

cheerful affections of the heart, not through any strength or merit of thine own, but solely through the operation and afflatus of the Holy Spirit. For he alone renews the heart, and makes a man spiritual; that, thus being spiritual, he may love *spiritualem legem*, the law of the Spirit; and not through fear, or through desire of any advantage, but with a cheerful and free heart, may fulfil it; and may be borne on by *quodam impetu*, a sort of divine impulse, spontaneously and without constraint to do those things which belong to the law. 'The law is spiritual,' must therefore be thus understood: The law is not fulfilled except with a spirit and heart renewed by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, wherever this spirit and renovation of heart through the Holy Spirit are not, so far is the law from being there fulfilled, that, on the contrary, all the [natural] repugnance to it and hatred of it remain there, although the law of itself 'is holy, and just, and good.'

"WHAT IS MEANT BY FULFILLING THE LAW."

BUT to fulfil the law is, to perform those things commanded in the law, with hilarity, uprightness, and cheerfulness of heart; that is, spontaneously, and of one's free choice, to live to God, and to perform good works, even though the law had no existence. But *non contingit cordibus*, our hearts have not any such hilarity, cheerfulness, favourable inclination of the will, and ardent affection, except through *vivificantem*, the life-giving Spirit, and his lively impulse and *agitationem*, motion in the heart: as the Apostle says in chap. v. But the Spirit is bestowed solely through faith in Jesus Christ. In like manner, at the commencement he has said, Faith cometh by hearing the Gospel, or the word of God; by which Christ is preached as having died for us, as having been buried, and raised from the dead, as he declares in chap. iii., iv., x. Our entire justification, therefore, is of God; faith and the Spirit are likewise of God, and not of ourselves."

"FAITH ALONE JUSTIFIES."

HENCE also faith alone justifies, and it alone fulfils the law. For, faith, through the merits of Christ, obtains the Holy Spirit. This blessed Spirit renews, exhilarates, excites, and inflames the heart, so that it spontaneously performs what the law requires. And then, at length, from the faith thus efficaciously working and living in the heart, freely *fluunt*, proceed those works which are truly good. The Apostle wishes to convey this meaning in the third chapter. For after he had, in that chapter, utterly condemned the works of the law, and might almost seem, by the doctrine of faith, about to destroy and abolish the law, he at once anticipates the objection by asserting, 'We do not destroy the law, but we establish it;' that is, We teach how the law is really fulfilled by believing, or through faith."

"WHAT IS TRUE FAITH."

BUT true faith is the work of God in us, by which we are born again and renewed, through God and the Spirit of God, as we are told in John i.; and by which the old Adam is slain, and we are completely transformed *per omnia*, in all things; as the Apostle declares, 'We are made new creatures in Christ through

faith;' *ubi*, in which new creatures the Holy Spirit becomes *vita et gubernatio cordis*, the living and ruling principle of the heart. But faith is an energy in the heart; at once so efficacious, lively, breathing, and powerful, as to be incapable of remaining inactive, but bursts forth into operation. Neither does he who has faith *moratur*, demur about the question, whether good works have been commanded, or not; but even though there were no law, feeling the motions of this living impulse putting forth and exerting itself in his heart, he is spontaneously borne onward to work, and at no time does he cease to perform such actions as are truly pious and Christian. But whosoever from such a living affection of the heart produces no good works, he is still in a state of total unbelief, and is a stranger to faith; as are most of those persons who hold long disputes, and give utterance to much declamation in the schools, about faith and good works, 'neither understanding what they say, nor whereof they affirm,'"

"WHAT FAITH IS."

FAITH, then, is a constant *fiducia*, trust in the mercy of God towards us; a trust living and efficacious working in the heart; by which we cast ourselves entirely on God, and commit ourselves to Him; by which, *certò freti*, having an assured reliance, we feel no hesitation about enduring death a thousand times. And this firm trust in the mercy of God is *tan animosa*, so animating, as to cheer, elevate, and excite the heart, and to transport it with certain most sweet affections towards God; and it animates this heart of the believer in such a manner, that, firmly relying on God, he feels no dread in opposing himself *solum*, as a single champion against all creatures. This high and heroic feeling, therefore, *hinc ingentes animos*, this noble enlargement of spirit, is injected and effected in the heart by the Spirit of God, who is imparted [to the believer] through faith. And hence we also obtain [the privilege] to be impelled to that which is good, by this vital energy in our hearts. We also obtain such a cheerful *propensionem*, inclination, that freely and spontaneously we are eager and most ready to do, to suffer, and to endure all things in obedience to a Father and God of such great clemency; who, through Christ, has enriched us with such abundant treasures of grace, and has almost overwhelmed us with such transcendent benefits. It is impossible that this efficacious and vital principle of faith can be in any man without continually operating and producing fruit to God. It is just as impossible for a pile of dry faggots to be set on fire without emitting flames of light. Wherefore use watchfulness, *ibi*, in this quarter, so as not to believe the vain imagination of thy own mind, and the foolish cogitations and trifles of the Sophists. For these men possess neither heart nor brains: they are mere animals of the belly, born only for these solemn banquets of the schools. But do thou pray to God, who by his word has commanded light to shine out of darkness, that He would be pleased to shine into thy heart, and create faith within thee; otherwise thou wilt never believe, though thou shouldst spend a thousand years in studying to fabricate such cogitations about a faith already obtained or to be hereafter acquired."

(To be concluded in our next.)

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