

will refuse to subscribe unto them? Can they directly grant, and directly deny, one and the very self same thing? Our own proceedings in disputing against their works satisfactory and meritorious, do shew, not only that they hold, but that we acknowledge them to hold the foundation, notwithstanding their opinion. For are not *these* our arguments against them? Christ alone hath satisfied and appeased his Father's wrath; Christ hath merited salvation alone. We should do fondly to use such disputes, neither could we think to prevail by them, if that whereupon we ground, were a thing which we know they do not hold, which we are assured they will not grant. Their very answers to all such reasons, as are in this controversy brought against them, will not permit us to doubt, whether they hold the foundation or no. Can any man, that has read their books concerning this matter, be ignorant, how they draw all their answers unto *these* heads,—that the remission of all our sins, the pardon of all whatsoever punishments thereby deserved, the rewards which God hath laid up in Heaven, are by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ purchased, and obtained sufficiently for all men; but for no man effectually for his benefit in particular, except the blood of Christ be applied particularly to him by such means as God hath appointed that to work by? That those means of themselves, being but dead things, only the blood of Christ is that which putteth life, force, and efficacy in them to work, and to be available, each in his kind, to our salvation? Finally, that Grace being purchased for us by the blood of Christ, and freely without any merit or desert at the first bestowed upon us, the good things which we do, after Grace received, be thereby not made satisfactory and meritorious? Some of their sentences to this effect I must allege for mine own warrant. He then gives some extracts from the writers of the Romish Church, pointedly to the effect of what he had just attributed to them.

“Howbeit,” he says farther on, “considering how many virtuous and just men, how many Saints, how many Martyrs, how many of the Ancient Fathers of the Church, have had their sundry perilous opinions; and amongst sundry of their opinions this,—that they hoped to make God some part of amends for their sins by the voluntary punishment which they laid upon themselves,—because *by a consequent* it may follow hereupon that they were injurious unto Christ, shall we therefore make such deadly epitaphs, and set them upon their graves, they denied the foundation of Faith directly, they are damned, there is no salvation for them? Saint Austin saith of himself, *Errare possum, Hæreticus esse nolo*. And, except we put a difference between them that err, and them that obstinately persist in error, how is it possible that ever any man should hope to be saved?

“And shall I think, because of this only error, that such a man toucheth not so much as the hem of Christ's garment? If he do, wherefore should not I have hope, that virtue might proceed from Christ to save him? Because his error doth *by consequent* overthrow his faith, shall I therefore cast him off, as one that hath utterly cast off Christ? One that holdeth not so much as by a single thread?

“Surely, I must confess unto you, if it be an error, that God may be merciful to save men even when they err, my greatest comfort is my error; were it not for the love I bear unto this error, I would never wish to speak, nor to live.