

adopted son of God, capable of producing (drawing out) works meritorious of eternal life, and of this eternal life he is an heir." According to this doctrine, the first impartation of grace is the immediate work of God, irrespective of human merit, with the exception of the predispositions that precede justification and serve as its preparation. But when grace has been imparted, it rouses into action our will enfeebled and depraved by original sin; and thus from the germs of the image of God at first enstamped on our soul, still surviving the ruins of the fall, combined with the righteousness of Christ, works are drawn forth which shall *deserve eternal life*. But though grace is the gift of God which unrenewed men cannot merit, yet the Tridentines somewhat inconsistently affirm that there are certain previous dispositions of soul which dispose us for its reception, compelling us to draw the inference that these previous dispositions are the reasons why God confers on us this needed grace. "If any one shall affirm," say the Tridentines, "that the ungodly are justified by faith alone, so that he understands that nothing else is required which may co-operate to his attaining the grace of justification, and that it is in no way necessary that he should be prepared and disposed by the motion of his own free will, let him be accursed."

This cumbrous scheme, which has no similarity to the simplicity of the gospel, was concocted by the schoolmen during the middle ages. Peter Lombard and Thomas Aquinas distinguished between *gratia gratis data*, and *gratia gratum faciens*, the last of which seems to be the grace of the Council of Trent, and is subdivided into *gratia operans*, and *gratia co-operans*. You will excuse me from translating this unintelligible jargon, since those who devised such a clumsy terminology had evidently no distinct idea of its meaning. There cannot be a doubt that such a scheme as this, co-operating with the self-righteousness of the human heart, will practically set aside the atoning death of Christ as the *only* sacrifice for sin, and that the sinner will endeavor to share with his Redeemer in the glory of his own salvation.

This compound of law and gospel, of faith and works, is as much opposed to the scriptures as to Protestantism. "Our works," says the Augsburg Confession, "cannot reconcile God, merit the remission of sins, and grace, and justification: but this we can attain only by faith, when we believe that we are received into favor for Christ's sake, who alone is appointed our mediator and propitiatory sacrifice, by whom the father can be reconciled. He, therefore, who expects to merit grace by his works, casts contempt on the merits and grace of Christ, and is seeking the way to God in his own strength, without the Saviour, who nevertheless tells us, 'I am the way, the truth, and the life.'" This doctrine concerning *faith* is inculcated by Paul, "ye are saved by grace through faith, and *that* not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." With these sentiments I entirely agree. In opposition to the Romish doctrine of good dispositions previous to justification, St. Paul affirms that he and his fellow converts "were by nature children of wrath even as others," and that so far from being able to co-operate in the reception of divine grace, they were "dead in trespasses and sins." And after we close with mercy, our righteousness, our very best deeds, are described by