did

our selves fulfil all righteousness, and satisfy justice, by and in Christ as personating us: nor that God doth judge us to have done all this in and by him; and so take us to be such as never sinned, as having from our birth to our death perfectly done all commanded us by another: nor are we justified by the Law of innocency, as no sinners: but from *that Law*, by the Law of Grace; else we could have no need of Christ's death and satisfaction, nor be capable of any pardon, nor pray for pardon, nor use any means for pardon, nor give any thanks for it, nor need a Law of Grace to give it us, nor a Sacrament to seal it to us; for he that is reputed never to have sinned, but to have perfectly kept the Law, hath no sin to pardon, or to be washed from by the blood of Christ. And this maketh all God's punishing corrections of us for sin to be none, or to be unjust; if we are reputed such as never sinned, or such as have made perfect satisfaction by another. Christ's righteousness is ours as to the effects, uses and ends, and in the time, measure and order determined by himself: but it is not *ours* in the same sense as it is his; for his person and ours being not the same, (though Union make us members of his Political Body, not of his Natural) the same accident cannot be in two (yea innumerable) subjects: Christ's righteousness is Divine as well as Humane, and so is his Essence, and is Infinite, and is very God: but we have no righteousness which is our Essence, Infinite, and is very God: we are not Gods: Christ's habitual righteousness is exclusive of all sin, or need of healing Grace, or of a Saviour: but so is not ours: Christ was the very Agent of those acts that are his active righteousness: but we did them not, nor doth God mistake, and think we did them: it is not well said therefore that we are as righteous as Christ, and more righteous than the Angels, as having all the same righteousness that Christ hath, as proprietors of it self: but it is ours in and to all the fruits and effects of it, as it pleased the Father and Son to convey them. And lest any could not remember my words, I told you that Mr. Bradshaw in a little Book of *Justification* (in Latin and English) hath in a few lines in the Preface told you in what sense Christ's righteousness is and is not imputed to us, just as I mean, and to that I stand.

II. I said that we have no Righteousnesses of our own, which answereth the Law of innocency, or satisfyeth it: Nor any which is in stead of the Righteousness of Christ, or any of its proper uses; nor any which is to joyn with Christ's to the same uses and nearest ends; nor must we ascribeto our own works, the least degree of that which is proper to

to the meritorious Righteousness, or Sacrifice, or Grace of Christ: But as Christ is our King, and hath freely given his benefits, by the way and terms of a Law of Grace (the Baptistina Covenant) so that Covenant or Law must be performed by us through his grace: And we must be judged by that Law: And we must have a Righteousness required by that Law in subordination to Christ's Meritorious Righteousness: And by that personal Righteousness, we must be justified against the contrary charge: that is, we must be justified by our faith against the charge of Infidelity, and by our Repentance against the charge of Impenitency; and by our Love, Holiness, Obedience and Sincerity, against the charge of final unholiness, rebellion, and being hypocrites: And the day of Judgment will not be to try Christ and his Righteousness, but (to honour it) and try us and ours: And all men shall be judged according to their own works: And to be judged, is to be justified or condemned: And salvation or damnation will be adjudged us as we are found to have been personally righteous or unrighteous, in respect to the terms of the Law of Grace; that is, Believers or unbelievers, penitent or impenitent, holy or unholy; and no man shall be justified or saved by this plea; Though I lived and dyed an Atheist, Infidel, Blasphemer, impenitent, unholy, carnal, a dishonest man, a Thief, a Murderer, an Adulterer; yet Christ believed, repented, was holy, and just, and sober, and honest, in my stead and person. And yet Salvation as to the *Thing itself*, is the free gift of God, merited only by Christ for us; but it is a reward to *our* obedience, only as to the Order of collation of that free gift: As a Father will give a piece of Gold to his Child that will humbly thank him, and not to him that will despise it.

III. I said that God indeed commandeth no Duty which he is not ready to help us to perform, and that he that commandeth us to Believe, Repent and Love him, doth by effectual grace cause all his Elect to Believe, Repent, and Love him (and sincerely to obey him, and persevere herein) but that it is not true that his *Commands*, and *Promises*, and *Operations* are of equal extent, so that he *Promiseth* and *Giveth* all that he *Commandeth*, either to *All*, or to the *Elect*: For unless we will say as some Papists, that there are *Counsels* which are no *Laws*, and *Venial Sins*, which are but *Analogically* and not *properly* called *sins*, we must believe that all men are *Commanded* to Love, trust and obey God with all their mind, and soul, and might, yea perfectly; and that all this is forbidden, even imperfection of holy duty, and every vain thought, and

and word, and deed : And he, that saith he hath no sin, is a lyer, for in many things we offend all ; and sin is a transgression of the Law : And it is not meet for a Godly man's mouth to say, either that *no man*, or *no elect man* ever sinneth, or that *God breaketh his promise* as oft as any of them sin ; which must be if he promise and Give all that he commandeth, and not only help or enable men to do more than they do.

All the other Counterfeit Priviledges I pass by, because I hear of none accused particularly but these ; and if herein I erre, I crave hereafter the charitable Teaching of them that by accusing, shew that they think their knowledge of these matters is more clear ; professing my desire thankfully to Learn, and to buy the truth at a dearer rate than a recantation of my error. But if I have only opened a weighty part of Christ's Gospel, which babes should understand, and all sober Christians do or should agree in, and have only sought to keep God's Doctrine, Church, and Servants, from such Corruption as looketh too like *another Gospel*, and if prevalently practised, would be mens utter ruine ; and also to vindicate God's Servants from such scandalous errors, as some envious Writers with great scorn endeavour to fasten on them ; I humbly ~~ad~~monish all sober Christians, that they own not those errors, and justify not those accusers, and harden not any insulting adversaries, and ensnare not honest injudicious Christians, or posterity, and to fear lest they should hainously injure that Christ, and that sacred Gospel, which they love : And if they will not Learn of one that differs from them, that they would consider what it is that they defame, lest they take that brand upon themselves, as being of the contrary judgment, which I would have saved them from, and lest they do many Souls such hurt as they cannot cure.

IV. And (on the by, perswading Teachers, not hastily to engage the common hearers though godly, in such Controversies as they are unfit for, and are past their reach, lest they turn their practical Religion into wordy contentious sidings, and make their Churches Militant against themselves, and other brethren) I did aver to them upon my long observation and experience, that so much of those difficult Controversies among Christians doth lye in bare ambiguous words and notions, (Or unrevealed things) as will hardly be believed by such as have not thoroughly tryed it : yea, not only among Protestants, but some such Controversies with the Papists themselves ; where I told you by distinction, that our Controversies with them are of two sorts ; 1. Some that

that a carnal interest bred and feedeth, such as their Papal usurped Power, and Tyrannical Church Government, and Indulgences, and their Carnal way of worship, and all those Doctrines (as Purgatory, and such others) which serve the same interest and ends : And in all these our difference is great indeed, and unreconcilable unless they change : But 2. There are some points which no carnal interest, but the meer difficulty of the matter, and the weakness of man's understanding make a Controversie ; such as (I named them) about Election and Reprobation, and Physical predetermination, and universal Redemption, the definition of man's Power and free will, the way of Divine operations on the Soul, the nature and difference of effectual and sufficient Grace ; Perseverance, God's providence about the causation of sin, and other such like : And here I say again so much of the difference lyeth in words differently understood, as few believe : And a man well skilled in opening such wordy ambiguities, and truly stating Controversies, might force many to confess that they mean the same thing, while they trouble the Church by rendring each other odious for the difference. And that in the foresaid points, the Papists more differ one from another, than the Protestants do among themselves, or from the adverse part of them : The Synode of Dort (and the *English* Articles and Doctrine) not going near so far from the very Jesuits (or Arminians or Lutherans) as the Dominicans and Janfenists do ; and I would have no Christians think or say that they differ where they do not, nor make the worst man seem worse than he is, nor wrong any adversary, and harden them by wronging them, and that to our own hurt and dishonour.

But instead of this which I thus delivered, it hath been reported abroad the City, that I said, *the difference between us and the Papists, was but in words* ; and all the said distinction and instances left out : And I humbly now propose it to such Brethren, whether this be serving the Lord or his Truth, or profitable to the hearers and reporters Souls, or safe or honourable to themselves, and who is served and gratified hereby. And whether those Teachers that have bought their little knowledge at as dear a rate as any of them, deserve not better Justice from them, if not the charity of personal conviction or instruction, instead of all this behind our backs, when we cannot right our selves, or save the hearers ; and whether such requital for our labours will be their peace at last, or their honour to posterity. Though to me it must be a small thing to be judged of man, being going to the judgment of the Lord ; and small

to be denied the praise of Man, which is the Hypocrites poor reward. And I doubt not but that which the erroneous accuse, will be profitable to impartial teachable persons; and as errors have in all ages been shorter lived, than truth, so the age that followeth may entertain that, which prejudiced mistaught persons at present do resist. And it is sound Doctrine that must make sound Christians, and sound Churches: which must not by any faithful Minister be betrayed; especially not for fear of displeasing them, who would hate their errors if they did but know them; and who expect that we should flatter neither Princes nor Prelates, were we to preach to them, who yet can offer us far greater temptations, than these offended persons, from whom we crave and expect no more, but entertainment of Gods truth as far as we prove it, or at least to stay while they impartially consider it, and not fearlessly to speak evil of that which they never understood. But if with some misled hearers, so much wisdom and conscience is not to be hoped for, I am persuaded that in *England*, few Ministers of Christ will prove so weak as to propagate or approve such errors.

POSTSCRIPT.

I Must here also tell the World that there are divers Sheets published and cryed about as mine; with my Name prefixed; (as one called [*Mr. Baxter's Directions for Family Duties*; another of *Sentences about Conversion*,] and more such, which are none of mine, but are falsely so pretended to my wrong: some said to be Printed by *John Conners* in *Southwark*, and some by others.

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FINIS.