

J. Dolbeare

The Nature of that Faith without
which it is impossible to please God,

CONSIDERED IN A

SERMON,

On HEBREWS xi. 6. *Without Faith it
is impossible to please him.*

TOGETHER WITH

Some OCCASIONAL REMARKS

On some late Writers :

ALSO,

AN APPENDIX,

Shewing what has been the constant Doctrine
of the Protestants in the Article of Faith,
and some Vindication of the Reformers,
and the late Mr. *Hervey*, &c. against some
Animadversions of the Rev. JOSEPH
BELLAMY, D. D. of *Bethlehem* in New-
England.

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German Congregation at *Savannah* in *Georgia*.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF SOME HEARERS.

That they may be found in the Faith. Titus i. 13.

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IN publishing the following plain discourse I have the more readily complied with the request and advice of some of my brethren, friends, and hearers, because I think the subject highly important, and the deviations from the general doctrine of Protestants likely to be attended with very unhappy consequences. To appear in favour of truth requires no apology with the friends of it, and when none else espouses its cause even inferior abilities may commendably be made use of in its support. I have only to add, that the sermon being preached from short notes it is possible as to words and expressions there may be some difference from what has been delivered in the pulpit, the drift and doctrine the attentive hearer and reader will find the same, and this observation I must extend to all I published before, and perhaps also if I should publish any sermon hereafter. As to the manner in which I have treated my subject with very little variation, I would express my mind in the words of the late Dr. Doddridge, in his lectures, p. 424. “ If the account of faith here given should appear to “ be agreeable to the scripture notion of that faith to “ which the promises of the gospel and salvation are “ annexed, then it will follow that those are mistaken “ who represent faith as consisting merely in an assent “ to the gospel as true, and that upon declaring that “ assent a man was justified from all past sins,---- “ it would be very unsafe in the general to describe “ faith according to this notion of it;” and I pray GOD that we may all come to the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of GOD, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

J. J. ZUBLY.

T E X T. H E B R E W S xi. 6.

Without Faith it is impossible to please God.

WHEN God the Creator surveyed the works he had made, and, on the last day of the creation, took a review of all the creatures he had just been forming, we are told he beheld the whole with a sacred complacency, found every part of it perfectly answerable to the design of his original plan, and the whole every way worthy of himself. “God saw every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good.”* As his divine pleasure gave existence to the world, so he was also pleased with the creation and the whole system of beings unto which he had given existence. He created all things, and for his pleasure they are and were created. † Now, as the sole motive of his producing any creatures must be the divine pleasure, so it is evident that the first aim and object of every intelligent being ought to be to please his Creator, and that the only method in which this is to be attained must be by entering into his views, and by acting in due conformity to the will of God in the respective station and agreeable to the faculties and talents wherewith he has intrusted any individual. As every creature was made good and perfect in its kind, nothing more was necessary to secure the constant good pleasure of the Creator and Lord of all than a continuance in that estate in which he made and beheld man at first and pronounced him very good. This happy
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* Gen. i. 31. † Rev. iv. 11.

state alas did not long continue; man fell, and man, considered in his present fallen state, cannot please God; as he is directly the opposite of what he was at first, so he must as much displease God, now he is a sinner, as before he did please him while cloathed with the original integrity of his nature. The obligation to please God still remains, but the ability and very desire to do so man has deprived himself of by his fall and apostacy from his God.

WHETHER, and by what means, man may be re-admitted to the happy state of pleasing his God, is a most important question, to which, from the words that I have read as the subject of our present meditation, we may derive a very pertinent and satisfactory answer; for if without faith it is impossible, by faith it must be possible to please God; let us therefore

FIRST, enquire into the nature of that faith with which man may please God, and,

SECONDLY, shew that as without this it is impossible to please God, so, on the contrary, all those possessed of it must needs please him.

As the subject is interesting in the highest degree, I make no doubt of your favourable attention, and may God send his light and truth that they may guide us, that we may all become believers indeed, and, knowing in whom we believe, may at last obtain the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls.

It will much conduce to the greater clearness of
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the point in hand if we premise two or three general remarks.

1. *There is a difference between belief and faith.* Belief in general is an assent of the mind to things which appear probable; of things which appear to us absolutely certain we do not say *we believe*, but *we know them*; our reasons for believing are not equal to the evidences of our knowing; the reasons may be so strong as scarce to admit a doubt, nevertheless to see is a higher degree of conviction, and as knowledge excludes, so believing still implies the possibility of a doubt. We make this difference even in common language; we believe or disbelieve a report in which we have no concern, we do not even much enquire into the matter; a piece of news which we wish to be true we readily believe so, and what we wish otherwise we are as apt to look upon as false; but, supposing an offer or threatening is made in which we are deeply interested, a remedy proposed which is to heal a disorder, we must not have belief only, but confidence also, if we make use of it. In the former case we look to the *circumstances*, and, as they appear probable or improbable, we believe, disbelieve, or suspend our belief; not so in the latter, we look to the *person*, if that does not appear worthy of credit, and to be depended on, we have no confidence, and, if a remedy is proposed which does not appear likely, we say, we have no faith in it. Belief or disbelief has any proposition for its object, faith is concerned only where we are interested ourselves.

This distinction appears to me well warranted by the sacred scriptures. Thus the belief of the

truth is no more than an assent to any proposition the truth of which we are convinced of, it is no virtue, nor implies any goodness at all, it results naturally and unavoidably from the conviction of the mind, and does not in itself make man any better, it equally affects the good man and the bad; the worst man cannot disbelieve what he knows to be true, though he may disown his believing, and it is not in all the powers of delusion to make man believe what he knows to be false, though he possibly may profess and act as though he thought it to be true. We may be mistaken when we think we know, but it is as possible that a thing should exist, or not exist, at the same time, as it is possible that we should believe or disbelieve contrary to our conviction. The scriptures indeed speak of men believing a lie, but the meaning cannot be that they believe that true which they know to be a lie, for then they must believe it to be a lie, and yet true at the same time, than which a greater absurdity cannot be imagined, but, being "under strong delusion," they may believe that true which yet in itself, and in reality, is no better than a lie. Nothing but truth can be the object of belief, because nothing but truth can deserve credit; but you may easily conceive that men may receive a report as truth which is not so, or without placing any confidence in him by whom reported, though the report proves true in itself.

THE *Jews* did not only believe but knew that *Christ* was a teacher come from God, and yet they did not *receive* his testimony nor himself, *John* iii. 2. 32. v. 40. The Priests and Pharisees believed that *Christ* wrought many miracles, and yet, contrary to their conviction, they not only received him
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not, but also did their utmost that others should not believe in him. Of *Judas*, who betrayed him, it is expressly said, that *Jesus* knew him as one of them who believed not, * and yet it does not admit any doubt but *Judas* was convinced of, preached, and believed the truth, and even publickly owned *Jesus Christ* as his Lord and Master; he died with the truth on his lips, and yet he never had that faith of the elect which purifieth the heart; he was and continued a devil, though like them he believed and trembled. All these believed and had no faith, had a rational conviction of the truth, and yet no solid confidence; I might say *Judas* died in some sense a martyr to belief, and yet went to his own place because he was a stranger to saving faith; so strongly impressed and influenced by the truth he believed, that he could not bear it, but became a murderer of himself, the force of truth which he felt wrought such agonies in him which, without confidence in a Redeemer, could not but end in everlasting despair.

2. *True faith is never without some confidence.* The design of the gospel is not so much to acquaint us with a set of sublime and excellent doctrines as with a person who is the Mediator between God and man, and unto whom all Prophets bear witness that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall obtain remission of sin, through whom alone we may come unto God; knowledge must precede conviction, and persuasion go before confidence, but neither this knowledge nor persuasion can be strictly called faith, because either of these man may be possessed of, and yet remain without that confidence in *Jesus* the Mediator without which
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* *John* vi. 64.

man neither can nor will come unto God and obtain salvation; and why are men to whom the gospel is preached not also saved at last, but because the word did not profit, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it? Many that hear it doubtless are rationally convinced and believe the gospel as much at least as they believe any thing else, but these things are written not only that we might believe that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, which is matter of belief, but that believing we might have life through his name,* which we cannot have without an actual application to him for ourselves for all those blessings and benefits which in general terms are offered by the preaching of the gospel to all that should believe in his name. The idea of confidence indeed naturally and usually enters into the idea of faith; it will be more than difficult to shew any instance of the contrary, without this men believe in vain, 1 *Cor.* xv. 2. When *Christ* tells his Disciples, Have faith in God, *Mark* xi. 22. he could not mean less than have confidence in him. When the Apostles perceived that the lame man had faith to be healed, *Acts* xiv. 9. when *Jesus* beheld the faith of the sick of the palsy, and of those that brought him, he doubtless also discovered what their very application to him declares, a confidence that *Christ* might and would heal him, and the general answer which our Lord gave on such occasions, Be it unto you according to your faith, very naturally implies: Be it unto you according to your desire of and confidence in me. Neither can all things be possible unto him that believeth by a bare assent to the truth, but it is clear that we can do all things by him in whom we trust,

* *John* xx. 31.

trust, even *Christ* who strengtheneth us, and that
 “by *faith* in him we are made whole every whit.”

NEITHER should it pass unnoticed, that, in the language of the New-Testament, faith is usually spoke of not as a belief of what *Christ* spoke, but as believing in *Christ* that spoke it. This most undoubtedly implies a confidence, and the only dependance or hope we can have for the fulfilling of any thing promised or spoken is because he is faithful who made the promise, and he that trusts or believeth in him shall not be confounded, 1 *Peter* ii. 6. Knowledge and assent must precede faith, for how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard; * but man may know and assent to what he hears, and yet be destitute of saving faith; he may make light of it, he may hold the truth in unrighteousness, he may believe for a while and yet *have no root in him*, he may like *Simon* the forcerer believe, be baptised, make an open profession, and thus appear influenced by his faith, and yet remain in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity, and an utter stranger to that faith which is of the operation of God, and which is not a bare act of the understanding, but a saving grace wrought by God our spirit in the heart.

3. *We may conceive a very remarkable difference in the faith of those who have and those who have not heard the gospel.* The Apostle asserts it as an universal truth that without faith NO MAN can please God; some faith therefore must be found in all that are to please him, but it seems reasonable that this faith be proportionable to the means which they had of knowing and believing in him. Every man ought to believe there
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is a God ; this truth is written with sun-beams before every man's eyes ; he that does not believe, and in consequence honour God, is inexcusable ; to believe a God should naturally produce an endeavour to glorify him and be thankful ; it is also very clear that what God speaks man should believe, when he makes him any promises they ought to be the object of his confidence, and threatnings awake his fears ; as man *cannot* come to God without the belief that God is, so neither *will* he seek or *come* unto him without he has a confidence that God is to him accessible and the hope that God will be the rewarder of those that diligently seek him ; and as these things are not altogether hid from reason, reason engageth us not only to believe there is a God, but, considering he is our Creator and Preserver, also to put our trust in him. Unto him to whom much is given of him much also will be required ; and the Apostle plainly intimates, that on the last day every man will be judged by the law which he has received, and not by that of which he never heard ; those therefore who never heard the gospel, but, from natural reason, or perhaps some dark tradition, are persuaded that there is a God, a rewarder of good and evil, and as such diligently seek and trust in him, may be possessed of a faith in which they may please God, who is no respecter of persons, but with whom, in every nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted ; but it should be carefully observed, that none can please God but in and for *Christ's* sake, seeing there is no salvation in any other, nor any other name given under Heaven but his, for men to be saved by ; if any therefore are saved without the knowledge of him, it still is not without his mediation and merit.

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which the holy one of *Israel* may apply unto them in a method as just as to us perfectly unknown; and, with regard to all that heard the gospel, none can please God but by drawing near unto him, by such a faith as is of his own appointment, and indeed of his own operation; what this faith is you will next naturally enquire.

THERE is no virtue nor good quality which the scriptures of the New-Testament speak so highly of as they do of faith in *Jesus Christ*; 'tis *this* which denominates the whole life of the Christian, it is a life of faith in *Jesus* the Son of God, there can be no Christian life without it, no hope here, no happiness hereafter. The Apostle had just been quoting as a fundamental truth that the just shall live by faith; this passage, which the antient *Jews* say contains all the law, and is the sum of all the commandments, appeared so important to the Apostle, that he introduceth it in no less than three of his Epistles; full of this subject, and well aware of its importance, he gives us a definition of that faith by which the just shall live, and, as he is writing a long and important chapter in support of, he first clearly establishes what that faith is which is so necessary to men, and so useful to believers. I do not recollect that any other Christian grace or virtue stands so designedly and expressly defined by any sacred writer, and it appears evidently his design to remove all objections, and give us such an account of this matter, in which, being written by divine inspiration, we might entirely acquiesce. The just shall live by faith, but what is that faith by which the just shall live? It is, *saith the Apostle, the substance of things hoped*

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hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. * In this full and comprehensive definition the Apostle clearly establishes two propositions--that faith is the substance of things hoped for, and that it is an

* A late author defines faith with the beloved Disciple *John*, and as he saith, the great *St. Paul*, *the belief of truth*—the believing that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, or a giving credit to the record which *God* gave of his Son, *2 Thes. ii. 13. 1 John v. 1. 10.* but whoever reads these passages attentively will find them nothing less than definitions of saving faith, which in the first at most is only mentioned in an incidental manner, and in the second the Apostle only describes that act of a believer which one that believes only for a season, or hath the faith of miracles, might as well have performed as a believer indeed; doubtless there may be and is belief of the truth, and of the truth of the gospel too, where the truth, as it is in *Jesus*, and saving faith, are still woefully wanting, and when this author sternly adds, “*These definitions are not to be contradicted by any, however some have glossed upon them till they brought in a sense diverse from the inspired writers.*” I cannot but admire his omitting the only definition of faith where the Apostle expressly treats the matter, and to which what he saith of the passages he quotes under the name of definitions is far more applicable. I also lament that my friend should bring a charge of glosses made on his text to the bringing in of a sense diverse from the inspired writers, which is a very heavy one, and in my opinion unsupportable by truth and charity, if leveled, as it seems to be, at men whose merits and labours ought to secure them from contempt now they are asleep, though in their lifetime doubters they were no more infallible than some that are still living.———See the Appendix.

Another author saith, “*Faith is admitting for truth what another declares to us from a confidence in his veracity;*” but this seems to lay greater stress on the credibility of the reporter than the credibility of the report, whereas a liar is credible when he delivers a known truth, and a good man not to be believed when from ignorance he delivers a falsehood known to the hearer. I have no doubt of an author’s veracity, *i. e.* that he saith what he thinks true, but I may have good reason not to believe all he saith, my opinion of his veracity notwithstanding. Belief looks to the credibility of the report, faith trusts to the faithfulness of the reporter.

an evidence of things not seen. The word rendered substance does not often occur; but even in prophane writers † it signifies *confidence*; the things we hope for are distinct from our faith and hope, they exist in themselves, and they could never be the objects of faith and hope if either of these were to give them existence; but faith renders us confident of their existence, and that in due time they shall become objects of sight and enjoyment; indeed, in this very Epistle, iii. 14. the word is translated confidence, if we hold the beginning of our confidence unto the end, and the very same word occurs 2 Cor. ix. 4. where the Apostle speaks of his confident boasting; according to the Apostle, therefore, faith realizes and confidently expects things which indeed are not present, but which already exist, and which we hope will be our own. We always take interest in things we hope for, and accordingly the faith of the Christian does not only believe and is persuaded of invisible realities, but also realizes them even now, and confidently expects them as her own. Faith, indeed, excludes sight, as possession does hope, and enjoyment expectation; nevertheless faith also is the evidence of things not seen, it does not look for things still to be created, but for things which already actually exist, but are unseen. What we absolutely know nothing of is to us neither true nor false, but a persuasion that God is true and faithful serves

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† *Raphelius*, in his annotations on the New-Testament, quotes passages out of *Arianus* and *Polybius*, where *hypostasis*, which is the word of the original, is used for confidence; in *Suidas*, *Plutarch*, and *Euripides*, it stands in the same sense; the *Syriack* translation renders it *certainty*, the *Low Dutch* and *French* a sure foundation, *Castalio* *subjeccio*, *Luther* a sure confidence, which word also the *English* translation preserves in the margin.

instead of evidence unto the soul, and assures us both of the existence of the things which his word speaks of, and which now we do not see, as also that all the promises of God will be made good to us however contrary all appearances. This idea of faith you will find the Apostle preserves throughout the whole chapter; the worthies whom he mentions not only believed what God spoke, but also placed confidence both in the word that was spoken and in him that spoke it; they *received* the promises, saw them afar off, were *persuaded* of them, and *embraced* them, and thus they lived and died in that faith which looks to that which is invisible, and places all confidence and hope in the things promised and the faithfulness of a promising God. Such is the Apostle's account of faith, and as by this the antients obtained testimony that they pleased God, let us now more particularly enquire what that faith is without which it is impossible to please him. But before I speak positively on what it is, I would, for the sake of greater clearness, take notice of what by some is said to be so, but in reality is not.

As the characteristick of that faith I am to speak of is that by it we please God, it must necessarily consist of ingredients capable of such a great effect, and whatever leaves us short of pleasing God must also leave us destitute of that faith in which man may, and in which the antients did obtain testimony that they pleased God; wherever therefore men have no other faith than the belief of the truth, a conviction that *Jesus* is the Son of God, and if you will a profession too that all his doctrine is true, and all his precepts just and holy, it cannot be saving faith; those that please God by faith
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have all this, but it is not in any thing which they have in common with bad men, and even devils, that they can please him; that which so greatly distinguisheth from these by its effect must also be very distinct in its nature, but that wicked men and devils are persuaded of the truth of the gospel admits no doubt, the latter especially too severely felt the effects of it in the destruction of their kingdom, and in *Christ's* power over them, not to have the most lively persuasion that *Jesus* is indeed the Son of God and the Saviour of men; they remain devils nevertheless, and of all those at least, among the rulers of the *Jews*, who in secret believed on him, and joined in his publick persecution, it holds good, this belief notwithstanding, what the Apostle saith of the *Jews* in general that they did not please God, and were contrary to all men, *1 Thes. ii. 15.* and if so, all those that no more than assented to and professed the gospel were still destitute of that faith without which it is impossible to please God; of these the young men in the gospel, who knew and approved the doctrine of *Jesus Christ*, whom *Jesus* loved, and who could not even part with *Christ*, or decline following him without open sorrow, is another instance. *Obs. 1. There is a real distinction between divine faith, i. e. that belief which is grounded upon the testimony of God, and that faith without which it is impossible to please him.* Men may have very clear ideas of the truth in their head without feeling the power of it in their hearts. The *Galatians* even suffered many things in the cause of *Christ*, and yet laid greater stress on the works of the law than was consistent with the doctrine of faith. Man may see and hear God speaking to him, and yet his faith be “only common;” the

600,000 who heard God speaking out of the cloud on *Sinai*, heard and promised to do, yet all they had seen and heard was not sufficient to make them believers indeed; God was displeased with them, their carcases fell in the wilderness, they could not enter into *Canaan*, because of unbelief they could not enter, though I dare say they never doubted but God had spoke to them, and also remembered and assented to what he had spoken on that never to be forgotten occasion. Believing therefore what God spoke, and believing it because he spoke it, does not amount to that faith without which it is impossible to please him. I have already observed that there is some difference between belief and faith, the former being a simple assent to any proposition, the latter to a proposal that I look upon as made unto me. I would now further *observe*,

2. *There may be some confidence where there is no saving faith.* Faith cannot exist without confidence, but confidence may be found in such as are destitute of saving faith. All that believe and are persuaded that *Christ* died for them, and live and die in that persuasion, profess it in publick by partaking of ordinances, are not in a state of divine favour, nor can it be said of all or most of them that they please God; far the greater number of those that profess Christianity believe that *Christ* died alike for *Judas* and *Peter*, that he alike died for all; if they believe this they cannot doubt but he also died for them in particular; but have not the most lamps without oil? are not numbers of professors destitute of that spirit which whoever has not is none of *Christ's*? We find some so strongly persuaded that they belong to *Christ*, that in his name they wrought miracles and cast out devils,---that
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even in the last day they will plead their relation, ---that nothing can undeceive them but that final decisive declaration of the Judge, I NEVER knew you. It is clear therefore that some men may have what they call a particular persuasion that *Christ* died for them in particular, and yet that it is not of the right kind, and yet they may not have that faith without which 'tis impossible to please God. I thought it necessary to make these previous remarks, that so no man might mistake shadow for substance, belief for faith, or a heated imagination for reality of grace. I would now endeavour to shew what faith really is, and what manner of persons we must be if in our faith we are to please God. As whatever we cannot please God in cannot be the faith here spoke of, so on the contrary whatever makes us acceptable to God must be the faith, or the fruit of that faith in which alone we may please him. This is the exact reasoning of the Apostle; he asserts that *Enoch* pleased God; he hence concludes that *Enoch* must have had faith, for, faith he, it is a known and indisputable truth that without faith no man can please him; as *Enoch* therefore did please him, it must have been by that very means, which is the standing rule of God's looking in mercy on sinners, and man's pleasing God in and through a Redeemer. By faith *Enoch* pleased God before he was translated. I take for granted what no Christian will deny, viz. that we cannot please God, nor be acceptable to him, but in and through *Jesus Christ*; with him God is well pleased, and we are made acceptable through him, the beloved, in the presence of that God who is both just and the justifier of them that believe in *Jesus Christ*; till we are in *Christ* God is a consuming fire, and the sinner hay, wood and stubble;

stable; from the moment that we are one with him God beholds us in his Son, and pleased with him he is also pleased with all that are his people. Short of this we are strangers to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God; and as without *Christ* none can come unto the Father, so none can come unto *Christ* but by believing, *i. e.* fixing his trust in and applying unto him; whatever therefore men call faith, if it does not unite them with *Jesus Christ*, they cannot please God in it; on the other hand, the very lowest degree of that which unites us with *Jesus Christ* brings also *Christ* to dwell in our hearts by faith, and makes us acceptable unto God.

In faith we may observe *knowledge, confidence, and love and assurance*; without knowledge there can be no confidence, without confidence there can be no applying to and laying hold on *Jesus Christ*; and wherever these two are united it is as impossible they should not work by love as it is impossible for light not to shine. I think *all* these ingredients necessary to faith; but if it be enquired in which of the three the essence and the very act of faith properly consists, then those that say in knowledge alone seem to say too little, because thousands who knew *Christ* never applied to nor trusted in him; to place it in full assurance is requiring too much, because thousands of God's children believe what they do not see, and their whole life is an uninterrupted conflict with fear and diffidence; but in the meanest, as well as in the greatest believer, some confidence is to be found, and none but a true believer will venture his soul and salvation upon *Jesus Christ* alone; whatever therefore is to be found in the weakest, as well as in the strongest,

est, and is to be found in none but real believers, must make up the essence of faith, and that confidence which, to use the language of scripture, desires, hungers, thirsts after, comes, applies to, and lays hold on *Jesus Christ*, bids fairest to be that very faith in which we may, and without which it is impossible to please God. *

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* Dr. Chauncy, in his very valuable sermons on the nature of faith, which are in many hands among us, page 113. hath this note: “ *It will very probably be thought by some that I have been greatly deficient in not making the essence of faith as justifying to consist in the soul’s reliance on Christ, or trusting in his righteousness as the only pleadable title to life; this WITH THEM is the principal thing the scripture means by that faith which justifies.*” With all due respect to the Doctor, I do not hesitate to confess that I am one of *them* who think exactly in the manner he is here writing against, and I am so little ashamed of my company, that I could most heartily wish the Doctor was one of the number. I would ask: Can any man be justified without this reliance on *Christ*, or trusting in his righteousness, or was ever any justified without it? If yes, then the man that trusts in *Christ*, and the man that does not, the man that relies on *Christ*, and the man that relies on his own righteousness, are perfectly upon a footing, provided they do but both give their assent to the testimony of God, which, page 71. he saith is the faith of the Christian: If nay, then surely that without which faith never could, nor ever can subsist as justifying, must belong to its essence. And when the Doctor further observes, “ *That he knows of no text in all the Bible which gives this idea of faith,* I would submit to his consideration that the word in the original is not only used for trust and confidence in prophane writers, (*Phocylides, apud Lampium, Lao mi pistewe, trust not to the people, and Demosthenes scauto pisteweis, thou trustest thyself*) but that this is its usual signification in the New Testament, I will only cite the passages where faith in *Jesus Christ* is mentioned in *Luke*, and to believe in him in *St. John*, and leave the judgment with the reader, see *Luke* v. 20. vii. 50. viii. 25. 48. xvii. 5. 17. 19. xviii. 8. 42. xxii. 32. of believing in him, see in *John* only, *John* i. 7. 12. 50. ii. 22. 23. 24. iii. 12.

On the whole, then, the definition which I would give of this faith in which they that have heard the gospel, and are awakened to a due care of their soul, may please God, is this: It is such a persuasion

15. 16. 18. 36. iv. 21 39. 41. 42. 48. 53. v. 38. 44. 46. 47. vi. 29. 30. 35. 40. 47. 69. vii. 38. 39. and not to be too tedious, viii. 24. xi. 25. xiv. 1. xx. 29. 31. omitting so many other passages, I would only mention *Paul*, 2 *Tim.* i. 12. I know in whom I have believed (trusted;) *James*, Let him ask in faith not doubting, *James* i. 6 *Peter*, 1 *Peter* i. 21. That you might have faith and hope in God. *John*, Faith which overcometh the world, 1 *John* ii. 13. Assuredly among all these there is one text which implies trust in the idea of faith. "It may be observed here, that almost every character or action, whereby faith in *Christ* is represented in scripture, carries in it the notion of trust, hope, or dependence, so that the original and most proper sense of the word *faith* is still maintained, and every sinner, who applies himself to *Christ* for salvation, does certainly put forth an act of trust or hope in him, though he may not always so evidently and distinctly apprehend and judge of the inward act of his own soul, or distinguish them so exactly." *Watts's Orthodoxy and Charity united*, p. 260.

If trusting in *Christ* is only an effect or consequence of saving faith, then it is as distinct from it as an effect from the cause, or a consequence from the proposition from which it is drawn, and in that case our salvation, which the scripture uniformly ascribes unto faith, is not an effect of faith, but an effect of an effect of it. It much mitigates the question, which otherwise I should think of considerable moment, that those who will not allow it to enter into its essence, yet expressly assert, that "faith and this trust are inseparable;" but surely it will not be said, "that wherever assent is bottomed on the witness of God," there is also this trust, or saving faith. This seems a new way of expressing old truths, but I confess to me it is not very desirable, the old is better.

N. B. That faith implies trust appears to demonstration in the original of *John* ii. 24. so it also does whenever the word is used in the passive form, *Rom.* iii. 2. 1 *Tim.* i. 11. The only "pleadable title to life" is the righteousness, merit, and sacrifice of *Jesus* the Redeemer, this faith pleads and saith, *Psalms* lxxi. 16. 17.

sion of the truth of the gospel as makes the awakened sinner embrace *Jesus Christ*, offered therein as his own and only Saviour, and influences his whole nature and practice. He that thus believeth is not every sinner, but the sinner awakened to a sense of his undone condition; what he believes is not simply the truth of the gospel, but he looks chiefly to *Jesus Christ* as the Saviour in the gospel set forth for sinners; he does not barely believe him such in general, but he makes the experiment for himself, his soul desires, his hope embraces him; he views *Christ* as his own Saviour, and knows of none else, and nothing else, which he can look to for salvation, but him; this persuasion is of him that called him, and therefore it has this happy effect, that it purifies his heart, overcomes the world, fills him with peace and joy in believing, and at last bestows upon him the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul. There is nothing in this definition which does not suit the meanest real believer, or which is not the care, wish, and desire of every believer in reality. You will observe that I place the weight, essence, and characteristick of that faith in which we are to please God, in its uniting us with *Jesus Christ*, so that he and his righteousness become our's; less cannot do, because all that are not in *Christ* cannot please God; and this is sufficient, because all that are in *Christ* cannot but please him. I repeat it therefore, whatever does not make *Christ* our's is not saving faith, and whatever is the means of our union with him must also be the means of our union with his Father, or that very faith in which we may please him, which I am now more particularly to consider as the second general head of this discourse.

To please God, as it appears a general expression, and is applied not to any particular action, but to the person of the believer, itself cannot mean less than that he with whom God is pleased has the divine approbation, is an object of his love and favour, that he will be admitted into the divine presence, dwell with God, and enjoy all that bliss which must accompany such a happy state for ever and ever. All this we see in the case of *Enoch* which the Apostle has just been citing; God translated him, he did not taste death, he exchanged faith for sight, “he was no more” among mortals, but he *dwelt* with God in Heaven, with whom he had *walked* while on earth, and all this because *before his translation he had this testimony that he pleased God.*

To please God is the highest attainment of rational creatures, and that which secures them the enjoyment of all that happiness a creature can be capable of. In proportion of our pleasing God he will bestow us encreasing tokens of his favour, and we must be happy exactly in the same proportion; it is very evident that sin must displease the most holy being, and that therefore the sinner must undergo a very great and total change before he can please God again; and seeing without faith it is impossible to please him, faith of course is indispensably necessary for this most important purpose. Some actions of graceless men may in some lower degree please God; when *Jehu* destroyed the house of *Ahab*, according to the divine command, God said unto him, Thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, therefore shall thy children of the fourth generation sit on the throne of
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of *Israel*, 2 *Kings* x. 30. There was something amiable in the young man who went away sorrowful from *Jesus Christ*, though his very going away plainly proved his want of real faith; but no man can please God, so as to be acceptable to him, but in and through *Jesus Christ*, and no man that has heard of *Christ*, and his gospel, can please God, unless he also sets his seal to it that God is true, and receives the record which he has given of his Son.

In this faith it is possible to please God; the reason is evident, this faith makes us one with *Christ*, by this faith he dwells in our heart; by faith we are said to be in him, and he in us; by faith *Jesus Christ* liveth in us, and when we live a life of faith we live in the faith of the Son of God; *Christ* and the real believer are inseparable, God beholds the one in the other, and we are made accepted through grace in him the beloved, *Eph.* i. 6. and as all things are possible unto him that believeth, so, by being of the faith of *Jesus*, for his sake in whom we believe we may also please God. Add to this, that the greatest promises are given unto him that believeth, he does not come into judgment, he will never die, he will be raised again on the last day, he has even now eternal life, all which undoubtedly imply that he that believeth in *Jesus Christ* also pleaseth God, who has him set forth the object of our faith, as a propitiation through faith in his blood, that he might be just and the justifier of him who believeth in *Jesus*, *Rom.* iii. 25. 26.

AND as without some faith it is impossible for any man, so without this faith it is impossible for any
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that have heard of Christ to please God. Man cannot please God as a sinner; he that pleaseth God has also a testimony that he is righteous, verse 4. he must also walk with God like *Enoch*, and obtain a good report like all the antients; but all this he cannot while destitute of this faith, and therefore, as he is destitute of these things which God might behold with approbation, and of that which distinguisheth the penitent and impenitent, the real believer and unbeliever, it is also impossible that he should please God; it is morally and naturally impossible he should; it is not only difficult, or possible only in a few rare instances, but it is impossible in itself, and therefore in every instance. The Apostle lays it down as a self evident maxim, as a truth which none that knows any thing of divine things can dispute, or possibly have any doubt of; to assert the opposite would be directly contrary to the word of God, and the experience of his people in every age, who one and all came to God through faith, and from their own conviction and knowledge declare that it is impossible to please God without it.

MAN cannot please God now in his state by nature, he is born of the flesh and is flesh, and *they that are of the flesh cannot please God, Rom. viii. 8.* Neither are man's best performances and attempts sufficient only to hide this guilt, though he wash himself with nitre, and take much soap, yet his iniquity is marked before God, *Jer. ii. 22.* The *Ethiopian* may as easily change his skin, and the leopard his spots, as men in their own strength do good who are accustomed unto evil; and in such a situation how is it possible man should please him who is of purer eye than to behold any iniquity.

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Men may, and some actually do try to please God by performances of their own, they make an offer of thousands of rams, they would give rivers of oil, and even their first born, for the transgression of their souls; they are so zealous in external duties that they are ready to expostulate with God, We have fasted and thou seest not, we have afflicted our souls and thou takest no knowledge, *Isaiab* lviii. 3. The Pharisee thanks God that he is not like other men, nor even like that Publican who yet goeth to his own house justified before the other. This is the way of *Cain*, whose sacrifice God regarded not, and the very reverse of *Abel*, who by faith offered a better sacrifice; this was *Israel's* national sin, they followed after the law of righteousness, but did not attain it, because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law, *Rom.* ix. 31. 32. Hence faith is not only the means and method by which man must draw near unto God and please him at first, but even those who actually believe, and are in a state of good works, must constantly depend on *Christ* alone for their acceptance, nor will any offering be accepted by God that is not offered in that faith without which it is impossible to please him.

THIS impossibility ariseth from the nature of the thing itself and the express divine constitution. As in the nature of things no man can or will come unto God, or endeavour to please him, without a belief that God is, and a confidence that he may not be rejected but accepted, so no sinner awakened to a sense of his case will venture to draw near unto God without a Mediator; neither indeed can he please God, unless he is introduced by the only Mediator between God and man, to whom an access

cess and through him unto God is opened in the gospel, but which no man can or will make any use of destitute of that belief and confidence which enters into the essence of that faith of which the Apostle is speaking. I add to this, that it is Heaven's fundamental law, he that believeth not shall not see life, is condemned already, because he believeth not in the name of the only begotten Son of God; God has sworn by himself, "to him every knee shall bend, and every tongue shall say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength; such also shall come to (believe in) him, and the rest shall be ashamed;" there is no name under Heaven given to man to be saved in but that of *Jesus Christ*, nor way of coming to the Father but by him, nor any possibility of coming to him but by faith; they that attempt it in any other method act upon principles diametrically opposite to the divine constitution, they will not be saved by faith in a Redeemer, but please God by works of their own; by faith all the worthies in this chapter did all they did; but those that mean to please God without faith take a method directly opposite to his institution, and with *Cain* take part against all those who by faith pleased God.

I SHALL only add, that though by faith we please God, and it is impossible to please him without it, yet it is not our faith, nor any thing of our's, that renders us acceptable to God; this honour is even due unto *Jesus Christ* alone, and we please God not because of our faith, but because of him to whom our faith looks, and with whom by faith we become united, though it is not unusual to the scripture to ascribe that unto our receiving which is only the free and unmerited mercy of God in giving,

giving, and thus the Redeemer himself sometimes, when he healed any that applied to him, condescended to put that dignity upon faith, which in strictness was only due to his own act, and to tell them, Go in peace, thy faith has made thee whole.

IMPROVEMENT.

THERE is no doctrine or knowledge that can be of greater importance to man than how he may please his God. If we consider ourselves only in the relation of his creatures nearness to him must constitute our bliss, and when we reflect on it that, from the very nature of our soul, its desires must be as infinite as its duration, we must be convinced that none but God infinite can fulfil them, that not to please the God of our spirits must be misery, to please him happiness and pleasure. It is a good thought of a heathen poet, that God being at peace with us we cannot be unhappy; * and nothing can be clearer than that to lie under the divine displeasure must be the height and spring of every calamity conceivable, and that while this displeasure lasts every thing terrible to men, and nothing else, is to be expected.

THE sacred scriptures every where represent mankind as in a state of apostacy from God, as gone astray and corrupted, their thoughts and the imagination of the heart wicked before him continually, the heart itself desperately wicked and deceitful above all things; from thence, like

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* *Pecato possum non miser esse DEO.* Ovid.

from an impure spring, proceedeth every iniquity; from this root of bitterness all these evil fruits; which defile man, and make him appear abominable before him who is of purer eye than to behold iniquity; hence by nature we are said to be the children of wrath and cannot stand in God's presence. Soon as man commenced a sinner, and *went* astray, he was also *driven* from the presence of his God, Gen. iii. 24. and now light may more easily have communion with darkness, or righteousness have fellowship with unrighteousness, than a holy, just, and offended God, may have communion with the impenitent sinner, or his supreme holiness take any pleasure in a creature so entirely corrupted, and so entirely strayed away from his God and Creator. Though his *creature* may be an object of undeserved pity, yet the *sinner* cannot appear otherwise in the sight of God than as a guilty and daring rebel, and as such, shall God have pleasure in him? shall not he rather visit for these things, and shall not his soul be avenged on such a generation as this? Jer. ix. 9. I may add to this, that sin has also filled man with displeasure and aversion against God and his ways; the sinner saith, depart from us, we desire not the knowledge of thy ways, but how can two walk together unless they are agreed? and how is it possible there should be any pleasing intercourse between God, that abominates the sins of man, and man, who abhors the ways, precepts, and command of his God? It is equally true that the holiness and justice of God will not suffer him to take any pleasure in sinners, and that the love of sin, impurity, and unholiness, unavoidably disable man from taking any pleasure in God; this unhappy condition must continue till the sinner return unto
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God, but alas! this, left to himself, remains an impossibility, or till God in pity restore and recover him; and whether he will do so or no, we could never know, unless God himself inform us, and in this view also *Jesus Christ* has brought life and immortality to light by his gospel.

We are informed that some of guilty *Adam's* offspring pleased God; this is sufficient to raise the hopes that to please God again is not absolutely impossible, and by what means they did please him becomes the most important enquiry of any that are desirous to please him also. This method, the kindness of God hath not only given us some dark distant hints of, which already would have been great mercy, but the Apostle sets before us a cloud of witnesses who have obtained this good report; by faith they came unto him, by faith they pleased him, "they had testimony that they pleased God," but if without faith it is impossible to please him, we can be at no loss to conclude, that all those that are possessed of this faith must also infallibly please him.

It may probably be asked, why faith, above all things, should be the means of pleasing God, and I do not wonder that such as look upon faith to be no more than a bare assent to truth, or the truth of the gospel, should form such a question; with them faith at the most can only stand upon a level with other good works, and why should the honour of pleasing God be conferred upon that more than upon any other? I answer, that if you will but attentively read the New-Testament, you will find that every great effect is ascribed unto faith; the purifying the heart, *Acts* xv. the victory over the

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world, 1 *John* v. 4. the whole Christian life, *Gal.* ii. 20. and the salvation of the soul, 1 *Pet.* i. 9. Faith is spoke of as the means of all this, all these are considered as effects of faith; now, if God has so constituted matters, this should be abundantly reason enough for us to acquiesce in it, but the truth is, that though an assent to the truth, or “the bare belief of the bare truth,” does not necessarily produce such great effects, yet neither is this the faith in which we please God, and that faith in which we please him has not only a divine sanction, and is grounded on the promises of God, but has also in its own nature a capacity and fitness to answer all these important purposes.

THE gospel plan of salvation manifestly places our recovery and happiness not in any works of righteousness of our own, but in the mercy of God through *Jesus Christ* the Saviour, that being justified through his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life, *Tit.* iii. 5. 7. It plainly distinguisheth between the works of the law, by which no flesh shall be justified, and the faith in *Jesus Christ*, by which we may be justified, *Gal.* ii. 16. *Christ* is spoke of as the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, *Rom.* x. 4. there is no salvation, nor any name but *his* given for man to be saved, *Acts* iv. 12. To the praise of the glory of his grace he made us accepted in the beloved; our redemption therefore, and acceptance with God, is not our own work, but in *CHRIST* we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin, according to the riches of his grace, *Eph.* i. 6. 7. We are assured that unto him that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted
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righteousness, *Rom.* iv. 7. As we cannot save ourselves, we must either remain lost, or be saved by another; that we do not, cannot save ourselves, experience, and the very coming of *Jesus* to save that which was lost, plainly shews; could we save ourselves there would be no need of a saviour; seeing therefore we cannot save, or make ourselves acceptable unto God, and seeing a Saviour is given through whom all these blessings may be obtained, the question is, by what means sinners awakened to a sense of their want and danger may come to partake of them. Now, what can be more worthy of God, more consistent with the plan of salvation by means of another, and more consistent with our own case, than that, upon feeling our want, and hearing of *Christ* as a Saviour, we should place our confidence in and apply to him that he would become *OUR* Saviour, make us partakers of his salvation? What can be more suitable and becoming guilty wretches than to throw themselves before him whom God has given to be a propitiation, confess their guilt, and plead his redemption, when they mean to return unto God to beseech the Mediator to plead their cause and introduce them; when the method that God pointed out for our return and acceptance is by means of his Son, the Mediator between God and man, what other method can be left to the sinner than to believe the testimony of God, apply to, desire and confide in this great Saviour, in a word, come unto the Father through the Son, and thus by faith to please God? This indeed cuts off all boasting, and renders man indebted for pardon and recovery entirely to the mercy of God in *Jesus*; but for that very reason also it appears worthy of God and suitable to the case of the sinner. As the sinner cannot,

not, and will not come unto God, unless he has some confidence in him, as he cannot take any pleasure in God if he beholds him as a consuming fire, as he is, without an intervening Mediator, so God cannot take any pleasure in him in this condition; but when man by faith is once brought unto *Jesus Christ* these obstacles become removed, man sees the glory of God in the face of *Jesus Christ*, and God beholds the sinner as redeemed, atoned for, and united with his Son; and as faith is the principal means of all this, it is plain that every one possessed of it must also please God.

THIS is diametrically apposite to the thoughts of many. There is none but what will acknowledge that to please God is the duty and bliss of man, to displease him fraught with every calamity and danger; but in the way to please him men greatly differ, there are few that make this their study and care, and too many who pursue methods which never will attain this end. It is greatly to be lamented that men in general are so extremely indifferent about it whether they please or displease their God, as to thousands God is not in all their thoughts, their own pleasure is the motive and aim of all their actions, they act contrary to God in the most audacious manner, and sin against him with their hands lifted up, they do the abominable thing which he hates, and have not even the thought that thus they make themselves loathsome in the sight of a holy, pure, and all-seeing God; if these can ever think that while they continue so they can please God, they must also think God altogether such an one like themselves; how fearful will their case appear when once they discover their mistake, and how desperate if they should not discover

cover it till it is become irretrievable, when God will reprove them, set their sins fully before their face, tear them to pieces, and there be none to deliver, *Psalms* 1. 21. 22. Consider this ye that deliberately go on in sin and wilfully keep away from God; as you desire not the knowledge of his ways, as you will none of him, set at nought his counsel, and will have none of his reproof, what will you do when your day cometh? Can you endure, can your hands be strong when God shall deal with you? Can you bear his frowns who with a nod shakes the creation, and whose fury is poured out like fire? If the wrath of a King be the forerunner of death, what must be the indignation of the King of Kings? If the righteous scarcely be saved, where will the ungodly and sinner appear, and if judgment begin first of the house of God, what will be the end of them that obey not the gospel of *Jesus Christ*? Remember it, daring sinners, God is displeased with you, with the wicked he is angry every day. Because man sees not God he does not think God sees him; because man himself is pleased in sin it does not affect him that God is displeased; because sentence is not speedily executed on the evil works of men the heart of men is fully set in them to do evil; the sinner forms himself an idea of divine mercy which would rather be imbecility, he considers the Ruler and Judge of the universe as one who may be offended with impunity, and who either does not take notice or will never shew any displeasure against the folly and wickedness of men; man goes on in the love of sin, in the neglect of duty, a stranger unto God, an enemy to the cross of *Christ*, the god of this world has blinded his eyes, he loves darkness rather than light because his works are evil; there
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is a God, but the sinner will not know him; there is a Saviour, but the sinner tramples his blood under feet; there are pleadings of the spirit, but the sinner resists and quencheth them; God taketh no pleasure in the sinner's death, but the sinner himself takes pleasure in the ways of it, he will not come unto God through *Christ*, he will not come unto *Christ* that he might have life; surely *they are a people without understanding, and at last he that made them will have no mercy upon them, and he that formed them will shew them no favour*, Isaiah xxvii. 11. I am afraid some that now hear me may still be of this stamp; O that it might come home unto them! God has made and supported you; God has given his Son for sinners; *Jesus Christ* shed his blood and died for sinners; there will be joy in Heaven over any one sinner's repentance; canst thou know, hear, and believe this, and go on in sin? O thou wretch, God is displeased with thee, and thou art pleased with thyself!

THOUGH we may hope better things of some others, yet cannot we of many hope things which accompany salvation. *Many think it is little or no matter what a man believes so he lead a sober virtuous life*; these think that without faith a man can please God, they think the very reverse of what the Apostle asserts, *Christ* and his redemption is left out of their creed, they are their own saviours, at the very best *Christ* is only a pattern unto them, a little superior to other good men, but to expect salvation because he hung on a cross, to place their hope of acceptance in the foolishness of the cross, and in what *Christ* suffered and did for sinners, to expect to be saved by faith, and to place their whole trust in one that died without the camp,

camp, hearing our reproach, truly, this is beneath their dignity, the whole doctrine is unto them as unacceptable as it was unto those who counted it foolishness and a stumbling block, they make no doubt but their own arms will save them, and if they lead a good life they will be accepted, but let man the sinner know that he is a rebel against God, and that it is impertinence in him to talk of being accepted till he has laid down the rebellious arms, and sued out a pardon; let him also know that God forgives none but for the sake of his Son, and that unless men apply to they must go without him; let them in short know that without faith it is impossible to please God; this is the method which infinite wisdom and kindness has appointed, and which whoever does not submit to must of course remain an object of the displeasure of an offended God and slighted Saviour.

WHILE some, contrary to the whole tenor of the New-Testament, lay so little stress on faith, that they think a pious life can secure happiness without it, or that there can be true piety where faith in *Jesus Christ* lies not at the bottom, the opposite error, which perhaps as many hold with equal eagerness, is not less void of danger, *they fancy within themselves that because they believe aright all is safe and well, however ill they may live*; faith with them is a covering for every iniquity, they can persuade themselves that right notions in the head overbalance the wrongest biases of the heart, and are sufficient to atone for every vice in life; they are apt to suspect all those that press the necessity of a holy life, as though they were too legal, or enemies to faith, and think it derogates from the excellency of their Christian grace if with equal care

we maintain that believers must be found in a state of good works; this is an error of the most dangerous consequence, they that hold it plainly prove that they have not even the idea of true faith in the Son of God, or of that faith without which it is impossible to please him; but as no true believer can think or act so, it well deserves enquiry whether the holding the “bare belief of the bare truth,” or a bare assent to the gospel, which doubtless these people may have, to be saving faith, may not much contribute to a mistake of such fatal tendency. As nothing is more common than for men to persuade themselves they have saving when they have but common faith, so it argues a great ignorance of human nature to suppose that the will of men will always follow the conviction of the understanding, that man will do what is right when once he knows it, and that, in order to engage him to become a true believer, he need only be convinced of the truth. Thousands have a true faith, *i. e.* believe what is really true, but this very faith becomes an occasional cause of their greater damnation, because they rest on this as sufficient to interest them in a Redeemer, and an eternity of happiness, this is their condemnation, that *light is come unto them, but they loved darkness* rather than light, because their works were evil, *John iii. 19.* Man may have a fairer shew than all this and yet deceive, or be deceived himself; those that have sat under a sound awakening Ministry may have their judgments clearly informed, and their affections greatly raised and warmed, although their hearts were never changed; they may have received the word with gladness, they may from hearing others have learnt the language of *Canaan*, they may seem full of hope and of confidence,

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and yet, weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, be found wanting; nature may personate grace, and there are some who talk vainly of attainments, joys, and the like, while others who walk humbly before God, and know the plague of their own heart, are filled with diffidence and fear; the kingdom of God is not in words, but in power, and whatever you may call faith, or pretend to have as faith, if it does not work by love, though it may have a near resemblance, it is but a counterfeit; not to be far from the kingdom of God will not avail, to be only near is still to be without, and all that are not found in *Christ* by faith will perish in the day when God shall deal with them; he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him, *John* iii. 36.

If without faith it is impossible to please God, then it is as much as every man's soul is worth to enquire whether he be in the faith, and whether the faith he hopes to have be of the right sort. All men, saith an Apostle, have not faith, *2 Thes.* iii. and all that passeth under that name will not stand the test; examine yourselves therefore whether ye be in the faith, prove your ownelves whether *Christ* be in you, except ye be reprobates, *2 Cor.* xiii. 5.

WITH regard to all such as are displeased with the method of pleasing God by faith in *Jesus Christ*, they had need to consider whether what they trust to even in the judgment of reason and conscience is any safer. Man is undoubtedly a sinner, and God undoubtedly of purer eye than to take any pleasure in iniquity, and will by no means hold the guilty guiltless; the best present works cannot

atone for past evil ones, our best are no more than what we owed before; if man will venture to stand upon his own bottom, and be bold to appear before God without an intervening Mediator, or faith in *Jesus Christ*, he must then do as well as he can, *Christ* will not plead the cause of his soul, *Christ* may say unto him in his last moments what indeed he has said already: No man cometh to the Father but by me, *John* xiv. 6. All men will be convinced in the last day that without faith it is impossible to please God.

You that go by the name of Christians, know and profess to believe the truth, see to it that you may not be mistaken. We are made partakers of *Christ* if we hold the beginning of our confidence steadfast unto the end, *Heb.* iii. 14. Have you indeed partook of *Christ*? When did your confidence take its beginning? Are you rooted and grounded in him? For unless we hold out to the end we never had a right beginning. If you are openly profane, and indulge yourselves in sin, you may talk of faith, but if you believe right you act wrong, and your doom will be the heavier because you rendered yourselves obnoxious to it in a deliberate manner; while sin has dominion over you you live not, and so cannot die in the faith of the Son of God; if you do not depart from iniquity it signifies nothing that you are called after *Christ*, God can take no pleasure in you, *Jesus Christ* will not own you as his own, what you call faith is a dead thing and can do you no service, you are still in your sin, you are still under the divine displeasure; nay, and though a man live soberly before men, if *Christ* do not dwell in him by faith he cannot please God tho' he make ever so fair a profession, yet, faith
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God, if any draw back my soul shall have no pleasure in him, *Heb. x. 38.*

If conscience tells any of you that you are destitute of this faith, that to please God has not been your aim, or that to come to him by faith has never been your care, O consider how awful and melancholy is your case! You seem now perfectly unconcerned whether or no you please or displease him in whose favour is life, and death the portion of all that sin against and will none of him; you are unaffected though you hear the gospel, though the method of pleasing God is plainly set before you, and you informed withal how much *Jesus* did and suffered that God might again be pleased with man, and man brought back unto God, but consider, you are to die, you will surely die, and that perhaps soon, when you die you must appear before God, and the very *Jesus* who reconciled sinners unto God will be your judge. Can you stand his frowns though you now mind not his displeasure? Will it be an indifferent matter to you on a dying day whether you have faith in God, or whether you have it not? Will you then also remain unaffected when the Judge of all will place all believers on his right hand, and assign the place and portion of unbelievers on his left? Can you believe the word of God and doubt this? This moment you either have faith and please, or are destitute of it and cannot please God. Without this faith how will you bear the face of him that sitteth on the throne, or stand the wrath of the Lamb? We beseech you to consider, and may God give you open eyes that in this your day you may know the things which concern your peace, at least before they be hid from your eyes for ever.

SHOULD

SHOULD any say unto me, Well, I am clearly convinced that without faith no man can please God, and as clearly that I have not that faith in which I might please him, and now what shall I do? To such I would say, It is the work of God's spirit to convince the world of sin, and especially of unbelief, if therefore you see your want and need of faith, we may hope this is a happy beginning of the work of faith in your souls. You have not pleased God hitherto, and would now please him; then remember this cannot be done in any other way but by faith in *Jesus Christ*, every other attempt will be lost labour, you can never come to God but through *Christ*, nor to *Jesus Christ* but by faith. How then will you say shall I obtain it? Why truly it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God's mercy, yet *faith cometh by hearing*, Rom. x. 17. Be diligent therefore to read and hear the word of God, this is the ordinary means which God by his spirit makes use of to open our understanding, to incline our will, and to work that faith in us in which we may please him. *Faith is the gift of God*, Eph. ii. 8. You now know the value of it, and how much you want it, seek therefore and ye shall find, ask and ye shall receive, if you seek the LORD with your whole heart doubtless you will find him, and he that calleth you will fulfil in you all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power, 2 *Thes.* i. 11. Your own unworthiness and a sense of guilt will stand in your way, but it is a *faithful saying, and worthy your acceptation*, that *Jesus Christ* came into the world to save sinners, 1 *Tim.* i. 15. Fear not therefore, only believe. You believe that *Christ* came to bring sinners unto God,
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you acquiesce in that method of salvation which God points out in the gospel of his Son, you see all self-sufficiency in *Christ* to save sinners, it is the will of your soul that he may be your's, and you become his, venture now to lay hold on all his promises and salvation for yourself, I believe, LORD, help my unbelief, and though now you are bound down under a sense of your sin and unbelief, yet "then shall you know if you follow on to know the LORD," and thus you also may be filled with peace and joy in believing.

THE sincerest souls are often the most forward to mistrust themselves, and when such as are truly in earnest hear, how many are mistaken; what fair appearances nature may put on, and yet remain void of saving grace; that the faith of many is not of the right stamp, and that the confidence of some will not hold out to the end; then they are ready to conclude against themselves, this is certainly my case; while they think so there is no peace in their bones, and sometimes they are ready to sink in fear and despondency. With regard to such I would in general observe, that as some deceive themselves by indulging too favourable an opinion, so it is very possible others may deprive themselves of much comfort for fear of deceiving themselves with a delusive hope; and it is not at all to be wondered at, that any that have discovered the deceitfulness of sin, and are truly sensible of the amazing importance of the matter, should be afraid by faith to call that their own of which they know themselves so exceeding unworthy. I would add to this, that the conclusions of faith are not so easily made as conclusions in logick, and many a sincere Christian, when he sees that in another

ther which he cannot deny is also in himself, will more easily conclude that his neighbour has true faith than he will make the same conclusion in favour of himself, and that too when perhaps he might safely make it, and even upon better evidence. Such therefore I would ask, whether they have not seen, and still see their absolute need of a Mediator to come near unto God? Whether they do not see their own unworthiness, and the insufficiency of their very best endeavours to please God? I would ask, whether they are not convinced that the Lord *Jesus Christ* alone can help them and bring them unto God? I would ask them, whether, in sighs, prayer, and cries, they have not and still apply unto him for that purpose, placing all their confidence, hope, and expectation, in him alone? I would ask them, whether they are not truly willing to walk worthy of God unto all well pleasing, and to make it all their care and labour that, whether present or absent, they may be accepted of him? I would ask them, whether even now, notwithstanding all their scruples, doubts, and fears, they would part with the bare possibility of having an interest in *Jesus Christ* and his salvation for a thousand worlds? Whether even now it is not their desire to be holy, the sooner the better, and the more so the more agreeable? Look unto him O ye all that find yourselves such, and your eyes will be lightened, and your faces will not be ashamed. These things which you must own in you are either nature or grace, they are either your own work or that of his blessed spirit, and think ye such grapes can be gathered from thistles, or such fruit from thorns? Fear not, only believe, open your mouth wide and he will fill it; he has done great things for you, stagger not through unbelief

lief at the promise, but grow strong in faith, giving glory to God, persuaded that what he has promised he will also perform, *Rom. iv. 20. 21.* If your confidence cannot rejoice in it that you have obtained forgiveness already, let your confidence stand firm, that you, and all that constantly seek it, shall as certainly obtain it as God has promised it, whose promises are all Yea and Amen in *Christ Jesus.*

AND if any that now hear me are so happy that they know in whom they have believed, that by faith in *Christ* they have come unto God already, and have received the testimony within themselves, that for *Jesus'* sake God is pleased with them, what abundant reason have they to bless God for *Jesus Christ*, and that it is given unto them to believe in him. By nature we also were children of wrath, when God visited us first it was in our low estate, when he first beheld us we were weltring in our blood, and when neither we nor any eye pitied us, he said unto us, Live. Look back on the time, O believers, when you also were strangers to the covenant and promise, without faith, and consequently without *Christ*, and without God in the world, humbly acknowledge it that it is the gift of God and the work of his spirit in your soul, that the case is happily altered, and that now you have faith and hope in God. Now you also may please him, because you are in *Christ*; now whatever you do by his grace will also please him, because it is done in God; and we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the LORD *Jesus*, that as ye have received of us how you ought to walk, and to please God, so ye would abound more and more, 1 *Thes. iv. 1.* Grow in grace and in the
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knowledge of our *LORD Jesus Christ*, for as by faith we draw near unto God at first and please him, so as we grow and encrease in faith we please him more and more. Be diligent in the use of all the means which God hath appointed for that purpose, make it your constant rule daily to read the sacred scriptures, especially of the New-Testament, from these you first learnt how to believe and come unto God, and these can make you wise unto salvation, that you may be perfect in every good work, and as faith cometh so it is also encreased by hearing, let the opportunities therefore of hearing a preached gospel be very precious to you, for you don't know at what time, or in what sermon, God may make the word of his grace a means to strengthen your faith; and as the ordinance of the *LORD's Supper* hath an immediate tendency to quicken our faith, and to assist it by sense, never fail to partake of it, and in this manner also to remember all he suffered and did for you. It is a common objection against the doctrine of faith as we preach it, that it is unfriendly to good works, do you therefore shew your faith by your works, and though you never rely on any thing but on what *Christ* did and suffered, let his love constrain you to live for him who died for you, make it evident that before faith asks whether good works ought to be done, as one expresseth it, it has set about and done them already; seeing you walk by faith, and not by sight, labour that whether present or absent you may be accepted of him, 2 *Cor.* v. 7. 8.

FAITH must have its trial; *your's* also will not go without, but the author of it will also be the finisher of our faith, we look not to ourselves, nor
any

any thing in us, but to *Jesus Christ* alone. Faith endureth as seeing him who is invisible; this confidence must rely upon the promises, however contrary all appearances may seem within and without; if the Christian were to believe, confide, and hope, “exactly in the same proportion as he is conscious of his repentance, coming to God, &c.” * I am afraid at some time he must believe in a very small proportion indeed, but, blessed be God, though at times it may be so low with the Christian that he appear to himself like a tree in winter without leaves or fruit, yet there is life at the root, and if our confidence, hope, and faith, is at so low an ebb that we think we believe (trust) not, yet he is faithful, he cannot deny himself, 2 *Tim.* ii. 13. † Look up continually unto *Jesus*, the author and finisher of your faith, and you will be supported, though by an unseen hand; he prays for his people that their faith cease not; faith in him will turn the shadows of death into the light of the morning, faith will triumph over every and also over the last enemy. All these mentioned in this chapter, and may we not add many of our own friends and acquaintances, died in faith; assure yourself he that liveth and believeth shall never die, the meanest believer shall obtain the end of his faith, even the salvation of his soul; the meanest believer pleaseth God, and shall arrive at last where there is fulness of joy and pleasures for evermore; therefore
 “Hold out faith and hope, your work will soon be at an end.”

* *Bellamy's Blow at the Root*, p. 36.

† This passage is a very remarkable instance that the word *pistevein* implies trust as well as belief—understand it of bare belief, and bare belief will make a very bare figure.

A P P E N D I X.

THE doctrine of faith, as represented in the preceding discourse, I hope will appear to my readers well grounded in the sacred scriptures, by which alone all doctrine ought to be tried; but as this doctrine of late has been written against, and its professors treated with some contempt, by sundry *New-England* authors, I thought it not improper, by way of appendix, to shew that this has also been the current doctrine of all Protestant Churches at and since the Reformation; for this purpose I shall here present the reader with faithful extracts from some of the most considerable Protestant Divines, which, though no more than fallible men, may be of use to inform and direct his judgment; they are not obtruded as authorities to decide, but as testimonies to declare what has been the constant doctrine of Protestants. It would be wrong in any man to receive this doctrine merely because Protestants in general taught it, but those who do not think with them must also acknowledge that thus far they separate from all that taught it, *i. e.* all Protestants. I shall begin with extracts from the publick Confession of Faith.

The *Confession of AUGSBOURG*, presented in full Diet to *Charles V.* in behalf of all then Protestant states, and which now is received by the kingdoms of *Denmark, Sweden, Norway*, and all the *Lutherans* in *Germany* and elsewhere, describes faith as follows: Now the word **FAITH** does not only signify a knowledge of the history of *Christ*, but also to believe and assent unto the promise that is proper to the gospel wherein remission of sins, justification and life everlasting, are promised to us for *Christ's* sake, for this promise also does pertain to the history of *Christ*, even as in the Creed to the history is added, I believe the remission of sins. Faith does signify not only a knowledge of the history, but signifies a belief of the promise of mercy which is granted us through our Mediator *Christ Jesus*, and in this sort faith is understood a confidence or trust in mercy. *Harmony of Confessions of Faith*, pag. 263. 270.

The *Confession of SAXONY*, which was designed to be presented at the Council of *Trent* in 1551, declares, **FAITH** doth signify not only the knowledge of the history, (for that is also in devils) but it doth signify to embrace all the articles of faith, and among them this article, I do believe the remission of sins, neither do I believe that it is only given unto others, but unto me also. This faith is also a confidence resting

on the Mediator according to that: Being justified we have peace, so that *Paul* speaks of faith which embraceth the promises consenting to all the articles of faith, for he joineth together faith and the promise, *Rom. iv.* Therefore it is of faith that the promise might be sure. *Harmony, p. 284.*

The *HELVEICK Confession*, written in 1566, and the same year received by the Kirk of *Scotland*, and in 1567 by some Protestant Churches of *Poland* and *Hungary*: Christian faith is not a human persuasion or opinion, but *a sure trust* and an evident assent of the mind, to be brief, a most sure comprehension of the truth of God set forth in the scriptures and in the Apostles Creed, yea and of God himself the chief blessedness, and especially of God's promise, and of *Christ* who is the consummation of all promises. And this faith is the mere gift of God, because God alone of his power giveth it to his elect according to measure, and that when, to whom, and how much he will, and that by his holy spirit, through the means of preaching the gospel, and of faithful prayer. *Harmony of Confessions, 248.*

The *FRENCH Confession* was presented in behalf of all the Protestants of *France* to *Francis II.* in 1559, and published by the Pastors of the *French Churches* in 1566: We believe that our whole righteousness doth consist in the remission of our sins—We believe that we cannot find where to rest ourselves if we decline ever so little from this foundation, but rather we shall always be unquiet, because we are not at peace with God till we be certainly persuaded that we are loved in *Jesus Christ*, because that in ourselves we are worthy of all hatred. *Harmony, p. 258.*

The *BOHEMIAN and WALDENSIAN Confession* is rather the most antient, and teacheth thus: Faith properly is an assent of a willing heart to the whole truth delivered in the gospel, whereby man is lighted in his mind and soul, that he may rightly acknowledge and receive for his only Saviour, his God and LORD, *Jesus Christ*, and upon him as a true rock may build his whole salvation, love, follow, and enjoy him, and repose all his hope and confidence in him, and by this valiant confidence he may lift himself up, and trust that for him, and his only merit, God is become to him loving, bountiful, and gentle, and also that in him, and for him, he assuredly hath, and shall for ever have, according to his true promise, eternal life.—This faith alone, and this inward confidence of the heart in *Christ Jesus* our LORD, doth justify or make a man just before God without any works he may add, or without any merit of his own. *Harmony ut supra, p. 250.*

The *Confession of the Churches in HOLLAND*, published in
French

French in 1566, and by a Synod of those Churches in 1579 in *Low Dutch*: We believe that the Holy Ghost dwelling in our hearts doth bestow upon us true faith, that we may attain to the knowledge of so great a mystery. The which *faith doth embrace* Jesus Christ with all his merits, *doth challenge him unto itself as proper and peculiar*, and doth seek for nothing beside him. For it is necessary that either all things which are required unto our salvation be not in *Christ*, or if all be in him, that then he which by faith professeth *Jesus Christ* have also perfect salvation.—Faith is but only an instrument whereby we apprehend *Christ* which is our justice, and whereby we are coupled (united) unto *Christ* by a participation and communion of all his benefits, and whereby we are kept in that fellowship. *Vide ut supra* Harmony, p. 260.

The *WIRTEMBERG Confession*: We are not able to stand before the severe tribunal of God but in the confidence of the only free favour shewn unto us in *Christ* the Son of God, for this is that faith which *Paul* teacheth and the ecclesiastical writers do also interpret, That we are justified by faith alone. *Ibid.* p. 299.

The *Churches of SWABIA*: We cannot otherwise be justified than by being endued chiefly with faith in him, by which faith we believe the gospel, and therefore *being persuaded that God hath taken us for his adopted children*, and that he will for ever shew himself a loving father to us. *Ibid.* p. 302.

The *Confession of the Church of SCOTLAND*, in 1581, under the article of original sin, describes faith as: An assured faith in the promise of God revealed to us in his word, by which faith we apprehend *Christ Jesus*, with the benefits and graces promised in him.

The *WESTMINSTER Confession of Faith*: The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls is the work of the spirit of *Christ* in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the word.—By faith a Christian believeth to be true whatever is revealed in the word of the LORD for the authority of God himself speaking therein.—But the principal acts of faith are, acceptance, receiving, and resting upon *Christ* alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virtue of the covenant.

The *SAVOY Confession*, which is that of those called Independents, which I have seen only in *French*, describes faith in the following manner: Faith, which accepts, receives *Jesus Christ*, and entirely relies on him and his righteousness, is the only and sole instrument of our justification. Chap. xi. of justification and chap. xiv. That faith by which the elect are enabled to believe for the salvation of their souls is a work
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of the spirit of *Jesus Christ*, formed in an ordinary manner by the ministry of the word, by means of which it is also encreased and fortified, to the encrease of which the practice of prayer, strictness of life, and participation of sacraments, considerably contribute. See *du Moulin conformité des Independants avec les anciens Chrétiens*, p. 156.

The Homilies of the Church of ENGLAND, to which the 39 articles refer, and therefore must be deemed as the established doctrine of the Church, and which all that receive Orders must subscribe: 'There is one faith, which in scripture is called a dead faith, which bringeth no good fruit, but is idle, barren, and unfruitful.—This faith is a persuasion and belief in man's heart whereby he knows that there is a God, and agreeth unto all the truths of God's most holy word, so that it consists only in believing in the word of God that it is true;—and *this is not properly called faith*: But as he that readeth *Cæsar's* Commentaries and notable acts, believing the same true, has thereby a knowledge of *Cæsar's* life, because he believeth the history of *Cæsar*, yet it is not properly said that he believeth *in Cæsar* of whom he looketh for no help or benefit.—There is also saving faith, and this is not only the common belief of the articles of our faith, but *it is also a true trust and confidence of the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ*, and a stedfast hope of all good things to be received at God's hands, and that although we, through infirmity or temptation of our ghostly enemies, fall from him by sin, yet, if we return again unto him by true repentance, that he will forgive and forget our offences for his Son's sake, and will make us inheritors of his everlasting kingdom, and that in the mean time, until that kingdom comes, he will be our protector and defender in all perils and dangers whatsoever, that evermore he will be our loving father, correcting us for our sins, but not withdrawing his mercy finally from us, if we trust in him and commit ourselves wholly unto him, hang only upon him, and call upon him, ready to obey and serve him. This is the true, lively, and unfeigned faith, and is not in the mouth and outward profession only, but it liveth and stirreth inwardly in the heart; and this faith is not without hope and trust in God, &c.

The POLISH Churches at the Convent of Thorn 1645: We do not call faith true and justifying but as it confidently embraceth, with a practical assent, the promises of the gospel, offering unto the penitent life and forgiveness in *Christ*, and with a humble heart makes the application to itself, and then worketh by love.

The Apology of the Confession of Augsbourg faith: When our ad-

adversaries speak of faith, they say it must precede repentance, and do not understand that faith which justifies before God, but a general faith by which a man believeth there is a God. But we speak moreover of such a faith, *whereby I certainly believe for myself that my sins are forgiven unto me for Christ's sake*; about this faith we contend, which ought and must follow our terrors, comfort conscience, and set the heart at ease under the heavy conflict; and this, God willing, we will eternally defend, and maintain it against all the gates of Hell, that that faith must be present if sins are to be forgiven. *Form Concord.* fol. 75.

We believe, teach, and confess, that faith is not a bare knowledge of the history of *Christ*, but such a gift of God whereby we truly know *Christ* our Saviour, and trust in him, that for his sake only we have forgiveness of sins, are held righteous by his Father, and obtain eternal life. *Formula Concordiæ*, which in most Lutheran Churches is a symbolical book, p. 235.

Next to publick Confessions, the doctrine of every Church may best be ascertained from the Catechisms it makes use of for the instruction of youth. These I would consider next.

The Catechism of the Church of *England*, in describing the duties of those baptized, describes faith: Whereby they steadfastly believe the promises of God made to them in that sacrament.

The Church of *Scotland*, in the Larger Catechism, describes faith thus: It is a saving grace wrought in the heart of a sinner by the spirit and word of God, whereby he being convinced of his sin and misery, and of the disability in himself, and all other creatures, to recover him out of his lost condition, not only assenteth to the truth of the promise of the gospel, but receiveth and resteth upon *Christ* and his righteousness therein held forth for pardon of sin, and for the accepting and accounting of his person righteous in the sight of God for salvation. In the Lesser Catechism. Q. 86. faith in *Jesus Christ* is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation as he is offered to us in the gospel.

The Catechism of *Heydelberg* was first framed by order of *Frederick III.* Elector Palatine in 1562, and by his son also presented to *Rodolph II.* Emperor of Germany, and is received and used by all the Reformed Churches of *Germany*, *Switzerland*, *Holland*, &c. and describes faith as follows, viz. Faith is not only a certain knowledge, whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in his word, but also an assured confidence, which the Holy Ghost works by the gospel, that not only unto others, but to me also, remission of sin, everlasting

lasting righteousness and salvation, are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of *Christ's* merit. Q. 26.

The Catechism of the Church at *Zurick* answers the question, What is faith? thus: It is not only a true knowledge (*agnitio*) of God and his word, but also a *filial confidence* into God my Father, that without any merit of my own, for the sole atonement's sake of *Christ*, he will forgive all my sins and grant me eternal righteousness.

The Catechism of the *French Churches*, composed by *Calvin*, speaking that by faith we must receive *Jeus Christ*, describes that faith not only as believing that he died for us to deliver us from eternal death, and to obtain us life, but also that *Christ* dwells in us and that we are so united with him as the members with the head, and that we may partake of all his graces in virtue of that union.

Luther's Lesser Catechism which is taught in all the Churches that bear his name, describes faith as a *heartly confidence* in God that for *Christ's* sake he will have mercy on me and forgive my sins.

The judgment of Dr. *PARÆUS* having been approved by the whole Synod of *Dort*, and thanks given him for the same, may be considered as the doctrine and sentiment of the whole Synod. Examining the articles of the *Arminians*, he thus expresseth himself: There is also some trifling in the word *believe*, and in the term of *faith*: With us (*i. e.* Contraremonstrants) to believe does not only mean to give assent to the word of God, but principally also and properly to trust to the evangelical promise of forgiveness of sin for *Christ's* sake: *Only believe*, Mark v. for *only confide*. And this is the meaning of it particularly in the expressions, to *believe in God*, and *in Christ*; if you believe in God you believe (confide) in me, for there he comforts his Apostles, *Lord, who is it that I may believe*, *i. e.* confide in him? With us saving faith is conjoined with *confidence in* the promises of the gospel, or of the forgiveness of sin through the blood of *Christ*; so that when we speak of being justified by faith, faith signifies confidence, and to be justified by faith is to be absolved of sin by our confidence in *Christ*, which the Apostle means when he asserts that God has set forth *Christ* as a propitiation by faith in his blood. Faith in his blood cannot signify any thing else but a confidence in the blood of *Christ*.

On the contrary, as they (the *Arminians*) make *believing* to be no more than to assent, as appears, among many other things, from their slippery (*lubrica*) disputations of faith, in most of which they do not require confidence in faith in order

to obtain forgiveness of sin, and contend that faith justifies or is imputed for righteousness, not because it lays hold (*sibi applicat*) on the merit of *Christ*, but because they look upon the very act of faith as the fulfilling of the law.

From this passage it appears what was the opinion of the Synod and of the *Arminians* about that definition of faith, that it is no more than believing the truth, and that confidence is no part, but only a consequence or an effect of it.

I shall now proceed to give the sense of such of the Reformers upon the nature of faith as, in a country where well instructed libraries are not to be expected fell under my notice; not to multiply quotations, I'll content myself with one or two of the most material from each.

CALVIN, in his Institutions, cap. v. § 6. defines faith thus: We shall, saith he, have a true definition of faith, when we say it consists in a sure and certain knowledge of the divine favour towards us, which, being grounded in the truth of the promises in *Christ*, is manifested to us by the Holy Ghost, and sealed in our hearts.

Speaking on the definition given by the Apostle, *Heb. xi.* 1. he saith: By the word *hypostasis* he as it were understands a support (*fulcrum*) on which a pious mind leans and rests, as if he called faith a certain and secure possession of those things which are promised to us of God, unless we would rather render the word *hypostasis* a confidence, which I am not averse to, though I rather chuse the other as more commonly received. What he further saith I shall not translate: *Simul & alia duo concidunt Sophistarum commenta. Prius, quod fidem formari nugantur, accedente ad assensum pia affectione. Alterum, quod crassissimam ignorantiam fidei nomine prætexentes (quam ipsi implicitam appellant) miseræ plebeculæ sic illudunt. Quod enim ad illud attinet, in eo satis declarant se nescire qualis sit fidei assensio in comprahenda Dei veritate, quum ex nuda inanique assensione, fidem informem (et illis vocatur) conficiunt. Siquidem assensionem ipsam cordis esse magis quam cerebri, & affectus magis quam intelligentiæ, jam expositum est. Qua ratione obedientia vocatur fidei, cui nullum aliud præfert obsequium Dominus. Et merito: quamdo illi sua veritate nihil est pretiosius: quam a credentibus, quasi descriptione facta, obsignari Johannes Baptista est testis. Quoniam res minime dubia est, uno verbo statuimus, eos inepte loqui, quum fidem formari dicunt, accessione piæ affectionis ad assensum facta: quum assensus quoque pia affectione constet: qualis saltem in Scripturis demonstratur. Sed alterum multo clarius argumentum se etiamnum offert. Quum*
enim

enim fides Christum amplectatur, ut nobis offertur a Patre: ille vero non in iustitiam modo, peccatorum remissionem & pacem offeratur: sed in sanctificationem quoque, & fontem aquæ vivæ: eum haud dubie rite cognoscere nunquam poterit, quin sanctificationem Spiritus simul apprehendat. Aut, si quis apertius id dictum cupiat: Fides in Christi notitia sita est. Christus nisi cum Spiritus sui sanctificatione cognosci nequit. Consequitur, fidem a pio affectu nullo modo esse distrahendam. *Instit. cap. v. § 32.*

BEZA, Calvin's faithful colleague, in his Annotations on *Rom. xi. 11.* To believe in God, or to believe God, is nothing else but to assent to the promise of salvation which God made in *Christ*, so that you do not only believe to be true, but also belonging to yourself, and have no doubt but God in *Christ* is reconciled with you, from whence ariseth confidence, which is as much distinct from faith as an effect is from the cause.

Though *Beza* expressly makes the confidence he speaks of a consequence and effect of our believing that the promises belong to and God is reconciled to us, yet in this place it may be necessary to observe, that in this he is so far from making against what I have asserted, (that true faith is never without some confidence) that he rather strongly establisheth it; the truth is, that the word confidence is not always taken in the same sense; some confidence is essential, and some is only an effect or consequence of faith, and there may be true and saving faith where the want of *this* confidence is complained of. I shall state this in the words of Bishop *Davenant*, who was one of the Members of the Synod of *Dort*: "The word confidence (*fiducia*) stands for two things; either the act of relying on and cleaving to *Jesus Christ*, by which we embrace *Jesus Christ*, and by which act we endeavour to obtain of God the Father pardon, grace, and glory, and we say that our justification always follows this act, whether the sinner in the moment of it obtain an assurance of his pardon or no. Confidence sometimes also stands for an effect of justifying faith, *viz.* a full persuasion and lively sense that we have obtained forgiveness. We acknowledge that **THIS** confidence is not justifying faith, but an offspring of it which the soul does not usually obtain but after trials of faith and holiness." *Davenantii Determinat. Theol. 37.*

How far this quotation may be applicable to the definition given by *Beza* of faith let the reader judge. *Confer eundem Bezam, 1 Tim. iv. 1.* Ubi de fide ut sequitur, Fides nihil aliud est quam firma nostræ in Christo electionis persuasio.

LUTHER. Should I transcribe *Luther* on faith I might transcribe all his works, I had almost said *Luther* himself. Whoever would know what *Luther* taught on this subject let him read his Commentary on the *Galatians*, which has been blessed for the information and comfort of numbers. FAITH, faith *Luther*, is a lively determined confidence in the grace of God, so certain, that one would die a thousand times in the persuasion of it; and such confidence and knowledge of the grace of God makes joyful, resolute, and cheerful in God, and towards all creatures, which the Holy Ghost works by faith, whence, without any compulsion, a man becomes willing to do good unto every body, and to suffer any thing for the glory of God, of whom he has received such great favour.—Therefore take care of thy own false thoughts, and unprofitable talkers, who pretend to judge of faith and good works, and are the greatest fools. Pray God that he may work faith in thee else thou wilt for ever go without it. *Statii Lutherus redivivus*, p. 67. Faith, faith he, loves the pronouns mine and thine, e. g. Domine Jesu ego sum tuum peccatum, & tu es mea iustitia —Next comes

PHILIP MELANCHTHON, *Luther's* special and constant friend, who was esteemed the most learned man of his age, and called *Totius Germaniæ Preceptor*. Faith, faith he, is not only to know the history, which the Devil was obliged to confess to be true, that the Son of God appeared and is risen from the dead, or as *Judas* had a knowledge of *Christ*, but true faith is to esteem all the words of God as certainly true, and so also the promises of grace, and therefore faith is a hearty confidence in *Christ* the Saviour, that for the sake of this his Son God forgives us our sins, receives us, and makes us heirs of eternal salvation.—This faith must receive the promises, and therefore it is such a confidence in *Christ* the Saviour; he that does not receive the promises does not give credit to all the words of God, so *Judas* does not believe that God will forgive him his sins, but *David* and *Peter* do not only believe that the histories are true, but they believe also the promises of grace. *Loci Com. Theol.* p. 129.

I cannot forbear to add what he saith on *Paul's* definition, *Heb. xi. 1.* Quidam ajunt encomium potius esse, quam definitionem, quod non improbo, sed tamen encomia, si sunt apta & propria, sumuntur ex definitionibus: Certe ab his dissentire non debent. Afirmo igitur esse veram & commendam definitionem. Nam fides, de qua hic fit mentio, duo complectitur: Notitiam seu assensum, & fiduciam seu motum cordis, qui comitatur assensum. Primum igitur fides est notitia

titia certa non apparentium. Id vocat *Elenchos*, i. e. fide certo statuimus Deum esse, Christum esse Filium Dei, generis humani Redemptorem judicaturum esse totum genus humanum. Deinde non sola notitia est, sed etiam expectatio promissionum, id est, fiducia, qua statuimus nobis contingere promissa Dei, scilicet, quod propter Christum Deus nobis ignoscat peccata exaudiat, curet, juvet nos ab æterna morte liberaturus. Hanc fiduciam, qua statuimus, nobis Deum propitium esse, nosque Deo curæ esse complectitur, cum ait esse expectationem. Cum igitur fidei natura recte declaretur, comprobanda est definitio, & si dialectice loquendum est, recte locum generis obtinet notitia certa, & deinde expectatio. Est enim fides primum notitia, deinde & motus cordis, quo expectamus promissa, & vere nos Deo curæ esse statuimus. Differentiæ sumptæ sunt a subjectis: Quia fides versatur circa verbum Dei, quo promittuntur bona cælestia, nondum subjecta sensui, scilicet remissio peccatorum, quia Deus nos exaudiat, curet, & sit denaturus nobis vitam æternam. Sic ille in *Consiliis Theol.* p. 138.

SPERATUS, Bishop of Pomesania, in Prussia, who died in 1554, in a hymn he made on justification, describes faith thus: It is no more than saying, Dear Lord, thy death shall be my life, for thou hast paid my ransom.

ZANCHTUS. Justifying faith is a firm and undoubted assent to the promises of God that we shall obtain forgiveness of sins and righteousness for Christ's sake, which is wrought in us by the spirit of God. And: Confidence is a most certain persuasion which does not suffer us to doubt that we shall obtain what God of his mercy has been pleased freely to promise us; *for to confide is firmly to believe, and without any doubt to hope that you shall obtain what is promised, or to be sure of the thing promised for the faithfulness' sake of the promiser.*

PETRUS MARTYR. A firm and certain assent of the mind to the word of God wrought by the Holy Ghost to the salvation of believers, and which has that efficacy that carries with it confidence, hope, charity, and all good works.

MUSCULUS. A constant assent of the heart to all that is taught or promised in the word of God. Faith makes us partakers of Christ, and frees from judgment. *Id. John* iii. 19.

BULLINGER. Faith apprehends the goodness of God and the favour of the Most High, it understands that through Christ we are received to the inheritance of eternal life, and in this it acquiesceth, and by this knowledge Christ justifies the whole multitude of the elect, *Jes.* liii. 11. *Apud Marloratum in Gal.* v. 6.

JOHN

JOHN FOX, the Martyrologist, in a sermon preached 1570, saith: The order of all this thus standeth, first cometh *Christ* crucified and offered for us, with him cometh faith apprehending him, with faith cometh reconciliation or justification through the promise, whereby man being reconciled unto God, which before was rejected, is made a new creature.

Though **ERASMUS** lived and died in the Church of *Rome*, his writings greatly contributed to the Reformation: He saith on *Heb. xi. 1*. There is nothing that so much commends pious souls unto God as a sure confidence in him, for that is an indication of a mind that thinks well of God, not to doubt of his words, though what he saith neither appear to the senses, nor can be proved by common reason.—This faith, by which the just are preserved when others are lost, is not a vulgar credulity, but a sure and certain foundation of things which cannot be comprehended by sense or reason, but a firm hope so presents them unto the mind as though they were seen by the eye, and persuades their certain existence not by human arguments, but by confidence in God their author. The *Jews* confide in their works, but we are approved and made acceptable to God by this only, *i. e.* by faith.—The sacred writings often use faith for confidence little differing from hope. *Erasm. ad Rom. ii. 17*.

BUGENHAGIUS POMERANUS, who was the Reformer of *Denmark*, he writes of faith: When God converts a man he works two things in him; the first is, that he knows and feels his sins; the second, that he convinceth him that there is no creature or work which might help him to eternal life, and then secretly works faith in him and the knowledge of the grace of God in *Jesus Christ*, that God is our gracious Father, and will forgive us all our sins.

Prince **GEORGE** of *ANHALT*, in his younger days a Dignitary of the Church of *Rome*, and afterwards a zealous Preacher among the Protestants, in one of his sermons saith thus: It is not enough for thee to believe, that God, for his dear Son's sake, will forgive the sins unto some. This does not make thee a Christian, and does not help thee any thing, but *THOU*, for thine own person, must believe, hold for certain and true, and make no doubt of it, and entirely rely upon it, and therewith comfort thyself in the greatest temptation, that the Son of God came in flesh for *thy* benefit also, that thy sins are forgiven unto thee, and that for *Christ's* sake thou hast been received into favour and been made a child of eternal life. If thou dost not believe this thou art no member

ber of the Church. Therefore the *Credo* belongs to it, I believe forgiveness of my sins and eternal life, *Amen*, that is, be it so, there is no doubt of it.

After these extracts from the publick Confessions and writings of sundry Reformers, the attentive reader probably will not be surprized that some affirm "they made assurance of the essence of faith," and yet, upon a careful review, it will appear, that they did not make it so essential as to affirm there can be no saving faith without it. Thus *Calvin*: "*When we teach that faith ought to be certain and secure, we do not imagine such a certainty which is inaccessible to doubt, no such security as is disturbed by no uneasiness, we say on the contrary, that there is a constant conflict between believers and their own diffidence, so far are we from saying their consciences are so at rest that no uneasiness disturbs them* Again, *however they may be afflicted, we say that they can fall away from or fail of that certain confidence which they conceived of the mercy of God.*" *Instit. c. v. § 10.* And *LUTHER* also, in his Lesser Catechism, describes saving faith thus: "*It is a hearty confidence in GOD, that of his mercy, for Christ's sake, he WILL have mercy on me, forgive my sins, adopt me as his child, and make me eternally happy.*"

The Reformers in general never meant that faith is not saving till it has attained this certainty, though they pressed the necessity and possibility of attaining it in opposition to the doctrine of the Church of *Rome*, which they had just quitted. Though a confidence that my sins ARE forgiven is not equally necessary with a confidence that on my applying to and believing in *Christ* my sins WILL be forgiven, yet without some confidence true and saving faith cannot be conceived, and I cannot see what this confidence can more safely rest on than the word of promise. Several worthy men, who speak of faith in the language and title of the Reformers and the publick Confessions of the Protestant Churches, therefore ought to have been treated more tenderly than they have been by *Mr. Bellamy*, of *Bethlehem, New-England*, in a pamphlet of his, entitled, "*A Blow at the Root.*" As I cannot learn that any person has publickly animadverted on some passages therein, which I sincerely wish had never been written, and which, to my knowledge, have been a stumbling-block unto many, I take this opportunity to offer a few friendly remarks, and leave the judgment of their necessity or propriety with my reader. The authors he most expressly condemns are the late *Mr. Hervey*, *Marshal*, and *Wilson*. I am not possessed of the writings he finds so much fault with, but I suppose I may venture to quote the definition which the former gives of faith

faith from *Sandiman's* Letters, and the most material charge Mr. *Bellamy* brings against them I sha'll take as stated by Mr. *Bellamy* himself. "*Faith, (saith Hervey) is a real persuasion that Christ died for ME.*" And again, "*I would only maintain that an appropriation of Christ is essential to faith, that none can have the proper scriptural faith but those who are taught by the enlightening spirit to say, He shed his blood for ME.*" The passage in *Marshall* from which Mr. *Bellamy* draws a proposition, which himself saith he "*brought out of the clouds,*" and which he so manfully fights against, in reality saith no more, and the very thing which was said by the Reformers in general; whether there be any room for such a tragical outcry, and whether the heavy charges Mr. *Bellamy* brings against all that taught so have any foundation in candour, charity, and truth, I would beg leave to examine.

With regard to the Reformers, Mr. *Bellamy* declares, "*By the way this inclines me to entertain CHARITABLE thoughts of the first Reformers, that their hearts MIGHT be right even though it should be proved, as is affirmed by some, that they made assurance of the essence of faith.*" Charitable indeed! and yet but just charitable enough to be inclined to think their hearts MIGHT be right. I will not doubt of Mr. *Bellamy's* being a truly good man, but I can never think the better of him for this insinuation against his betters. Their works for ages have praised them in the gates, and here above two hundred years after their decease comes a Protestant, sets up a judge of evil thoughts, and insinuates that there is but a bare possibility that in a judgment of charity their hearts, which it is far more difficult to judge of than of writings and actions, might be right. When *Luther* attacked the errors of the Papists with truth on his side, the attempt seemed so much above his strength that one of his fellow Friars advised him, what I'd take no bad advice in this case, *Frater abi in tellam & dic misereere mei Domine.*

Mr. *Bellamy* finds great fault with a passage of the celebrated Mr. *Hervey*, as he truly call's him, though seemingly not with a good will, which runs thus: "*This method of seeking peace and assurance I fear will perplex the simple minded, and cherish rather than suppress the fluctuations of doubt, for, let the sign be what you please,—these good qualifications are sometimes like the stars at noon-day, not easily, if at all discernible,—consequently will yield at best but a very feeble, at the worst a precarious evidence, if in such a manner we should acquire some little assurance, how soon may it be unsettled by the incursions of daily temptations,*"

" tations, or destroyed by the insurrection of remaining sin,
 " at such a juncture how will it keep its standing, how re-
 " tain its being?" To this he opposeth, "*that sanctification,*
taking the word in a large and comprehensive sense, is the evidence,
the only scripture evidence of a man's good estate." He observes,
 " That the Papists formerly, as the *Arminian* party do now
 hate all assurance of salvation in general, page 5. and, page
 11. that Papists and *Antinomians* join to deny any certain as-
 surances by our own inherent graces." How far, and to
 what assurance the Papists and *Arminians* are enemies, best ap-
 pears from their writings. The Council of *Trent* (*Sess. vi.*
cap. 9.) saith: " As no man is to doubt of the mercy of God,
 " the merit of *Christ*, the virtue and efficacy of the sacra-
 " ments, so every one, when he considers himself, his own
 " infirmity and indisposition, may be apprehensive and a-
 " fraid of his (state of) grace, as none can know it with a
 " certainty of faith that cannot be mistaken that he has at-
 " tained the grace of God." But that faithful historian
Fra. Paolo observes, that others keeping close to the au-
 thority of the sacred writings thought otherwise, they said,
 that to as many as it is read in the gospel that *Christ* forgave
 them their sins, to all them he said, Believe that thy sins are
 forgiven, and it would be an absurdity to say that *Christ*
 should give an occasion to temerity and pride.—That the
 scripture bindeth us to give God thanks for our justification,
 which cannot be given except we know we have obtained it,
 for to give them when we are mistaken would be foolish and
 impertinent.—That *St. Paul*, in sundry places, confirms this
 certainty, and most clearly, when he saith, that the spirit
 bears witness with our spirit that we are the sons of God,
 that the contrary is to accuse them of rashness who believe
 the Holy Ghost that speaketh within them.—That *St. Am-*
brose saith the Holy Ghost never speaketh to us, but he also
 maketh us to know that it is he that is speaking, that it is
 the opinion of a man in a dream to defend that grace is vo-
 luntarily received when we know not whether we have it or
 not.—Some said there was so much certainty as to exclude
 all doubt, yet that it is not Christian faith, but *human* and
experimental, as he that is hot is sure that he is so, and
 should want sense if he doubted, so he that hath grace in him
 does perceive it, and cannot doubt, yet it is by the sense of
 the mind, and not by divine revelation.—But the other de-
 fenders of certainty, constrained by their adversaries to speak
 plainly, whether they thought a man might have it, or whe-
 ther it were a divine or human faith, they came to say, that

it being faith given to the testimony of the spirit of God, it could not be said to be in our liberty, every one being bound to believe divine revelation, and that it must needs be called divine faith. From this Popish doctrine of assurance it appears, that in that Church some teach we obtain our assurance from consciousness, and that it is only human and experimental, and others that we obtain it by the spirit of God speaking within us, and making us know that it is he that speaketh. I believe both opinions have still their partizans and are tolerated in that Church. Now, whether the *Arminians* are enemies to THAT assurance which ariseth from our own inherent graces, read their great champion *Limborch Theol. lib. vi. cap. 7.* "We say that a believer may not only be certain of his state, that he is in a state of salvation, but he cannot be otherwise than certain IF HE MAKE TH USE OF HIS REASON AND JUDGMENT. If he is uncertain, it must be either because he does not know what a state of salvation is, or the nature of it, and consequently whether his state be that, but this is an absurdity, because this state is very clearly described in the gospel;—or else, that though he knoweth this, he is ignorant whether it be his own state. From this it would follow that a man cannot know himself, but this is not only possible, but also easy, if a man will but attend to and duly examine himself. To know the mind of another is difficult, to know one's self very easy; hence 1 *John* iii. 14. 19. 21. 23. *Heb.* vi. 14. and in this reasoning it is impossible that man should deceive himself." Now, how far those whom Mr. Bellamy calls *Antinomians* join with the Papists and *Arminians* in enmity against assurance of salvation in general, or from inherent graces, or what doctrine most resembles theirs, the candid reader upon due comparison will be able to judge.

To consider the charge which Mr. Bellamy brings against his *Antinomians* in general, though he does not even endeavour to support it but from one single passage of *Marshall's*, for which none can be accountable but himself, would lead me too far beyond my present purpose, perhaps no good man was ever more misunderstood or misrepresented. In the passage on which Mr. Bellamy builds his whole refutation, so far from asserting we believe what is not true before we believe it, as Mr. Bellamy very wrongheadedly charges him, he asserts the direct contrary, it is, saith he, a TRUTH BEFORE we believe it, his words are: *We believe it not because it is a truth before we believe it; and Bellamy makes him say: It is not a truth before we believe it.* Every impartial reader must

must see that these two propositions are not equivalent, and that Mr. *Marshall*'s words are either misunderstood or wilfully perverted. Mr. *Bellamy* should have considered that there is a difference between what is unknown and what is false. *Non entis nulla sunt prædicamenta, & non entium & non apparentium eadem est ratio.* Unless he can prove in express words, or by fair consequence, that *Marshall*, or any of those he is so bitter against, say, as he, p. 17. expresseth, *that the thing to be believed is known to be false, owned to be false, publicly declared to the world to be false*, all his sneers against Mr. *Marshall*'s "undisguised honesty" will only recoil on himself, and "down goes his whole scheme, and all he built upon it lies in ruins;" and when he further saith, "that their faith lies in believing this proposition, I who am an unbeliever am justified," he is again bound to shew their words for it, or submit to be thought to speak falsely against his brethren, and to slander his own mother's son. He will doubtless say, though they do not teach this expressly, yet it follows from what they teach. It does not follow from the passage he quotes, which asserts the very reverse, neither do I believe it can be found in any of their writings if not read through a yellow glass, nor in any man's writings but Mr. *Bellamy*'s; but even supposing this consequence should really follow from their assertions, candour will not impute to any, consequences which they disown, to shew that these consequences will really follow, and that not to admit them is to reason unjustly, is all that a candid disputant will do, and leave the judgment of the whole to bystanders. It is an easy matter to dress up a man in a fool's cap, and then laugh at him, but wise men will not be imposed upon by a few hard words. No man deserves more to be ridiculed and thought absurd than he that attempts to pass others for absurd and ridiculous merely by an absurd fiction of his own fancy. Mr. *Bellamy*'s drawings are what in painting is called *caricatura & outré*. No man in his senses can believe what he knows to be false, neither could *Hervey* and *Marshall*, and it will be long before such reasonings like Mr. *Bellamy*'s will convince any impartial man that *Hervey*, *Marshall*, or any man in his senses, held or taught such a tenet; the honour of this discovery is entirely due to Mr. *Bellamy*, and that it was far fetched himself sufficiently intimates when he saith it is brought out of the clouds. Mr. *Bellamy*, p. 25. has this remarkable passage, which "the more I consider it the more remarkable it appears:" "THEY (*i. e.* all that teach like *Hervey* and *Marshall*, *i. e.* all the Reformers and all the Protestants, Mr. *Bellamy*, and a few moderns of his

neighbourhood, only excepted) *may be called Antinomians, and they greatly resemble the ancient Manicheans, BUT THEY CANNOT WITH PROPRIETY BE CALLED CHRISTIANS.*"

What! *Hervey, Marshal*, the Reformers, cannot be called Christians? Who art thou that thus judgest thy brother? I have not seen the essay in which *Mr. Bellamy* saith he has shewn this, but (waving the *Antinomian* nickname) the *Manicheans* taught that there were two Gods, two first causes, one good and one evil; it seems not possible *Mr. Bellamy* should be so ignorant not to know this, but then, if he knew it, it does not seem possible he should say such men as the Reformers, and *Mr. Hervey*, &c. resemble them greatly.

Perhaps, when *Mr. Bellamy* wrote all this, he really thought he "counteracted the Devil's grand scheme," perhaps he really nicknamed all these good men in hopes of doing God service; but may not he himself be an instance that we may be mistaken when we think ourselves "conscious" that we are in the right and our neighbours wrong? Is it not melancholy that even good men should bite and try to devour? Is it possible we can serve the interest of religion by trying to make its most established champions pass for men whose sincerity is doubtful, who greatly resemble the worst of heretics, or such worse than natural fools, as can require a man to believe as true what at the same time he knows and they tell him is false? A very sufficient refutation of some charges and accusations might be conceived in the words of the ninth commandment, Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour. The shortest way to bring one's own character in question is to question characters established beyond doubt and malice. When the spirits of just men made perfect meet in Heaven, is it utterly impossible that such of them should be put to the blush who nicknamed or miscalled those on earth, who were then already in a state of perfection, and with whom they will now agree and be happy for ever?

Dr. Chauncy, "before he points out, in as plain and easy a manner as he is able, what is the meaning of faith as connected with justification," declares, that "he will not trouble himself, nor his hearers, with those descriptions of faith which are to be seen in books upon that subject, these (he saith) are almost as numerous as the books that contain them, and if one were to judge from the differing accounts they give of this first and great principle of Christianity, one would be readily led to imagine it was as perplexed a point as any in religion." Notwithstanding my sincere esteem for the Doctor, I cannot but hope the doctrine of Protestants

testants on this first and great principle of Christianity has not been taught in so perplexed and confused a manner, nor so differently as the Doctor seems to insinuate; for this purpose I shall quote some of the most eminent writers among the Protestants, and I dare say the unprejudiced reader will rather be surprized at the harmony that is to be found among all authors of any note on this subject than think they differ much from one another. I purposely selected some from different Protestant nations that the concurrence and harmony might appear the more conspicuous, and as there is nothing new under the sun, though the Doctor did not chuse to have any recourse to books, I shall beg leave, after my quotations from *Calvinists* and *Lutherans*, to refer to some books which do not seem much to differ from the description of faith now given by the Doctor and some other *New-England* writers.

To begin with *English* authors Bishop *DAVENANT* gives this very comprehensive definition: Justifying faith is confidence (*fiducia*) in *Christ* the Mediator. *Determinatio* 37. And he quotes a very remarkable passage from *Thomas Aquinas*: *In ipsa justificatione peccatoris non est necesse ut cogitentur ceteri articuli, sed solum ut cogitetur Deus peccata remittens.*

Dr. *WARD*. *Fides salutaria est Christi appropriativa*, i. e. Saving faith appropriates *Jesus Christ*. He proves also in several chapters that to believe in, in scripture means to confide in and trust.

Dr. *HAMMOND*, in his *Practical Catechism*, p. 41. faith, that faith which is the condition of our justification is receiving the whole *Christ* in all his offices as my King, my Priest, my Prophet, and believing the commands and promises of the gospel.

BAXTER, on *Heb. xi. 1.* faith: It greatly concerns you to understand rightly what that faith is by which the just must live. This faith is the subsistence, *the firm and confident expectation* from God which we believing hope for, and which maketh them by the security of his faithful promise to be effectual motives to us as if they were present.—This realizing things future and unseen as certain by God's promise, and overcoming temptations from things seen and present, is our saving faith.

Dr. *OWEN*. The enquiry is, what is that act or work of faith whereby we may obtain a real interest or propriety in the promises of the gospel, and the things declared in them, unto justification before God? And, 1. It is evident that it doth not consist in, that it is not to be fully expressed by any one single habit, or act of the mind, or will, distinctly,
what-

whatever.—a. That which in order of nature seems to have the precedency is the assent of the mind unto that which the Psalmist betakes himself unto in the first place for relief under a sense of sin and trouble. That which the soul first fixed on as unto its relief is that there is forgiveness with God. This, as declared in the gospel, is, that God in his love and grace will pardon and justify guilty sinners through the blood and mediation of *Christ*, so it is proposed *Rom. iii. 23. 24.* The assent of the mind hereunto, as proposed in the promise of the gospel, is the root of faith, the foundation of all that the soul doth in believing; nor is there any evangelical faith without it; but yet, consider it abstractedly as a meer act of the mind, the essence and nature of justifying faith doth not consist solely therein though it cannot be without.—But, 2. This is accompanied in sincere believing with an approbation of the way of deliverance and salvation proposed as an effect of divine grace, wisdom, and love, whereon the heart doth rest it, and apply itself unto it, according to the mind of God. This is that faith whereby we are justified. 1. Is included in it a sincere renunciation of all other ways and means for the attaining of righteousness, life and salvation. This is essential unto faith, *Acts iv. 12. Hos. xiv. 2. 3. Jer. iii. 23. Psal. lxxi. 16* —2. There is in it the will's consent whereby the soul betakes itself cordially and sincerely as unto all its expectation of pardon of sin and righteousness before God, unto the way of salvation proposed in the gospel. This is that which is called coming unto *Christ*, and receiving of him, whereby true justifying faith is so often expressed in the scripture, or as it is peculiarly called believing in him, or believing on his name. The whole is expressed, *John xiv. 6.* where *Jesus* saith, I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father but by me —3. An acquiescency of the heart in God, as the author and principal cause of the way of salvation prepared, as acting in a way of sovereign grace and mercy toward sinners, who by him do believe in God, who raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory, that your faith and hope might be in God, *1 Peter i. 21.* —4. Trust in God, or the grace and mercy of God in and through the Lord *Christ*, as set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, doth belong hereunto, or necessarily ensue hercon: For the person called unto believing is (1.) convinced of sin and exposed unto wrath; (2.) hath nothing else to trust unto for help and relief; (3.) doth actually renounce all other things that tender themselves unto that end; and, *N. B.* therefore, *without some act of trust, the soul*

soul must lie under actual despair, which is utterly inconsistent with faith, or the choice and approbation of the way of salvation before described.—5. The most frequent declaration of the nature of faith in the scripture, especially in the Old-Testament, is by this *TRUST*, and that because it is that act of it which composed the soul, and brings it unto all the rest it can attain; for all our rest in this world is from trust in God, and the especial object of this trust, so far as it belongs unto the nature of that faith whereby we are justified, is God in *Christ* reconciling the world unto himself. Whether this trust or confidence shall be esteemed of the essence of faith, or as that which on the first fruit and working of it we are found in the exercise of, we need not positively determine; I place it therefore as that which belongs unto justifying faith, and is inseparable from it, for, if all we have spoken before concerning faith may be comprised under the notion of a firm assent and persuasion, yet it cannot be so if any such assent be conceivable exclusive of this trust.

DODDRIDGE. FAITH in *Christ* is in general committing our souls to him for salvation in his appointed way.

By the work of FAITH with power a sinner doth certainly believe the gracious discovery of his undone estate under sin and the law, and takes up his rest in grace of *Christ* by the same faith unto salvation. *CHAUNCEY's Doctrine of Godliness*, p. 209.

Of *SCOTCH* Divines I would mention **ROBERT BARON**, Professor at *Aberdeen*, who saith: Confidence, in the first place, is taken for a firm persuasion, or a firm and settled judgment of the understanding, by which we conclude in ourselves, and for the sake of the testimony of God in his word believe, that our Lord *Jesus Christ* has redeemed us with his most precious blood, and that for the sake of his merit his Father has forgiven us all our sins, and that he also for the sake of *Christ's* sacrifice offered on the cross will redeem us from every evil, and at last give eternal life: Secondly, it stands for an internal acquiescence in the goodwill and grace of God: Thirdly, for spiritual fortitude and courage: And, fourthly, for peace and tranquility of conscience: And he adds, that confidence, in the first sense, is the true and proper act of saving faith, nay its peculiar and specifick act. *Exercitat. 3.*

USHER, Primate of *IRELAND*, in his *Sum and Substance of the Christian Religion*, gives this account of faith: Justifying faith consists in these two things, in having a mind to know *Christ* and a will to rest upon him; whosoever sees
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to much excellency in *Christ*, that thereby he is drawn to embrace him as the only rock of salvation, that man truly believes to justification. P. 177.

Among the *FRENCH* Divines *LA PLACETTE* seems to state the matter with great clearness. The sinner, saith he, is first convinced of his own wretched condition, and has some confused wishes that he may be delivered from it; afterwards hearing there is no other remedy but *Jesus Christ*, he wisheth that this remedy may be applied to him: Next, hearing that God makes him the offer of it, he accepts it; and lastly, having accepted, and possessing him, he places in him all his joy and happiness. The principal and most efficacious of these acts is the accepting. In my opinion it is this which justifies. Afterwards he proves with several arguments that justifying faith consists in this, and also clearly shews that saving faith accepts *Christ* such as he is offered, and such as he is. *Traité de la foi divine, p. 327 seq.*

RIVET, President of the National Synod at *Vitry*. It is not enough to know the history that *Christ* suffered, nor yet to believe that he suffered for the sins of all men, but it is moreover required that man have a certain confidence, by which the sinner must firmly believe that not only to other believers, but to him also in particular, forgiveness of sin is granted for *Christ's* sake, and that he confidently apply to himself that for his atonement's sake himself is received into favour. *Le Blanc Theol* 208.

The *GERMAN* Protestant Divines are either *Calvinists* or *Lutherans*; how sweetly they agree in this fundamental article the following citations will shew.

The great *SPENER*, after making faith to consist of knowledge, assent, and confidence, adds, this confidence is as it were the heart of true faith, and require a special application of grace, that the believer does not only hold for true in general that God is gracious, and *Christ* redeemed men, but lays hold on all this as belonging to himself, *Christ* loved me and gave himself for me, *Gal. ii. 10.* which the Apostle did not say from immediate revelation, but it is the common property of faith and confidence. *Sermons on the Doctrine of Faith, P. 332.*

A. Herm FRANCKE, that man of great faith, describes the business and act of faith as follows: The main business of faith in our justification consists in this, that man turns away his eyes from looking on his own sin, corruption, and damnation; which portend him nothing but death, and that now his soul looks simply to a crucified *Jesus*, and in his sacred merit

merit lays hold on forgiveness of sin, and that righteousness which will stand before God; first, he lays hold on it more in wishing and desiring than that he can lay hold in reality, he rather longs that the blood of *Christ* and his great redemption may be applied to him, than he is able to lay hold on it according to his wishes. Alas! here he is all a tremble, he knows his indignity, he feels his weakness, he is conscious how frail he is in his conflict; alas! saith he, all my striving, all my struggling and repenting, is not of the right kind, I have not near such sorrow and grief for sin as I ought to have, I am not yet rightly ashamed of my sins, and so grace does not yet belong to me, I dare hardly venture to lay hold on *Christ* and his merit, but what shall I do? I see however that it is not the will of God that the sinner should perish, I can't give myself a greater anxiety of repentance, neither can I encrease the measure of godly sorrow in myself, it must come of God, why then do I delay myself? Then saith the penitent sinner to *Christ*: O thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world, thou hast borne my sins! Ah now have mercy on me! Let me also be justified through thy blood, thou whose blood has washed so many a sinner of his sins wash me also clean in thy holy and precious blood. Thus saith stretcheth out both her arms, soars aloft, and clingeth around a crucified *Jesus*, and keeps close to him alone; faith before the judgment seat of God lays down and presents the blood of *Christ*, and saith: Doubtless I poor sinner have done wrong, if God deals with me according to his justice I am lost and damned forever, but here is the ransom, here is the holy precious blood of *Jesus Christ*, the Lamb undefiled and unspotted; what I have not been able to do he hath done, what I could not fulfil he hath fulfilled, and fulfilled it for me, for me hath he done all this, for me he became a curse that I might obtain the blessing. Now faith also arises to greater strength, the holy spirit brings the spark to a flame, that such an one through the grace of *Jesus Christ* may say: Well, the thing is done, the ransom is paid, I feel the power of the word of the gospel in my soul, I will take comfort of the grace of God, I will no more be afraid of death, of condemnation, of the curse and wrath of God; I am reconciled with God through *Jesus Christ*, if my sins condemn me *Jesus Christ* proclaims life, and saith: Not perish, but have life everlasting, &c. &c.

Among the *Calvinists* *URSINUS*, one of the authors of their Publick Catechism, saith: Every believer finds in him, 1. That he believes all is true and of God what is contained in scrip-

scripture; 2. He perceives that he is bound to believe and receive it, for when we confess it true, and of God, it is necessary and just that we should assent to it; 3. He hath a principal eye to, embraceth and applies to himself, the promise of the grace of God, or of unmerited forgiveness of sin and eternal life through *Christ*, and for *Christ*'s sake, as it is written, he that believeth in the Son hath eternal life; 4. While he firmly relies on this confidence he is contented, and acquiesceth in the present grace of God, and concludes, Since God now loves me, and bestows such great blessings on me, he will also keep me for ever, because he is unchangeable, and his gifts are without repentance; 5. Hence follows, that he rejoiceth in all these things, and that peace which passeth all understanding; 6. He hath a purpose and serious resolution to obey God.

LAMPE defines faith to be that gracious work of God and his spirit whereby the will of the sinner, called according to the everlasting purpose, is rationally and efficaciously moved to receive *Christ*, according to the testimony of the gospel, wholly and solely as a perfect Saviour.

The Divines of *SWISSERLAND*. Dr. *HEIDEGGER*. We contend against the *PAPISTS* that faith is not a bare assent, but knowledge and assent joined with such confidence, that the heart relies on God and *Christ*, apprehends him, flies to him, and in him rests securely and without fear.

BUCANUS. Faith is the instrument by which the sinner apprehends *Christ* and all his benefits, applies them unto himself, is united with *Christ*, and lives with him. 276.

PICTET, after establishing the different acts of faith, saith: Faith is that motion of our soul whereby we do not only acquiesce in the truths and promises of the gospel, but also betake ourselves to *Jesus Christ* as our only Saviour, and look to him for salvation, righteousness, and life. P. 58.

NAKSKOW, Prepositus of *Jutland* in *DENMARK*. The third and most principal act of faith is a hearty and sincere confidence in God, whereby a Christian trusts in God, and is assured that himself shall be saved for *Christ*'s sake. *Sermons*, P. 123.

For want of a *SWEDISH* Author I would extract from a Confession of Faith presented to the King of *Sweden* as harmonious with the doctrine taught in his kingdom. To believe does not mean such knowledge as is in devils and wicked men, but we teach, that to believe is not only to know the history, but have confidence in God that he will do what he promised. Faith always lays hold on grace and forgiveness of sin. *Pottendorff. Confess. Art. 22.* A

A **POLISH** Protestant Divine takes notice of an objection of *Beelarmino* against special application of *Christ's* righteousness, because the Centurion, *Mat. viii. 10.* had only general faith, and replies, that one does not take away the other, and that, though it is not said in this place, yet in many others special faith is clearly asserted; and on *Heb. xi. 1.* he asserts, that to faith it is not only necessary to believe a God, but to believe in him as my God. *ARNOLDI lux in tenebris.*

The **HOLLAND** Divines. *MASTRICHT.* The act of faith is to lay hold on God and *Christ.*

Van TILL. Faith is the federal act of adstipulation, by which the mind acquainted with the contents of the covenant gives a chearful assent thereto, and commits itself with hunger and thirst after righteousness to *Jesus Christ* for salvation, and betaking itself unto *Christ* as the anchor of his hope.

The principal and properly saving act of faith is nothing else but the endeavour and acquiescence of the soul that loves God, and flies to him through *Christ*, (*nisus reclinatio*) and the yielding up of itself into the hands of God for mercy. *BURMANN.*

The **NEW-ENGLAND** Divines in 1680 formed a Confession of Faith, which in the article of faith perfectly corresponds with that of *Westminster.*

President *CHAUNCEY*, in his doctrine of justification, saith: The proper nature and office of faith is to rely and rest on *Christ*, or the grace of God in *Christ*, for righteousness and salvation.—Faith makes it its proper and distinguishing action to look out for a righteousness, for justification, and finding it in *Christ* wholly rests and relies on it as the rock and foundation the poor sinner must be staid by and built on.

As to the great dispute among many, whether faith be appropriated to the understanding, or is rooted also in the will, those who will have it in the will do not exclude the understanding; the difference between these is because they do not dispute *ad idem*; we deny not a faith of assent, but are also satisfied that the word faith is of a further extent according to the gospel, including in it recumbency or affiance, and must needs be implied, in the believing in or upon any object, by all that understand the import of the phrase, according to the sense of mankind, and that it is thus intended here is manifest by the title or denomination given unto it in question faith in *Jesus Christ* — This therefore is that which tends to distinguish it from every other faith, and directs us to the right and proper notion of it. *Willard's Body of Divinity*, p. 786.

After thus stating the doctrine of the Protestants, which I hope will appear sufficiently harmonious, I would next take

notice of the doctrine of faith in the Church of *Rome* and among the *Socinians* and *Arminians*, and as every Church is to be judged by its publick Confessions, and not the private assertions of any of its Doctors, I shall strictly state the doctrine of the Church of *Rome* from the Council of *Trent*, and then take notice of what has been taught by some of its members.

After asserting that man may dispose himself for justification by baptism, &c. the Council declares: Of this disposition towards justification it is written, That he that will come to God must believe that he is and will be the rewarder of those that seek him altho: Confide, my son, because thy sins are forgiven thee. *Sess. vi. cap. 6.*

Though it is necessary to believe that sins are not forgiven, nor were ever forgiven, but by the mercy of God for *Christ's* sake, yet it ought to be said that sins are not forgiven to any that boasts of his confidence, and the certainty of the forgiveness of his sins, and rests in it, as may possibly be done, and in our time is done by hereticks, and this vain and impious confidence preached amongst them with great contention against the Church. Nor ought it to be held, that those that are truly justified ought without doubt to conclude within themselves that they are justified, or that no man is absolved from his sins and justified but he that believes he is absolved and justified, and that justification and absolution is attained by this faith only, as though he that does not believe this doubted of the promise of God, and of the efficacy of the death and resurrection of *Christ*, for as no man is to doubt of the mercy of God, the merits of *Christ*, and the efficacy and virtue of the sacraments, so every one, when he considers his own infirmity, may be afraid of his having grace, as no man can know with certainty of faith that cannot be mistaken that he shall obtain the grace of God. *Sess. vi. cap. 9.*

If any shall say that justifying faith is nothing else but a confidence in the mercy of God forgiving sins for *Christ's* sake, or that it is only confidence in which we are justified, let him be accursed. *Canon xii.*

If any man shall say that to obtain forgiveness of sin it is necessary to believe, without having any regard to his own infirmity and indisposition, that his sins are forgiven him, let him be accursed. *Canon xiii.*

If any man shall say that a man's sins are forgiven, and he justified, because he certainly believes himself absolved and justified, or that no man is justified but who believes himself justified, and that by this faith only absolution and justification are obtained, let him be accursed. *Canon xiv.*

If any shall say that the regenerate and justified are bound to believe themselves in the number of the predestinated, let him be accursed. *Canon xxi.*

The general and prevailing notion of faith among the Papists is this: It is nothing else but an assent given by the motion and inspiration of the Holy Ghost to all that God has revealed unto man, which assent is grounded on the veracity and authority of God who revealed them. *Le Blanc, p 235.* JAUBERT, Archbishop of *Arles*, distinguishes two acts to believe what is contained in the scriptures because God revealed it, which may be without charity and good works, and is called a dead faith,—and faith working by love, which is found only in the righteous, and by which man expects the fulfilling of God's promises.

P. SPIESS defines it, a special grace of God, and supernatural light, by which a man is enlightened to believe all the Church commands to be believed. *Catechis. p. 16.*

This is their current doctrine, but it is no more than justice to observe, that some in the midst of that Church have taught otherwise; in the ritual of the visitation of the sick, said to be composed by *Anselm* Archbishop of *Canterbury*, the patient is asked: "Dost thou believe that thou canst not be saved but by the death of *Christ*?" *Ans.* I do. "Therefore, as long as thy soul is in thee, place all thy confidence only in this death, place no trust in any thing else, and if the Lord will judge thee say, LORD, I put the death of thy Son between me and thy judgment; I cannot enter into judgment upon any terms: And if he shall say unto thee, Thou art a sinner, then say thou, His death I put between me and my sins: And if he say, Thou deserveest Hell, then say, I put his death between me and my evil deserts, his merit I offer to thee for that merit which I ought to have had and have not; then say, LORD, into thy hands I commit my spirit, &c."

FISHER, Bishop of *Rocheſter*, though a martyr of the Church of *Rome*, saith our confidence must be in *Christ*, for whose merit and sake the Father freely gives salvation to all that repent; neither are we to trust to our works, (*industriam*) but only his merits; and he expressly saith this is the only faith that justifies. *Vide Ward, p. 28, 160.*

The SOCINIANS teach of faith as follows: Faith, which makes us just before God, is nothing else but to confide in *Christ*, to believe every thing true what he has said relating to us, and to think so highly of them, that if he bids us do any thing we do it, if he bids us hope for any thing we hope it,

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if he promise us the attaining of any thing when we shall have done any thing we not only hold it as true, but also do not hesitate to do it. *Socius apud felic. Wyff. Catechismo. p. 21, 309.*

The faith of a Christian is, to believe that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, or God's anointed, which faith influenceth us to honour the Son even as we honour the Father who has sent him. *Fleming's Scale of Principles.*

The *ARMINIAN* doctrine I shall state from *Limborch*, their most esteemed author, and the least suspected of *Socinianism*. **FAITH** in *Jesus Christ*, saith he, is not only a knowledge and assent by which we believe that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, and the appointed Saviour of all who live according to the precepts of the gospel, but also a confidence by which we rely on him as the Prophet, Priest, and King, given us of God, fully persuaded, that, if we obey his doctrine, we shall obtain through him forgiveness of sin and eternal life, which is productive of a serious and effectual purpose to yield him that obedience which he requireth of us. *Theol. Christ. lib. v. cap. 6.*—He makes three acts of faith; one antecedent, which is knowledge; one formal, assent, wherewith confidence is intimately united, (*aliis inseparably connected*;) and one, which is not so much faith as an effect of it, *sc.* obedience. Assent, he saith, must be firm, solid, and grounded on the judgment of reason. Confidence, he saith, doth not look to special mercy, which is absurd, (p. 411.) but to the mercy of God as offered unto all mankind. p. 412. and of this confidence, and of all Christian obedience, trust in special mercy is a consequent, by which eternal salvation before laid hold on under this condition, is, now that condition is fulfilled, specially applied, and which consequently we cannot be possessed of without previous justifying faith.

On the whole, it seems that many Protestants place faith in a persuasion or confidence that *Christ* is my Saviour, *ALL* Protestants in confidence in *Jesus Christ*, applying to and resting on him as such; the *PAPISTS* in believing what God has spoken because he spoke it; *SOCINIANS* in belief, confidence in, and obedience to *Jesus Christ*; the *ARMINIANS* in an assent to truth, wherewith confidence is intimately united; *Dr. Chauncy* in assent to the testimony of God, and *Mr. Stillman* in the belief of the truth, believing that *Jesus* is the *Christ*, and giving credit to the record God gave of his Son, of which the receiving of *Christ* is no part, but only an effect or consequence.