

# Commutation as Unto Sin and Righteousness

by John Owen

*The sermon explores the commutation as unto sin and righteousness, where Christ takes upon himself the sins of the world and undergoes the punishment for them, making him the righteousness of God in us.*

**Scripture:** Genesis 4:13, Leviticus 16:21, Deuteronomy 21:1, Psalm 38:4, Isaiah 53:5, Matthew 11:28, Romans 5:11, Romans 8:3, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Galatians 3:13, 1 Peter 2:24

**Topics:** "Imputed Righteousness", "Substitutionary Atonement"

## Description

John Owen preaches about the commutation between Christ and believers in sin and righteousness, emphasizing the imputation of sins to Christ and His righteousness to believers. This concept is illustrated in the ordinance of the scapegoat in Leviticus, the nature of expiatory sacrifices, and the expiation of an uncertain murder in Deuteronomy. Various Bible verses such as Isaiah 53:5, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 8:3-4, Galatians 3:13-14, and 1 Peter 2:24 are cited to prove and vindicate this commutation. The actings of faith in response to this commutation are highlighted in verses like Romans 5:11, Matthew 11:28, Psalms 38:4, and Genesis 4:13, showing how believers are called to lay their burdens on Christ and find rest in His righteousness.

## Transcript

Fifthly, A commutation as unto sin and righteousness, by imputation, between Christ and believers, represented in the Scripture The ordinance of the scapegoat, Lev. xvi. 21, 22 The nature of expiatory sacrifices, Lev. iv. 29, etc. Expiation of an uncertain murder, Deut. xxi. 19 The commutation intended proved and vindicated, Isa. liii. 5, 6; 2 Cor. v. 21; Rom. viii. 3, 4; Gal. iii. 13, 14; 1 Pet. ii. 24; Deut. xxi. 23 Testimonies of Justin Martyr, Gregory Nyssen, Augustine, Chrysostom, Bernard, Taulerus, Pighius, to that purpose The proper actings of faith with respect thereunto, Rom. v. 11; Matt. xi. 28; Ps. xxxviii. 4; Gen. iv. 13; Isa. liii. 11; Gal. iii. 1; Isa. xlv. 22; John iii. 14, 15 A bold calumny answered

Fifthly. There is in the Scripture represented unto us a commutation between Christ and believers, as unto sin and righteousness; that is, in the imputation of their sins unto him, and of his righteousness unto them. In the improvement and application hereof unto our own souls, no small part of the life and exercise of faith does consist.

This was taught the church of God in the offering of the scapegoat: And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat. And the goat shall bear upon him

all their iniquities, Lev. xvi. 21, 22. Whether this goat sent away with this burden upon him did live, and so was a type of the life of Christ in his resurrection after his death; or whether he perished in the wilderness, being cast down the precipice of a rock by him that conveyed him away, as the Jews suppose; it is generally acknowledged, that what was done to him and with him was only a representation of what was done really in the person of Jesus Christ. And Aaron did not only confess the sins of the people over the goat, but he also put them all on his head, &#1493;&#1456;&#1504;&#1464;&#1514;&#1463;&#1503;&#1488;&#1465;&#1514;&#1464;&#1501;&#1506;&#1463;&#1500;&#1470;&#1512;&#1465;&#1488;&#1513;&#1473;&#1492;&#1463;&#1513;&#1474;&#1468;&#1464;&#1506;&#1460;&#1497;&#1512;, And he shall give them all to be on the head of the goat. In answer whereunto it is said, that he bare them all upon him. This he did by virtue of the divine institution, wherein was a ratification of what was done. He did not transfuse sin from one subject into another, but transferred the guilt of it from one to another; and to evidence this translation of sin from the people unto the sacrifice, in his confession, he put and fixed both his hands on his head. Thence the Jews say, that all Israel was made as innocent on the day of expiation as they were on the day of creation; from verse 30. Wherein they came short of perfection or consummation thereby the apostle declares, Heb. x. But this is the language of every expiatory sacrifice, Quod in ejus caput sit; Let the guilt be on him. Hence the sacrifice itself was called &#1495;&#1463;&#1496;&#1468;&#1464;&#1488;&#1514; and &#1488;&#1464;&#1513;&#1473;&#1464;&#1501;, sin and guilt, Lev. iv. 29; vii. 2; x. 17. And therefore, where there was an uncertain murder, and none could be found that was liable to punishment thereon, that guilt might not come upon the land, nor the sin be imputed unto the whole people, a heifer was to be slain by the elders of the city that was next unto the place where the murder was committed, to take away the guilt of it, Deut. xxi. 19. But whereas this was only a moral representation of the punishment due to guilt, and no sacrifice, the guilty person being not known, those who slew the heifer did not put their hands on him, 35so as to transfer their own guilt to him, but washed their hands over him, to declare their personal innocence. By these means, as in all other expiatory sacrifices, did God instruct the church in the transferring of the guilt of sin unto Him who was to bear all their iniquities, with their discharge and justification thereby.

So God laid on Christ the iniquities of us all, that by his stripes we might be healed, Isa. liii. 5, 6. Our iniquity was laid on him, and he bare it, verse 11; and through his bearing of it we are freed from it. His stripes are our healing. Our sin was his, imputed unto him; his merit is ours, imputed unto us. He was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might become the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21. This is that commutation I mentioned: he was made sin for us; we are made the righteousness of God in him. God not imputing sin unto us, verse 19, but imputing righteousness unto us, does it on this ground alone that he was made sin for us. And if by his being made sin, only his being made a sacrifice for sin is intended, it is to the same purpose; for the formal reason of any thing being made an expiatory sacrifice, was the imputation of sin unto it by divine institution. The same is expressed by the same apostle, Rom. viii. 3, 4, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. The sin was made his, he answered for it; and the righteousness which God requires by the law is made ours: the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, not by our doing it, but by his. This is that blessed change and commutation wherein alone the soul of a convinced sinner can find rest and peace. So he has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come on us, Gal. iii. 13, 14. The curse of the law contained all that was due to sin. This belonged unto us; but it was transferred on him. He was made a curse; whereof his hanging on a tree was the sign and token. Hence he is said to bear our sins in his own

body on the tree, 1 Pet. ii. 24; because his hanging on the tree was the token of his bearing the curse: For he that is hanged is the curse of God, Deut. xxi. 23. And in the blessing of faithful Abraham all righteousness and acceptation with God is included; for Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness.

But because some, who, for reasons best known unto themselves, do take all occasions to except against my writings, have in particular raised an impertinent clamour about somewhat that I formerly delivered to this purpose, I shall declare the whole of my judgment herein in the words of some of those whom they can pretend no quarrel against, that I know of.

36The excellent words of Justin Martyr deserve the first place: &#913;&#8016;&#964;&#8056;&#962;&#964;&#8056;&#957; &#7988;&#948;&#953;&#959;&#957; &#965;&#7985;&#8056;&#957; &#7936;&#960;&#941;&#948;&#959;&#964;&#959; &#955;&#973;&#964;&#961;&#959;&#957; &#8017;&#960;&#8050;&#961; &#7969;&#956;&#8182;&#957;,, &#964;&#8056;&#957; &#7941;&#947;&#953;&#959;&#957; &#8017;&#960;&#8050;&#961; &#7936;&#957;&#972;&#956;&#969;&#957;,, &#964;&#8056;&#957; &#7940;&#954;&#945;&#954;&#959;&#957; &#8017;&#960;&#8050;&#961; &#964;&#8182;&#957; &#954;&#945;&#954;&#8182;&#957;,, &#964;&#8056;&#957; &#948;&#943;&#954;&#945;&#953;&#959;&#957; &#8017;&#960;&#8050;&#961; &#964;&#8182;&#957; &#7936;&#948;&#943;&#954;&#969;&#957;,, &#964;&#8056;&#957; &#7940;&#966;&#952;&#945;&#961;&#964;&#959;&#957; &#8017;&#960;&#8050;&#961; &#964;&#8182;&#957; &#966;&#952;&#945;&#961;&#964;&#8182;&#957;,, &#964;&#8056;&#957; &#7936;&#952;&#940;&#957;&#945;&#964;&#959;&#957; &#8017;&#960;&#8050;&#961; &#964;&#8182;&#957; &#952;&#957;&#951;&#964;&#8182;&#957;&#903; &#964;&#943; &#947;&#8048;&#961; &#7940;&#955;&#955;&#959; &#964;&#8048;&#962; &#7937;&#956;&#945;&#961;&#964;&#943;&#945;&#962; &#7969;&#956;&#8182;&#957; &#7968;&#948;&#965;&#957;&#942;&#952;&#951; &#954;&#945;&#955;&#973;&#968;&#945;&#953;,, &#7970; &#7952;&#954;&#949;&#943;&#957;&#959;&#965; &#948;&#953;&#954;&#945;&#953;&#959;&#963;&#973;&#957;&#951;&#894; &#7952;&#957; &#964;&#943;&#957;&#953; &#948;&#953;&#954;&#945;&#953;&#969;&#952;&#8134;&#957;&#945;&#953; &#948;&#965;&#957;&#945;&#964;&#8056;&#957; &#964;&#959;&#8058;&#962; &#7936;&#957;&#972;&#956;&#959;&#965;&#962; &#7969;&#956;&#8118;&#962; &#954;&#945;&#8054; &#7936;&#963;&#949;&#946;&#949;&#8150;&#962;,, &#7970; &#7952;&#957; &#956;&#972;&#957;&#8179; &#964;&#8183; &#965;&#7985;&#8183; &#964;&#959;&#8166; &#920;&#949;&#959;&#8166;&#894; &#8038; &#964;&#8134;&#962; &#947;&#955;&#965;&#954;&#949;&#943;&#945;&#962; &#7936;&#957;&#964;&#945;&#955;&#955;&#945;&#947;&#8134;&#962;,, &#8038; &#964;&#8134;&#962; &#7936;&#957;&#949;&#958;&#953;&#967;&#957;&#953;&#940;&#963;&#964;&#959;&#965; &#948;&#951;&#956;&#953;&#959;&#965;&#961;&#947;&#943;&#945;&#962;,, &#8038; &#964;&#8182;&#957; &#7936;&#960;&#961;&#959;&#963;&#948;&#959;&#954;&#942;&#964;&#969;&#957; &#949;&#8016;&#949;&#961;&#947;&#949;&#963;&#953;&#8182;&#957;&#903; &#7989;&#957;&#945; &#7936;&#957;&#959;&#956;&#943;&#945; &#956;&#8050;&#957; &#960;&#959;&#955;&#955;&#8182;&#957; &#7952;&#957; &#948;&#953;&#954;&#945;&#943;&#8179;

&#7953;&#957;&#8054; &#954;&#961;&#965;&#946;&#8135;,  
 &#948;&#953;&#954;&#945;&#953;&#959;&#963;&#973;&#957;&#951; &#948;&#8050;  
 &#7953;&#957;&#8056;&#962; &#960;&#959;&#955;&#955;&#959;&#8058;&#962;  
 &#7936;&#957;&#972;&#956;&#959;&#965;&#962;  
 &#948;&#953;&#954;&#945;&#953;&#974;&#963;&#8131;., Epist. ad Diognet.; He gave his Son a ransom  
 for us; the holy for transgressors; the innocent for the nocent; the just for the unjust; the incorruptible for  
 the corrupt; the immortal for mortals.

For what else could hide or cover our sins but his righteousness? In whom else could we wicked and  
 ungodly ones be justified, or esteemed righteous, but in the Son of God alone? O sweet permutation, or  
 change! O unsearchable work, or curious operation! O blessed beneficence, exceeding all expectations  
 that the iniquity of many should be hid in one just one, and the righteousness of one should justify many  
 transgressors. And Gregory Nyssen speaks to the same purpose:  
 &#924;&#949;&#964;&#945;&#952;&#949;&#8054;&#962; &#947;&#8048;&#961;  
 &#960;&#961;&#8056;&#962; &#7952;&#945;&#965;&#964;&#8056;&#957; &#964;&#8056;&#957;  
 &#964;&#8182;&#957; &#7969;&#956;&#8182;&#957;  
 &#7937;&#956;&#945;&#961;&#964;&#953;&#8182;&#957; &#8165;&#973;&#960;&#959;&#957;.,  
 &#956;&#949;&#964;&#941;&#948;&#969;&#954;&#941; &#956;&#959;&#953; &#964;&#8134;&#962;  
 &#7953;&#945;&#965;&#964;&#959;&#8166;  
 &#954;&#945;&#952;&#945;&#961;&#972;&#964;&#951;&#964;&#959;&#962;.,  
 &#954;&#959;&#953;&#957;&#969;&#957;&#972;&#957; &#956;&#949; &#964;&#959;&#8166;  
 &#7953;&#945;&#965;&#964;&#959;&#8166; &#954;&#940;&#955;&#955;&#959;&#965;&#962;  
 &#7936;&#960;&#949;&#961;&#947;&#945;&#963;&#940;&#956;&#949;&#957;&#959;&#962;., Orat. 2 in  
 Cant.; He has transferred unto himself the filth of my sins, and communicated unto me his purity, and  
 made me partaker of his beauty.

So Augustine, also: Ipse peccatum ut nos justitia, nec nostra sed Dei, nec in nobis sed in ipso; sicut ipse  
 peccatum, non suum sed nostrum, nec in se sed in nobis constitutum, Enchirid. ad Laurent., cap. xli.; He  
 was sin, that we might be righteousness; not our own, but the righteousness of God; not in ourselves, but  
 in him; as he was sin, not his own, but ours, not in himself, but in us. The old Latin translation renders  
 those words, Ps. xxii. 1, &#1491;&#1468;&#1460;&#1489;&#1456;&#1512;&#1461;&#1497;  
 &#1513;&#1473;&#1463;&#1488;&#1458;&#1490;&#1464;&#1514;&#1460;&#1497; Verba delictorum  
 meorum.

He thus comments on the place: Quomodo ergo dicit, Delictorum meorum? nisi quia pro delictis nostris  
 ipse precatur; et delicta nostra delicta sua fecit, ut justitiam suam nostram justitiam faceret; How says he,  
 Of my sins? Because he prayeth for our sins; he made our sins to be his, that he might make his  
 righteousness to be ours. &#8046; &#964;&#8134;&#962;  
 &#947;&#955;&#965;&#954;&#949;&#943;&#945;&#962;  
 &#7936;&#957;&#964;&#945;&#955;&#955;&#945;&#947;&#8134;&#962;&#903; O sweet commutation  
 and change!

And Chrysostom, to the same purpose, on those words of the apostle, That we might be made the  
 righteousness of God in him: &#928;&#959;&#8150;&#959;&#962; &#964;&#945;&#8166;&#964;&#945;  
 &#955;&#972;&#947;&#959;&#962;., &#960;&#959;&#8150;&#959;&#962;.,  
 &#964;&#945;&#8166;&#964;&#945;  
 &#960;&#945;&#961;&#945;&#963;&#964;&#8134;&#963;&#945;&#953;

&#948;&#965;&#957;&#942;&#963;&#949;&#964;&#945;&#953; &#957;&#959;&#8166;&#962;&#894;  
 &#964;&#8056;&#957; &#947;&#8048;&#961; &#948;&#943;&#954;&#945;&#953;&#959;&#957;,  
 &#966;&#951;&#963;&#8054;&#957;,, &#7952;&#960;&#959;&#943;&#951.&#963;&#949;&#957;  
 &#7937;&#956;&#945;&#961;&#964;&#969;&#955;&#972;&#957;,, &#7989;&#957;&#945;  
 &#964;&#959;&#8058;&#962; &#7937;&#956;&#945;&#961;&#964;&#969;&#955.&#959;&#8058;&#962;  
 &#960;&#959;&#953;&#942;&#963;&#8131;  
 &#948;&#953;&#954;&#945;&#943;&#959;&#965;&#962;&#903;  
 &#956;&#8118;&#955;&#955;&#959;&#957; &#948;&#8052; &#959;&#8016;&#948;&#8050;  
 &#959;&#8021;&#964;&#969;&#962; &#949;&#7990;&#960;&#949;&#957;&#903; &#7936;&#955;&#955;  
 &#8003; &#960;&#959;&#955;&#955;&#8183; &#956;&#949;&#8150;&#950;&#959;&#957;  
 &#7974;&#957;&#903; &#959;&#8016; &#947;&#8048;&#961; &#7957.&#958;&#953;&#957;  
 &#7956;&#952;&#951;&#954;&#949;&#957;,, &#7936;&#955;&#955;  
 &#945;&#8016;&#964;&#8052;&#957; &#964;&#8052;&#957;  
 &#964;&#940;&#957;&#959;&#957;&#964;&#945; &#956;&#972;&#957;&#959;&#957;,  
 &#7936;&#955;&#955;&#8048; &#964;&#8056;&#957; &#956;&#951;&#948;&#8050;  
 &#947;&#957;&#972;&#957;&#964;&#945;  
 &#7936;&#956;&#945;&#961;&#964;&#943;&#945;&#957;&#903; &#7989;&#957;&#945;  
 &#954;&#945;&#8054; &#7969;&#956;&#949;&#8150;&#962;  
 &#947;&#949;&#957;&#974;&#956;&#949;&#952;&#945;,, &#959;&#8016;&#954;  
 &#949;&#7990;&#960;&#949;,, &#948;&#943;&#954;&#945;&#953;&#959;&#953;,  
 &#7936;&#955;&#955;&#8048; &#948;&#953;&#954;&#945;&#953;&#959;&#963;&#973;&#957;&#951;,  
 &#954;&#945;&#8054; &#920;&#949;&#959;&#8166;  
 &#948;&#953;&#954;&#945;&#953;&#959;&#963;&#973;&#957;&#951;,, &#920;&#949;&#959;&#8166;  
 &#947;&#940;&#961; &#7952;&#963;&#964;&#953;&#957; &#945;&#8021;&#964;&#951;,  
 &#8005;&#964;&#945;&#957; &#956;&#8052; &#7952;&#958; &#7956;&#961;&#947;&#969;&#957;  
 (&#8005;&#964;&#945;&#957; &#954;&#945;&#8054; &#954;&#951;&#955;&#8150;&#948;&#945;  
 &#7936;&#957;&#940;&#947;&#954;&#951; &#964;&#953;&#957;&#8048; &#956;&#8052;  
 &#949;&#8017;&#961;&#949;&#952;&#8134;&#957;&#945;&#953;)) &#7936;&#955;&#955;  
 &#7936;&#960;&#8056; &#967;&#940;&#961;&#953;&#964;&#959;&#962;  
 &#948;&#953;&#954;&#945;&#953;&#969;&#952;&#8182;&#956;&#949;&#957;,,  
 &#7956;&#957;&#952;&#945; &#960;&#8118;&#963;&#945;  
 &#7937;&#956;&#945;&#961;&#964;&#943;&#945;  
 &#7968;&#966;&#940;&#957;&#953;&#963;&#964;&#945;&#953;,, 372 Epist. ad Corinth. cap. v.

Hom. 11; What word, what speech is this? What mind can comprehend or express it? For he says, He made him who was righteous to be made a sinner, that he might make sinners righteous. Nor yet does he say so neither, but that which is far more sublime and excellent; for he speaks not of an inclination or affection, but expresses the quality itself. For he says not, he made him a sinner, but sin; that we might be made, not merely righteous, but righteousness, and that the righteousness of God, when we are justified not by works (for if we should, there must be no spot found in them), but by grace, whereby all sin is blotted out.

So Bernard also, Epist. cxc., ad Innocent: Homo siquidem qui debuit; homo qui solvit. Nam si unus, inquit, pro omnibus mortuus est, ergo omnes mortui sunt; ut videlicet satisfactio unius omnibus imputetur, sicut omnium peccata unus ille portavit: nec alter jam inveniatur, qui forisfecit,9 alter qui satisfecit; quia caput et corpus est Christus. And many more speak unto the same purpose. Hence Luther, before he

engaged in the work of reformation, in an epistle to one George Spenlein, a monk, was not afraid to write after this manner: *Mi dulcis frater, disce Christum et hunc crucifixum, disce ei cantare, et de teipso desperans dicere ei; tu Domine Jesu es justitia mea, ego autem sum peccatum tuum; tu assumpsisti meum, et dedisti mihi tuum; assumpsisti quod non eras, et dedisti mihi quod non eram. Ipse susceperit te et peccata tua fecit sua, et suam justitiam fecit tuam; maledictus qui hæc non credit!* Epist. an. 1516, tom. 1.

If those who show themselves now so quarrelsome almost about every word that is spoken concerning Christ and his righteousness, had ever been harassed in their consciences about the guilt of sin, as this man was, they would think it no strafe matter to speak and write as he did. Yea, some there are who have lived and died in the communion of the church of Rome itself, that have given their testimony unto this truth. So speaks Taulerus, *Meditat. Vitæ Christ. cap vii. Christus omnia mundi peccata in se recepit, tantumque pro illis ultro sibi assumpsit dolerem cordis, ac si ipse ea perpetrasset; Christ took upon him all the sins of the world, and willingly underwent that grief of heart for them, as if he himself had committed them.*

And again, speaking in the person of Christ: *Quandoquidem peccatum Adæ multum abire non potest, obsecro te Pater clestis, ut ipsum in me vindices. Ego enim omnia illius peccata in me recipio. Si hæc iræ tempestas, propter me orta est, mitte me in mare amarissimæ passionis; Whereas the great sin of Adam cannot go away, I beseech thee, heavenly Father, punish it in me. For 38 I take all his sins upon myself. If, then, this tempest of anger be risen for me, cast me into the sea of my most bitter passion.*

See, in the justification of these expressions, Heb. x. 510. The discourse of Albertus Pighius to this purpose, though often cited and urged, shall be once again repeated, both for its worth and truth, as also to let some men see how fondly they have pleased themselves in reflecting on some expressions of mine, as though I had been singular in them. His words are, after others to the same purpose: *Quoniam quidem inquit (apostolus) Deus erat in Christo, mundum reconcilians sibi, non imputans hominibus sua delicta, et deposuit apud nos verbum reconciliationis; in illo ergo justificamur coram Deo, non in nobis; non nostrâ sed illius justitiâ, quæ nobis cum illo jam communicantibus imputatur.*

*Propriæ justitiæ inopes, extra nos, in illo docemur justitiam quærere. Cum inquit, ui peccatum non noverat, pro nobis peccatum fecit; hoc est, hostiam peccati expiaticem, ut nos efficeremur justitia Dei in ipso, non nostrâ, sed Dei justitiâ justi efficimur in Christo; quo jure? Amicitia, quæ communionem omnium inter amicos facit, juxta vetus et celebratissimum proverbium; Christo insertis, conglutinatis, et unitis, et sua nostra facit, suas divitias nobis communicat, suam justitiam inter Patris judicium et nostram injustitiam interponit, et sub ea veluti sub umbone ac clypeo a divina, quam commeruimus, ira nos abscondit, tuetur ac protegit; imo eandem nobis impertit et nostram facit, qua tecti ornatique audacter et secure jam divino nos sistamus tribunali et judicio: justique non solum appareamus, sed etiam simus.*

Quemadmodum enim unius delicto peccatores nos etiam factos affirmat apostolus: ita unius Christi justitiam in justificandis nobis omnibus efficacem esse; et sicut per inobedientiam unius hominis peccatores constituti sunt multi, sic per obedientiam unius justi (inquit) constituentur multi. Hæc est Christi justitia, ejus obedientia, qua voluntatem Patris sui perfecit in omnibus; sicut contrâ nostra injustitia est nostra inobedientia, et mandatorum Dei prævaricatio. In Christi autem obedientia quod nostra collocatur justitia inde est, quod nobis illi incorporatis, ac si nostra esset, accepta ea fertur: ut eâ ipsâ etiam nos justi habeamur.

Et velut ille quondam Jacob, quum nativitate primogenitus non esset, sub habitu fratris occultatus, atque ejus veste indutus, quæ odorem optimum spirabat, seipsum insinuavit patri, ut sub aliena persona benedictionem primogenituræ acciperet: ita et nos sub Christi primogeniti fratris nostri preciosa puritate delitescere, bono ejus odore fragrare, ejus perfectione vitia nostra sepeliri et obtegi, atque ita nos piissimo Patri ingerere, ut justitiæ benedictionem ab eodem assequamur, necesse est.

And afterwards: Justificat ergo nos Deus Pater bonitate suâ gratuitâ, qua nos in Christo complectitur, dum eidem insertos innocentiam et justitiâ Christi nos induit; quæ una et vera et perfecta est, quæ Dei sustinere conspectum potest, ita unam pro nobis sisti oportet tribunali divini judicii et veluti causæ nostræ intercessorem eidem repræsentari: qua subnixi etiam hic obtineremus remissionem peccatorum nostrorum assiduam: cujus puritate velatæ non imputantur nobis sordes nostræ, imperfectionum immunditiæ, sed veluti sepultæ conteguntur, ne in judicium Dei veniant: donec confecto in nobis, et plane extincto veteri homine, divina bonitas nos in beatam pacem cum novo Adam recipiat; ¶God was in Christ, says the apostle, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing unto men their sins, [and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.]

In him, therefore, we are justified before God; not in ourselves, not by our own, but by his righteousness, which is imputed unto us, now communicating with him. Wanting righteousness of our own, we are taught to seek for righteousness without ourselves, in him. So he says, Him who knew no sin, he made to be sin for us (that is, an expiatory sacrifice for sin), that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We are made righteous in Christ, not with our own, but with the righteousness of God.

By what right? the right of friendship, which makes all common among friends, according unto the ancient celebrated proverb. Being ingrafted into Christ, fastened, united unto him, he makes his things ours, communicates his riches unto us, interposes his righteousness between the judgment of God and our unrighteousness: and under that, as under a shield and buckler, he hides us from that divine wrath which we have deserved, he defends and protects us therewith; yea, he communicates it unto us and makes it ours, so as that, being covered and adorned therewith, we may boldly and securely place ourselves before the divine tribunal and judgment, so as not only to appear righteous, but so to be.

For even as the apostle affirms, that by one mans fault we were all made sinners, so is the righteousness of Christ alone efficacious in the justification of us all: And as by the disobedience of one man many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one man, says he, many are made righteous. This is the righteousness of Christ, even his obedience, whereby in all things he fulfilled the will of his Father; as, on the other hand, our unrighteousness is our disobedience and our transgression of the commands of God.

But that our righteousness is placed in the obedience of Christ, it is from hence, that we being incorporated into him, it is accounted unto us as if it were ours; so as that therewith we are esteemed righteous. And as Jacob of old, whereas he was not the first-born, being hid under the habit of his brother, and clothed with his garment, which breathed a sweet savour, presented himself unto his father, that in the person of another he might receive the blessing of the primogeniture; so it is necessary that we should lie hid under the precious purity of the First-born, our eldest brother, be fragrant with his sweet savour, and have our sin buried and covered with his perfections, that we may present ourselves before our most holy Father, to obtain from him the blessing of righteousness.

And again: God, therefore, does justify us by his free grace or goodness, wherewith he embraces us in Christ Jesus, when he clotheth us with his innocence and righteousness, as we are ingrafted into him; for

as that alone is true and perfect which only can endure in the sight of God, so that alone ought to be presented and pleaded for us before the divine tribunal, as the advocate of or plea in our cause. Resting hereon, we here obtain the daily pardon of sin; with whose purity being covered, our filth, and the uncleanness of our imperfections are not imputed unto us, but are covered as if they were buried, that they may not come into the judgment of God; until, the old man being destroyed and slain in us, divine goodness receives us into peace with the second Adam.

So far he, expressing the power which the influence of divine truth had on his mind, contrary to the interest of the cause wherein he was engaged, and the loss of his reputation with them; for whom in all other things he was one of the fiercest champions. And some among the Roman church, who cannot bear this assertion of the commutation of sin and righteousness by imputation between Christ and believers, no more than some among ourselves, do yet affirm the same concerning the righteousness of other men: Mercaturam quendam docere nos Paulus videtur.

Abundatis, inquit, vos pecunia, et estis inopes justitiæ; contra, illi abundant justitia et sunt inopes pecuniæ; fiat quædam commutatio; date vos piis egentibus pecuniam quæ vobis affluit, et illis deficit; sic futurum est, ut illi vicissim justitiam suam qua abundant, et qua vos estis destituti, vobis communicent. Hosius, 10 De Expresso Dei Verbo, tom. 2 p. 21. But I have mentioned these testimonies, principally to be a relief unto some mens ignorance, who are ready to speak evil of what they understand not.

This blessed permutation as unto sin and righteousness is represented unto us in the Scripture as a principal object of our faith, as that whereon our peace with God is founded. And although both these (the imputation of sin unto Christ, and the imputation of righteousness unto us) be the acts of God, and not ours, yet are we by faith to exemplify them in our own souls, and really to perform what on our part is required unto their application unto us; whereby we receive the atonement, Rom. v. 11. Christ calls unto him all those that labour and are heavy laden, Matt. xi. 28. The weight that is upon the consciences of men, wherewith they are laden, is the burden of sin. So the psalmist complains that his sins were a burden too heavy for him, Ps. xxxviii. 4. Such was Cains apprehension of his guilt, Gen. iv. 13. This burden Christ bare, when it was laid on him by divine estimation. For so it is said, &#1493;&#1463;&#1506;&#1458;&#1493;&#1465;&#1504;&#1465;&#1514;&#1464;&#1501;&#1492;&#1493;&#1468;&#1488; &#1497;&#1460;&#1505;&#1456;&#1489;&#1468;&#1465;&#1500;,, Isa. liii. 11, He shall bear their iniquities on him as a burden. And this he did when God made to meet upon him the iniquity of us all, verse 6. In the application of this unto our own souls, as it is required that we be sensible of the weight and burden of our sins and how it is heavier than we can bear; so the Lord Christ calls us unto him with it, that we may be eased. This he does in the preachings of the gospel, wherein he is evidently crucified before our eyes, Gal. iii. 1. In the view which faith has of Christ crucified (for faith is a looking unto him, Isa. xlv. 22; lxv. 1, answering their looking unto the brazen serpent who were stung with fiery serpents, John iii. 14, 15), and under a sense of his invitation (for faith is our coming unto him, upon his call and invitation) to come unto him with our burdens, a believer considers that God has laid all our iniquities upon him; yea, that he has done so, is an especial object whereon faith is to act itself, which is faith in his blood. Hereon does the soul approve of and embrace the righteousness and grace of God, with the infinite condescension and love of Christ himself. It gives its consent that what is thus done is what becomes the infinite wisdom and grace of God; and therein it rests. Such a person seeks no more to establish his own righteousness, but submits to the righteousness of God. Herein, by faith, does he leave that burden on Christ which he called him to bring with him, and complies with the wisdom and righteousness of God in laying it upon him. And herewithal does he receive the everlasting righteousness

which the Lord Christ brought in when he made an end of sin, and reconciliation for transgressors.

The reader may be pleased to observe, that I am not debating these things argumentatively, in such propriety of expressions as are required in a scholastic disputation; which shall be done afterwards, so far as I judge it necessary. But I am doing that which indeed is better, and of more importance, namely, declaring the experience of faith in the expressions of the Scripture, or such as are analogous unto them. And I had rather be instrumental in the communication of light and knowledge unto the meanest believer, than to have the clearest success against prejudiced disputers. Wherefore, by faith thus acting are we justified, and have peace with God. Other foundation in this matter can no man lay, that will endure the trial.

Nor are we to be moved, that men who are unacquainted with these things in their reality and power do reject the whole work of faith herein, as an easy effort of fancy or imagination. For the preaching of the cross is foolishness unto the best of the natural wisdom of men; neither can any understand them but by the Spirit of God. Those who know the terror of the Lord, who have been really convinced and made sensible of the guilt of their apostasy from God, and of their actual sins in that state, and what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God, seeking thereon after a real solid foundation whereon they may be accepted with him, have other thoughts of these things, and do find believing a thing to be quite of another nature than such men suppose. It is not a work of fancy or imagination unto men, to deny and abhor themselves, to subscribe unto the righteousness of God in denouncing death as due to their sins, to renounce all hopes and expectations of relief from any righteousness of their own, to mix the word and promise of God concerning Christ and righteousness by him with faith, so as to receive the atonement, and wherewithal to give up themselves unto a universal obedience unto God. And as for them unto whom, through pride and self-conceit on the one hand, or ignorance on the other, it is so, we have in this matter no concernment with them. For unto whom these things are only the work of fancy, the gospel is a fable.

Something unto this purpose I had written long since, in a practical discourse<sup>11</sup> concerning Communion with God. And whereas some men of an inferior condition have found it useful, for the strengthening themselves in their dependencies on some of their superiors, or in compliance with their own inclinations, to cavil at my writings and revile their author, that book has been principally singled out to exercise their faculty and good intentions upon. This course is steered of late by one Mr Hotchkis, in a book about justification, wherein, in particular, he falls very severely on that doctrine, which, for the substance of it, is here again proposed, p. 81.

And were it not that I hope it may be somewhat useful unto him to be a little warned of his immoralities in that discourse, I should not in the least have taken notice of his other impertinencies. The good man, I perceive, can be angry with persons whom he never saw, and about things which he can not or will not understand, so far as to revile them with most opprobrious language. For my part, although I have never written any thing designedly on this subject, or the doctrine of justification, before now, yet he could not but discern, by what was occasionally delivered in that discourse, that I maintain no other doctrine herein but what was the common faith of the most learned men in all Protestant churches.

And the reasons why I am singled out for the object of his petulancy and spleen are too manifest to need repetition. But I shall yet inform him of what, perhaps, he is ignorant, namely, that I esteem it no small honour that the reproaches wherewith the doctrine opposed by him is reproached do fall upon me. And the same I say concerning all the reviling and contemptuous expressions that his ensuing pages are filled withal. But as to the present occasion, I beg his excuse if I believe him not, that the reading of the

passages which he mentions out of my book filled him with horror and indignation, as he pretends.

For whereas he acknowledges that my words may have a sense which he approves of (and which, therefore, must of necessity be good and sound), what honest and sober person would not rather take them in that sense, then wrest them unto another, so as to cast himself under the disquietment of a fit of horrible indignation? In this fit I suppose it was, if such a fit, indeed, did befall him (as one evil begets another), that he thought he might insinuate something of my denial of the necessity of our own personal repentance and obedience.

For no man who had read that book only of all my writings, could, with the least regard to conscience or honesty, give countenance unto such a surmise, unless his mind was much discomposed by the unexpected invasion of a fit of horror. But such is his dealing with me from first to last; nor do I know where to fix on any one instance of his exceptions against me, wherein I can suppose he had escaped his pretended fit and was returned unto himself, that is, unto honest and ingenuous thoughts; wherewith I hope he is mostly conversant.

But though I cannot miss in the justification of this charge by considering any instance of his reflections, yet I shall at present take that which he insists longest upon, and fills his discourse about it with most scurrility of expressions. And this is in the 164th page of his book, and those that follow; for there he disputes fiercely against me for making this to be an undue end of our serving God, namely, that we may flee from the wrath to come. And who would not take this for an inexcusable crime in any, especially in him who has written so much of the nature and use of threatening under the gospel, and the fear that ought to be in generated by them in the hearts of men, as I have done?

Wherefore so great a crime being the object of them all, his revilings seem not only to be excused but allowed. But what if all this should prove a wilful prevarication, not becoming a good man, much less a minister of the gospel? My words, as reported and transcribed by himself, are these: Some there are that do the service of the house of God as the drudgery of their lives; the principle they yield obedience upon is a spirit of bondage unto fear; the rule they do it by is the law in its dread and rigour, exacting it of them to the utmost without mercy or mitigation; the end they do it for is to fly from the wrath to come, to pacify conscience, and to seek for righteousness as it were by the works of the law.<sup>12</sup> What follow unto the same purpose he omits, and what he adds as my words are not so, but his own; ubi pudor, 44ubi fides?

That which I affirmed to be a part of an evil end, when and as it makes up one entire end, by being mixed with sundry other things expressly mentioned, is singled out, as if I had denied that in any sense it might be a part of a good end in our obedience: which I never thought, I never said; I have spoken and written much to the contrary. And yet, to countenance himself in this disingenuous procedure, besides many other untrue reflections, he adds that I insinuate, that those whom I describe are Christians that seek righteousness by faith in Christ, p. 167.

I must needs tell this author that my faith in this matter is, that such works as these will have no influence in his justification; and that the principal reason why I suppose I shall not, in my progress in this discourse, take any particular notice of his exceptions, either against the truth or me, next unto this consideration, that they are all trite and obsolete, and, as to what seems to be of any force in them, will occur unto me in other authors from whom they are derived, is, that I may not have a continual occasion to declare how forgetful he has been of all the rules of ingenuity, yea, and of common honesty, in his dealing with me.

For that which gave the occasion unto this present displeasing digression, it being no more, as to the substance of it, but that our sins were imputed unto Christ, and that his righteousness is imputed unto us, it is that in the faith whereof I am assured I shall live and die, though he should write twenty as learned books against it as those which he has already published; and in what sense I do believe these things shall be afterwards declared. And although I judge no men upon the expressions that fall from them in polemical writings, wherein, on many occasions, they do affront their own experience, and contradict their own prayers; yet, as to those who understand not that blessed commutation of sins and righteousness, as to the substance of it, which I have pleaded for, and the acting of our faith with respect thereunto, I shall be bold to say, that if the gospel be hid, it is hid to them that perish.

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