



**The Baptist Standard Bearer, Inc.**

NUMBER ONE IRON OAKS DRIVE • PARIS, ARKANSAS 72855

## THE SERMONS OF JOHN BRINE

A Right to Eternal Glory, Through the Meritorious  
Obedience of Christ, Proved to Be Consistent With  
the Absolute Freedom and Sovereignty of  
Divine Grace, as the Origin of It  
*by John Brine*

*(London: George Keith, 1762)*

*Thou hast given a standard to them that fear thee;  
that it may be displayed because of the truth  
— Psa. 60: 4*



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# SERMON 36

A RIGHT TO ETERNAL GLORY, THROUGH THE  
MERITORIOUS OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST,  
PROVED TO BE CONSISTENT WITH THE  
ABSOLUTE FREEDOM AND SOVEREIGNTY OF  
DIVINE GRACE, AS THE ORIGIN OF IT.

IN A SHORT DISCOURSE ON TIT. 3: 7.

*Printed for GEORGE KEITH, in Gracechurch-street; And fold by  
JOHN EYNON, Printseller, the Corner of Castle-Alley, by the Royal-  
Exchange 1762.*

## THE PREFACE.

*THE Publication of the following short Discourse, was occasioned by my  
treating on the Grace of GOD, and the Merit of the Obedience of CHRIST,  
in two Sermons, which I very lately preached. In composing the first,  
nothing was more distant from my Thoughts than exposing to public View  
the Sentiments and Reasoning therein contained. But as time of my worthy  
Friends, to whom it was acceptable, in hearing, solicited me to make it  
public, before the Delivery of the second, I determined comply with their  
Solicitation. And upon the Delivery of the second, they approved (their  
being connected, unto which I was not disinclined. They are both  
contracted, as the Reader may judge, by the Brevity of the Discourse. But,  
I hope, not to the Disadvantage of the Sentiments advanced, or the  
Arguments used in their Defence.*

*I am apprehensive, that I shall pass under the Censure of some Persons,  
because I attribute proper infinite Merit to the Obedience of CHRIST. It  
hath been blasphemously affirmed, that his Obedience is deserving of NO  
BENEFIT. Nothing more depreciating can be said of the Obedience of a  
mere Creature, allowing it to be perfect. The Reason assigned for this  
daring blasphemous Assertion is, if CHRIST merited Benefits for us, by his  
Obedience, those Benefits cannot be of free Grace; for what is merited, is*

*not freely given; and, therefore, we must either give up the Doctrine of free Grace, or deny the proper Merit of CHRIST, in Respect to those spiritual Blessings, which are bestowed upon us here and hereafter, If any Man can, and will give Proof, that Grace in GOD towards us, and CHRIST'S meriting for us, are inconsistent, I shall be free to part with the Doctrine of the Merit of our glorious Redeemer, both in his Obedience and Sufferings; because, I am firmly persuaded, that sovereign Grace in GOD, is the Origin of our whole Salvation and Happiness. But I am bold to say, that such Proof will never be given, unless it can be proved, that CHRIST'S Capacity to merit, in what he did and suffered, was not the Effect of the sovereign Grace of the Father towards himself, as Man, and towards us. It is my sincere Aim to exalt the Glory of the Grace of GOD, and maintain the due Honour of our precious Savior, as GOD and Man united. I do not detract from the Glory of the Grace of GOD towards CHRIST, as Man, in affirming that his Capacity to merit is the Result of the Grace of the divine Father; nor do I obscure the Glory thereof, by asserting, that sovereign Grace made his meritorious Obedience ours. Surely, this will be granted in my Favour. Nor, is it any Detraction from the Glory of free Grace to assert, that CHRIST merited spiritual and eternal Blessings for us, by his Obedience, because the Merit of it arises from the Constitution of his Person, which is the pure Effect of overeign Grace towards himself, as Man, and towards us. His Person was constituted, as it is, for our Sakes. The End of the Subsistence of the human Nature of CHRIST, in his divine Person, was our Happiness, in Subordination to the Glory of all the Perfections of GOD.*

*And as that was the Contrivance of infinite Wisdom, so it is a most glorious Effect of sovereign Grace towards CHRIST, as Man, and towards us. Therefore, the sovereign Grace of the divine Father is paramount in our Salvation and eternal Felicity, through the meritorious Obedience and Sufferings of JESUS CHRIST. Upon this important Subject I will speak what I think, The eternal Weight of Glory does not exceed the Worth, Value and Merit of the Righteousness of the Son of GOD. And it is extremely weak and injudicious to object, that our future Blessedness is not of free Grace, if it was merited for us, by the Righteousness of CHRIST, because free, sovereign Grace rendered him capable of meriting, and the Gift of his meritorious Righteousness to us is a GIFT BY GRACE. But, clear and consistent as these Things are, in themselves, I fear, that by and by some will take Offence at our saying, that we have a legal Right and Title to everlasting Life, through the Righteousness of CHRIST.*

**TIT. 3: 7.**

That being justified by His Grace we should be made Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life.

*IN these Words four Things, in general, are to be observed.*

- I.** The Benefit of our Justification. *That being justified.*
  - II.** The Cause of that Benefit, viz. The Grace of GOD. *That being justified by his Grace.*
  - III.** The Consequence of our Justification. We are made Heirs of Life thereby.
  - IV.** That Life, whereof we are made Heirs, is *eternal*.
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**I.** *The first Thing observable in the Text is the glorious Benefit of our Justification. That being justified.* This consists of two Branches.

**First**, Acquittance from Guilt.

**Secondly**, The Constitution of our Persons righteous, and accounting or esteeming us righteous thereupon.

**First**, Acquittance from Guilt is one Branch of our Justification. By Guilt I understand, Actions which agree not With the Law, that is the Rule of our Conduct. Every Individual of Mankind is chargeable with Sin: *For all have sinned, and come short of the Glory of GOD. Now we know, that what Things soever the Law saith, it saith to them that are under the Law, that every Mouth may be stopped, and all the World may become guilty before God.* (Rom. 3:23.) Our Offenses are exceedingly numerous, they are *more than the Hairs of our Heads*, and cannot be numbered by us, No Man is able to reckon up his sinful Thoughts, irregular Desires, and unlawful Delights. And every Breach of the divine Law, renders us worthy of Death. According to the just Constitution of GOD, in the *Law, the Wages of Sin is Death*. Not only temporal, but also eternal, the Opposite of eternal Life.

Hence we must conclude, that our Condition is very deplorable. As guilty we can have no Foundation in ourselves to hope for Acceptance with our

Maker, or the Communication of Favors from Him; but on the contrary, we have just Reason to dread his Anger, and expect the Infliction of Punishment, at his Hand. Consequently, without Remission, we must be miserable for ever. Sin unpardoned will eternally deprive us of all Hope of being happy, and subject us to inconceivable and endless Misery. They are the only happy Persons in the World, whose Crimes are remitted to them. No guilty Creature can possibly enjoy Happiness, without a full Discharge of that Guilt, which he hath contracted. And no Sinner can make Compensation for his Offences, nor devise a Method whereby Forgiveness may be obtained.

GOD in infinite Mercy decreed to pardon sin, and in his immense Wisdom, he contrived a Way, wherein we are acquitted of our Guilt, without the least Prejudice to His Law, or Dishonor to his Justice. *He was in CHRIST, reconciling the World to himself, i.e. drawing the Plan of their Reconciliation, not imputing their Trespasses unto them.* (2Co. 5:19.) It was his gracious Purpose, that CHRIST should bear our Sins, and suffer that Penalty in our stead, which they demerited. Unto which the Blessed JESUS agreed, in the Council of Peace, held between the Father and himself. In this Contrivance, GOD *hath abounded towards us in all Wisdom and Prudence.* (Eph. 1: 8.) It is the *Wisdom of GOD, in a Mystery, his hidden Wisdom, which he ordained before the World, to our Glory.* (1Co. 2: 7.) For this was a Resolution to commend his Love to our Persons, and fully manifest his just Indignation against our Sins.

CHRIST, Who *knew no Sin, was made Sin for us.* (2Co. 5:21.) The Lord *laid on him, or made to meet in him the Iniquities of us all* (Isa. 53: 6.). *He bore our Sins in his own Body on the Tree.* Our Guilt was transferred from us, and imputed to him by the Father. And CHRIST voluntarily took it upon himself, or consented to bear it.

The human Will of our Savior was all Submission to the sovereign Pleasure of the Father, in this wonderful Transaction. He was not in the least Degree reluctant to come under the Charge and Imputation of our Crimes, in order to make Atonement for them.

In Consequence of our Sins being placed to the Account of CHRIST, he sustained such Punishment, which they demerited. *He was made a Curse for us.* (Gal. 3:13.) *And the Sword of divine Justice was awakened, against, and smote him.* (Zec. 13: 7.) His Sufferings and Death, therefore, were properly penal. And by Reason of the infinite Dignity of his Person,

real and infinite Merit attended his Sufferings; so that the Law and Justice of GOD are fully satisfied for our whole Guilt.

Hence, GOD *is just in justifying those who believe in JESUS.* (Rom. 3:26.) He is not only *faithful*; but also *just to forgive us our sins*, on this Foundation. Justice directs to the Impunity of a Sinner, upon Satisfaction being made for his Offences. *All who believe are justified from all Things, from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses. The Law made nothing perfect; but the bringing in of a better Hope did.* CHRIST, *by one Offering, hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. It was not possible, that the Blood of Bulls, or of Goats should take away Sin. But CHRIST put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself. In him we have Redemption through his Blood, even the Forgiveness of Sin. His Blood cleanseth from all Sins. Our Iniquities are forgiven, and our Sins are covered,* in Virtue thereof.

*Being justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from Wrath through him.* (Rom. 5: 9.) *All Trespasses are forgiven us.* (Col. 2:13.) *No sin can be laid to our Charge, CHRIST, having loved us, and washed us from our Sins, in his own Blood.* (Rev. 1: 6.) Divine Pardon is a Discharge of all Guilt. It includes our Sins before and after Conversion: Sins of Omission and Commission: Sins of Heart and Life. This Branch of our Justification may be included in the Text. But I humbly apprehend it is not principally intended therein. My Reason for which is, what immediately follows, *viz. we should be made Heirs according to the Hope of eternal Life.* And, therefore, I conceive, that Branch of Justification is chiefly designed, upon which follows our Right to future Blessedness. Now, Acquittance from Guilt does not give a Sinner a Title to Happiness. It indeed frees him from an Obnoxiousness to suffering Penalty; but a Right to the Enjoyment of Glory cannot result from that.

**Secondly**, the other Branch of our Justification is, the Constitution of our Persons righteous, and accounting, or esteeming us righteous thereupon. *We are all as an unclean Thing, and all our Righteousnesses are as filthy Rags.* Defects and Blemishes attend all the Duties which we perform. Our sinful Neglects are many, and in numerous Instances our Actions are materially evil. For, *in many Things we offend all. There is not a just Man that liveth and sinneth not.* The divine Lawgiver is of *purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity.* None, therefore, could possibly determine how we may be justified by our Maker; which *job* strongly expresses. *I know it is so of a Truth; but bow should Man be just with GOD?*

(Job. 9: 2.) The sacred Gospel clearly resolves this most important Question. By acquainting us with the Imputation of a Righteousness to us, which is without Works. *Blessed is the Man to whom the LORD will impute Righteousness without Works.* (Rom. 4: 6.) Righteousness consists of Works, which are good, and agree with the Law, that is the Rule of our Duty. And, therefore, the Phrase, without Works, must be understood of our own personal Obedience. For, in no other Sense can it be true, that, that Righteousness, which God imputes to us, is without Works. *In the Lord we have Righteousness.* And CHRIST is of GOD *made unto us Righteousness.* Which is a Benefit distinct from Sanctification: That includes a Principle of Holiness, and holy Actions springing from that Principle. As Righteousness and Sanctification are not the same, but distinct Benefits: CHRIST in being made Righteousness, is not made Sanctification, and in being made Sanctification, he is not made Righteousness. Our Righteousness is in him, as .a representative Head, our Sanctification is in him, as a Head of Influence. He is made Righteousness to us by Imputation, he is made Sanctification to us in a Way of Communication. Hence it is evident, that Righteousness designs that which remains in CHRIST subjectively. and which we do not become the Subjects of, or it is not inherently in us. It will eternally abide in CHRIST, as its proper Subject, though it is graciously imputed to us. Consequently, Righteousness means the Holiness of CHRIST's Nature, and his Obedience to the Law. *By the Disobedience of one, many were made Sinners, and by the Obedience of one shall many be made righteous.* (Rom. 5:19.) On Account hereof, our precious Savior bears the Title of *the Lord our Righteousness.* (Jer. 23: 6.) In the Lord all the Seed of *Israel* are justified, and shall glory. In these two Things consists our Justification, as we are Sinners: The Non-imputation of Sin, and the Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ to us, whereupon GOD esteems us just and. righteous.

## **II. The Cause of our Justification is the Grace of God. That being justified 'by his Grace.'**

**1.** Grace is Favour, which is absolutely free; and undeserved. Its objects are not considered as Subjects of any amiable Qualifications moving unto it. The Love of GOD, from which our Salvation springs, has no Cause out of himself. It is his good Pleasure, a kind Act of his sovereign Will towards us. *He hath Mercy, because he will have Mercy; and he hath Compassion, because he will have Compassion.* No other Reason thereof

can be assigned. There was no Fitness in us to be beloved of GOD. On the contrary, we were the subjects of such detestable Qualities, as rendered us deserving of his awful Displeasure. And, therefore, his Love to us is justly denominated Grace. It is Kindness and Favour above all Motive, or Inducement, in those, whom it respects. Without Love of that Kind in the Heart of GOD to us, our Recovery from Ruin had been absolutely impossible.

**2.** The Divine Father, who is the first Person, in the adorable Trinity, is intended. This is clear in the Context. For he is distinguished from the Holy Spirit, and the LORD JESUS CHRIST. *The Kindness and Love of GOD our Savior towards Man appeared, not by Works of Righteousness, which we have done, but according to His Mercy he hath saved us, by the Washing of Regeneration, and the Renewing Of the Holy Ghost: Which he shed on us abundantly through JESUS CHRIST our Savior.* That Person is designed, who sheds forth the Holy Spirit, and who sheds him forth through CHRIST upon the Saints. And, therefore, neither the Spirit, nor CHRIST, is the Person, concerning whose Grace the Apostle here speaks; but the Divine Father, as distinct and distinguished from them both.

**3.** Our Justification is founded in, and takes its Rise from the Grace of GOD the Father. His absolutely free and unmerited Love is the Origin of it. That most important Branch of our Salvation, entirely springs from his Sovereign Good-Will and Pleasure. His Will to justify us was not caused by any Thing out of Himself, which is in us, or in our blessed Savior. His Decree to acquit us of our Guilt, and to constitute us righteous, was an Act of pure Favour, without any external moving Cause. None, I hope, will think, that I detract from the Honour of CHRIST, either in his Obedience, or Sacrifice, by attributing our Justification to the mere Love, and absolutely free Favour of GOD, as the proper and only Source of it. In Order to clear up, and represent this momentous Point in a plain and easy Light, I would propose to Consideration the following Particulars.

**(1.)** The Father ordained the human Nature of CHRIST unto a most near and ineffable Union with his Divine Person. *He was fore-ordained before the Foundation of the World; but was manifest for us in these last Times* (1Pe. 1:19, 20.). *The Word, which was in the Beginning with GOD, and which was GOD, was made Flesh* (Joh. 1: 1, 14.). He became Man, by the Assumption of human Nature, according to the Appointment of the Father. And that Nature, which he assumed hath its Subsistence in his divine Person, and is one with him. This Union of the divine and human



Natures, in the Person of the Mediator, is the Mystery and Glory of our holy Religion. *Without Controversy, great is the Mystery of Godliness, GOD manifest in the Flesh* (1Ti. 3:16.). Herein consists the highest Glory of CHRIST as Man. For, in Consequence of it, he became *Heir of all Things, and by Inheritance obtained a more excellent Name than the Angels* (Heb. 1: 2.). This made him *rich*, though for *our Sakes he became poor, that through his Poverty we might be rich*. This Decree of the Father concerning CHRIST, as Man, was the highest Act of free, sovereign Grace, that he ever did, or will put forth. And evident it is, that Grace lies at the Bottom of our whole Salvation. Yea, that is the whole and entire Foundation thereof.

[1.] This Appointment of the Father was an Act of infinite Love and Grace, with Respect to CHRIST himself, the Object of it. His human Nature being the curious Workmanship of the Spirit, and filled with his supernatural Graces, there was a Meetness in him to be personally united with the eternal Son of GOD; but not a Worthiness and Desert of that Dignity.

And this Meetness in his human Nature, for that Union with the Son of GOD?, was the Effect of mere Favour towards him. Nothing which CHRIST did, nor any Thing which he suffered, in Obedience to the Father's Will, induced him to ordain his human Nature unto that Union; in Consequence whereof, he becomes entitled to such Glory, wherein he cannot possibly have a Rival, or Partner. Our Savior hath this Glory, by Donation, from the Father, as the Fruit of his eternal Love to him. *Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my Glory, which thou hast given me, for [or, because] thou lovedst me before the Foundation of the World* (Joh. 17:24.). Free, absolutely free Love, in the Heart of the Father towards CHRIST, as Man, is that Fountain from which springs his highest Dignity, in his mediatorial Capacity.

Long since, *Austin*, that Champion for the free Grace of GOD, well improved this, as an Argument in Proof, and Confirmation of free Favour, being the Cause of the Blessedness and Glory of the Saints. And indeed, if CHRIST, the Head, possesses his superior, and greatest Glory, as the Effect of divine Grace to him, it is unreasonable to suppose, that his Members do not owe their eternal Felicity, unto the Grace of GOD, as the Origin and Cause thereof. CHRIST, as Man, will for ever adore the Love of the Father to him, which he displayed in the gracious Ordination of his human Nature unto a Union with his divine Person; whereby, he not only became

entitled to the greatest Glory, but also fit and capable of acting as a Redeemer to the Church.

[2.] This Purpose of the Father was an Act of infinite Love to us. His End in appointing the human Nature of CHRIST unto a Union with his divine Person, was, that he might be the Savior of his Body, the Church. Which, without that Union, he could not have been. It is true indeed, that his human Nature, without subsisting in his divine Person, might *have* been upheld by omnipotent Power, in obeying and suffering; but in that Case, his Obedience and Sufferings could not have availed to our Pardon and Acceptance, because the Value of both, arises from his Divinity. What a glorious Instance, therefore, of sovereign Grace was it in GOD towards us, to resolve upon the Union of the Man CHRIST JESUS with his eternal Son, that he might be capable of rescuing us from Ruin, and bringing us to Glory, in a Way, which is infinitely honorable to his own Perfections! May our Souls eternally admire this Grace of the Father! which shines most brightly in this wonderful Design! both with Respect to CHRIST and the Church!

(2.) It was an Act of absolutely free Favour in GOD to decree that CHRIST, as he is both GOD and Man, should be a Representative Head unto us. This was his gracious Determination from everlasting. The Act of eternal Election terminated upon CHRIST and his People. He and they were chosen by the Father in the same Act. According as *He hath chosen us in him before the Foundation of the World* (Eph. 1: 4.). We, therefore, were in CHRIST from Eternity, in some Sense; for otherwise, it can't be true, that GOD chose us in him. The Father Chose him, as Head, and chose us in him, as his Members. CHRIST is the Father's *Elect* (Isa. 42: 1). In that gracious Purpose he was constituted a Representative Head to all those Persons, whom it respected. And they were therein *blessed with all spiritual Blessings* in him, as such a Head to them. And *they are saved and called with a holy Calling, according to Grace, which was given them in CHRIST before the World began* (2Ti. 1: 9.). This Relation subsisting between CHRIST and the Elect, as Head and Members, is that Foundation on which his Obedience and Sufferings are placed to their Account, in Order to their Acceptance with GOD, and the Remission of all their Sins. They were in CHRIST of the divine Father, by a sovereign Appointment of his in Eternity. And in Consequence of that, CHRIST IS of him made unto them *Wisdom, and Righteousness, and Sanctification, and Redemption* (1 Corinthians 1:30.). Their Union with him, as a Representative Head to

them, therefore, was antecedent unto, and is the Ground on which they partake of all his saving Benefits. Now, what but infinite and sovereign Love in GOD towards them, could be the Cause of his ordaining CHRIST to be such a Head to them, and that they should be his Members? Nothing in them could induce him to form this Design in their Favour. This is an Honour, whereof they were absolutely unworthy. And a Security entirely undeserved. The Grace of the divine Father, therefore, in this Decree and Appointment, is most eminently conspicuous. It is the Result of his absolute Pleasure, without any external Motive: Consequently, our Justification through the Righteousness of CHRIST must be the Effect of his Grace. His Love towards us is the Reason of his making CHRIST Righteousness unto us, in Order to our Justification.

**(3.)** It was an Act of sovereign Favour towards us, to decree that CHRIST should become a Subject of the *Law*, in Order to obey it, as our Representative. This clearly appears, by considering the Nature of the Law: The Person of *Christ*; and the End of his coming under subjection to it, respecting us.

**[1.]** The Law, or Covenant of Works, requires Obedience, as a Condition of Life. According to that Constitution, a Right to Happiness results from an universal Observance of its Precepts, and cannot be had without it. *The Man that doeth them, shall live in them.* Obey, and live; sin; and die, are the Terms of that Covenant: And, therefore, without a punctual and constant Obedience to all its Commands, a Title to the Enjoyment of Good, cannot accrue to the Subjects of it.

**[2.]** CHRIST is GOD and Man united; and his human Nature by Reason of its Subsistence in his divine Person, had an unalienable Right to Life and Glory, antecedent unto his coming under the Obligation of the Covenant of Works. And his Subjection to that Covenant was not upon his own Account, to acquire a Right to Life for himself. That would have been incompatible with the Dignity of his Person. When he was *found in Fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, in becoming obedient* to the Covenant of Works, which; without a special Appointment of GOD, would have had no Concern with him, who is *the Man GOD's Fellow*. Sovereign Favour raised him above the State of a mere Creature, by a personal Union with the eternal Son of GOD; and being thus advanced to Dignity, far superior to what Angels or Men can claim, divine Sovereignty resolved upon his Subjection to the Law for our Sakes. Which was such a glorious Instance of Grace in GOD towards us, as demands our highest

Praises for evermore. May our Souls live in the Contemplation and Admiration thereof, while we are in this mortal State! How is *the Law magnified, and made honorable*, by CHRIST'S subjection to it, and his perfect Obedience unto all its Commands, who is GOD, as well as Man. The infinite Dignity of his Person reflects infinite Glory upon the Law, in coming under its Obligation. Provision, therefore, was made, in the Covenant of Grace, for the Honour of the Covenant of Works. For it was agreed on, in the Covenant of Grace, between the FATHER and CHRIST, that he should, as our Representative, be made under the Law, and obey it for us. Herein Grace and Holiness shine forth with equal Lustre, Mercy and Justice receive the same Glory, in this wonderful Constitution. *Mercy and Truth meet together, Righteousness and Peace kiss each other* (Psa. 85:10.), in this Contrivance.

[3.] The important End of CHRIST'S becoming subject to the Law, respecting us, was our Justification. He being our Representative, as he came under the Obligation of the Covenant of Works, his Obedience to its Precepts is placed to our Account, on that Foundation. What he acted in the Capacity of a Representative Head, it is fit, that it should be put to the Account of those whom he did represent. And without that no wise End could be brought about, by his being constituted such a Head, and yielding Obedience to the Law, in that Capacity. His Righteousness, upon the Foot of Right, becomes theirs, to whom he is such a Head; and their Justification, in Consequence thereof, is an Act of Justice. Sovereign Grace made the Obedience of CHRIST Ours, by appointing him to be our Representative; and divine Justice accepts of and justifies us, through that Obedience. *In the Lord we have Righteousness. In the Lord we are justified, and may glory.* Oh what Love, what Wisdom, what Holiness, are herein displayed! This Way of our Justification, which is so honorable to the Law, so glorifying to the Grace of God, and which agrees with his Justice, will eternally fill the Minds of Angels and Saints with holy Wonder and Adoration.

(4.) It is of the Sovereign and distinguishing Grace of GOD, that we are in CHRIST JESUS, as a Representative Head, in Distinction from others. This Honour and Security none could claim. GOD was under no Obligation to form such a Design in Favour of any: it was an Act of undeserved Goodness to decree, that CHRIST should be, and act in the Capacity of a Head to some of the Sons of Men, with a View to their Justification and Salvation. And it was absolutely free with GOD to determine unto what

Number of the human Race he should be a Representative Head, in obeying the Law, that his Obedience of Right might become theirs, and in Justice be imputed to them. From hence, it is evident, that it is unwarrantable, yea, blasphemous Boldness, to suggest, that it is dishonorable to the Perfections of Deity to conceive, that, that number is small. For, if GOD was not obliged to make Provision for the Justification and eternal Salvation of any Sinner, the Glory of no divine Attribute can be obscured, by the Smallness of the Number, for whom such Provision is made. It is also exceedingly clear; that GOD acted in a sovereignly gracious Manner, in fixing upon the Individuals of Mankind, to whom CHRIST should be a Head, in Order to their Security and Happiness. His Choice of them from among others unto a Union with CHRIST, as his Members, was an Act of his absolute Pleasure. No Reason can be assigned why *Peter*, rather than *Judas*, should be united unto CHRIST, and be represented by him, in his Obedience to the Law, but the sovereign Will of GOD so determining. Election unto this Dignity was of pure Grace, and without any Inducement in the Persons who are included in that Decree.

### **III. *The Consequence of our Justification: We are ‘made Heirs’ of Like thereby. In Order to make this evident, I argue as follows.***

**1.** Right to Life results from perfect Obedience, according to the legal Constitution. If the Terms of the Covenant of Works are fulfilled, upon which it promises Life, a Right to the Enjoyment of Life must spring from thence. This, I suppose, would not be called into Question, if we ourselves perfectly obeyed the Commands of that Covenant. *The Man that doeth them shall live in them.* Now CHRIST being our Representative, in obeying the Law, his Obedience is to be considered as ours; and, therefore, in Consequence of that, we become entitled to Life, no less than if we had obeyed it in our own Persons. The Grace of GOD makes the Righteousness of CHRIST ours; and, in Virtue thereof, we have a proper Claim to Life, even according to the Covenant of Works. For a Title to Life springs from having such a Righteousness as that Covenant requires, with Respect to the Matter and Extent of it, whether it be wrought out by ourselves, or by another for us, as our Representative, *Adam* being our Representative, in his Disobedience, we came under a Sentence of Death, which was annexed to the Breach of the Covenant of Works. And CHRIST being our Representative, in his Obedience, we have a Title to Life, a Promise of which was annexed in that Covenant, unto a perfect Observance of its Precepts. As our Savior fulfilled the perceptive Part of the Law for us; in

Consequence thereof, we have a proper Claim to Life, according to the Promise in that Constitution.

**2.** The Reasoning of the Apostle on the Effect of *Adam's* Disobedience, and the Effect of CHRIST'S Obedience, in my humble Opinion, most clearly proves the Truth of the Point for which I plead. The Entrance of Death into the World was by Sin. Not as a Mean of Conveyance, but as a procuring Cause. *Death reigned even over them, that had not sinned after the Similitude of Adam's Transgression.* And this Reign of Death was *through his Offence.* For, *through the Offence of one, many are dead.* His Sin is not a Medium of the Reign of Death. It properly demerits Death: And its Dominion over us is founded in Justice, in Consequence of that Sin being ours. *Adam* sinning, as the Representative Head of Men, they were made Sinners thereby; and, therefore, *Judgment*, according to Equity, came upon them *to Condemnation.* Now, as Death reigns through *Adam's* Sin, so *the Grace of GOD reigns unto Life, through the Righteousness of CHRIST.* Not as a Mean of the Conveyance of Life, but as a procuring Cause of it. For, *by one Righteousness (δι ενος δικαιωματος)* is *our Justification of Life.* *Adam's* Offence, according to Justice, subjects to Death; on the contrary, the Righteousness of CHRIST, according to Justice, entitles to Life, If it is the Design of the Apostle in this Context (Rom. 5:12.) to prove, that *Adam's* Offence was a procuring Cause of Death, it is reasonable to conclude, that it was his Intention to prove, that the Righteousness of CHRIST Is a procuring Cause of Life. To deny that the Righteousness of CHRIST is a procuring Cause of Life, would oblige us to allow of Impropriety in the Apostle's Reasoning. For, if we receive Life, through the Righteousness of Christ, as a Mean by which it is conveyed to us, and not as a procuring Cause, it is not properly compared with *Adam's* Offence, as a procuring Cause of Death.

**3.** The Hope of eternal Life is called *the Hope of Righteousness.* And the Crown of immortal Glory is a *Crown of Righteousness*, given by the Lord, as a *righteous Judge.* Righteousness, therefore, is the Foundation of a just Claim to eternal Life, and it is agreeable to Justice to bestow it upon those who are made righteous by the Imputation of the Righteousness of CHRIST to them. It is an Act of Justice in the Lord, the righteous Judge, to sentence to eternal Death, on Account of Sin; it also is an Act of Justice in him to confer eternal Life, on Account of Righteousness. Our Right to Glory through the Obedience of CHRIST, as a meritorious Cause, is the Contrivance of immense Wisdom, it is the Design of sovereign Grace,

and, perfectly corresponds with infinite Justice. What a solid Basis is this for the Faith and Hope of the Saints!

**4.** To deny that there is proper Merit, or Desert, in CHRIST'S Obedience, is a blasphemous Detraction from the Glory of it. For it is reducing of it unto a Level with the perfect Obedience of a mere Creature. A proper Desert of the Enjoyment of Good cannot attend the Obedience of the most holy Creature; but the Obedience of CHRIST, by Reason of the infinite Dignity of his Person, hath proper Desert, Merit, and Value in it. If it hath not, there is no Excellency therein, transcending the perfect Obedience of a mere Creature. To suppose which, is as great a Diminution of It as is possible, allowing it to be complete. For, Nothing more lessening could be thought of his Obedience, if he had been Man only. And, if there is any Desert in his Obedience, because he is GOD, that Desert arising from the Divinity of his Person must be infinite. For my Part, I am free to declare, that there is not any Thing which I have arrived unto a fuller Satisfaction of the Truth of, than the Doctrines of CHRIST'S proper Deity, and the proper infinite Merit of his Obedience and Sufferings. Nor shall I call into Question the Verity of the one, or the other, until I renounce the whole Gospel. This strong Way of speaking arises from such, a Zeal in me for the Honour of a dear Redeemer, which, I trust, will not be found a mistaken one.

**Object. 1.** It hath been said, *if the Obedience of CHRIST is imputed to us, we are made Meritours thereby.* **I answer,** a Meritor is one who merits; We do not Merit, by having the meritorious Obedience of CHRIST placed to our Account. He merited in yielding Obedience; but with no Propriety can it be said, that we merit, because his meritorious Obedience is imputed to us. Meriting is peculiar to CHRIST, the Person obeying; and, therefore, the Persons for whom he obeyed are not made Meritours, by the Imputation of his Obedience to them. The Imputation of his Obedience to us does not cause us to merit, and we cannot be made Meritours by that which does not cause us to merit. The Imputation of CHRIST'S Obedience does not cause us to merit; and, consequently, we are not made Meritours by the Imputation of his meritorious Righteousness to us. This Objection is of so trifling a Nature, that it is not a little strange, that it should be thought of Weight, by any Person of a tolerable Capacity.

**Object. 2.** *If CHRIST by his Obedience merited eternal Life for us, or procured thereby a Right to Glory on our Account, then our future, Blessedness is not of the free Grace of GOD; for that which is merited,*



*cannot be of free and undeserved Favour. Merit and Grace are inconsistent.* I answer.

**1.** If we were caused to merit Glory by the meritorious Obedience of CHRIST, being made ours, this Objection would have Force in it; but as we are not caused to merit Glory by the Imputation of the meritorious Obedience of CHRIST to us, there is not the least Degree of Force in it. For eternal Life and Glory are as absolutely free; in Regard to us, as if no meritorious Cause thereof subsisted. By the Imputation of the Righteousness of CHRIST to us we do not become the Subjects of it, or It is not inherent in us, in Consequence of that Imputation. And as his Righteousness itself is not inherent in us, so the Merit of his Righteousness is not inherent in us; and, therefore, notwithstanding the Imputation of his meritorious Righteousness to us, we are not made subjectively deserving of eternal Life. As the Righteousness of CHRIST cannot be made ours subjectively, so the Desert of his Righteousness cannot be made subjectively ours. Hence, it is evident, that in our own Persons we remain destitute of a Desert of eternal Life,' although the Righteousness of CHRIST is imputed to us, which is deserving of that Life. And to confer eternal Life, upon us merely on Account of a Righteousness, which is not our own, but another's, is an Act of free Favour towards us, though that Righteousness properly merits and deserves it. Since, by the Imputation of that Righteousness, we do not become the Subjects of its Merit, or Desert.

**2.** It was sovereign Grace which provided the Righteousness of CHRIST for us, and made it ours. This, I hope, is clearly explained, and solidly proved above. And, therefore, I can't help saying, that the Objection is weak, though it may affect some for whom I have a Regard. It is as old, self-evident, and approved Axiom, or Rule, that *the Cause of a Cause, is the Cause of that which is caused*. This is true in Things natural, moral, and spiritual. Now, let us apply it to the Point under Consideration. CHRIST'S Obedience is a meritorious Cause of eternal Life. The Cause of that Cause, is the absolutely free Love and Favour of GOD.

**(1.)** Towards CHRIST. It was an Act of sovereign Love, to ordain his human Nature unto a Union With his divine Person; from which Union springs the whole Merit of his Obedience. And, therefore, his Capacity to merit, in obeying, was founded in Grace towards himself, as Man.



(2.) It was an Act of sovereign Grace to decree, that his meritorious Obedience should be ours. Free, glorious Grace appointed him to be our Representative Head, and us to be his Members. And, consequently, divine Grace is the Origin from which flows that Right to Glory; which we have through the Obedience of CHRIST: Free Grace being the Cause of the meritorious Cause of our Right to eternal Glory, it is the Cause of that Right.

(3.) The Glory of free Grace is so far from being eclipsed herein, that it appears the more illustrious. For, as *the Gift of Righteousness is a Gift by Grace*, by how much the more deserving that Righteousness is, by so much the more is the Grace of GOD magnified, in the Gift thereof. If the Elect had been brought to Glory, without a Righteousness meritorious of that Glory, the Grace of GOD would not have been so it illustriously displayed, in bringing them unto the Enjoyment of eternal Blessedness. So far is it from being true, that the Grace of GOD, and the proper Merit of CHRIST, are inconsistent in this wonderful Affair.

(4.) As the Pardon of sin was properly merited, by the atoning Sacrifice of CHRIST, and yet, Remission is of free Grace; so, tho the Obedience of CHRIST properly merited eternal Life, notwithstanding that, it is of free Grace. The Reason of which is the same in both, viz. this. Free Grace provided the Sacrifice of CHRIST for us; and, therefore; our Pardon is of Grace, though properly merited by his Sacrifice: And free Grace provided the Obedience of CHRIST for us; and, therefore, eternal Life is of Grace, notwithstanding it was properly merited by his Obedience. It is a futile Objection of the *Socinians*, that the Pardon of Sin is not of the Grace of GOD, if CHRIST merited it by his Sufferings and Death, because his Death was the Effect of divine Grace towards us. And it is a very weak Objection of some others, that eternal Glory cannot be of Grace, if CHRIST merited it by his Obedience, because his Obedience was the Effect of divine Grace towards us. It is no Detraction from the Glory of the free Grace of GOD in our Pardon, to assert, that, that Sacrifice which it provided did merit Forgiveness. Nor is it any Diminution of the Glory of the free Grace of GOD, in our everlasting Felicity, to affirm, that, that Obedience, which it provided, did merit endless Happiness for us. In this Doctrine the Glory of the Grace of the divine Father is exalted, and the due Honour of a dear Redeemer is maintained in perfect Agreement the one with the other. Those who deny, that CHRIST merited by his Obedience, cannot attribute any Excellency to it, surpassing the perfect

Obedience of a mere Creature and, therefore, thereby they dishonor him infinitely. I do not say designedly, but consequentially, it may be through Inattention, or a Want of solid Judgment, in *comparing spiritual Things with spiritual*.

**IV.** *That Life whereof we are made Heirs is 'eternal.' It is eternal Glory unto which we are called, by the GOD of all Grace* (1Pe. 5:10.); that is designed. The Saints upon Death immediately take Possession of complete Felicity in their Souls, *All corrupt Habits* are expelled instantaneously. And the Principle of Grace is ripened into Glory. Their Communion with the divine Father, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and the Holy Spirit, is most intimate, and uninterrupted. Their Bodies, which now sleep in the Dust, shall be raised from the State of the Dead, and rendered *immortal, spiritual, and glorious*, fit Receptacles for their perfected Minds, be re-united with them and they will be consummately happy for evermore.

**1.** They will for ever enjoy a perfectly clear Sense of the Love of each divine Person, as displayed in the Design and Accomplishment of their, Salvation. Those imperfect Views, which they now have thereof, by Faith, fill them with ineffable Joy. What Delight, what Adoration will their Souls be possessed of, when their Prospects thereof will be perfectly clear, extensive, and uninterrupted! This is a State of Happiness far transcending what is promised in the Covenant of Works.

**2.** In Heaven they will behold most clearly the Glory of a dear Redeemer. The Glory of his Person, as GOD and Man united. The Rays of his Divinity shining through his human Nature, subsisting in his divine Person. And that Glory which accrues to him from glorifying the Father in the Work of their Redemption. Doubtless they will be filled with inconceivable Pleasure, when they see the blessed *Jesus Crowned with Glory and Honour*, who was *crowned with Thorns*, for their Sakes. This Part of their future Felicity was unknown to the Covenant of Works, and surpasses in Excellency that Life which is promised therein.

**3.** The Saints, in the heavenly State, will have a clear and constant Sense of their near Union with CHRIST, as he is GOD and Man united. The Union of his human Nature with his divine Person is his highest Glory as Man. And their Union with him, as his Person is so constituted, is the solid Foundation of their eternal Security; and it is their greatest Honour, yea, that is, the Ground or the intimate Communion which they will enjoy with

GOD unto Eternity. This Union is represented by that of a Vine and its Branches. By that of the natural Head and its Body. The Elect compose a mystical Body, whereof CHRIST is the Head. And the same Spirit is upon Head and Members: *There is one Body, and there is one Spirit.* By a conjugal Union. The Church is the *Lamb's Wife. We are Members of his Body, of his Flesh: and of his Bones.* Oh! What a Dignity is this, to be thus united unto him, who is the Man *GOD's. Fellow.* A Sense of it will raise and maintain in the Minds of the blessed holy Admiration to all Eternity. This likewise is a Branch of our endless Felicity, wherewith the Covenant of Works was wholly unacquainted. Hereafter we shall in a perfect Manner discern how all the Perfections of GOD are glorified, in bringing us unto this blissful state, by the Mediation of CHRIST. His Sovereignty, Grace, Kindness, Mercy, Holiness, Justice, Truth, and absolute Immutability. This also was unknown to the Covenant of Works. A Right to Life we have, according to the Promise of that Covenant, on the Foundation of CHRIST'S Obedience to it for us, as our Representative. But it is unto a Life far exceeding in Glory the Life which that Covenant promises. And it is fit and condecant that the Righteousness of CHRIST should entitle us to a Life superior in Excellency and Glory to that Life, which is promised therein. For, though the Obedience of CHRIST did not exceed the Commands of that Covenant materially, yet, in Value, Worth, and Dignity, it infinitely exceeds what that Covenant requires, because of the infinite Greatness of his Person. And, as the Grace of the Father is the Origin, from which the meritorious Obedience of CHRIST springs, in Heaven it will clearly appear, that *he is all in all.* All in CHRIST, the Head, and all in his Members. That his free and sovereign Favour is the Fountain of the highest Glory of CHRIST, and of the everlasting Happiness of the Elect, through his meritorious Obedience. For the Merit of it is founded in the Grace of the Father towards CHRIST himself, as Man, and towards them, which also made his Obedience theirs. And, therefore, CHRIST and the Church will for ever unite in Ascriptions of Praise and Glory to the divine Father, as he is ALL IN ALL.

