

oil. No: nor yet asking the opinion of ministers or of experienced christians; but "the rather giving diligence to make their calling and election sure." The farmer who looks well to his flocks and herds, flourishes; the negligent is clothed with rags. The soul of the diligent is made rich, whether in temporals or spirituals. Then, be not slothful, or mere hearers of the Word, but clear your state, and prove your election. (See Use of Saving Knowledge, at the end of the Confession of Faith; and read Guthrie's trial of a saving interest in Christ.) Obey the invitation of Christ, if hitherto you have not done so. Close with His offers, and cleave to Him, if heretofore you have been undecided. But use diligence, for otherwise you will not attain. "Unstable as water, thou canst not excel," will be your description; "Always learning, but never coming to the knowledge of the truth," your characteristic. Wherefore "give diligence to make your calling and election sure; for if ye do so, you will never fall."

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The Justifying Righteousness.

THAT righteousness by which we are justified, is a free gift, as appears by the following words:—"The gift of righteousness, conformably to which, the Apostle represents believers, not as performing it, but as *receiving* it. The Gospel of sovereign grace, proclaiming the sufficiency, suitability, and freeness of it, is thence denominated the word of righteousness.—the ministration of righteousness; and one of the glorious characters which our Divine Sponsor bears, is, The Lord our Righteousness. In perfect correspondence with which, He is said to be *made unto us Righteousness*; and it is affirmed of believers, that they are made the Righteousness of God, in Him. Hence it is that they are declared, by the Spirit of Infidelity, to be *justified in Him, accepted in Him, complete in Him, and saved in Him*. Such is the divinely appointed method of justification, and such the provision which Grace has made, for the acceptance of guilty, ungodly and wretched creatures."

The grand design of the Gospel is to reveal this righteousness of God, and to display the riches of that grace, which provided and freely bestows the wonderful gift. The Gospel informs us that, in regard to justification, what is required of the transgressor, both as to doing and suffering, was performed by our adorable substitute. This perfect obedience, therefore, being revealed in the word of truth, for the justification of sinners, it is the business of true faith, not to come in as a condition, not to assert its own importance, and to share the glory with our Saviour's righteousness, but to *receive* it as absolutely sufficient to justify the most ungodly sinner, and as entirely free for his use. For what is evan-

gelical faith, but the *receiving of Christ and His righteousness*? (Leviticus xlv. 22; John i 12; Romans v. 17.) Or, in other words, a *dependence on Jesus for eternal salvation*? A dependence upon Him is all-sufficient to save the most guilty, and every way suitable to save the most ungodly sinner, and as absolutely free for the viles of sinners. The Divine Redeemer, and His finished work, being the object of faith, and the report of the Gospel, its warrant and ground, *to believe*, is to trust entirely, and without reserve, on the faithful word which God has spoken, and on the perfect work which Christ has wrought. Such is the faith of God's elect; and the comfortable evidences of its truth and reality, are the love of God and holy obedience, peace of conscience and hope of glory. These, to a greater or less degree, are its proper effects and genuine fruits.

Happy, thrice happy, they that are interested in this divine righteousness, and have received the atonement! All such are pronounced righteous by the Eternal Judge. There is nothing to be laid to their charge. They were acquitted, with honor to all the perfections of Deity, and everlastingly free from condemnation. Their sins, though ever so numerous, or ever so hateful, being purged away by atoning blood, and their souls being vested with that more excellent robe—the Redeemer's righteousness—they are *without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing*. They are *presented*, by their great Representative, *in the body of His flesh, through death, holy, unblamable, and unreprovable, in the sight of Omniscience*. They are fair as the purest wool, and whiter than the virgin snow. Yes, let believers exult in the thought! the work and worthiness of the Lord Redeemer give them acceptance with infinite Majesty and dignity, before the angels of light. These afford consolation on earth, and procure estimation in heaven. Through these, they shall stand, with courage, at the bar of judgment, and make their appearance, with honor, among the inhabitants of glory. Let the legalist boast of his good works, his devout services and strict holiness; the man that is taught by God esteems them all, if set in competition with Christ, or presuming to stand in the place of His righteousness, sordid as dross, vile as the dung, lighter than vanity and worse than nothing. Were he endued with all the shining virtues that ever adorned the lives and characters of the most excellent saints; did he possess the exemplary meekness of Moses, and the amazing patience of Job, the ever-active zeal of Paul, and that love which glowed in the bosom of John; he would not, he durst not, advance the least claim to justification on that footing. No, blessed Jesus, it is in Thy righteousness only that he dares to confide; it is only in thy obedience he presumes to glory. This obedience is an immovable basis for the anxious mind to rest upon by faith. This is a sure