

and exemption from penalty, which, in the technical language of theological schools, are usually denoted as sanctification and justification. Sanctification begins, justification takes place, on believing. The beginning of sanctification is regeneration or the new birth. How should these two great constituents of salvation be presented to men? Although they are inseparable, we cannot well present both at once, for they are so different in kind as to require distinct exposition. Shall we first show men the necessity of exemption from all legal penalty, by substitutionary righteousness and simple faith, in order to true religiousness both below and above? So the wisdom of all our great divines avers, declaring that, in the order of thought, justification is first. Or, shall we first show men the necessity of being washed from their impurity and made Christlike in character? The wisdom of Christ says "yes" to the last question, and teaches us to set before the world, first of all, the necessity of restoration to purity. Salvation is not best proclaimed to such a man as Nicodemus in the first place as a matter of law, but as a matter of life, as a spiritual and divine cleansing. Justification involves law and justice; and law and justice, in connection with our salvation, involve many nice and subtle distinctions, to task the intellect and perhaps perplex the head; but our first business with men, as sinners, is so to avoid subtlety and controversy and exhibit vital facts as to touch the heart, to awaken a sense of sinfulness and of utter unfitness for God's service and kingdom, to show the necessity of a thorough renovation of heart and life. "By the law is the knowledge of sin," because in the light of the law we see how much evil we have done, how impure must be the heart that does it, how terrible is the penalty of doing it, and how impossible it is for us ever to be like God