

CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 11.-Of Justification.

I. Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth¹: not, by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not, for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone; nor, by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience, to them, as their righteousness, but, by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them², they receiving, and resting on him and his righteousness by faith; which faith, they have, not of themselves, it is the gift of God³.

Question 1.—*Does God freely justify those whom he effectually calls, not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous, not for any thing wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ's sake alone?*

Answer.—Yes. Rom. 8:30; 3:24. So, then, the Papists, Socinians and Quakers do all err, who maintain, that the righteousness, whereby we are justified before God, is not without (outside of) us, but within us, and inherent. Because, 1.) if inherent righteousness did justify us, then good works would justify us, but Scripture denies that, Rom. 3:20; 4:6; Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8, 9; Tit. 3:5. In all which places, works are secluded expressly from our justification. 2.) Because the righteousness whereby we are not justified, is not properly our own anyway, 2 Cor. 5:21; Phil. 3:8, 9. 3.) Because we are not justified by the law, Acts 13:38, 39. 4.) Because our justification is given us freely, Rom. 4:4, 5; 11:6. 5.) Because our inherent righteousness is imperfect, 1 Kings 8:46; 1 John 1:8. 6.) Because if we were justified by inherent righteousness, we should have matter to boast of, which is contrary to Paul's doctrine, Eph. 2:9. 7.) Because the righteousness of a Christian man, is the justifying of the ungodly, Rom. 4:5.

Question 2.—*Does God justify men by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness?*

Answer.—No. Rom. 3:22, 24, 25, 27, 28; Eph. 1:7. So, then, the Arminians err, maintaining that faith itself, and the act of believing, is imputed to us for righteousness. Because 1.) Faith is that by which we receive righteousness, Acts 26:18. Therefore, if it is that by which we receive righteousness, it cannot be righteousness itself; because that which is received is far different, and another thing from that, whereby we receive it, Rom. 4:5-8. 2.) Because we are not justified by inherent righteousness, as it is proven evidently against the Papists in the previous question; all which reasons do clearly evince, that we are not justified by the imputation of faith itself, or by the act of believing, as our righteousness, Tit. 3:5, 7.

¹ Rom. 8:30; 3:24.

² Rom. 4:5-8; 2 Cor. 5:19, 21; Rom. 3:22, 24, 25, 27, 28; Tit. 3:5, 7; Eph. 1:7; Jer. 23:6; 1 Cor. 1:30, 31; Rom. 5:17-19.

³ Acts 10:44; Gal. 2:16; Phil. 3:9; Acts 13:38, 39; Eph. 2:7, 8.

Question 3.—*Wherein, then, stands our justification, if not in the imputation of faith?*

Answer.—The justification of sinners stands wholly in the righteous of Jesus Christ, his obedience and satisfaction imputed unto all that believe, 1 Cor. 1:30, 31; 2 Cor. 5:19, 21. The Old Testament bears witness to this righteousness of Messiah, Jer. 23:6. Likewise, the New Testament declares this imputation of Christ's righteousness to sinners, Rom. 5:17-19. It is not merely pardon of sins, or the *effects* of Christ's satisfaction, but the righteousness of Christ *itself*, for which we plead, Rom. 3:22. We are expressly told that God imputes righteousness without works, Rom. 4:6. This imputation proceeds upon the grounds of the believer's *federal* union with Christ from eternity, *cf.* Rev. 13:8; and of his *vital* union with him in time, John 15:5. The *federal* union is a consequence of the unconditional election of some to everlasting life from eternity, Eph. 1:11; but the *vital* union is by receiving, and resting on him and his righteousness by faith; which faith, believers have, not of themselves, it is the gift of God, Acts 10:44. The faith of Jesus is his obedience, the righteousness wrought in believers by Christ, Gal. 2:16; yet, this is not a righteousness wrought in believers by themselves but the righteousness of Jesus worked in them by this faith, Phil. 3:9. This righteousness of Christ by faith is the forgiveness of sins itself, together with a deliverance from the condemnatory power of the law, Acts 13:38, 39. Furthermore, this faith, so far from being the ground of the imputation of Jesus' righteousness, it is itself a gift of God, Eph. 2:7, 8.