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E L E V E N
L E T T E R S

From the late

Rev. Mr. HERVEY,

TO THE

Rev. Mr. JOHN WESLEY;

C O N T A I N I N G

An ANSWER to that GENTLEMAN'S
Remarks on THERON and ASPASIO.

Published from the

AUTHOR'S MANUSCRIPT,

Left in the

Possession of his Brother W. HERVEY.

W I T H A

P R E F A C E,

Shewing the REASON of their being now printed.

L O N D O N:


Printed by Charles Rivington,

For JOHN RIVINGTON in St. Paul's Church-Yard,

M,DCC,LXV.



P R E F A C E.

 *THE following Letters were written by my late Brother, in answer to a Piece, which was first sent him from the Rev. Mr. John Wesley, by way of private Letter, containing some Remarks which that Gentleman had made on reading Theron and Aspasio. When my Brother had read it over, he thought it best to be silent, as it contained nothing which could materially affect his Judgment in Regard to the Work it censured: For this Reason, as well as for Peace Sake, he layed it by him unanswered.—Mr. Wesley then published a Pamphlet, which he intituled, A Preservative against unsettled Notions in Religion; in which, he printed the above-mentioned Letter.*

This my Brother looked upon as a Summons to the Bar of the Public, and upon this Occasion, in a Letter to a Friend, dated June 23, 1758, writes as follows,

[“ My dear Friend,

“ I little thought, when I put Mr. Wesley’s
 “ Manuscript into your Hand, that I should see
 “ it in Print so soon. I took very little Notice
 “ of it, and let it lie by me several Months, with-
 “ out giving it an attentive Consideration *. It
 “ seemed to me so palpably weak, dealing only in
 “ positive Assertions and positive Denials, that I
 “ could not imagine he would adventure it into the
 “ World, without very great Alterations. But
 “ it is now come abroad, just as you received it,
 “ in a two Shillings Pamphlet, intituled A Preser-
 “ vative against unsettled Notions in Religion.
 “ Of this Pamphlet what he has wrote against
 “ me, makes only a small Part. Now then the
 “ Question is, whether I shall attempt to answer
 “ it? Give me your Opinion, as you have given
 “ me your Assistance, and may the Father of
 “ Mercies give you an Increase of Knowledge and
 “ Utterance, of Peace and Joy in the Holy
 “ Ghost.”]

Between this and the October following, my Brother began the Letters contained in this Volume, of which he thus speaks in another Letter to his Friend, dated October 24, 1758.

[“ My dear Friend,

“ Let me repeat my Thanks for the Trouble you
 “ have taken, and for the Assistance you have
 “ given

* Afterwards he read it again, and gave it, what he calls in the Beginning of the 11^t Letter, “ a careful Perusal.”

“ given me, in relation to my Controversy with
 “ Mr. Wesley; he is so unfair in his Quotati-
 “ ons, and so magisterial in his Manner, that I
 “ find it no small Difficulty, to preserve the De-
 “ cency of the Gentleman, and the Meekness of
 “ the Christian, in my intended Answer: May
 “ our divine Master aid me in both these In-
 “ stances, or else not suffer me to write at all.”]

When, in the December following, I was sent
 for to Weston, in the very last Period of my
 Brother's long Illness—I asked him (the Evening
 before he died) “ What he would have done with
 “ the Letters to Mr. Wesley, whether he would
 “ have them published after his Death?—He an-
 “ swered—By no means, because he had only tran-
 “ scribed about half of them fair for the Press, but
 “ as the Corrections and Alterations of the latter
 “ Part were mostly in Short-Hand, it would be
 “ difficult to understand them, especially as some of
 “ the Short-Hand was entirely his own, and others
 “ could not make it out; therefore, he said, as it
 “ is not a finished Piece, I desire you will think no
 “ more about it.”

As these were his last Orders concerning these
 Letters, I thought it right to obey them, and
 therefore I withstood the repeated Sollicitations
 of many of his Friends, who wanted to have
 them printed; alledging the Service they
 might be of to allay the groundless Prejudices,
 which the Preservative might occasion in the

Minds of many, against my Brother's other Writings, as well as the Utility of them in general, as they contained so masterly a Defence of "the Truth as it is in JESUS."

But, notwithstanding the Regard I had for the Persons who sollicitated the Publication, I could not be persuaded to print the Letters; and they never had appeared in Publick with my Consent, had not a surreptitious Edition of them lately made its Way from the Press, and was I not under a firm Persuasion that will be followed by more.

As this is the Case, I think it my Duty to the Memory of my late Brother, to send forth as correct an Edition as I possibly can; for as to that which has appeared (from what Editor I know not,) it is so faulty, and incorrect, that but little Judgment can be formed from it, of the Propriety and Force of my Brother's Answers to Mr. Wesley.

As to the Unfairness of publishing my Brother's Letters without my Consent, and the Injustice to his Memory, in sending so mangled a Performance out under his Name, they are too apparent to need any Proof; and though the Editor, as I have been informed, gave away the whole Impression, so that it is plain, Lucre was not the Motive of his Proceeding, and I would charitably hope he did it with a View of benefiting his Readers, yet it is so
like

like doing Evil that Good may come, as, in my Opinion, to be quite unjustifiable.

However, as the only Way now left to remedy in some Sort what has been done, and to prevent a further Imposition on the Publick, from worse Motives than aētuated this Publisher, I have called a Friend to my Assistance, and by this Means, present the Reader with as perfect a Copy of these Letters, as can possibly be made out from the original Manuscript now in my Hands.

That the Reader may judge more clearly of the State of the Controversy between my late Brother and Mr. Wesley, I have thought it right to subjoin Mr. Wesley's Letter, Word for Word, as it stands in the Preservative.

A LETTER to the Rev. Mr. ———

DEAR SIR,

OCT. 15, 1765.

A Considerable Time since I sent you a few hasty Thoughts which occur'd to me on reading the Dialogues between *Theron* and *Aspasio*. I have not been favour'd with any Answer. Yet upon another and a more careful Perusal of them, I could not but set down some obvious Reflections, which I would rather have communicated, before those Dialogues were publish'd.

In the First Dialogue there are several just and strong Observations, which may be of

Use to every serious Reader. In the Second, is not the Description often too laboured, the Language too stiff, and affected? Yet the Reflections on the Creation (in the 31st and following Pages) make abundant Amends for this. (I cite the Pages according to the *Dublin* Edition, having wrote the rough Draught of what follows, in *Ireland*.)

P. 39. Is *Justification* more or less, than God's pardoning and accepting a Sinner thro' the Merits of *Christ*? That God herein "reckons the Righteousness and Obedience which *Christ* performed *as our own*:" I allow, if by that ambiguous Expression, you mean only as you here explain it yourself, "They are as effectual for obtaining our Salvation, *as if they were our own* personal Qualifications." P. 41.

P. 43. "WE are not solicitous, as to any particular Set of Phrases. Only let Men be humbled, as repenting Criminals at *Christ's* Feet, let them rely as devoted Pensioners on his Merits, and they are undoubtedly in the Way to a blisful Immortality." Then for *Christ's* Sake, and for the Sake of the immortal Souls which He has purchased with his Blood, do not dispute for that particular Phrase, *The imputed Righteousness of Christ*. It is not scriptural; it is not necessary. Men who scruple to use, Men who never heard the Expression, may yet "be humbled, as *repenting Criminals* at his Feet, and rely as *devoted Pensioners* on his Merits." But it has done immense Hurt. I have had abundant Proof, that the frequent Use of this unnecessary Phrase, instead of

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"furthering

“furthering Mens Progress in vital Holiness,” has made them satisfied without any Holiness at all; yea and encouraged them to work all Uncleaness with Greediness.

P. 45. “To ascribe Pardon to *Christ's passive*, eternal Life to his *active* Righteousness, is fanciful rather than judicious. His universal Obedience from his Birth to his Death, is the one Foundation of my Hope.”

THIS is unquestionably right. But if it be, there is no manner of Need, to make the Imputation of his *active* Righteousness, a separate and laboured Head of Discourse. O that you had been content with this plain scriptural Account, and spared some of the *Dialogues* and *Letters* that follow!

THE Third and Fourth Dialogues contain an admirable Illustration and Confirmation of the great Doctrine of *Christ's* Satisfaction. Yet even here I observe a few Passages, which are liable to some Exception.

P. 54. “SATISFACTION was made to the Divine Law.” I do not remember any such Expression in Scripture. This Way of speaking of the Law as a *Person injured* and to be *satisfied*, seems hardly defensible.

P. 74. “THE *Death* of *Christ* procured the *Pardon* and *Acceptance* of Believers, even before He came in the Flesh.” Yea, and ever since. In this we all agree. And why should we contend for any Thing more?

P. 120. “ALL the Benefits of the New Covenant, are the *Purchase* of *his Blood*.” Surely they are. And after this has been fully proved,

proved, where is the Need, where is the Use, of contending so strenuously, for the *Imputation of his Righteousness*, as is done in the Fifth and Sixth Dialogues?

P. 135. "IF He was our Substitute as to *penal Sufferings*, why not, as to *justifying Obedience*?"

THE former is expressly asserted in Scripture. The latter is not expressly asserted there.

P. 145. "AS Sin and Misery have *abounded* through the first *Adam*, Mercy and Grace have *much more abounded* through the second. So that none can have any Reason to complain." No, not if the second *Adam* died for all. Otherwise all for whom He did not die, have great Reason to complain. For they inevitably *fall* by the first *Adam*, without any *Help* from the second:

P. 148. "THE whole World of Believers" is an Expression which never occurs in Scripture: Nor has it any Countenance there: The World in the inspired Writings being constantly taken either in an universal or in a bad Sense: Either for the whole of Mankind, or for that Part of them who know not God.

P. 149. "IN the LORD shall all the House of Israel be justified." It ought unquestionably to be rendered, "By or through the LORD:" This Argument therefore proves nothing. "Ye are complete in Him." The Words literally rendered, are, *Ye are filled with Him*. And the whole Passage, as any unprejudiced Reader may observe, relates to Sanctification, not Justification.

P. 150. "THEY are accepted *for* Christ's Sake; this is Justification through *imputed Righteousness*." That remains to be proved. Many allow the former, who cannot allow the latter.

Theron. "I SEE NO Occasion for such *nice Distinctions and metaphysical Subtleties*."

Asp. You oblige us to make Use of them by confounding these very different Ideas, that is, *Christ's* active and passive Righteousness."

I ANSWER, We do not *confound* these: But neither do we *separate* them. Nor have we any Authority from Scripture, for either thinking or speaking of one separate from the other. And this whole Debate on one of them separate from the other, is a mere *metaphysical Subtlety*.

P. 151. "THE Righteousness which justifies us, is already *wrought out*."—A crude, unscriptural Expression! "It was *set on Foot, carried on, compleated*."—O vain Philosophy! The plain Truth is, *Christ* lived and *tasted* Death for every Man. And through the Merits of his Life and Death, every Believer is justified.

P. 152. "WHOEVER perverts so glorious a Doctrine, shews he never believed." Not so. They who *turn back as a Dog to the Vomit*, had once *escaped the Pollutions of the World by the Knowledge of Christ*.

P. 153. "THE Goodness of GOD leadeth to Repentance." This is unquestionably true. But the *nice, metaphysical Doctrine of imputed Righteousness*,

Righteousness, leads not to Repentance, but to Licentiousness.

P. 154. "THE Believer *cannot but* add to his Faith, Works of Righteousness." During his first Love, this is often true. But it is not true afterwards, as we know and feel by melancholy Experience.

P. 155. "WE no longer obey, *in order to* lay the Foundation for our final Acceptance." No: That Foundation is already laid in the Merits of *Christ*. Yet we obey, *in order to* our final Acceptance thro' his Merits. And in this Sense, by obeying we *lay a good Foundation, that we may attain eternal Life*.

P. 156. "WE *establish the Law*: We provide for its Honour, by the perfect Obedience of *Christ*." Can you possibly think: St. Paul meant this? That such a Thought ever entered into his Mind? The plain Meaning is, We establish both the true Sense, and the effectual Practice of it: We provide for its being both understood and practised in its full Extent.

P. 157. "ON those who reject the Atonement, just Severity." Was it ever possible for them, not to reject it? If not, how is it just, To cast them into a Lake of Fire, for not doing what it was impossible they should do? Would it be just (make it your own Case) to cast *you* into Hell, for not touching Heaven with your Hand?

P. 159. "JUSTIFICATION is *complete* the first Moment we believe, and is incapable of *Augmentation*."

Not so: There may be as many *Degrees* in the *Favour* as in the *Image* of God.

P. 190. "ST. PAUL often mentions a *Righteousness imputed*: (Not a *Righteousness*; never once; but simply *Righteousness*.) "What can this be, but *the Righteousness of Christ*?" He tells you himself, *Rom. iv. 6. To Him that believeth on Him that justifieth the Ungodly, Faith is imputed for Righteousness.* "Why is *Christ* stiled *Jehovah our Righteousness*?" Because we are both justified and sanctified thro' Him.

P. 191. "My Death, the Cause of their Forgiveness, My Righteousness, the Ground of their Acceptance."

How does this agree with P. 45. "To ascribe Pardon to *Christ's passive*, Eternal Life to his *Active Righteousness*, is fanciful rather than judicious?"

P. 195. "HE commends such Kinds of Beneficence *only*, as were exercised to a Disciple as such." Is not this a Slip of the Pen? Will not our LORD then commend, and reward eternally, all Kinds of Beneficence, provided they flow'd from a Principle of loving Faith? Yea, that which was exercised to a Samaritan, a Jew, a Turk or an Heathen? Even these I would not term "transient Bubbles," tho' they do not *procure* our Justification.

P. 197. "How must our Righteousness exceed that of the Scribes and Pharisees? Not only in being sincere, but in possessing a *complete Righteousness*, even that of *Christ*." Did our LORD mean this? Nothing less. He specifies

cifies in the following Parts of his Sermon, the very Instances wherein the Righteousness of a Christian exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees.

P. 198. "HE brings this specious *Hypocrite* to the Test." How does it appear, that he was an *Hypocrite*? Our LORD gives not the least Intimation of it. Surely He *loved him*, not for his Hypocrisy, but his Sincerity!

YET he loved the World, and therefore could not keep any of the Commandments in their spiritual Meaning. And the keeping of these is undoubtedly the *Way* to, tho' not the *Cause*, of Eternal Life.

P. 200. "BY *Works* his Faith was made perfect: appeared to be true." No: The natural Sense of the Word is, *By the Grace* superadded while he wrought those *Works*, his Faith was literally *made perfect*.

Ibid. "HE that doeth Righteousness is righteous—manifests the Truth of his Conversion." Nay; the plain Meaning is, *He alone is truly righteous*, whose Faith worketh by Love.

P. 201. "ST. JAMES speaks of the *Justification of our Faith*." Not unless you mean by that odd Expression, our *Faith* being *made perfect*: For so the Apostle explains his own Meaning. Perhaps the Word *justified* is once used by St. Paul for *manifested*.—But that does not prove, it is to be so understood here.

P. 202. "WHOSO doeth these Things shall never fall into total Apostasy." How pleasing is this to Flesh and Blood! But *David* says no such Thing. His Meaning is, *Whoso doeth these*

these Things to the End shall never fall into Hell.

THE Seventh Dialogue is full of important Truths. Yet some Expressions in it I can't commend.

P. 216. "ONE Thing thou lackest the imputed Righteousness of *Christ*." You cannot think, this is the Meaning of the Text. Certainly the *one Thing* our LORD meant was, The Love of GOD. This was the Thing he lacked.

P. 222. "Is the Obedience of *Christ* insufficient to *accomplish* our Justification?" Rather I would ask, Is the *Death* of *Christ* insufficient to *purchase* it?

P. 226. "THE Saints in Glory ascribe, *the whole* of their Salvation to the *Blood* of the Lamb." So do I: And yet I believe He "obtained for all a *Possibility* of Salvation."

P. 227. "THE Terms of Acceptance for *fallen Man* were a *full Satisfaction* to the Divine Justice, and a *complete Conformity* to the Divine Law." This you take for granted; but I cannot allow.

THE *Terms* of Acceptance for *fallen Man* are *Repentance* and *Faith*. *Repent ye and believe the Gospel.*

Ibid. "THERE are but Two Methods whereby any can be justified, either by a *perfect Obedience* to the Law, or because *Christ* hath kept the Law in our stead." You should say, "Or by *Faith* in *Christ*." I then answer, This is true. And *fallen Man* is justified, not by *perfect Obedience* but by *Faith*.
What

What *Christ* has done is the *Foundation* of our Justification, not the *Term* or *Condition* of it.

IN the Eighth Dialogue likewise there are many great Truths, and yet some Things liable to Exception.

P. 253. "DAVID GOD Himself dignifies with the *most exalted* of all Characters." Far, very far from it. We have more exalted Characters than *David's*, both in the Old Testament and the New. Such are those of *Samuel*, *Daniel*, yea and *Job*, in the former, of *St. Paul* and *St. John* in the latter.

"BUT GOD stiles him *a Man after his own Heart*." This is the Text which has caused many to mistake: For want of considering, First, That this is said of *David* in a *particular Respect*, not with Regard to his *whole Character*: Secondly, The Time, at which it was spoken. When was *David a Man after GOD's own Heart*? When GOD found him following the *ewes great with Young*, when He took him from the *Sheep-Folds*, *Pf. lxxix. 71*. It was in the 2d or 3d Year of *Saul's* Reign, that *Samuel* said to him, *The LORD hath sought Him a Man after his own Heart, and hath commanded him to be Captain over his People*, *1 Sam. xiii. 14*. But was he *a Man after GOD's own Heart* all his Life? Or in all Particulars? So far from it, that we have few more exceptionable Characters, among all the Men of GOD recorded in Scripture.

P. 261. "THERE is not a just Man upon Earth that sinneth not." *Solomon* might truly say so, before *Christ* came. And *St. John* might

might after He came say as truly, *Whosoever is born of GOD sinneth not.* “But in many Things we offend all.” That St. James does not speak this of himself, or of real *Christians*, will clearly appear, to all who impartially consider the Context.

THE ninth Dialogue proves excellently well, That we cannot be *justified by our Works.*

BUT have you thoroughly considered the Words which occur in the 270th Page?

“O CHILDREN of *Adam*, you are *no longer* obliged, to love GOD with all your Strength, nor your Neighbour as yourselves. Once indeed I insisted upon absolute Purity of Heart: Now I can dispense with some Degrees of evil Desire. Since *Christ*—has fulfilled the Law for you, “You need not fulfil it. I will *connive* at, yea accommodate my Demands to your Weakness.”

I AGREE with you, That “this Doctrine makes the Holy One of GOD a Minister of Sin.” And is it not your own? Is not this the very Doctrine which you espouse throughout your Book?

I CANNOT but except to several Passages also in the Tenth Dialogue. I ask First,

P. 291. “DOES the *Righteousness of GOD* ever mean” (as you affirm) “*The Merits of Christ?*” I believe not once in all the Scripture. It often means and particularly in the Epistle to the *Romans*, GOD’s Method of justifying Sinners. When therefore you say,

P. 292. “THE *Righteousness of GOD* means, such a Righteousness as may justly challenge

challenge his Acceptance," I cannot allow it at all: And this capital Mistake must needs lead you into many others. But I follow you Step by Step.

Ibid. "IN order to intitle us to a Reward, there must be an Imputation of Righteousness." There must be an Interest in *Christ*. And then every Man shall receive his own Reward, according to his own Labour.

P. 293. "A REBEL may be forgiven, without being restored to the Dignity of a Son." A Rebel against an earthly King may; but not a Rebel against GOD. In the very same Moment that GOD forgives, we are the Sons of GOD. Therefore this is an idle Dispute. For Pardon and Acceptance, though they may be distinguished, cannot be divided. The Words of *Job* which you cite are wide of the Question. Those of *Solomon* prove no more than this, (and who denies it?) That Justification implies both Pardon and Acceptance.

P. 295. "GRACE reigneth thro' Righteousness unto eternal Life,"—that is, The free Love of GOD brings us through Justification and Sanctification to Glory. *Ibid.* "That they may receive Forgiveness and a Lot among the Sanctified:" That is, That they may receive Pardon, Holiness, Heaven.

Ibid. "Is not the Satisfaction made by the Death of *Christ*, sufficient to obtain both our full Pardon and final Happiness?" Unquestionably it is, and neither of the Texts you cite proves the contrary.

P. 296. "IF it was requisite for *Christ* to be baptized, much more to fulfil the Moral Law."

I CANNOT prove that either the one or the other was requisite *in order* to his *purchasing* Redemption for us.

P. 297. "By *Christ's* Sufferings alone, the Law was not satisfied." Yes it was; for it required only the alternative, Obey or Die. It required no Man to obey and die too. If any Man had perfectly obey'd, he would not have died. *Ibid.* "Where Scripture ascribes *the whole* of our Salvation to the Death of *Christ*, a *Part* of his Humiliation is put for the *whole*." I cannot allow this without some Proof. *He was obedient unto Death* is no Proof at all; as it does not necessarily imply any more, than that *He died in Obedience* to the Father. In some Texts there is a *Necessity* of taking a Part for the whole. But in these there is no such *Necessity*.

P. 300. "CHRIST *undertook* to do every Thing necessary for our Redemption:" Namely, in a *Covenant* made with the Father. 'Tis sure, *He did* every Thing necessary: But how does it appear, that *He undertook* this, before the Foundation of the World, and that by a positive *Covenant* between Him and the Father?

You think this appears from four Texts,
 1. From that, *Thou gavest them to Me*. Nay, when any believe, *the Father gave them to Christ*. But this proves no such previous Contract.
 2. *GOD hath laid upon Him the Iniquities*

ties of us all. Neither does this prove any such Thing. 3. That Expression, *The Counsel of Peace shall be between them*, does not necessarily imply any more, than that both the Father and the Son would concur in the Redemption of Man. 4. *According to the Counsel of his Will*,—that is, In the Way or Method He had chosen. Therefore neither any of these Texts, nor all of them, prove what they were brought to prove. They do by no Means prove, That there ever was any such Covenant made between the Father and the Son.

P. 301. “THE *Conditions* of the Covenant are recorded. *Lo, I come to do thy Will.*” Nay here is no Mention of any *Covenant*, nor any Thing from which it can be inferr’d. “The Recompence stipulated in this glorious *Treaty.*”—But I see not one Word of the *Treaty* itself. Nor can I possibly allow the Existence of it without far other Proof than this. *Ibid.* “Another Copy of this grand *Treaty* is recorded *Isaiab* xlix. from the first to the sixth Verse.” I have read them, but cannot find a Word about it, in all those Verses. They contain neither more nor less than a Prediction, of the Salvation of the *Gentiles*.

P. 302. “By the Covenant of Works, Man was bound to obey *in his own Person.*” And so he is under the Covenant of Grace; though not in order to his Justification. “The Obedience of *our Surety* is accepted instead of *our own.*” This is neither a safe nor a Scriptural Way of Speaking. I would simply say,
We

We are accepted thro' the Beloved. We have Redemption thro' his Blood.

P. 303. "THE Second Covenant was not made with *Adam*, or any of his Posterity, but with *Christ* in those Words, *The Seed of the Woman shall bruise the Serpent's Head.*" For any Authority you have from these Words, you might as well have said, It was made with the Holy Ghost. These Words were not spoken *to Christ*, but *of Him*, and give not the least Intimation of any such *Covenant* as you plead for. They manifestly contain, if not a *Covenant* made with, a *Promise* made to *Adam* and all his Posterity.

P. 303. "CHRIST, we see, *undertook* to execute the *Conditions.*" We see no such Thing in this Text. We see here only a *Promise* of a Saviour, made by GOD to Man.

Ibid. "'Tis true, I cannot fulfil the *Conditions.*" 'Tis not true. The *Conditions* of the New *Covenant* are *Repent* and *believe*. And these you can fulfil, thro' *Christ* strengthening you. "'Tis equally true, this is not required at my *Hands.*" It is *equally* true, that is, absolutely false. And most dangerously false. If we allow this, *Antinomianism* comes in with a full Tide. "*Christ* has perform'd all that was *conditional* for me." Has he *repented* and *believed* for you? You endeavour to evade this by saying, "He perform'd all that was *conditional* in the *Covenant of Works.*" This is nothing to the Purpose; for we are not talking of that, but of the *Covenant of Grace*. Now He did not perform all that

was *conditional* in this Covenant, unless He repented and believed. “ But He did unspeakably more.” It may be so. But He did not do this.

P. 308. “ BUT if *Christ's perfect Obedience* be Our's, we have no more Need of Pardon than *Christ Himself.*” The Consequence is good. You have started an Objection which you cannot answer. You say indeed, “ Yes, we do need Pardon; for *in many Things we offend all.*” What then? If his *Obedience* be Our's, we still *perfectly obey in Him.*

P. 309. “ BOTH the *Branches of the Law*, the *Preceptive* and the *Penal*, in the Case of Guilt contracted, must be satisfied.” Not so. “ *Christ* by his Death alone, (so our Church teaches) fully satisfied for ~~the~~ Sins of the whole World.” The same great Truth is manifestly taught in the 31st Article. Is it therefore fair, is it honest, for any one to plead the Articles of our Church in Defence of Absolute Predestination? Seeing the 17th Article barely *defines* the Term, without either affirming or denying the Thing: Whereas the 31st totally overthrows and razes it from the Foundation.

Ibid. “ BELIEVERS who are notorious Transgressors *in themselves*, have a sinless Obedience *in Christ.*” O Siren Song! Pleasing Sound, to *James Wheatley! Thomas Williams! James Reiley!*

I KNOW not one Sentence in the Eleventh Dialogue, which is liable to Exception: But that grand Doctrine of Christianity, Original

nal Sin, is therein proved by irrefragable Arguments.

THE Twelfth likewise is unexceptionable, and contains such an Illustration of the Wisdom of God, in the Structure of the Human Body, as I believe cannot be parallell'd, in either Antient or Modern Writers.

THE former Part of the Thirteenth Dialogue is admirable. To the latter I have some Objection.

VOL. II. P. 44. “*Elijah* failed in his Resignation, and even *Moses* spake unadvisedly with his Lips.” It is true: But if you could likewise fix some Blot upon venerable *Samuel* and beloved *Daniel*, it would prove nothing. For no Scripture teaches, That the Holiness of *Christians* is to be measured by that of any *Jew*.

P. 46. “Do not the *best* of Men frequently feel Disorder in their Affections? Do not they often complain, *When I would do Good, Evil is present with me?*” I believe not. You and I are only able to answer for ourselves. “Do not they say, *We groan being burthen'd*,—with the Workings of inbred Corruption?” You know, this is not the Meaning of the Text. The whole Context shews, the Cause of that Groaning was their longing *to be with Christ*.

P. 47. “THE Cure” of Sin “will be perfected in Heaven.” Nay surely, in Paradise, if no sooner. “This is a noble Prerogative of the Beatific Vision.” No: It would then come too late. If Sin remains in us ’till the Day of Judgment, it will remain for ever. “Our Present Blessedness does not consist in

being *free from Sin.*” I really think it does. But whether it does or no, if we are not *free from Sin*, we are not Christian Believers. For to all these the Apostle declares, *Being made free from Sin, ye are become the Servants of Righteousness*, Rom. vi. 18.

“ IF we were perfect in Piety (St. *John's* Word is, *Perfect in Love*) *Christ's* Priestly Office would be superseded.” No: We should still need his Spirit (and consequently his Intercession) for the Continuance of that Love from Moment to Moment. Beside, we should still be encompassed with Infirmities, and liable to Mistakes, from which Words or Actions might follow, even though the Heart was all Love, which were not exactly right. Therefore in all these Respects, we should still have Need of *Christ's* Priestly Office: And therefore as long as he remains in the Body, the greatest Saint may say,

Every Moment, LORD, I need

The Merit of thy Death.

The Text cited from *Exodus* asserts nothing less than, That *Iniquity* “cleaves to all *our holy Things* ’till Death.”

P. 48. “ SIN remains, That the Righteousness of Faith may have its due Honour.” And will the Righteousness of Faith have its due Honour no longer than Sin remains in us? Then it must remain, not only on Earth and in Paradise, but in Heaven also—“ And the Sanctification of the Spirit its proper Esteem.” Would it not have more Esteem, if it were a perfect Work?

Ibid.

Ibid. “IT (Sin) will make us lowly in our own Eyes.” What, will Pride make us lowly? Surely the utter Destruction of Pride, would do this more effectually. “It will make us compassionate.” Would not an entire Renewal in the Image of GOD make us much more so? “It will teach us to admire the Riches of Grace.” Yea, but a fuller Experience of it, by a thorough Sanctification of Spirit, Soul and Body, will make us admire it more. “It will reconcile us to Death.” Indeed it will not: Nor will any Thing do this, like perfect Love.

P. 49. “IT will endear the Blood and Intercession of *Christ*.” Nay, these can never be so dear to any, as to those who experience their full Virtue, who are *filled with the Fulness of GOD*. Nor can any “feel their continual Need” of *Christ*, or, “rely on Him” in the Manner which these do.

DIALOGUE 14. P. 57. “THE Claims of the Law are all answered.” If so, Count *Zinzendorf* is absolutely in the right: Neither GOD nor Man can claim my Obedience to it. Is not this Antinomianism without a Mask?

P. 59. “YOUR Sins are expiated thro’ the Death of *Christ*, and a *Righteousness* given you, by which you have free Access to GOD.” This is not Scriptural Language. I would simply say, *By him we have Access to the Father*.

THERE are many other Expressions in this Dialogue, to which I have the same Objection, namely, 1. That they are Unscriptural, 2. That they directly lead to Antinomianism.

THE First Letter contains some very useful Heads of Self-Examination. In the Second,

P. 91. I READ, “There is a *Righteousness* which supplies all that the Creature needs. To prove this *momentous* Point, is the Design of the following Sheets.”

I HAVE seen such terrible Effects, of this unscriptural Way of Speaking, even on those *who had once clean escaped from the Pollutions of the World*, that I cannot but earnestly wish, you would speak no otherwise than do the Oracles of God. Certainly this *Mode of Expression* is not *momentous*. It is always *dangerous*, often *fatal*.

LETTER III. P. 93. “Where Sin abounded, Grace did much more abound: That as Sin had reign’d unto Death, so might Grace—the free Love of GOD—reign thro’ *Righteousness*, thro’ our Justification and Sanctification, unto eternal Life, Rom. v. 20, 21. This is the plain natural Meaning of the Words. It does not appear, that one Word is spoken here about *imputed Righteousness*: Neither in the Passages cited in the next Page, from the Common-Prayer and the Article. In the Homily likewise that Phrase is not found at all, and the main Stress is laid on *Christ’s shedding his Blood*. Nor is the *Phrase* (concerning the *Thing*, there is no Question) found in any Part of the Homilies.

P. 101. “IF the Fathers are not explicit with Regard to the Imputation of *active Righteousness*, they abound in Passages which evince the *Substitution* of *Christ* in our Stead: Passages which disclaim all Dependence on any Duties

Duties of our own, and fix our Hopes wholly on the *Merits* of our Saviour. When this is the Case, I am very little solicitous about any *particular Forms of Expression.*” O lay aside then those questionable, dangerous Forms, and keep closely to the Scriptural.

LETTER IV. P. 105. “The Authority of our Church and of those eminent Divines,” does not touch those *particular Forms of Expression*: Neither do any of the Texts which you afterward cite. As to the Doctrine we are agreed.

Ibid. “THE *Righteousness* of GOD signifies, the Righteousness which God-Man wrought out.” No. It signifies GOD’S Method of justifying Sinners.

P. 107. “THE Victims figured the *Expiation* by *Christ*’s Death, the cloathing with Skins, the *Imputation* of his Righteousness.” That does not appear. Did not the One rather figure our Justification, the other, our Sanctification?

P. 109. ALMOST every Text quoted in this and the following Letter, in support of that *particular Form of Expression*, is distorted above Measure from the plain, obvious Meaning, which is pointed out by the Context. I shall Instance in a few, and just set down their true Meaning, without any farther Remarks.

To *shew unto Man his Uprightness*. To convince him of GOD’S Justice, in so punishing him.

P. 110. HE *shall receive the Blessing*—Pardon—*from the LORD and Righteousness*—Holiness—*from the GOD of his Salvation*,—the GOD

who saveth him both from the Guilt and from the Power of Sin.

P. 111. I WILL *make Mention of thy Righteousness only.*—Of thy *Mercy.* So the Word frequently means in the Old Testament. So it unquestionably means in that Text, *In (or by) thy Righteousness shall they be exalted.*

P. 112. SION *shall be redeemed with Judgment*—after severe Punishment—and *her Converts with Righteousness*—with the tender Mercy of GOD, following that Punishment.

P. 113. IN (or thro') the LORD I have *Righteousness and Strength, Justification and Sanctification.* He *hath clothed me with the Garments of Salvation,*—saved me from the Guilt and Power of Sin: Both of which are again exprest by, *He hath covered me with the Robe of Righteousness.*

P. 114. MY *Righteousness*—my *Mercy*—*shall not be abolished.*

P. 116. To *make Reconciliation for Iniquity*—to atone for all our Sins—and *to bring in everlasting Righteousness, spotless Holiness* into our Souls. And this Righteousness is not *Human,* but *Divine.* It is the Gift and the Work of GOD.

P. 117. THE LORD *our Righteousness*—The Author both of our Justification and Sanctification.

P. 127. “WHAT Righteousness shall give us Peace at the last Day, Inherent or Imputed?” Both. *Christ* died for us and lives in us, *That we may have Boldness in the Day of Judgment.*

LETTER V. P. 131. *That have obtain'd like precious Faith thro' the Righteousness—the Mercy—of our LORD. Seek ye the Kingdom of GOD and his Righteousness—the Holiness which springs from GOD reigning in you.*

P. 132. *THEREIN is revealed the Righteousness of GOD—GOD'S Method of justifying Sinners.*

P. 135. “*WE establish the Law, as we expect no Salvation without a perfect Conformity to it—namely, by Christ.*” Is not this a mere Quibble? And a Quibble, which after all the labour'd Evasions of *Witfius* and a thousand more, does totally *make void the Law?* But not so does *St. Paul* teach. According to him, *without Holiness, personal Holiness, no Man shall see the LORD.* None who is not *himself* conform'd to the Law of GOD here, *shall see the LORD in Glory.*

THIS is the grand, palpable Objection to that whole Scheme. It directly *makes void the Law.* It makes Thousands content to live and die *Transgressors of the Law,* because *Christ* fulfilled it *for them.* Therefore, tho' I believe, He hath *lived and died* for me, yet I would speak very tenderly and sparingly of the former, (and *never,* separately from the latter) even as sparingly as do the Scriptures, for Fear of this dreadful Consequence.

P. 138. “*THE Gift of Righteousness* must signify a Righteousness not their own.” Yes, it signifies the Righteousness or Holiness, which GOD gives to and works in them.

P. 139. "THE Obedience of one is Christ's actual Performance of the whole Law." So here his Passion is fairly left out! Whereas his *becoming obedient unto Death*, that is, dying for Man, is certainly the chief Part, if not the whole which is meant by that Expression.

Ibid. "THAT *the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us*—That is, By our Representative in our Nature." Amazing! But this, you say, "agrees with the Tenor of the Apostle's Arguing. For he is demonstrating we cannot be justified by our own Conformity to the Law." No: Not here. He is not speaking here of the *Cause* of our Justification, but the *Fruits* of it. Therefore that unnatural Sense of his Words does not at all, "agree with the Tenor of his Arguing."

P. 140. "I TOTALLY deny the Criticism on *δικαιοσύνη* and *δικάωμα*, and cannot conceive on what Authority it is founded. O how deep an Aversion to Inward Holiness does this Scheme naturally create?"

P. 142. "THE Righteousness they attained could not be any Personal Righteousness." Certainly it was. It was *implanted* as well as *imputed*.

P. 145. "FOR *Instruction in Righteousness*, in the Righteousness of Christ." Was there ever such a Comment before? The plain Meaning is, *For training up in Holiness* of Heart and of Life.

P. 146. *He shall convince the World of Righteousness*—That I am not a Sinner, but innocent and holy.

P. 148. "THAT *we might be made the Righteousness of GOD in Him.* Not intrinsically, but imputatively." Both the one and the other. GOD thro' Him, first *accounts* and then *makes us righteous.* Accordingly

P. 152. THE *Righteousness which is of GOD by Faith,* is both *imputed and inherent.*

P. 153. "MY Faith fixes on both the *meritorious Life and atoning Death of Christ.*" Here we clearly agree. Hold then to this, and never talk of the former without the latter. If you do, you cannot say, "Here we are exposed to no Hazard." Yes, you are to an exceeding great one: Even the Hazard of living and dying without Holiness. And then we are lost for ever.

THE Sixth Letter contains an admirable Account of the Earth and its Atmosphere, and comprizes Abundance of Sense in a narrow Compass, and exprest in beautiful Language.

P. 177. GEMS have "a Seat on the virtuous fair one's Breast." I can't reconcile this with St. Paul. He says, *Not with Pearls:* By a Parity of Reason, *Not with Diamonds.* But in all Things I perceive, you are too favourable, both to *the Desire of the Flesh* and *the Desire of the Eye.* You are a gentle Casuist as to every Self-indulgence which a plentiful Fortune can furnish.

P. 182. "OUR Saviour's Obedience"—O say, with the good, old Puritans, our Saviour's *Death* or *Merits.* We swarm with Antinomians on every Side. Why are you at such Pains to increase their Number?

P. 194. *My Mouth shall shew forth thy Righteousness and thy Salvation.*—Thy Mercy which brings my Salvation.

THE Eighth Letter is an excellent Description of the Supreme Greatness of *Christ*. I do not observe One Sentence in it, which I cannot cheerfully subscribe to.

THE Ninth Letter, containing a Description of the Sea, with various Inferences deduced therefrom, is likewise a Master-Piece, for Justness of Sentiment, as well as Beauty of Language. But I doubt whether, “mere *Skrimps*,” P. 241, be not too low an Expression: And whether you might not as well, have said nothing of “*Cod*, the standing Repast of *Lent* :” Or concerning “the exquisite Relish of *Turbot*, or the Deliciousness of *Sturgeon*.” Are not such Observations beneath the Dignity of a Minister of *Christ*? I have the same Doubt, concerning what is said (P. 264.) of “delicately flavour’d *Tea*, finely-scented *Coffee*; the *friendly Bowl*, the Pyramid of *Italian Figs*, and the *Pastacia-Nut* of *Aleppo*.” Beside that the mentioning these in such a Manner is a strong Encouragement of Luxury and Sensuality. And does the World need this? The *English* in particular?—*Si non insaniunt satis sua sponte, instiga.*

LETTER 10. P. 271. “Those Treasures which spring from the Imputation of *Christ’s Righteousness*.” Not a Word of his *atoning Blood*? Why do so many Men love to speak of his Righteousness, rather than his Atonement? I fear, because it affords a fairer Ex-
cuse

cause for their own Unrighteousness. To cut off this, is it not better, to mention both together? At least never to name the former without the latter?

P. 285. "FAITH is, a Persuasion that *Christ* has shed his Blood *for me*, and fulfill'd all Righteousness *in my Stead*." I can by no Means subscribe to this Definition. There are Hundreds, yea Thousands of true Believers, who never once thought, one Way or the other, of *Christ's* fulfilling all Righteousness *in their Stead*. I personally know many who to this very Hour have no Idea of it; and yet have each of them a Divine Evidence and Conviction, *Christ loved me, and gave Himself for me*. This is *St. Paul's* Account of Faith: And it is sufficient. He that *thus* believes is justified.

P. 287. "It is a *sure* Means of purifying the Heart, and *never fails* to work by Love." It *surely* purifies the Heart—if we *abide in it*; but not if we *draw back to Perdition*. It *never fails* to work by Love, while it continues; but if itself fail, farewell both Love and Good Works.

"FAITH is the Hand which receives all that is laid up in *Christ*." Consequently, if we *make Shipwreck of the Faith*, how much so ever is laid up in *Christ*, from that Hour we receive nothing.

LETTER II. P. 288. "FAITH in the *imputed Righteousness* of *Christ*, is a fundamental Principle in the Gospel." If so, what becomes of all those who think nothing about

imputed Righteousness? How many who are full of Faith and Love, if this be true, must perish everlastingly?

P. 297. "THY Hands must urge the Way of the deadly Weapon, thro' the shivering Flesh, till it be plunged in the throbbing Heart." Are not these Descriptions far too strong? May they not occasion unprofitable Reasonings in many Readers?

Ne puerum coram populo Medea trucidet.

P. 248. "How can he *justify* it to the World?" Not at all. Can this then *justify his Faith* to the World?

P. 304. "You take the certain Way to obtain Comfort, the Righteousness of *Jesus Christ*." What, without the Atonement? Strange Fondness for an unscriptural, dangerous *Mode of Expression!*

P. 306. "So the Merits of *Christ* are derived to all the Faithful." Rather the Fruits of the Spirit: Which are likewise plainly typified by the Oil in *Zechariah's* Vision.

P. 310. "HAS the Law any Demand? It must go to Him for Satisfaction." Suppose, "Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself." Then *I* am not obliged to love my Neighbour. *Christ* has satisfied the Demand of the Law *for me*. Is not this the very Quintessence of Antinomianism?

P. 311. "THE Righteousness wrought out by *Jesus Christ*, is wrought out for *all his People*, to be the Cause of *their* Justification, and the Purchase of their Salvation. *The Righteousness* is the Cause, the Purchase." So the

the

the *Death*. of *Christ* is not so much as named !
 “ For *all his People*.” But what becomes
 of *all other People* ? They *must inevitably* perish
 for ever. The Die was cast, or ever they
 were in Being. The Doctrine to *pass them*
by, has

Consign'd their unborn Souls to Hell,
 And damn'd them from their Mothers Womb!

I could sooner be a Turk, a Deist, yea an
 Atheist, than I could believe this. It is less
 absurd to deny the very Being of GOD, than
 to make Him an Almighty Tyrant.

P. 318. “ THE whole World and all its
 Seasons, are rich with our Creator's Goodness.
 His tender Mercies are over all his Works.”
 Are they over the Bulk of Mankind ? Where
 is his Goodness to the Non-Elect ? How are
 his tender Mercies over *Them* ? “ His Tem-
 poral Blessings are given *to them*.” But are
 they to them Blessings at all ? Are they not
 all Curses ? Does not GOD *know* they are ?
 That they will only increase their Damnation ?
 Does not He *design* they should ? And this
 you call *Goodness* ! This is *tender Mercy* !

P. 321. “ MAY we not discern pregnant
 Proofs of Goodness, in each individual Ob-
 ject ?” No ; on your Scheme not a Spark of
 it in this World or the next to the far greater
 Part of the Work of his own Hands !

P. 334. “ Is GOD a generous Benefactor
 to the meanest Animals, to the lowest Reptiles ?
 And will He deny my Friend what is necessary
 to his present Comfort, and his Final Accep-
 tance ?” Yea, will He deny it to any Soul

that he has made? Would *you* deny it to any; if it were in your Power?

But if you *lov'd* whom GOD abhorr'd
The Servant were above his LORD.

P. 337. THE *Wedding-Garment* here means Holiness.

P. 340. "THIS is his tender Complaint, They *will not come* unto Me!" Nay, that is not the Case; they *cannot*. He Himself has *decreed*, not to give them that Grace without which their Coming is impossible!

"THE Grand End which GOD proposes in all his favourable Dispensations to fallen Man, is to demonstrate the Sovereignty of his Grace." Not so: To impart Happiness to his Creatures, is his Grand End herein. "Barely to demonstrate his Sovereignty," is a Principle of Action fit for the great Turk, not the most High GOD.

P. 341. "GOD hath Pleasure in the Prosperity of his Servants. He is a boundless Ocean of Good." Nay, that Ocean is far from boundless, if it wholly passes by Nine-tenths of Mankind.

P. 342. "You cannot suppose GOD would enter into a fresh Covenant with a Rebel." I both suppose and know He did. "GOD made the New Covenant with *Christ*, and charged Him with the Performance of the Conditions." I deny both these Assertions, which are the Central Point wherein Calvinism and Antinomianism meet. "*I have made a Covenant with my Chosen.*"—Namely, with *David my Servant*. So GOD Himself explains it.

P. 362. "HE will wash you in the Blood which atones and invest you with the Righteousness which justifies." Why should you thus continually put asunder, what God has joined?

P. 440. "GOD Himself at the last Day pronounces them righteous, because they are interested in the Obedience of the Redeemer." Rather, because they are washed in his Blood, and renewed by his Spirit.

UPON the whole, I cannot but wish, that the Plan of these Dialogues had been executed in a different Manner. Most of the grand Truths of Christianity are herein both explained and proved with great Strength and Clearness. Why was any Thing intermixt, which could prevent any serious Christian's recommending them to all Mankind? Any Thing which must necessarily render them exceptionable, to so many Thousands of the Children of GOD? In practical Writings I studiously abstain from the very Shadow of Controversy. Nay, even in Controversial, I do not knowingly write one Line, to which any but my Opponent would object. For *Opinions* shall I destroy the Work of GOD? Then am I a Bigot indeed. Much more, if I would not drop any *Mode of Expression*, rather than offend either Jew or Gentile, or the Church of GOD. I am,

With great Sincerity,

Dear Sir,

Your affectionate Brother and Servant,

J. W.

I have

*I have but one Thing more to add, which is, concerning the Seasonableness of the following Publication. It may, perhaps, be thought a needless Revival of a Dispute, which happened long ago, and which is now probably forgotten. In answer to which, I can assure the Reader, that the above is printed from an Edition of the Preservative, now on Sale at the Foundery. The Seasonableness of this Publication, is therefore apparent; for though my Brother died December 25, 1758, the Controversy did by no Means die with him, but still subsists in the daily Publication and Sale of the Preservative, which also comes with a special * Recommendation from Mr. Wesley, into the Hands of all his Preachers, to be by them first “carefully read, then to be recommended and explained to the several Societies where they labour.” So that the Controversy is, in the most effectual Manner, daily and hourly kept alive by Mr. Wesley himself. This proves very sufficiently the Seasonableness, and, as Things have happened, the Expediency, of the present Appearance of the following Letters in Publick. How pertinent an Answer they contain to Mr. Wesley’s Objections, is now to be left to the Consideration of the candid Reader.*

Miles’s-Lane,
December 5, 1764:

W. HERVEY.

* See the last Paragraph of a Tract, intituled, *Reasons against a Separation from the Church of England.* Printed also in the *Preservative*, p. 237.



LETTERS

TO THE

Reverend Mr. JOHN WESLEY.



LETTER I.

REV. SIR,



Received the Letter you mention, containing Remarks on the Dialogues between *Theron* and *Aspasio*. As after a careful Perusal, I saw very little Reason to alter my Sentiments, I laid aside your Epistle without returning an Answer, in hopes that my Silence (which it seems you mistook for Obstinacy) would most emphatically speak my Advice; which, had it been expressed more plainly, would have been delivered in the Apostle's Words, *That ye study, or make it your Ambition, to be quiet* *.

B

Since

* 1 Thess. iv. 11. Φιλοτιμῆσθαι, a beautiful Word, rich with Meaning, and not adequately translated by *make it your Ambition*, still more inadequately by our common Version.

Since you have, by printing these Remarks, summoned me, though reluctant, to the Bar of the Public, it should seem, that I ought not to discredit *the Truth once delivered to the Saints*, by a timid Silence; and I am the more willing to answer for myself, as I have now the Privilege of an unprejudiced Judge, and an impartial Jury.—If my Defence should be lost on my Opponent, it may possibly make some useful Impressions on the Court, and candid Audience. However, I will not absolutely despair of convincing Mr. *Wesley* himself, because it is written, *Give Admonition to a wise Man, and he will yet be wiser**. On some very momentous and interesting Points, I may probably be a little more copious than the strict Laws of Argument demand, in order to exhibit some of the great Truths of the Gospel, in so *clear a Light*, that *he may run who readeth them*; in so *amiable and inviting a Light*, that the Believer may rejoice in them, and the Sinner may long for them. For such Digressions, I promise myself an easy Pardon, both from yourself and the Reader.

Thus you open the Debate: “ In the second “ Dialogue, is not the Description often too laboured, “ the Language too stiff and affected?” I must confess, Sir, this Animadversion seems to be as just, as the Praise which you have here, and elsewhere bestowed, appears to be lavish: The former, if not more pleasing, may be no less serviceable than the latter; for Both I acknowledge myself your Debtor, and if ever I attempt any Thing more in the Capacity of an Author,

I will

* Prov. ix. 9. The original Phrase is only *in give*, which may signify, *give Admonition*, as well as (what our Version has supposed) *Instruction*.

I will be sure to keep my Eye fixed on the Caution you have given.

I am sorry that the next Words bring on a Complaint, so close to my Acknowledgment. “ You cite “ the Pages according to the *Dublin* Edition, having “ wrote the rough Draught of what follows in “ *Ireland.*” But should you not, in Complaisance to your Readers on this Side the Water, have referred to the Pages of the *English* Edition? For want of such Reference, there is hardly Distinction enough, in some Places, to know which are your Words, and which are *Aspasio*’s.—Should you not also, in Justice to the Author, before you transcribed the rough Draught for the Press, have consulted the *last* Edition of his Work? Which you well knew was not the Copy, from which the *Irish* Impression was taken, yet might reasonably suppose to be the least inaccurate.

When I read your next Paragraph, I am struck with Reverence, I am ashamed and almost astonished, at the littleness of the preceding Observations: Stiffness of Style, and a Thousand such Trifles, what are they all compared with *Justification* before the infinite and immortal GOD? This is a Subject that commands our most awful Regard, a Blessing that should engage our whole Attention. As this is the grand Article to come under our Consideration, I would desire to maintain an incessant Dependence on the Divine SPIRIT, that my Thoughts may be influenced, and my Pen guided by the Wisdom which cometh from above; that I may neither pervert the Truth, by any erroneous Representations, nor dishonour it by an unchristian Temper. It would be easy to make use of bitter Satire,

and disdainful Irony, the contemptuous Sneer, or the indignant Frown.—And indeed, Sir, you have laid yourself open to every Attack of this Kind; but these are not the Weapons of a Christian's Warfare,

— — *Non Defensoribus istis,*

we are to give a Reason of the Hope that is in us, with *Meekness and Fear*; *Meekness*, with regard to those who interrogate or oppose us; *Fear*, with regard to HIM, whose Cause we plead, and whose Eye is ever upon us. “Is Justification, you say, more or less, than GOD's pardoning and accepting a Sinner, through the Merits of *CHRIST*?” I somewhat wonder, Sir, that you should ask this Question, when it is professedly answered by *Aspasio*, who has presented you with a very circumstantial Definition of Justification, explaining it, establishing it, and obviating several Objections advanced against it. If you would animadvert with Spirit and Force, or indeed to any considerable Purpose, should you not lay open the Impropriety of this Definition, shewing from Reason and Scripture, that it is neither accurate nor orthodox?

At Pages 49, 50, the Reader may see *Aspasio*'s Account of Justification, and find the Words Imputation and Righteousness of *CHRIST*, particularly explained. The latter denoting, “all the various Instances of his active and passive Obedience;” accordingly it is affirmed (Page 51) “The Punishment we deserved, he endures, the Obedience which we owed, he fulfils.”—What *Aspasio* here professes to understand by the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, the Reader is particularly requested to bear in his Memory, that he be not misled by

Mr. Wesley, who often forgets it, and complains when the Righteousness of *CHRIST* is mentioned, that his penal Sufferings are quite omitted. I would not wish, Sir, to have a plainer Proof, that you do not discard the active, than *Aspasio* has hereby given, that he never excludes the passive.

By your Question, you hint a Dislike, yet without informing us what it is, or wherein *Aspasio's* Illustrations and Proofs are deficient. You propose, and *only* propose, another Definition. Well then, to differ from you as little as possible, nay, to agree with you, as far as Truth will permit, since you are so loth to admit of our Representation, we will accede to yours; especially if it be somewhat explained, and a little improved. For indeed the Words, in their present Form, are rather too vague to constitute any Definition. *Pardoning* and *accepting* may happen to be only diversified Expressions of the same Idea. The *Merits of CHRIST* will certainly comport, either with *Popish*, or *Socinian* Notions. It abounds in Writers of the former Sort, and it is to be found in the latter. Therefore, to be more explicit—By *pardoning*, I mean *GOD's* acquitting a Sinner from Guilt of every Kind, and of every Degree. By *accepting*, I mean still more, *GOD's* receiving him into full Favour, considering and treating him as righteous, yea perfectly and gloriously righteous.—By the *Merits of CHRIST*, I would always be supposed to signify, his active and passive Obedience, all that he wrought, and all that he suffered, for the Salvation of Mankind *. Interested in all this, the Believer enters into the

* The *Merits of CHRIST* is certainly an ambiguous Phrase, and what I can by no Means admire; but as it

the Divine Presence, and stands before the Divine MAJESTY — Not like *David's* Ambassadors, stealing themselves into *Jericho*; safe indeed, but with the Marks of *Ammonitish* Insults on their Persons: He rather enters like that illustrious Exile, *Joseph*, into the Presence of *Pharaoh*, when his Prison Garments were taken from him, and he was arrayed in *Vestures of fine Linen*, meet for the Shoulders of those, who appear before Kings. With this Explanation I am content that *your* Definition take place of mine *. I would farther observe, that you have dropt the Word *imputed*, which inclines me to suspect, you would cashier the Thing. But let me ask, Sir, How can we be justified by the Merits of *CHRIST*, unless they are imputed to us? Would the Payment made by a Surety, procure a Discharge for the Debtor, unless it was placed to his Account? It is certain, the Sacrifices of old could not make an Atonement, unless they were imputed to each Offerer respectively. This was an Ordinance settled

occurs in Mr. *Wesley's* Letter, and in many valuable Writers, I have, led by their Example, used it in the following Debate, still understanding it, and still using it, in the Sense explained above.

* To gratify Mr. *Wesley*, I have admitted his Phrase, "The Merits of *CHRIST*," though as it is a Phrase of dubious Import, and what almost any Sect or Heresy will subscribe, I should much sooner choote to abide by *Aspasio's* Language. And why should we not all speak with the Scriptures? Why should we not use the Expressions of the Apostle? He says, *justified by the Blood of CHRIST*; he says, made righteous by the Obedience of *CHRIST*; when therefore we say, Sinners are pardoned and accepted through the Blood, and through the Obedience of *CHRIST*, we have a Warrant for our Doctrine, which is indisputable, and a Precedent for our Language, which is unexceptionable.

settled by JEHOVAH himself*. And were not the Sacrifices, was not their Imputation typical of *CHRIST*, and Things pertaining to *CHRIST*? The former prefiguring his all-sufficient Expiation, the latter shadowing forth the Way whereby we are Partakers of its Efficacy. The Righteousness (not the Righteousness and Obedience, *Aspasio* speaks otherwise) which *CHRIST* performed is reckoned by GOD as our own. This you call an ambiguous Expression, but, if considered in Conjunction with the foregoing and following Enlargements, I should think can hardly deserve the Charge. *Aspasio* all along labours to be understood. In this Place he more fully opens his Meaning by giving another View of the Nature, and by specifying the Effects of Imputation. The Nature,—it being the same as placing to our Account something not our own †. The Effects,—*CHRIST*'s Righteousness, thus placed to our Account, being as effectual for obtaining our Salvation, as if it was our own personal Qualification ‡. To the latter you expressly agree, to the former you make no Objection: To the whole Doctrine, thus explained, you elsewhere declare your Assent.

B 4

If

* Lev. vii. 18. *If any of the Flesh of the Sacrifice of his Peace-Offerings, be eaten at all on the third Day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it. It shall not be accepted, Why? for this Reason, because it shall not be imputed. A plain Indication, that the latter is the Cause of the former. That without Imputation, whether it be of the typical or real Sacrifice, the Blood of the Beast, or the Death of CHRIST, there is no Acceptance.*

† *Theron and Aspasio*, p. 50.‡ *Ibid.* p. 53.

If in all this we may depend upon you, Sir, must we not feel an alarming Shock at your Adjuration in the next Paragraph?

“ For *CHRIST*'s Sake do not.” What? surely nothing less can excite or justify this vehement Exclamation, but the Obtrusion of some Doctrine, that is most glaringly false and absolutely damnable. Shall we have such a solemn Firing, such a Thunder of Explosion, only to silence a particular Phrase? In another Person this would look like profane Levity; in Mr. *Wesley*, the softest Appellation we can give it, is idle Pomp—All this Clamour merely against Words! Words too, the Explication of which, and the Doctrine contained in them, yourself allow. Dear Sir, what is a Word or a Phrase? Can it do either Good or Harm, but as conveying right or wrong Sentiments? Will the mere pronouncing or hearing of a Word (be it *Abracadabra*, or *Higgajon Selah*, or *Imputed*) without its Idea, poison the Principles of Men, and induce them to work *all Uncleanness with Greediness*? As you have been firing without an Enemy (*Aspasio* is owned for an Ally) so you seem to be triumphing without a Victory. *Aspasio*'s Charity for those who are disgusted at the Expression, and have no explicit Knowledge of the Doctrine, is guarded by the Words immediately following—“ Yet live under the Belief “ of the Truth, and in the Exercise of the Duty,” as well as by the annexed Description of the Persons, and their Temper; who are far enough from fancying, that if they may but be pardoned for the Sake of *CHRIST*, they can obtain the Divine Favour, and a Title to future Happiness, by their own good Behaviour. Hence it will appear, that he has been too cautious,

cautious, to part with the very Thing for which he is contending. And this is more abundantly evident, from the Close of his charitable Paragraph, wherein, though he allows such People to be safe; yet he laments their Embarrass, and their Deficiency in Light, Strength, and Consolation. “The Phrase is not scriptural.” Suppose it were not, this would afford but a slight Reason, for so passionate an Outcry: However, this is certain, St. Paul uses the Phrase, *GOD imputeth**, and *that Righteousness might be imputed* †. Now, is it possible, that there should be Righteousness imputed, yet not an imputed Righteousness? To assert this must argue either a wonderful subtil Refinement, or an exceeding strong Prejudice. “It is not necessary.”—Perhaps so. But is it not necessary Mr. Wesley should either inform us, what Sense of the Phrase it is, which he apprehends so likely to mislead Men, or else, instead of exclaiming against *Aspasio*, should join all his Force with him, in defending that Sense which they both espouse? “It has done immense Hurt.”—When we are made sensible of the immense, or indeed of any real, hurt done by the Phrase, *imputed*; when we see those who dislike it, cordially warm for the Sentiment expressed in other Words, we will then consent to resign it for its Equivalent, *reckoned as our own*,—*placed to our Account*,—*as effectual as if our own personal Qualification*. Till then we must guard the Casket for the Sake of the Jewel. We prefer the Word *imputed*, because it says more at once, than any other Term we know, and because we are aware of a common Practice used in all Ages, by the Opposers of sound Doctrine.

* Rom. iv. 6.

† Rom. iv. 11.

Doctrine. They pretend a Zeal only against the Phrase, that by bringing *this* into Disuse, they may cause *that* to be forgotten. Shall we not then dispute for *imputed* Righteousness? Yes, Sir, we must dispute, both for the Doctrine and for the Phrase, since there are Persons who openly strike at the one, and we fear with a View to supplant the other. Shall we not dispute for *imputed* Righteousness—though the Words are a grand Peculiarity of the Scriptures, and the Thing the very Spirit and Essence of the Gospel? Not dispute for that which is better to us Sinners than all Worlds, better than our Hearts could wish, or our Thoughts conceive; which in short is the best, the noblest, the completest Gift, that GOD himself can bestow!

When such a Gift, and such a Righteousness is the Subject of Disputation, we must not give Place, no, *not for an Hour*; we must maintain its matchless Excellency, so long as we have any Breath, or any Being. We must say in direct Opposition to your fervent but unadvised Zeal, “*For CHRIST’S Sake,*” let us contend earnestly for imputed Righteousness; because it is the brightest Jewel in His mediatorial Crown. “*For the Sake of immortal Souls,*” let us hold fast and hold forth this precious Truth; because it yields the strongest Consolation to the guilty Conscience, and furnishes the most endearing, as well as the most prevailing Inducement to universal Obedience.

“To ascribe Pardon to *CHRIST’S passive*, eternal Life to his *active* Obedience, is fanciful rather than judicious.” The Remark is just; not so the Quotation; *Aspasio* is somewhat disfigured by your Distortion of his Features; he limps a little, by your Dislocation of a Limb.

a Limb. There is in his Language, Guard enough to check every Attempt, either to dissolve the Union, or sever the Coagency, of the different Parts of our LORD's Righteousness.

But let us give *Aspasio* a fair Hearing, thus he expresses himself, "To divide them (the *active* and *passive* Righteousness) into detached Portions, independent on each other, seems to be fanciful rather than judicious." To divide into detached Portions, is more than to distinguish between the one and the other. The latter *Aspasio* practises, the former he disavows. "Independent of each other"—do these Words stand for nothing? Have they no Meaning, that here you shew them no Regard, and never recollect them throughout your whole Epistle? Had you honoured them with any Degree of Notice, several of your Objections must have been precluded, and if the more candid Reader pleases to bear them in Memory, several of your Objections, will at the very first View, fall to the Ground. Besides, the Person who tells us, the Case *seems* to be so, is not so peremptory, as he who roundly affirms it to *be* so; the former is all that *Aspasio* has advanced. Though I am willing that you should correct his Style, yet I must beg of you, Sir, not to make him quite so positive; let him have the Satisfaction of being modest, even where he has the Misfortune, in your Opinion at least, to be erroneous.

"CHRIST's universal Obedience from his Birth to his Death, is the one Foundation of my Hope," says *Aspasio*. To which you assent, and with a laudable Vehemence, reply, "This is unquestionably right." I wish, Sir, you would ponder your

Words

Words before you speak, at least before you print, that there may be something fixed and certain, on which *we* may depend, and by which *you* will abide. One would think, after this Acknowledgment, pronounced with such an Air of Solemnity, you could never so far forget yourself, as to open your Mouth against the Obedience, the universal Obedience of *CHRIST*, which surely must include both what he *wrought*, and what he *suffered*. You confess it to be your *Foundation*,—the Foundation of your *Hope*, the *only* Foundation of your Hope; can you then, without the most amazing Inconsistency, either wish to secrete the Doctrine, or offer to discountenance the Expression?

“ There is no Manner of Need to make the Imputation of *CHRIST*'s active Righteousness a “ separate Head of Discourse.” —No Manner of Need, even though you declare, that this active Righteousness, together with the expiatory Death, is the only Foundation of your Hope! Can you think it possible to treat of *such* a Topic too particularly, too distinctly, too minutely?—*Aspasio* has shewn the Need, or assigned the Reason for this Method of handling the Subject; because it sets the Fulness of our *LORD*'s Merit in the clearest Light, and gives the completest Honour to *GOD*'s holy Law. Have you alledged any Thing to disprove, or so much as to invalidate his Plea? Ought not this to have been done before your Assertion can be valid, or even decent?

Besides, are there not Persons in the World, who fondly imagine, that if they can but have Pardon through *CHRIST*, they shall by their own Doings secure eternal Life? When such Persons are in
Danger

Danger of overlooking the active Obedience of the REDEEMER, why should you not for their Sakes allow us to make the Imputation of his Righteousness “a separate Head of Discourse?” That, seeing the transcendent Perfection of *CHRIST*'s Work, they may cease from confiding in their own *, left it be said to them another Day, *I will declare thy Righteousness, and thy Works, that for the grand Purpose of Justification, they shall not profit thee †.*

We must therefore take leave to dwell upon the active Righteousness of our LORD; we must display its Perfection, in Opposition to all the vain Pretensions of human Qualifications, Endeavours, or Attainments; we must demonstrate that as the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so is this Divine Obedience higher than all the Works of the Children of Men. Yea, so transcendent in itself, and absolutely perfect, as to be incapable of any Augmentation. All the good Deeds of all the Saints, could they be added to it, would not increase in any Degree its justifying Efficacy; it is like all the other Works of GOD, concerning which we are told, *nothing can be added to them.* This brings to my Remembrance a most beautiful, and sublime Representation, which you must have read in the Evangelical Prophet, *Every Valley shall be exalted, and every Mountain and Hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough Places plain, and the Glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all Flesh shall see it together.* Here Mountains are demolished, Valleys are elevated, and the Earth is levelled into a spacious Plain on Purpose to accomplish what Mr. Wesley supposes unnecessary; on Purpose to give the most clear, full, striking

* Heb. iv. 10.

† Isa. Ivii. 12.

striking View of the great REDEEMER, of his wonderful Person, and glorious Work; that he alone may be distinguished and exalted; may walk majestic and conspicuous through the Midst of Mankind, as being singly and completely sufficient for the Recovery of Sinners. That all Flesh, not Jews only, but Gentiles also; not Men of Reputation only, but the meanest of Mortals, the most infamous of Wretches, may together see his Glory, may on equal Ground, without any Pre-eminence of one above another, contemplate and partake of his precious Death and perfect Righteousness, which are the one Object of divine Complacency, and the sovereign Glory of the LORD REDEEMER. According to the Import of this magnificent Piece of Imagery, all the Differences that subsist between one Man and another are abolished; nothing but *CHRIST* and his complete Work are proposed, as the Cause of Justification and the Ground of Hope. Faith beholds nothing but the Divine *JESUS*; it never enquires, What have I done? What have I suffered? But what has that most illustrious Personage done, and what suffered? What has *JEHOVAH* manifested in our Nature, wrought for the Benefit and Redemption of Sinners?—Faith is never weary of viewing or reviewing either the active or passive Obedience of *IMMANUEL*. Faith will declare, that neither of these Points can be set forth in too strong or too recommending a Light. Faith is ever desiring to see more and more of the SAVIOUR's Worthiness, that the Soul may rejoice in his Excellency, and be filled with all his Fullness.

May you, Dear Sir, abound in this Faith, and live under such Views of *GOD* our SAVIOUR;
then

then I flatter myself you will be dissatisfied with your present Opinion, and not be disgusted at the Freedom of Speech, used by

Your's, &c.



L E T T E R II.

REV. SIR,

I Am particularly pleased at my Entrance on this Epistle, because it presents me with a View of Mr. *Wesley* in very good Humour. Instead of rebuking, he commends. He puts off the Frown of Censure, for the Smile of Approbation. I hope to follow the amiable Example. To approve and applaud, wherever Opportunity offers, and Truth permits. And though I shall be sometimes obliged to oppose or refute; yet, I shall do both with all the Tenderness and Lenity, which may consist with a proper Vindication of the Truth.

“ The third and fourth Dialogues contain an admirable Illustration and Confirmation of the great Doctrine of *CHRIST*'s Satisfaction.”— This is generously acknowledged. Yet even here it so unhappily falls out, that Complaisance gets the Start of Judgment. Did you advert, Sir, to the State of the Controversy, or see the Consequence of *Aspasio*'s Arguing, you must either give up a favourite Tenet, or else dissent from his Doctrine.

Aspasio

Aspasio maintains, that *CHRIST*'s Sufferings were Punishment; real, proper Punishment. Now could *CHRIST*, an innocent Person, be punished, without bearing Sin; the very Sin of others? Could *CHRIST*, a Divine Person, bear the Sin of others, and not do it perfectly away! Or can they, whose Guilt was punished in *CHRIST*, and whose Sin is perfectly done away by *CHRIST*, can they perish eternally? But I forbear. Yourself, and the judicious Reader will easily apprehend my Meaning, and discern the Point, to which these Questions lead. All the Benefit I propose by this Remark, is, to convince Mr. *Wesley*, that he is not incapable of a Mistake—That he has tripped a little, in what he *commends*, and therefore may possibly make a false Step, in what he *condemns*.

Unless I may be allowed to propose this additional Advantage, the rectifying an Impropriety in some People's Apprehensions, concerning our LORD's vicarious Sufferings. It is usual to say, "He bore the Punishment, not the Guilt; the Penalty, not the Fault." Which seems to be a Distinction, more scrupulous than judicious. Answers no other End, but that of derogating from our REDEEMER's Grace, and weakening the Foundation of our Hopes.

The Guilt of Sin, I take to be what the Apostle calls, *anomia*, the Transgression of the Law. From hence arises the Obligation to Punishment. This Guilt, our LORD *so truly* bore, that he was no less liable to the Arrest of Justice, and the Infliction of Vengeance, than if he himself had committed the most enormous Crimes.—*He bare*, says the HOLY GHOST, *the Sin of many*. But Punishment cannot

not be reckoned the same as Sin, any more than Wages can be accounted the same as Work. If then our LORD bore Sin itself, he must bear every Thing criminal, that is included in it; no Circumstance of Demerit or Aggravation excepted.

He bore the *Fault*, therefore he makes us without Fault in the Sight of GOD; and will present us faultless before the Throne, with exceeding Joy.—He bore the *Guilt*—Therefore our LORD's Sufferings were real Punishment, justly inflicted by the supreme JUDGE, and, on Principles of Justice, discharge us from all Punishment whatever. He bore the *Filth*,—therefore he felt, what those wretched Souls endure, who die in their Iniquities; his eternal FATHER forsook him, and hid his Face from him as from an abominable Object.

This renders our SAVIOUR's Propitiation, great, wonderful, glorious. Seeing this, believing this, we have nothing to fear. Conscience is satisfied, and the Accuser of the Brethren is silenced. Nothing can be laid to our Charge by the righteous Law, and nothing remains to awaken the Indignation of the righteous JUDGE.—Whereas, if this was not done, we have Reason to be terribly apprehensive. If *CHRIST* bore not the Guilt, then Sinners must bear it in their own Persons; if he took not away the Filth; then it must lie on Transgressors, and render them loathsome for ever. If the Fault was not transferred to him, then it must abide upon us, and be our everlasting Ruin.

Neither does this Doctrine in any Degree detract from our SAVIOUR's Dignity. It rather gives Him the Honour due unto His Name, *JESUS*. As in the Scales of a Balance, the lower the one

descends, the higher the other mounts, so the deeper our MEDIATOR's Humiliation sinks, to the more exalted Height does His Glory rise. The more horrible the Condition to which he submitted, the more illustriously His Goodness shines, and the more clearly the Perfection of His Work appears.

Satisfaction was made to the Divine Law, says *Aspasio*. "I do not remember any such Expression in Scripture," replies Mr. *Wesley*.—But do you not remember this Expression in the Epistle to the *Galatians*, *CHRIST was made under the Law**? Why was He made under the Law, but to fulfil its Precepts, and undergo its Penalty? and is not this a Satisfaction to its Demands?

The Truth is, the Divine Law was violated by our Sins. It was absolutely impossible for us to make any Reparation, therefore *CHRIST* in our Nature and in our Stead submitted to its Obligations, that he might magnify its injured Authority, and render it in the highest Degree venerable: Might make even its tremendous Sanctions and rigorous Requirements, the very Basis of Grace, Mercy, and Peace.—Divinely noble Contrivance! Unspeakably precious Expedient! By this Means, Vengeance and Forbearance have met together; Wrath and Love have kissed each other, in the Redemption of Sinners. The Law says, I am fulfilled. Justice says, I am

* *Gal. iv. 4.* There is, I think, something uncouth in this Expression, *Made under the Law*. Γενομεν^ς 'tis true very well comports with both the Clauses, εκ γυναι^ς & υπο νομον. But in the *English* Translation, the Participle might, not ungracefully, be varied, perhaps in some such Manner; the *Son of GOD was made of a Woman, and became subject to the Law*.

I am satisfied. While both concur to expedite and ascertain the Salvation of a Believer.

“ This Way of speaking of the Law, as a Person injured, and to be satisfied, seems hardly defensible.” Does not the Apostle speak of the Law as a Person? A Person that *liveth* *, to whom some are married, and to whom others are *dead*? *Aspasio* will always think himself, and his Manner of speaking sufficiently defensible, so long as he has the Apostolical Practice for his Precedent.

Having such a Precedent he wants no other; otherwise he might plead the Authority of Mr. *John Wesley*; who in his Explanatory Notes on the *New Testament*, says—“ The Law is here spoken of (by a common Figure) as a *Person*, to which as to an Husband, Life and Death are ascribed †.” And if the Law be an Husband, may not an Husband be injured? May not an injured Husband insist upon being satisfied?

“ All the Benefits of the new Covenant are the Purchase of *CHRIST*'s Blood,” this is *Aspasio*'s Belief. To this you assent, “ *Surely they are.*”—With Pleasure I should receive your Suffrage, was I not afraid that this is your Meaning; they are *so* the Purchase of His Blood, as not to have any Dependence on, or any Connection with, his most perfect Obedience. I was alarmed by the Close of your last Paragraph, and my Suspicions are increased by the following negative Interrogation; “ after this has
C 2 “ been

* *Rom.* vii. 1, 4. The Word ζῆν at the End of the first Verse is spoken of the *Law*, not of the *Man*, as Mr. *Wesley* and others have very justly observed. It should therefore be translated not *He*, but *It*.

† See Explan. Notes, *Rom.* vii. 1.

“ been fully proved, where is the Need, where is
 “ the Use of contending so strenuously, for the Im-
 “ putation of His Righteousness?”

Aspasio has informed you, Sir, in the second Dialogue. He has there shewn the Advantage of unfolding, circumstantially and copiously, this momentous Truth.—To give you farther Satisfaction, he has quoted the Words of an eminent Divine, of which the following are a Part,—“ Whoever rejects
 “ the Doctrine of the Imputation of our SAVI-
 “ OUR’S Righteousness to Man, does, by so do-
 “ ing, reject the Imputation of Man’s Sin to our
 “ SAVIOUR, and all the Consequences of it.”—If you are not satisfied with Mr. *Staynoe’s* Reasons, you are remitted to St. *Paul*. In *Rom. v.* (a Chapter of distinguished Dignity and Importance) he teaches Mankind that *CHRIST* died for the Ungodly; that we are justified through His *Blood*, are saved from Wrath by His *Death*. After all this had been fully proved, where was the Need, where was the Use of insisting largely upon that Obedience of ONE by which many are made * Righteous? Or upon that Righteousness of ONE, which is imputed to many for Justification of Life? Yet this the inspired Writer evidently does.

Answer the foregoing Question, in Behalf of the Apostle, and you will answer it in Behalf of *Aspasio*. Or if you decline the Office, give me leave, Sir, to answer it on Behalf of them both. The Blood of *CHRIST* is never considered as independent on, or detached from, the Righteousness of *CHRIST*. They united their blessed Efficacy in accomplishing the Work of our Redemption; we always look upon
 them

* Rom. v. 19.

them as a grand and glorious Aggregate, in their Agency inseparable, though in Meditation distinguishable. Being thus distinguishable, at proper Times, we meditate upon each distinctly. We display each with all the Particularity possible, and cannot but contend for the Imputation of one, as well of the other. The farther we dig into either of these spiritual Mines, the greater Fund of Treasures we discover. The more we glorify the SAVIOUR, the more we strengthen Faith, and the greater Addition we make to our Comfort, our Peace, our Joy.

Aspasio enquires; if *CHRIST* was our Substitute as to penal Suffering, why not as to justifying Obedience? You reply—"the former is expressly asserted in Scripture, the latter is not expressly asserted there." A small Inaccuracy here; Sir! the former is no more a Scripture Expression, than the latter; while the latter is no less the Doctrine and Sense of Scripture than the former.—A little Piece of Forgetfulness likewise! Since you just now acknowledged, that "*CHRIST*'s universal Obedience was the *one* Foundation of your Hope." But how can His Obedience be any Foundation of your Hope, if in this Capacity he was not your Substitute? Take away the Circumstance of Substitution, and there is no more Ground for your Reliance on the Obedience of *CHRIST*, than for your Reliance on the Obedience of *Gabriel*. *We are made the Righteousness of GOD*, because we are *IN Him*, as our Proxy and our Head. Because he wrought the justifying Righteousness, not only in our Nature, but in our Name, not only as our Benefactor, but as our Representative.

“ As Sin and Misery have abounded through the
 “ first *Adam*, Mercy and Grace have much more
 “ abounded through the second. So that now none
 “ have Reason to complain.” Here indeed we have
Aspasio’s Words, but in a patched and disfigured
 Condition. One Part taken from Page 195, and ano-
 ther wrenched from Page 191. Let any one read the
 whole of those Passages, and judge whether they can
 be fairly applied to the Doctrines of Election or Pre-
 destination. Yet Mr. *Wesley* is resolved at all Adven-
 tures, with or without Occasion, to introduce these
 Subjects of deep and perplexed Disputation. There-
 fore he replies, “ No, not if the second *Adam* died
 “ for all, otherwise all for whom He did not die,
 “ have great Reason to complain.”

Here, Sir, do you not force an Inference from
Aspasio’s Words, foreign to his Design? He is speak-
 ing of those who betake themselves to *CHRIST*,
 and are recovered through his Righteousness. Such
 Persons he particularly mentions. Of such alone he
 discourses; without considering the Case of others,
 who, despising, or neglecting the REDEEMER, re-
 ject the Counsel of GOD against themselves.—Would
 it not be as edifying to the Reader, and as agreeable
 to your Office, if you should join with *Aspasio* in
 displaying the free, superabundant, infinitely rich
 Grace of our GOD; altogether as becoming this, as
 to divert his Aim, and retard his Steps, when he is
 pressing forwards to this Prize of our high calling in
CHRIST JESUS?

Aspasio’s Words are, “ When we betake our-
 “ selves to *CHRIST JESUS*, we shall find, that,
 “ as Sin and Misery have abounded, &c.” Please
 to observe, Sir, how he limits his Discourse, conse-
 quently

quently is obliged to defend nothing, but what corresponds with such Limitation.

Had the *Israelites* any Cause to be dissatisfied with the Provision, made for their Sustenance and their Cure, when the Serpent of Brass was lifted up on the Pole, and when the Bread from Heaven lay round about their Tents? No more have Sinners any Cause to think themselves aggrieved, when the Salvation of GOD is evidently set before them in the Gospel; is brought to their very Door, in the preaching of the Word, and they are allowed, importuned, commanded to receive it by Faith. This is enough for me. Enough this for any Transgressors, who want, not to gratify Curiosity, but to inherit Life.—If they, or you, Sir, chuse to pry further, and to intrude into the Divine Secrets, I must leave you to yourselves; saying, as I depart, *The secret Things belong unto the LORD our GOD; but those Things which are revealed, belong unto us and our Children* *.

“The whole World of Believers.”—“This is an Expression which never occurs in Scripture.”—It affords me a kind of presumptive Proof, that, solid Objections are not at Hand, when such Shadows are lifted into the Service.—I should be under no Pain if you could prove your Charge, beyond all Contradiction. To what would it amount? Why, that *Aspasio* having Occasion to mention a certain Topic, happened not to make Use of the very Syllables and Letters made Use of in Scripture. And do you or I, Sir, in all our Sermons, Journals, Preservatives, and Christian Libraries, undertake to use none but scriptural Expressions? Had we done this,

one benefit might indeed have accrued to the Public. It would considerably have reduced our Volumes.— But I trifle as well as Mr. *Wesley*. You proceed to enforce your Remonstrance, by adding,—“ Neither
“ has the Expression any Countenance from Scrip-
“ ture.” I am really ashamed to detain our Readers any longer upon so trivial a Point. Therefore what I am going to reply, is only a Word to yourself. You, Sir, can tell who it is that affirms in a certain Hymn;

*For ev'ry Man
It's finish'd it's past—
The World is forgiv'n
For JESUS's Sake.*

The World forgiven! What, all the World? Every Child of *Adam*? They who believe not on *CHRIST* and die in their Sins? This you cannot mean; this you dare not assert; this, I think, no Mortal can suppose. You yourself therefore, by “the World,” must intend “the believing World;” and are you offended at *Aspasio* for commenting on your Text? For expressing plainly what is implied in your own Words?

In the LORD shall all the House of Israel be justified. This Text *Aspasio* quotes, and acquiesces in the common Version, upon which you animadvert. “It
“ ought unquestionably to be rendered *by or through*
“ the LORD.” How hard is *Aspasio's* Lot! If he does not use the exact Language of Scripture, he is criminal at your Bar, witness the preceding Objection; if he does use the exact Language of Scripture, as in the present Instance, you indite him for an errone-

ous Translation. So that it is next to impossible to escape your Censure.

In the LORD, you affirm is not the pure Language of Scripture, it is a wrong Translation, “and ought unquestionably to be rendered by or through the LORD.” Yet, *Quisquis adhuc unopartam colit asse Minervam*—Whoever has learnt Hebrew no more than a Month, will assure our English Reader, that the Prefix \aleph is the very first Word in the Bible. Must it there be translated by or through the Beginning?—If our young Scholar have only his Psalter, he can shew the same Particle occurring three Times within the first Verse. In the Counsel—In the Way—In the Seat.—Twice in the second Verse; *His Delight is in the Law*—In His Law will he exercise himself. Three Times more in the Remainder of the Psalm, *Shall bring forth Fruit in his Season*—*Shall not stand in Judgment*. Neither in the Congregation of the Righteous.—Now let the English Reader judge for himself, whether the Hebrew Prefix must “unquestionably be rendered” in all these Places “by or through.” By or through his Season! By or through the Congregation! But I stop, there is no Need to apply all the Passages. Neither is there any Need of critical Skill in Languages, to determine concerning any one of them. Common Sense in this Case is sufficiently qualified to be our Critic and our Arbitrator.—I only wish Sir, you had produced the Evidence for the corrected Version. Then the Public might have seen on which Side the Balance were likely to turn; and which were the most cogent Logic, “*Aspasio's* Doctrine is false, therefore the Translation is wrong;” or

“ or the Translation is fair, therefore his Doctrine
“ is true.”

By this Time, I believe, the *unlearned Reader* will begin to discern, what Degree of Credit is due to your Criticisms upon the Original, and to your Alteration of the common Version, when they are supported by nothing more, than your bare Assertion.—I also begin to be apprehensive that our canvassing the Sense of Words, and sifting the dead Languages, will be no very agreeable Entertainment to *any* Reader. I will therefore for the future be more concise in the Execution of this Business; especially as I have here given a Specimen of what might be done. I will try, if it is not possible, to animate what would otherwise be dull, and to blend godly edifying, with critical Disquisition.

Ye are complete in him. With this Translation also Mr. Wesley finds Fault. “ The Words literally rendered are, ye are filled with him.”—I am ready to grant, that Places may be found, where the Preposition *εν* must be understood according to your Sense. But then every one knows that this is not the native, obvious, literal Meaning; rather a Meaning swayed, influenced, moulded by the preceding or following Word. The literal Signification of *εν αυτω* is as we have rendered it.—Nor is there the least Occasion to depart from the received Interpretation, it is suitable to the Context, and to the Scope of the whole Epistle.

However, we will suppose your Criticism to be just. Does this destroy or enervate *Aspasio's* Argument? Would you have one Meaning contradict or supplant the other? “ Ye are filled *with* him, therefore “ ye are not complete *in* him?” Does the former
Sense

Sense include or imply the latter? Can you, or I, or any one be filled with every Requisite for our Recovery and Happiness, yet not be complete? It seems therefore, you get nothing by this Criticism, but the Satisfaction of doing Violence to the Phrase, without any Improvement of the Sense, or any Advantage to your Cause.

“The whole Passage (you affirm) relates to Sanctification, not to Justification.” Where is your Proof, Sir? This we always expect. This Mr. *Wesley* seldom, if ever, condescends to give. “Yes, he says, “any unprejudiced Reader may observe it.” A strange Kind of Proof! reducible to no Figure in Logic, unless there be a Figure stiled *Presumption*. Was I to answer for the unprejudiced Reader, I think he would observe the very reverse. The Words of the Apostle are not a little forcible against your Sense of the Passage, as will appear from the transitive Adverb *also*. The next and the subsequent Verses, we allow, relate to Sanctification: If this Verse does the same, such is the Manner of the Apostle’s Reasoning, “In whom ye are sanctified, “in whom also ye are sanctified.” Whereas if the first Clause denotes the Justification of the *Colossian* Converts through the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, if the following Periods describe their Sanctification, as a Consequence of this most happily operating Privilege, then the Reasoning is just, and the Transition graceful. “In Him ye are completely justified, in “Him also ye are truly sanctified.”

The whole Passage is calculated to teach us that *CHRIST* is the *Fulness of our Sufficiency*. In Him, and Him in alone, there is enough to answer all the Purposes of Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification,
and

and Redemption.—It is intended likewise to admonish us, that we should rest satisfied with Him alone, in Opposition to all the fond Inventions of Men; who would introduce something else for the Ground of our Confidence, and the Cause of our Consolation, as though it was said;—

If indeed our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* had been an ordinary Person, or merely a created Being, ye might well be offended at my Doctrine. Ye might then with some colour of Reason seek to the Maxims of Philosophy for Wisdom, or to the Works of the Law for Righteousness. But *CHRIST* is an immensely glorious Person, for *in Him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge.*—*CHRIST* is an incomparably exalted Sovereign—for *He is the Head of all Principalities and Powers.*—Yea, *CHRIST* is the supreme incomprehensible *JEHOVAH*; for *in Him dwelleth all the Fulness of the GODHEAD bodily.* Being therefore transplanted into Him by Faith, ye are complete. Partakers of Him; ye have every Blessing and all Good. Thought cannot imagine, nor Desire crave, any Thing farther, greater, higher.

Matchless Privilege! Exalted Felicity! O may the Knowledge, the experimental Knowledge of it, fill our Hearts as *the Waters cover the Abyfs of the Sea!* Then will we sing the Hymn which once expressed your Sentiments, and still expresses mine.

* *Join Earth and Heav'n to bless
The LORD our Righteousness.*

The

* See p. 56. of *Hymns and spiritual Sings.* Anonymous indeed, but universally ascribed to Mr. *Wesley.* In these excellent

*The Mystery of Redemption this,
This the SAVIOUR's strange Design;
Man's Offence was counted His,
Ours his Righteousness divine.*

*In Him complete we shine,
His Death, his Life is mine:
Fully am I justified,
Free from Sin, and more than free,
Guiltless, since for me He died,
Righteous, since He liv'd for me.*

The Text lately quoted from *Isaiah*, is Part of a Paragraph eminent for its Dignity and Usefulness. We then considered a Fragment of it in a critical View; let us now examine the whole of it with a devotional Spirit. Thus examined, I trust it will be no longer a dry Bone, but a *Feast of fat Things full of Marrow*. Permit me to propose a correct Translation of the Original; to add a short Illustration of the Meaning, and then take my Leave for the present.

Look

excellent Lines, how strongly marked are the Sentiments of the Gospel! Our Offences so fully imputed to *CHRIST*, as to be accounted His. His Righteousness so fully imputed to us, as to be accounted Ours. In Him we are *complete*, because His most obedient Life, and his all-atoning Death are ours. We are guiltless, not through our Repentance, or Reformation, but because he has died for us. We are righteous, not on Account of any Graces or Attainments of our own, but because he has lived for us. To these Truths I most cordially subscribe. This is that good old Wine that once made Mr. *Wesley's* Heart glad. He has since tasted new; but I hope he will be brought to say, "*The old is better.*"

Look unto me and be saved all the Ends of the Earth, for I am GOD, and there is nought else*. By myself have I sworn, the Word of † Righteousness goeth out of my Mouth, the Word shall not return. To me every Knee shall bow, and every Tongue shall swear ‡, saying, surely § in the LORD have I Righteousness || and Strength.

* None else—עַד אֵין exactly rendered, signifies there is not besides. Not any Person, nor any Thing. No Person able to lend an helping Hand. No Thing capable of yielding the least Assistance.

† The Word of Righteousness, צְדָקָה דְבַר I apprehend is equivalent to St. Paul's λογος Δικαιοσυνης, and signifies, if not the whole Gospel, that precious Doctrine, which is the Gospel in Epitome. For the Vindication of this Version, see *Vitringa in loc.*

‡ Shall swear. Our Translation seems to discontinue the divine Speech here; which weakens the Force and diminishes the Dignity of the Passage. I apprehend JEHOVAH is still speaking, and in the following Words, prescribes the Form of the Confession, or dictates the Words of the Oath, in which Sinners shall testify their Allegiance—even the Allegiance of Faith. Agreeably to this Supposition, I would translate the Word אָמַר saying. It will then denote not one, or a few, but every Tongue mentioned in the foregoing Verse. לִשׁוֹן I am aware is of the feminine Gender, but every Reader knows how often the *Hebrews* neglect the Nicety of grammatical Construction, and every Reader sees that the Idea of שׂוֹא or of a Person, is comprehended in the Word Tongue.

§ The Prophet's אָמַר surely, is something like the Apostle's ἀλλὰ μενῆρυγε, yea, doubtless, *Phil.* iii. 8. The HOLY GHOS T teaches Believers to speak with Vehemence upon this Point, to signify their stedfast and resolute Affiance in the glorious REDEEMER, together with the mighty and matchless Importance of this Faith. I have taken in this Idea because it is suggested by the *English* Translation, though I prefer the *exclusive* Sense, only; as implying an absolute and total Renunciation of every other Confidence.

|| Righteousness. This is the precise Signification of

צְדָקָה

Strength. To Him shall Men come, and all that are offended in Him, shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the Seed of Israel be justified, and in Him shall they glory.

Here the SON of GOD presents himself in all the Glories of His Person, and all the Riches of His Grace. Presents himself, as the Object of Faith, and the Author of Salvation. To be received by Sinners, without any recommending Qualities, or any Pre-eminence of one above another.—But hear his gracious Words.

Look unto me, wretched ruined Transgressors, as the wounded Israelites looked unto the brazen Serpent. Look unto me dying on the Cross as your Victim, and obeying the Law as your Surety.—Not by doing, but by looking and believing; not by your own Deeds, but by my Works, and my Sufferings, be ye saved. This is the mysterious but certain Way of Salvation. Thus shall ye be delivered from Guilt, rescued from Hell, and reconciled to GOD. Who are invited to partake of this inestimable Benefit? *All the Ends of the Earth.* People of every Nation under Heaven; of every Station in Life; of every Condition and every Character, not excepting the chiefest of Sinners.

Is it possible that the Obedience of *one*, should save innumerable Millions? It is not only possible but indubitable. *For I am GOD* infinite in Dignity and Power; therefore all-sufficient, yea omnipotent to save. To save all that come unto me; be the
Multitudes

צדקה which being in the plural Number, seems to denote *Completeness*. A Righteousness, perfect, entire, and lacking nothing. Having every Thing necessary for our Pardon, our Acceptance, our everlasting Justification.

Multitudes ever so great, or their Cases ever so desperate.—(Is nothing to be done by Transgressors themselves? Are no Conditions to be fulfilled on their Part?) None—*there is nought beside me.* No Person can take any Share in this great Transaction. Nothing can in the least Degree co-operate with my Merits. Should you add to my Obedience and Death, all that Saints have performed, and Martyrs have endured, it would be like adding a Grain to the Sands of the Ocean, or a Moment to the Days of Eternity.

Such is my compassionate Invitation, and this my inviolable Decree. *I have* not only spoken, but *sworn*; sworn by myself and all my incomprehensible Excellencies. *The Word of Righteousness*, that which relates to the grandest of all Subjects, and most important of all Interests, is planned, adjusted, and unalterably determined. Now even now *it goes out of my Mouth*, is declared with the utmost Solemnity, and established by Veracity itself. The Word shall not return, either to be repealed by me, or frustrated by any other.—What is the Decree confirmed by this most awful Oath? We are all Attention to hear it. *To me every Knee shall bow.* Every Soul of Man, who desires to inherit eternal Life, shall submit to my Righteousness, and as an unworthy Creature, as an obnoxious Criminal, obtain the Blessing wholly through my Atonement.—*To me every Tongue shall swear.* Be Man's supposed Virtues ever so various, or ever so splendid, all shall be disclaimed, and my Worthiness alone shall stand. Renouncing every other Trust, they shall repose the Confidence of their Souls on me alone, and make public Confession of this their Faith before the whole World.—But we,
O LORD,

O LORD, are ignorant, we cannot order our Speech by reason of Darknefs.—This then shall be the Form of your Oath, such the Tenour of your Confession.

Surely—It is a most wonderful, yet a most faithful Saying, extremely comfortable and equally certain. *Only*—not in myself, not in a poor frail Creature, but *in* the incarnate JEHOVAH alone, in his divinely excellent Deeds, and unutterably meritorious Sufferings, *I have Righteousness*, a Righteousness without Spot, without Defect, and in all Respects consummate: Such as satisfies every Requirement of the Law, and most thoroughly expiates all my Iniquities. Such as renders me completely accepted before my Judge, and intitles me to everlasting Life. From the joyful Knowledge, the personal Appropriation; and the perpetual Improvement of this inestimable Privilege, I have *Strength* for my Sanctification. Now do I indeed delight myself in the LORD, who perfectly reconciled, and infinitely gracious, has done so great Things for me. Now do I cordially love my Neighbour, and being so happy myself, unfeignedly long for his eternal Happiness, that he may be a Partaker with me of this great Salvation.

To this Sovereign Decree, the Prophet sets, as it were, his Seal, or else, in a Transport of Joy, he foretells the Accomplishment of it. Yes, my Brethren, *to Him*, even to this gracious REDEEMER *shall Men come*. I see them flying as Clouds for Multitude, as Doves for Speed. They believe the Report of His Gospel, and receive of His Fullness.—Whereas, *all they that are offended in Him*, that cannot away with his Doctrine, which pours Contempt upon all human Excellency, and will allow no Righteousness

teousness to avail but that which is divine; who refuse to come unto Him, poor, and miserable, and stript of every Recommendation; all they *shall be ashamed*. The Fig-Leaves of their own Duties, or their own Endowments, shall neither adorn them for Glory, nor screen them from Wrath—but shall abandon them to Vengeance, and cover them with double Confusion. While on the other Hand, *all the Seed of Israel*, every true Believer, shall be justified in the LORD. Against these Persons no Accusation shall be valid: No Condemnation shall take Place: So magnificent is the Majesty, so surpassingly efficacious are the Merits of their SAVIOUR, that in Him they shall not only confide, *but glory*; not only be safe, but triumphant; cloathed with His incomparable Righteousness, they shall challenge every Adversary, and defy every Danger.

To this Portion of Scripture I have led back your Thoughts, that I might not close with any disgusting Sentiments, but might leave a sweet Savour on your Mind, on the Reader's Mind, and on the Mind of

Rev. Sir,

Your's, &c.



LETTER III.

REV. SIR,

LET me, now, resume my Observations on your Epistle. Which I do, not for the Sake of disputing, but for the Cause of Truth.

The

The Gospel contains many sublime and glorious Truths. But there is *one*, which, beyond all others, characterizes its Nature, its Import, and Design. Which makes it most eminently to differ from every other Form of Religion, professed or known in the World. I mean the Doctrine of *free Justification*, through the Righteousness of *CHRIST*. This is to the Religion of *JESUS*, what the particular Features and Turns of Countenance, are to each individual Person.

I have sometimes amused myself, with standing by a Painter, and observing him at his Work. Here, I have been surprised to see, how much a very little Stroke would alter the Aspect of his Draught; would turn the gay into a melancholy, or the composed into a frantic Countenance. Several of Mr. *Wesley's* Touches are to Appearance small; but, I fear, they will be found to disfigure more than a little the heavenly Pourtrait; and give a new, not the native, Air, to *the Truth as it is in JESUS*.—But I proceed; my Business being, to prove, not to blame.

Sinners, who betake themselves to the all-sufficient SAVIOUR for Redemption, are fully accepted by GOD, for his beloved SON's Sake. This is Justification through imputed Righteousness, says *Aspasio*.—"That remains to be proved," answers Mr. *Wesley*.—I think, it is pretty largely, and I would hope, it is satisfactorily proved, through the whole Book.—Nay; I find Mr. *Wesley* himself ere long acknowledging, that, "as to the Doctrine, we "are agreed." Either therefore you have received the Proof, which you demand; or else you can submit without Conviction, and agree without Cause of

Agreement.—Not to take Advantage of such Slips, I would rather enlarge upon what may be useful.

I would ask Mr. *Wesley*; in what other Way Sinners can be justified or accepted, save only through imputed Righteousness?—Through their own good *Deeds*, and holy *Tempers*? This supposes the Fruits to be good, while the Tree is corrupt; and would make Salvation to be of Works, not of Grace.—Through their *own Faith*, standing in the Law? Then they are justified before a perfect GOD, by an imperfect Endowment; and Life eternal is obtained, by the Exercises of their own Mind, not by the Merits of *JESUS CHRIST*.—Are they justified *without any* Righteousness, either wrought by themselves, or received * from another? This is an unworthy Thought; this were an unsufferable Practice; *JEHOVAH* himself being Judge. *He that justifieth the Wicked is an Abomination* †.

Say not; GOD is a free Agent, and not bound to observe his own Law. Say rather; The Rule of Righteousness revealed in the Law, is his most steadfast Will; unchangeable as his Nature.—Consider also; What this Law requires. A Satisfaction for Sin, not defective, but completely sufficient; a Performance

* Οἱ λαμβανόντες, *They who receive the Gift of Righteousness.* Rom. v. 17.

† *Prov.* xvii. 15. This is an invariable Maxim. It is that Word of GOD, which endureth for ever. Yet it is no Objection to *his* Method of justifying the Ungodly. Because, He first imputes his SON'S Righteousness unto them: Thereby renders them truly and perfectly righteous: Then pronounces them such; and as such, receives them to Pardon, to Favour, and eternal Life.—Does not the Text, thus considered, afford an incontestable Argument for the Necessity of an imputed Righteousness?

formance of the Command, not sincere only, but absolutely perfect.—Will GOD, in justifying a Sinner, disregard, contradict, overthrow his own Law? In no wise. Since then it insists upon, what no Mortal can yield, must not all Flesh perish for ever?

This would be the unavoidable Consequence, if Matters rested on human Abilities. But here the blessed Gospel comes to our Relief. Shewing us, that GOD, in his immense Mercy, and unsearchable Wisdom, has found out a Way, at once, to satisfy the unalterable Law, and save insolvent Man. To justify even the chief of Sinners; yet without the least Violation of Justice, Truth, or Holiness.—What is this Way? His own SON accomplishes the great Work.—How? By relaxing the Precepts of the Law, that we may perform them? By annulling the Sentence of the Law, that we may escape it? Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before any such dishonourable Expedient takes Place. On the contrary; He gives Satisfaction to the Sentence, by suffering the tremendous Punishment denounced; and He fulfils the Precept, by yielding the sinless Obedience required.—Because this was to be finished in the Nature, which had transgressed, therefore He was made Man. Because this was to be truly, or rather infinitely meritorious, therefore the Man was one Person with the GODHEAD.

Still it may be enquired; How the Obedience of Another can relieve my Distress? How indeed! But by GOD's transferring my Guilt to Him, and imputing his Obedience to me. By this Method, the Thing is clearly and completely effected. In this Method, I see a Propriety and an Efficacy, that silence my Doubts, and comfort my Heart. Ac-

cordingly, it is written, in the Scriptures; *GOD was in CHRIST reconciling the World unto Himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them.* GOD; the Work was too arduous, to be performed by a created Agent. Therefore GOD himself was in *CHRIST*. None less than the Almighty LORD could execute the Business. But if HE undertake it, how successfully must it be carried on, and how gloriously finished!—*Reconciling the World*; not setting poor Transgressors to reconcile themselves, but Himself contriving all, providing all, doing and suffering all, that was needful for this great Purpose. Being Himself the Creditor, the Sponsor, and Payer of the Debt.—How was all this brought to pass? By *not imputing our Trespases unto Us*; but taking them all upon Himself; bearing them all, in his own Body, upon the Tree; and sustaining the Vengeance, due to all our Crimes.—Thus was the Holy ONE and the Just *made Sin for Us*; that *We*, sinful Dust and Ashes, *might*, in the very same Manner, *be made the Righteousness of GOD in Him*. The former could be only by Imputation; and so only can be the latter.

If Men talk of being accepted for *CHRIST'S* Sake, yet reject the Imputation of Righteousness, they must have very inadequate Notions, concerning the Relation which *CHRIST* bears to his People, and the Nature of his mediatorial Undertaking.—Does this seem obscure? I explain myself.—A Person may conduct himself so honourably and excellently, as, on Account of his worthy Deeds, to obtain Favour in Behalf of another. And this, without being his Surety, or any Thing like his proper Righteousness. Witness the famous Instance of the two Brothers, *Amyntas* and *Æschylus*. The former,

former, was a gallant Hero; who exposed his Life, and lost his Arm, in the Defence of his Country. The latter, was an abandoned and infamous Profligate; whose Crimes had brought him to the Bar of public Justice. The Hero, on the Day of Trial, appeared as an Advocate for his Brother. He spoke nothing, but only lifted up to View the maimed and dismembered Arm. This silent Oratory struck the Assembly; and pleaded so powerfully, that the Criminal was unanimously acquitted.—Here was an Acquittal of one, in Consideration of the Merits of another. But then the obnoxious Party had no special Interest in those Merits. They were not acquired or exercised, with a particular Reference to his Good. He could not say, They are mine. Neither did they make him, in any Degree, or in any Sense, righteous.—Whereas, the Reverse of all this is true, with regard to *JESUS CHRIST*, and justified Sinners. This you and I, Sir, have asserted. Let us never retract the good Confession. But, as it is the Truth of the Gospel, let us still and for ever say,

In HIM complete we shine,

Because

Ours is Righteousness divine.

Theron, speaking of the Terms *inherent* and *imputed*, calls them nice Distinctions and metaphysical Subtilities. *Mr. Wesley* makes *Aspasio* apply the depreiating Remark to the active and passive Righteousness of *CHRIST*. Whereas, he says no such Thing. He means no such Thing. He is treating of a Subject totally different. And was he to maintain such a Sentiment, every one must observe, it would entirely overthrow his whole Scheme.

“ You oblige us to make use of metaphysical Sub-
 “ tilities by confounding these very different Ideas,
 “ that is, *CHRIST*'s active and passive Righte-
 “ ousness.”—I could hardly believe my Eyes, for
 some Time; though both of them attested, that this
 was produced as a Quotation from pag. 202, 203.
 In which Pages, and for a considerable Space, before
 and after, the Subject of Debate is the Difference be-
 tween inherent and imputed Righteousness.—I was,
 I own, quite vexed, to see *Aspasio* so mal-treated; ;
 his Discourse so misrepresented; and so little Regard
 paid to literary Justice. And glad I am, that I did
 not give Vent to my Thoughts, just at that Instant.
 I might have been too warm, and not have spared
 the Rod. But upon cooler Consideration, I began
 to recover, and the Prescription of *Horace* was of
 Service,

Amara lento temperat Risu.

I began to call your Conduct, not Artifice or
 Slight of Hand, but Incogitancy or Thought mis-
 applied. As you had been thinking so long upon
 the other Topic, it dwelt upon your Imagination;
 kept this from your Attention; and led you both to
 mistake and to miscall Things. Like a certain
 Preacher, who having lost his Fortune in the Bub-
 bles of the Year 19, and having Occasion to men-
 tion the Deliverance of the *Israelites* from *Egypt*,
 told his Audience, That *Pharaoh* and his Host, were
 all drowned in the *South Sea*—Poor Man! He
 meant the *red Sea*.

Mr. *Wesley* proceeds: “ We do not confound the
 “ active and passive Righteousness.”—Does *Aspasio*,
 Sir? He that considers them particularly and distinct-
 ly?

ly? He that examines each with a critical and minute Exactness? If this be to confound, Order and Confusion have changed their Nature.

“ Neither do we separate them.” It is somewhat difficult to understand, what you mean by separating the active and passive Righteousness of our LORD.— Separating them, as to their Influence? Then you must be sensible, this is never done by *Aspassio*. You cannot but know, that he disclaims such a Refinement. He protests against such a Practice.—Do you mean, treating them as Things really distinct, though always uniting their Agency? Then I am at a Loss to reconcile Mr. *Wesley* with himself. For in the very next Paragraph, he thus expresses himself. “ Through the Merits of his Life and Death, every “ Believer is justified.” Are not the Merits of his Life here *distinguished* from the Merits of his Death? Does not the former Expression denote his active, the latter his passive Obedience? Or would you be understood to mean? “ Through the Merits of his “ Life, which are nothing else but the Merits of his “ Death.” If you would not speak in this Manner, so unworthy of your better Judgment, you do the very Thing which you blame.—This is done still more apparently, in one of your Hymns. Where we see, not only a Separation, but a distinct Use and Application of the separated Subjects.

*Grant this, O LORD; for thou hast dy'd,
That I might be forgiven:
Thou hast the Righteousness supply'd,
For which I merit Heaven.*

I could easily excuse Mr. *Wesley*, for being a little inconsistent with himself; did he not also venture to

confront the Apostle, by the following Assertion. “Neither have we any Authority from Scripture, “for either thinking or speaking of one separate “from the other.”—Does not St. *Paul*, in one Passage, speak of the Obedience? In another, of the Death of *CHRIST*? Does he not, in one Place, enlarge upon the Righteousness? In another upon the Blood of *CHRIST*? If so, we have an Authority from Scripture, we have the Example of the chiefest Apostle, for this Way of thinking and speaking.

We have also a concurrent Testimony from the Genius and Import of the original Language. Do not *πραξον* and *δικαιοσυνη* signify somewhat different from *αμα* and *βαρβλος*? Are there any approved Writers, who use these Words promiscuously? as so many synonymous and convertible Terms? If not, the Voice of Grammar will vindicate the Propriety of our Conduct, while we assign a separate Discourse to each Subject, and exhibit them severally in the most distinct View.

Are not Light and Heat always united in the Sun? Is the Naturalist to blame, who considers them distinctly; and examines each Property, in a separate Treatise? You would commend this Practice in the Philosopher, as the Way to enter thoroughly into the Knowledge of his Subject. And why should you explode or censure it, in the Christian Divine? Are not theological Truths as worthy of a circumstantial and accurate Investigation, as philosophical? Will they not as amply reward our Diligence, and yield as rich Advantage to the serious Enquirer?

The Righteousness which justifies Sinners, is already wrought out, says *Aspasio*.—“A crude, unscriptural
“tural

“ tural Expression,” replies Mr. *Wesley*.—It may be so. But if the Expression is plain and true, I will sit down content. This, however, you will allow me to observe; that it is no new one, and is not far from scriptural. *Worketh Righteousness*, you know, is a scriptural Phrase. Does the Word *out* spoil it, or the Word *already*? I suppose, the latter may be most offensive. Yet you speak, in this very Paragraph, of being “ justified by the Merits of “ *CHRIST*’s Life and Death.” Are not these Matters already transacted? Is not the Merit of them already perfect? Or can any Language express these Things more clearly, and affirm them more strongly, than those emphatical Words in one of your own Hymns?

*Let us for this Faith contend,
 Sure Salvation is its End :
 Heav’n already is begun,
 Everlasting Life is won.*

Pardon me then, Sir, if I still suspect, that the Doctrine and its Consequences, rather than the Expression and its Crudity, awaken your Jealousy. If this Doctrine be admitted, if the justifying Righteousness be already wrought, it must absolutely overturn all your Pre-requisites, Qualifications, and Conditions; Conditions of Repentance, Obedience, and I know not what besides. We must say to every one of them, as *Jehu* said to the Messengers of *Joram*: *What hast thou to do with the grand Article of Justification? Get thee behind me. Could they be fulfilled, they would come a Day too late; like the Sickle, when the Harvest is reaped. Could they be*

fulfilled

fulfilled in *all* their imaginary Dignity, they would, in this Relation, be needless; like a Proposal for augmenting the Splendour of the Sun.

“ The Righteousness, which justifies sinful Man,
 “ was set on Foot, when GOD sent forth his SON,
 “ from the Habitation of his Holiness and Glory,
 “ to be born of a Woman, and made subject to the
 “ Law.—It was carried on, through the whole
 “ Course of our SAVIOUR’s Life; in which
 “ He always did such Things, as were pleasing to
 “ his heavenly FATHER.—It was completed, at
 “ that ever memorable, that grand Period, when
 “ the blessed IMMANUEL bowed his dying Head;
 “ and cried, with a strong triumphant Voice, IT IS
 “ FINISHED.”—Upon this Extract from *Aspasio’s*
 Discourse, Mr. *Wesley* exclaims, “ O vain Philoso-
 “ phy!”—Philosophy! *This* Philosophy, Sir! Never
 did I hear, till this Moment, such Doctrines ascribed
 to Philosophy. But this I have heard, and this I
 believe; that *the World*, even the learned and philo-
 sophic World, by their boasted *Wisdom knew not*
 GOD; nor GOD’s Method of Salvation, by the
 Sufferings of an innocent, and the Obedience of a
 divine Person. Their Philosophy prejudiced them
 against it; puffed them up with a vain Conceit of
 their own Sufficiency; and set them at the greatest
 Distance from submitting to the Righteousness of
 GOD.

I wish, Sir, you would shew me, in which of the
 Philosophers I might find these sacred Sentiments;
 or a Grain, or a Spice, or a Savour of them. I
 have, for a considerable Time, laid aside my *Plato*,
 and have no more Inclination to turn over my *Se-
 neca*; because I can see nothing like this divinely
 precious

precious Truth, adorning and enriching their Pages. But if you will discover this golden Vein in their Works, I will immediately renew my Acquaintance with them; and will do the Philosophers a Piece of Justice, which Mr. *Wesley* denies them. I will not call their Philosophy vain, but *the Wisdom of GOD, and the Power of GOD.*—A Righteousness wrought out, and a Redemption obtained for us! The former divine! The latter eternal! These, rightly understood, make us beyond all the Treasures of Literature, *wise*. These, habitually enjoyed, will, more effectually than all the Delineations of Morality or Exhortations to Virtue, render us *holy*.

A divine Righteousness (pardon me for dwelling on my favourite Topic) already wrought! A great Redemption perfectly finished! And this by the Abasement, the Ignominy, the Indignities; by the Cries, the Agonies, the Blood of our SAVIOUR. Yea, of our GOD, *in Fashion as a Man*; in the Form of a Servant, a Slave, an execrable Malefactor.—What, like this, did a thousand Philosophers teach? What, like this, do a thousand of their Volumes contain? To stab our Pride; to tame our Fury; and to quench our Lust? To kindle our Benevolence; to inflame our Devotion; to make us, in a Word, *wise unto Salvation*?

“ The plain Truth is, *CHRIST* lived and “ tasted Death for every Man.”—To be sure then, since every Man is not saved by Him, He lived and died only to make their Salvation possible.—From this and other Hints, I guess your Opinion to be, that *CHRIST*, by his Life and Death, obtained only a Possibility of Salvation. [Which Salvation is to become our own, upon performing Terms and

Con-

Conditions, bringing with us Pre-requisites and Qualifications.]—If I mistake you, Sir, in this Case, you have nothing more to do, than simply to deny my Supposition. This exculpates you at once. I shall rejoice to hear you say; “As *CHRIST* “made us, and not we ourselves; in like Manner “He saves us, and not we ourselves. No human Endowments, no human Performances, but *CHRIST* “alone is *the Author of eternal Salvation.*”

Should you reply, true—*CHRIST* is the Author of eternal Salvation, but *to those only who obey Him.*—I must then ask; What Obedience *CHRIST* requires? The Law says, “Do, and live.” *CHRIST*, the End of the Law, says; “Believe in ME, and “live. Be verily persuaded, that I am sufficient for “thy Salvation, without any Working of thine at “all. Is not the SON, the SON of the most “high GOD, given unto thee in the divine Record? “Be satisfied with *his* Doing and Suffering, without “wishing for, or thinking of, any Thing more, to “procure thy final Acceptance?”—Let no one account lightly of this Obedience. It is the Obedience of Faith. The Obedience suited to the Name *JESUS*. Obedience to the first and great Command of the Gospel. Beyond all other Expedients, it excludes Boasting; and, at the same Time, produces that genuine Love, that filial Fear, which the Law of Works requires in vain.

Only to make a Thing possible, and to effect it, are widely different. When our King fits out a Fleet, and gives his Admiral a Commission, to harass the *French* Coasts, and destroy the *French* Shipping, he makes the Thing possible. But to carry this Design into Execution; to accomplish the Enterprize,

terprize, now become practicable; is a far more arduous Task, and a far more honourable Atchievement. How strangely do those Writers derogate from the Dignity and Glory of the REDEEMER; who would ascribe to Him, what corresponds with the former; and attribute to Man, what bears a Resemblance to the latter!

If *CHRIST* only made our Salvation possible, then *we* are to execute the Plan. We are to face the Enemy, to sustain the Charge, and silence the Battery: We are to climb the Steep, to enter the Breach, and bring off the Standards. And so, in all Reason, the Honour and Praise must be our own.—Whereas, the Gospel gives all the Honour to the Captain of our Salvation. He bore the Heat and Burthen of the dreadful Day. He made Reconciliation for Iniquity, and brought in everlasting Righteousness. So that all our officious Attempts, like a Pinnacle arriving after the Victory, should be told, *It is finished*; the great Salvation is already wrought. And instead of being dissatisfied or disappointed, methinks, we should rejoice, unfeignedly rejoice, in the Accomplishment of the glorious Work.

If it should occur to the Reader's Mind, that the Christian Life is represented as a Warfare; and that we ourselves are commanded to fight, though under the Banner of our divine Leader; to this Doubt I would answer—*The Canaanite is still in the Land*; and we fight, not to gain the Country, but only to subdue the Rebels.

“Whoever perverts so glorious a Doctrine, shews he never believed.”—This may be the Substance of what *Aspasio* maintains. Though not represented

so fully or so clearly, as he has expressed himself. However, such a small Wrong we will readily excuse. It was done with no sinister Intention, but for the Sake of Brevity.

To this Position Mr. *Wesley* replies; “Not so.”—That is; they did really and truly believe. But after their Belief, they apostatized, and fell from the Faith. They were, some Time, the Members of *CHRIST*, and Temples of the *HOLY GHOST*; but, quickly severed from their divine Head, they became the Slaves of the Devil, and Brands for the everlasting Burning. Their Names were, indeed, written in Heaven. But it seems, the heavenly Records were less faithful than the Parish Register. They were quickly erased, and their Place in the Book of Life knew them no more.

Or thus—They did as really and truly believe, as those who are now in the Mansions of Glory. But, after their true *Knowledge of the Name of the LORD JESUS*; after their full Conviction of his Sufficiency and Faithfulness for their Salvation; even such as inclined and enabled them, to *put their Trust in Him alone*, for their Acceptance with *GOD*; they were disappointed. Though *CHRIST* called them *his Sheep*, as thus *bearing his Voice*; yet He did not *give unto them eternal Life*, according to his Promise. But suffered Satan to *pluck them out of his Hand*.

These Sentiments have no very probable, much less have they a pleasing or recommending Aspect. Let us enquire, whether they comport with St. *John's* Determination of the Case, Speaking of such Backsliders, he says, *They went out from us, but they were not of us*. Mr. *Wesley*, to be consistent with himself, should say on this Occasion; “Not so; they were
of

“ of you, but they fell away from you.”—The Apostle proceeds; *For, if they had been of us, no Doubt, they would have continued with us.* Had they been really converted, they would most undoubtedly have continued in our Doctrine and Fellowship. Their Revolt from our *Doctrine*, is a manifest Proof, that they never truly received it, nor with their Heart believed it. Their Departure from our *Fellowship*, is an evident Indication, that they were, notwithstanding all their Professions, still carnal, and never renewed by Grace.

Mr. *Wesley* produces a Text from *St. Peter*, with a View to support his Objection. They who *turn back as a Dog to his Vomit, had once escaped the Pollutions of the World, through the Knowledge of CHRIST.* Here and elsewhere I perceive the Cannon roar, but without feeling the Ball. Before this Piece of sacred Artillery can be brought to bear upon us, it will be necessary to prove, that the Knowledge of *CHRIST*, or even believing in *CHRIST*, always signifies true Faith. In some Places, it certainly does. In other Places, it signifies no such Thing. *Though I have all Knowledge,* says the Apostle; yet even with this specious Endowment I may be *nothing*. There is a Knowledge, says the same Author; which, instead of *edifying*, or establishing the Soul in Godliness, *puffeth up* with Pride. We are likewise assured, that *Simon* the Sorcerer, though in the Gall of Bitterness and in the Bond of Iniquity, yet had *Knowledge of the Things, which concerned the Kingdom of GOD, and the Name of JESUS CHRIST*; nay, that *he also* believed, yet had neither Lot nor Portion in the inestimable Blessing.

Let us attend to the Apostle's Manner, and we shall be led to put the same Interpretation upon the Phrase, as it is used in the Passage before us.—These People are not described, like the true Believers, to whom he addresses the Epistle. Here is no mention of their being *Partakers of a divine Nature*; of being *born again by the incorruptible Seed*; or of having their *Souls purified by the SPIRIT*. They are only said to have escaped the Pollutions of the World.—Again; the Word expressive of these Pollutions is *μιασμαία*, which denotes the grossest Excesses, and most scandalous Iniquities. Consequently, their abstaining from such Abominations, implies no more than what is called a negative Goodness, or a mere external Reformation. Their Lusts had been restrained only, not subdued. Therefore the unhappy Wretches were easily overcome by their old Corruptions.—It is farther observable, that St. *Peter* never considers these Persons as new Creatures. He calls them by no other Name, than the *Dog* and the *Sow*. Such they were, at first; no better, under all their Profession of Christianity; and no other, even in their foulest Relapses. When they returned again to their Vomit, or their filthy Practices, they returned to their own.

There is, then, a Knowledge of *CHRIST*, which is only superficial and notional; floats idly on the Understanding, but neither penetrates, nor sanctifies the Heart. There is also a Knowledge of *CHRIST*, which is wrought by the *SPIRIT*, and engrafted into the Soul; which receives the Gift of Righteousness, and brings Justification into the Conscience. The Comfort and Joy of which, mortify the Love of Sin, and produce the Life of Holiness.

This

This Knowledge, Sir, may you and I teach; in this Knowledge may our Hearers and Readers abound; and may the *divine* Power give us, by Means of this Knowledge, all Things pertaining to Life and Godliness!

The Goodness of GOD leadeth to Repentance.—

“ This is unquestionably true, says Mr. *Wesley*.
 “ But the nice metaphysical Doctrine of imputed
 “ Righteousness.”—Should you not rather have said,
 The nice metaphysical *Phrase*? Since, as to the
Doctrine, we are, according to your own Confession,
 agreed. Bound therefore, each of us, equally bound
 to clear it of the Consequences, with which it may
 be charged, by the Author of the *Preservative*, or by
 any other Objector.—And as to the *Phrase*, I cannot
 understand, by what Authority Mr. *Wesley* calls it
metaphysical. *Theron*, it is true, uses the Word, and
 applies it to the present Subject. But does not
 Mr. *Wesley* know, that *Theron* often personates an
 Enemy, and speaks the Language of Unbelief?—
 Be pleased Sir, to explain your Term; and shew,
 in what Sense it is compatible with this Article of
 my Faith? “ I am acquitted and counted righteous
 “ before GOD, only through the Imputation of
 “ my SAVIOUR’S Obedience and Death?” Which
 is, both in Style and Sentiment, tru’y evangelical;
 but, in no Degree, that I can discern, metaphysical.

When Mr. *Wesley* adds; “ This leads not to
 “ Repentance, but to Licentiousness;” he speaks
 what we understand, not what we allow.—Will
 any one say, That speculative Reasoning upon the
 Goodness of GOD, or contemplating it barely in
 our Ideas, leadeth to Repentance? But, when we
 taste and enjoy, when we apply and appropriate, his

profusely rich Liberality in *CHRIST*; we are thereby prompted to neglect, abuse, and dishonour our great Benefactor? Or shall it be said? The divine Goodness, manifested in common Providence and inferior Instances, tends to awaken Love and work Godliness. But the same divine Goodness, shining forth in the most illustrious Manifestation, that Men or Angels ever knew; shining forth with a Glory, a Richness, a Perfection, sufficient to transport Heaven and Earth with Joy unspeakable: *This* Goodness tends to excite Contempt of *GOD*, and to cherish carnal Indulgence? Such an Insinuation, so depreciatory to the Righteousness of the blessed *JESUS*, I had much rather have heard in a *Jewish* Synagogue, than have seen in Mr. *Wesley's* Writings.

No, Sir; this and this alone leadeth a *Sinner* to Repentance. Not all the Munificence of the *DEITY*; neither the Rain from Heaven, nor fruitful Seasons; neither the Fatness of the Earth, nor the Abundance of the Seas; can take away the Enmity of our Nature, and reconcile our Affections to *GOD*. Nothing, nothing but a Sense of Pardon and Acceptance, through the Work finished on *IMMANUEL's* Cross.—If you please to review the Text, you will not affirm, that the Apostle is asserting the efficacious Influence of providential Goodness on the Hearts of Men. He is evidently inveighing against the gross and almost general Abuse of such Bounty. Though it ought, it does not produce Gratitude and Duty. It would indeed upon upright, but it does not thus operate upon depraved Minds. No Cause is adequate to this Effect, but free Justification through *JESUS CHRIST*.

“ The Believer cannot but add to his Faith, “ Works of Righteousness.”—“ During his first “ Love, says Mr. *Wesley*, this is often true. But it “ is not true afterwards, as we know and feel by “ melancholy Experience.”—How, Sir! Do you yourself feel this? Where then is your sinless Perfection? Can they be perfect, whose Love ceases to glow, and whose Zeal loses its Activity? Does Mr. *Wesley* himself make this Confession? Let him then say with us—And let us say, with invariable Stedfastness, and with increasing Gratitude—Blessed be GOD for Perfection in *JESUS CHRIST!*

Do you learn, Sir, what is here acknowledged, by Observations made upon others? Then those others, I apprehend, if they do not exercise themselves in good Works, either have no Faith, and deceive both you and themselves—Or else they intermit and discontinue the Exertion of their Faith. Which neither detracts from the Efficacy of the Principle, nor disproves *Aspasio's* Opinion. It is not said; The Believer never trips, nor falters in the Course of his Obedience; but, he always adds to his Faith, the Duties and Works of Obedience. Whenever the former acts, the latter constantly ensue. So long as we live by the Faith of the SON of GOD, we shall not fail to bring forth those Fruits of Righteousness, which are through *JESUS CHRIST.*

This is strongly maintained, by *Aspasio*, in another Place. “ It is as impossible for the Sun to be “ in his Meridian Height, and not dissipate Dark- “ ness, or diffuse Light; as for Faith to exist in “ the Soul, and not exalt the Temper, and melio- “ rate the Conduct.”—This is very forcibly implied, in our LORD's Interrogation to his Disciples;

Where is your Faith? It must be dormant and inactive, like the Sap of the Trees in Winter, or like the Faculty of Reasoning in Sleep. Otherwise, it would banish your Fears, even amidst the raging Storm; and produce an undaunted Confidence in GOD your SAVIOUR.—The Design of all this, is, to evince the Wisdom of the Gospel, which lays such a Stress upon Faith; so frequently urges the Necessity of Faith, above and before all Things; representing it, as the principal Work of the divine SPIRIT, and the great Instrument of receiving Salvation. Hence it appears, that the sacred Plan is not formed in vain; much less is it calculated to suppress or discourage real Holiness.

“ We no longer obey, in order to lay the Foundation for our final Acceptance.” These Words I read with Pleasure.—“ That Foundation is already laid in the Merits of *CHRIST*.” These I contemplate with still greater Satisfaction.—But when I come to the following Clause, “ Yet we obey, in order to our final Acceptance through his Merits,” with Disappointment and Regret I cry; How is the Gold become dim! How is the most fine Gold changed!

A Foundation, *for what?* *Aspasio* would reply; For Pardon, for Reconciliation, and for everlasting Salvation. For Peace of Conscience, for Access to GOD, for every spiritual and eternal Blessing.—A Foundation, of *what Kind?* In all Respects perfect; incapable of any Augmentation; not to be strengthened, enlarged, or improved by all the Duties and all the Deeds of Prophets, Apostles, Martyrs. Because it has Omnipotence for its Establishment.—A Foundation, *for whom?* For Sinners; for the

the vilest and most miserable of Sinners. That all guilty and undone Wretches may come; and though ever so weary, ever so heavy laden, may cast their Burthen upon this Rock of Ages; in full Assurance of finding Rest, and obtaining Safety.

This is chearing; this is charming. What Pity it is, that such an illustrious Truth should be clouded, such a precious Privilege spoiled, by that ungracious Sentence! “We obey in order to our final Acceptance.”—But is this, Sir, your constant Profession? I must do you the Justice to own, that you have happier Moments, and more becoming Apprehensions.—When you join in public Worship, this is your humble and just Acknowledgment; “Although we be unworthy, through our manifold Sins, to offer unto Thee any Sacrifice; yet we beseech Thee to accept this our bounden Duty and Service.”—When you criticise upon *Aspasio*, the Note is changed, and this is the Purport of your Strain; “We beseech Thee to accept us, on Account of these our Services; for we do them, O LORD, with a professed View to this End.”—To implore Acceptance for our Duties, confesses them to be mean and contemptible. Whereas, to expect Acceptance on their Account, strongly intimates their Excellency. That they are worthy in a very high Degree; so as to obtain Favour, not for themselves only, but for a miserable Creature also, who confesses himself subject to manifold Sins.

I said, “on account of”—For, if you obey, *in order* to your final Acceptance; surely, you must expect final Acceptance and eternal Life, on account of your own Obedience. A poor Object displays his Sores, and relates his Distress, in order to obtain

your Alms. Does he not then expect your Alms on account of his Sores, his Distress, and his piteous Tale?—What a Coalition is here, between Mr. *Wesley* and the Subjects of the triple Crown! I find the whole Council of *Trent* establishing his Sentiments by their anathematizing Decree. These are their Words; “If any one shall say, that the Righteous ought not, for their own good Works, to expect the eternal Reward, through the Merit of *JESUS CHRIST*, let him be accursed*.”—Do you speak of the Merit of *CHRIST*? So do they. Do you, in some Sense, allow *CHRIST* to be the Foundation? So do they. Are your Works to rear the Edifice, and perform the most respectable Part of the Business? So are theirs.

By this Time, I believe, the thoughtful Reader will guess the Reason, why you oppose and decry imputed Righteousness. You are solicitous, it seems, not barely for Works of Obedience, but for their Value and Credit in the Affair of Salvation; for their Significancy and Influence, in winning the Good-will of *JEHOVAH*. Since this is your Notion, you may well be offended at *CHRIST*'s imputed Righteousness. This will admit of no Partner or Coadjutor. This, Sir, in the Case of Justification, pours Contempt upon all your most laborious Exercises, and admired Attainments. Yea, this being divine and inconceivably excellent, pours all around a Blaze of Glory, in which all our puny Doings are lost, as the Stars in the meridian Sunshine.

“We

* *Si quis dixerit, justos non debere pro bonis operibus, expectare æternam retributionem, per Jesu Christi meritum, anathema sit. De Bon. Oper. Can. xxxvi.*

“ We obey in order to final Acceptance.”—Me-thinks, this discovers no more Gratitude, than Wisdom. Is it not an officious Indignity to that noble Goodness, which has set forth *JESUS CHRIST* for a Propitiation? Is it not a contemptuous Disregard of that heavenly Voice, which said, with so much Solemnity; *In Him I am well pleased* with the Children of Men.—Does this exalt, does it not degrade the SAVIOUR? Does it mortify, does it not cherish the Pride of Man?—According to this Scheme, the Merits of our LORD are the Foundation, not immediately of our Acceptance, but of that Situation only, in which we are supposed capable of acquiring it ourselves. They are, in short, no more than a mere Pedestal; on which human Worth, or rather human Vanity may stand exalted, and challenge the Favour of Heaven.

Ah, Sir! Acceptance with GOD, is an immensely rich and glorious Blessing: A high and transcendently precious Privilege: Incomparably too high and glorious, to be obtained, in any Degree, by such mean Obedience as yours and mine.—The Pardon of Rebels against the King of Kings! The Reception of leprous Sinners into the Bosom of Heaven! Shall such Effects, than which nothing can be greater; shall such Benefits, than which nothing can be richer; be ascribed to human Obedience? What, but the very Distraction of our Disease, can have occasioned or can account for a Thought, so extreme in Absurdity?—[Shall we, fordid Wretches, with our ulcerous Sores, our withered Limbs, and a Stupor over all our Faculties; shall *we* think ourselves able to *do something* for HIM, who needeth not the Services of Angels? Nay, to do something

thing considerable enough, to found a Claim to that transcendent Honour and Happiness, the Light of his Countenance?—Our Adorations! Our Thanksgivings! Our Praises! Our Prayers! Our Preaching! Our sacramental Duties! What are they all but filthy Rags*, compared with his inconceivable Holiness and Glory? What Part of his Work do we attempt, but we debase it with our deplorable Imperfections, or pollute it with our very Touch?—Shame then belongs to us, Shame and Confusion of Face, whenever we look to ourselves or our own Performances. While all our Comfort, all our Hope, is to be derived from the only Righteous One *CHRIST JESUS*.

If we know not enough of our own Meanness and Impotency, let us listen to the Prophet *Isaiah* †. In order to our Acceptance with GOD, he informs us, *Lebanon* with all her stately Cedars is not sufficient to burn; nor all the Beasts, that range through her extensive Shades, sufficient for a Burnt-Offering. Nations, whole Nations, avail no more than single Persons.

* *Isa. lxiv. 6.* In such a Light, I cannot but look upon the Services and Works of frail Man. In such a Light they are represented, in various Parts of our public Devotions. And if we are but humble enough to confess ourselves *Sinners*, in such a Light they *must* appear to every discerning and impartial Eye. Since nothing, even in Hell itself, is more loathsome, or imparts a more horrid Defilement, than Sin.—If such Services are a sweet-smelling Savour to GOD, it is owing to that copious Incense, (*θυμιαμαλα πολλα, Rev. viii. 3.*) which arises from the golden Censer and the golden Altar. (*Rev. viii. 3.*) It is wholly owing to the infinite Dignity and all-recommending Efficacy of *CHRIST*'s Blood, Intercession, and Righteousness.

† *Isa. xl. 15, 16, 17.*

Persons. Should they unite their Abilities, and exert all their Efforts, to do something which may recommend them to JEHOVAH *; all would be mean, ineffectual, despicable. Mean, as the Drop of a Bucket, which falls to the Ground, and none regards it. Ineffectual, as the Dust upon the Balance, which wants even that small Degree of Impetus, necessary to turn the most nicely poised Scales. Despicable, as the Atom that floats in the Air, and has not Weight enough to settle itself on any Object.—Should you reply; In all these Things there is some, though very little Substance. The Prophet farther declares; That all Nations in the World, with all their Virtues, Accomplishments, and Works, would, before the infinitely majestic GOD, be as Nothing, less than Nothing, yea, Vanity itself. Incapable, absolutely incapable of winning his Favour, or doing any Thing worthy of his Notice †.—Blessed therefore, for ever blessed be divine

* Do we want to learn the Prophet's Aim and Design, in this magnificent Paragraph? We may, to our great Satisfaction, consult his sagacious and devout Commentator *Vitringa*. *Hic altius surgens oratio, non tantum omne meritum abjudicat carni, sed docet etiam & inculcat, esse hæc omnia quæ gentes ad placandum numen finxerunt, merum nihil & inane. Nullum plane pondus afferre in commendatione causæ suæ apud Deum: imo esse nihilo ipso & inani inferiora, si quid nihilo minus fingi & cogitari possit. Non potest in natura: sed fingi potest & obtinet in œconomia spirituali. Est enim ibi quod ita non prodest ad obtinendam justitiam apud Deum, ut simul noceat. Cujus generis sunt omnia expostula & commenta sapientiæ carnis. Non tantum Deo non commendant, sed potius iram & indignationem divinam provocant.*

† May I be allowed to elucidate the noble Passage, quoted above? Sure I am, the Reader will not be displeas'd with the Digression, unless the Annotator fails in the Execution, and has the Misfortune

vine Grace, that we have a great High-Priest, in whom GOD is pleased; is well pleased; and his very

— — — *Egregium opus
Culpa deterere ingeni.*

The Prophet, struck with the Contemplation of a most glorious Personage, cries out, like one transported and amazed, *Who?* Never was any Thing comparable to him, either existing in Nature, or imaged by Fancy. *Who hath measured the Waters, the unfathomable Deep, and the boundless Wave; measured them, not in his capacious Cistern, but in the Hollow of his Hand? Who hath meted out Heaven, an Expanse in which Worlds revolve, and extended to Immensity; meted it, not with an out stretched Line, but with the Span of his Fingers? Who hath comprehended the Dust of the Earth, all the solid Contents of this prodigiously large Globe, as a little Pittance in the smallest Measure? Who hath weighed the Mountains, with all their ponderous Ridges, and the Hills, with all their massy Rocks, as a Man weigheth an Ounce or a Dram in his Scales?*—Here I would only observe the judicious Choice of Objects. By far the most distinguished and magnificent, that the Universe affords. The Abyss of Waters, and the Circuit of the Skies! The Dimensions of the Earth, and the Elevation of the Mountains! Compared with which, the loftiest Groves are less than the Hyssop on the Wall; and the most ample Cities, are smaller than a Grain of Mustard-Seed.

Then follows a Comparison, more admirable, if it be possible, than this fine Description. *Behold!* The Nations, whether on the neighbouring Continent or in the remotest Isles, are, before this exalted Being, as the small Drop of a Bucket, which is almost too scanty to deserve our Notice. They are as the smaller Dust upon the Balance, which is not sufficient even to turn the hovering Scale. They are as the smallest Atom, which has not Weight enough to reach the Ground, nor Force enough to resist the slightest Undulations of the Air. Yea, all the Nations of the Earth, amidst all their Pomp and Grandeur, with all their boasted Accomplishments and admired Works, are before this incomprehensible GOD, as a mere Nothing.—Can Language go farther? Can Imagination take a bolder Flight? Yes; the astonishingly rich

very Soul delighteth. Whose Sacrifice, and whose Work, have merited all the Good, that Sinners can want, or the ALMIGHTY can bestow.

If we are not yet duly humbled, nor willing to profess ourselves beholden to divine Grace alone; if we still resolve to be Principals or Partners with the one MEDIATOR, in the Purchase of the ineffimable Jewel, let us fear, lest *the LORD our Righteousness* resent such a Dishonour done to Himself; and swear in his Wrath, that we shall have neither Lot nor Portion in this Matter. Of this He has expressly warned us by his Apostle; *If ye be circumcised, CHRIST shall profit you nothing.* What would St. Paul teach us, by this solemn Protestation?—That no Jew can be saved? Himself was an Hebrew of the Hebrews. Circumcised the eighth Day.—That a Christian would, by receiving Circumcision after his Conversion to CHRIST, forfeit

rich Ideas of the Prophet add a Heightening, a redoubled Heightening even to this inimitable Picture. The Kingdoms of the World, with all their Inhabitants, and all their Honours, are less than nothing; are less than Vanity itself, in the Estimate of the Almighty JEHOVAH.

This, if I am not greatly mistaken, is one of the most highly finished Sketches of the *Beautiful and Sublime*, extant in the whole Compass of Letters.—Let us always remember, that the majestic Person, whom it describes, is our Atonement and Righteousness (ver. 2.) is our Shepherd and Guide (ver. 11.) it will then be one of the most consolatory and delightful Truths, in all the Book of GOD.—And O! may we never forget, that the small Drop of the Bucket, the smaller Dust on the Balance, the volatile Atom, and that which is less than nothing, are intended to shew us, what Figure our own Endeavours, Works, and Duties make in the Sight of Almighty GOD. We shall then have a Doctrine, most powerful to humble us, to abase us, and to teach us to renounce our own Righteousness.

feit all his Privileges? No; for he himself circumcised *Timothy*, to gain him a fair Hearing from the Judaizing Bigots.—Or is Circumcision here used, by Way of Synecdoche, for the ceremonial Law? Teaching us, that, as the *Mosaic* Rites were now abolished, an Attempt to continue the Observance of them, would be an unpardonable Opposition to the Designs of Providence? The charitable Compromise, recorded in the xivth to the *Romans*, leads to a different Conclusion.—Or did those seducing Teachers, who required this Conformity from the Gentile Converts, require them to renounce *CHRIST*, and relapse into mere Judaism? Neither is this at all supposable. They only required such a Conformity, “in order to their Acceptance through his Merits;” which they never rejected, but only placed as a Foundation for their own.

What then can be meant by, *CHRIST shall profit you nothing, if ye be circumcised?* If ye make Circumcision, or any Thing whatever, besides the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, necessary to your Acceptance with *GOD*, ye shall receive no Advantage from all that the *REDEEMER* has done and suffered. This is to halt between Works and Grace, between *CHRIST* and Self. And such divided Regards, He will interpret as an Affront, rather than an acceptable Homage. Indeed, this is, in Christians, the grand Apostacy. By this they deny the Sufficiency of their *SAVIOUR*'s most consummate Righteousness. They cast themselves entirely out of the Covenant of Grace, and must expect no Salvation but by doing the whole Law.

This is the awful apostolic Caution. To which let me subjoin the plain apostolic Instruction—*Ye*

are accepted, says St. Paul, not partially, but entirely; not occasionally, but finally, *in the BELOVED*. All Acceptance, of whatever Kind, or whatever Date, is wholly in Him, not in any Thing of our own.—The Author to the *Hebrews* affirms; That *CHRIST* hath obtained Redemption, not left it to be accomplished, either in greater or smaller Measure, by our Diligence and Duties. No; He Himself hath obtained, both present and final, yea, complete and *eternal Redemption for us*. And will you, Sir, ascribe to your own Obedience, what the Apostle so expressly ascribes, and so entirely appropriates, to the blessed JESUS?—The same Writer assures us; That *CHRIST*, by one Offering, hath perfected for ever, them that are sanctified. Them that are cleansed with the Blood of Sprinkling, He hath not only discharged from the Guilt of Sin, but rendered them unblameable and unreprieveable, before the Majesty of Heaven. He hath done all that is necessary for their full, perfect, and everlasting Acceptation. Yes; whether it be in Life or Death; whether it be at the Throne of Grace, or the Tribunal of Judgment; during the Span of Time, or through the Ages of Eternity; all that is necessary for our perfect Acceptation is done. Done by an infinitely better Hand, than our own; by an infinitely better Expedient, than any human Obedience.

Do I, by these Remonstrances, set at nought true Holiness? Or suppose a Salvation, separate from holy Obedience? You, Sir, cannot entertain such a Supposition; since, in your very last Remark, you was dissatisfied with my insisting on the *inseparable* Connection of a living Faith, and Works of Righteousness.—I honour and prize Works of Righteousness.

ousness. I would incessantly inculcate, both the indispensable Necessity, and the manifold Utility, of holy Obedience. We are redeemed, that we may be zealous of good Works. We are created in *CHRIST JESUS*, that we may be able to do good Works. And by good Works we are to glorify our *FATHER* which is in Heaven.

Only I would have good Works know their proper Station, and their proper Office. I am far from setting at nought the Services of the Hand or the Foot. But I should very much disapprove their Design; I should utterly despise their Pretensions; if they should offer to intrude themselves on the Province of the Eye, or act as the Organs of Sight. Apply this Simile to the Obedience of Man, and Justification before *GOD*, or Acceptance with *GOD*; you will then see, in what Rank I place, in what Esteem I hold, both the one and the other.

As I would have Obedience know its proper Place, so I would have it take a right Form. The Obedience, which you propose, is the Obedience of the Bond-Man, not of the free. A Slave, bought with our Money, obeys in order to be accepted. A Servant, hired to dispatch our Business, obeys in order to receive his Wages. But the Child obeys, because he is beloved; because he is the Heir; and all Things, which the Father hath, are his.

“Obey in order to Acceptance!”—Indeed, Sir, you quite mistake the Principle and Source of Christian Obedience. Nor shall I undertake to rectify your mistaken Apprehensions, lest you should scorn to learn from an Inferior. I will refer you to a Set of Teachers, from whom you need not blush to receive Instruction. But as this may demand a very particular

cular Consideration, I shall postpone it to some future Opportunity, and assign to it a distinct Epistle.

In the mean Time, if you should ask; Why I have been so copious upon this Point? I answer; Because it is a Matter of the utmost Importance. An Error on this Subject, is as detrimental to our spiritual Welfare, as a Fault in the first Concoction is to the animal Constitution. A Mistake concerning Acceptance with GOD, must set in a false Light every religious Truth, and shed a malignant Influence on every religious Sentiment.

If you ask; Why I have repeated the obnoxious Proposition, almost as frequently as the Rams-Horns sounded the fatal Blast, on the Day when *Jericho* was overthrown? I answer; For the very same Purpose. To overthrow, if possible, so pernicious a Notion. To lay it as low, as the Fortifications of that devoted City. And I hope, neither Mr. *Wesley*, nor any other, will attempt to rebuild it, lest they lay the Foundation thereof, in the Dishonour of the blessed REDEEMER; and set up the Gates of it, in the Distress of precious Souls. Both which Effects, I am persuaded, are very remote from your Intention. That they may be equally remote from your Preaching, your Writing, and all your Doctrine, is the sincere Wish of, &c.



L E E T E R IV.

REV. SIR,

I Had, in the Warmth of my Concern, almost forgot to take Notice of a Text, which you produce from *I Tim. vi. 17, 18, 19.* And, which is somewhat strange, produce as a Proof, that the Apostle requires Christians “to obey, in order to their final Acceptance.”

Is *Paul* then become the Apostate? And do the Curses, which he has denounced against the Seducers of the *Galatian* Converts, fall at length on his own Head? He placed *Timothy* at *Ephesus*, as a Bulwark against the Encroachments of other Doctrines. Was it with a Reserve for Liberties of this Kind, which he himself should take? Can we think his Mind so much altered, since he told those very *Ephesians*, that, without seeking Acceptance through their Obedience, *they were already accepted in the BELOVED?* Does he now retract the blessed Truth? Advising the Rich, to raise a Cloud of golden Dust, that it may cover their Sins, and waft them to the Skies? At the same Time, excluding the Poor from the Fellowship of this new Gospel, and the Hope of Glory. Is he grown ashamed of that Righteousness of GOD, which, he assured the *Romans*, was the Power of GOD unto Salvation, only through Believing? And are we, Sir, grown weary of that pure Doctrine, which was restored to

us,

us, by our glorious Reformers? Are we willing to give up the Depositum, and return to the more than *Egyptian* Darknes of Friars and Monks? with whom

— — *Cælum est venale DEUS que?*

But to the Point.—I shall transcribe the Text, and add a short Paraphrase. Which may, perhaps, explain the Meaning, and best refute the Objection. *Charge them that are rich in this World, that they do Good, that they be rich in good Works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; laying up in Store for themselves a good Foundation, that they may lay hold on eternal Life. Charge them, those Believers * among you, who are rich in this World; that they do Good, that, as Members of CHRIST, they shew Kindness, and exercise Beneficence to others. That they be rich in good Works, abounding in those Works and Labours of Love, which flow from Faith, or a comfortable Persuasion of their Interest in CHRIST. Ready to distribute, on all proper Occasions, with Cheerfulness and Delight; as counting it more blessed to give, than to receive. Willing, even without Sollicitation, to communicate; and not only embracing, but seeking every Opportunity of relieving*

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the

[* The Exhortation is addressed, not to the Ungodly, but to true Believers. Who had received *CHRIST*, and were saved through Grace. Consequently, had no Need to *win* or *attain* eternal Life, but only to make it, in their own Apprehension, or to their own Consciences, more and more *sure*. Had they been unconverted People, the Apostle would, like his divine *MASTER* discoursing with the rich, but unregenerate *Nicodemus*, have struck at the Root of their Misery; and spoke of more important Things, than distributing a little shining Dust among the Poor.]

the Necessitous. Lightly esteeming all that is called Wealth here below; and *laying up in Store for themselves* another Kind of Treasure, [even *CHRIST*; who is the Pearl of Price, and the true Riches.] This will be a *good Foundation* of Hope, of Comfort, and Joy: *Against the Time to come*, whether it be the trying Season of Sickness, the awful Hour of Death, or the more tremendous Day of Judgment. That, placing their Affections on Him, and having their Treasure in Him, they may be found wise Merchants. Not grasping Uncertainties and Shadows, but *laying fast Hold on* * sure and substantial Possessions; even *on eternal Life*.

We establish the Law: We provide for its Honour by the perfect Obedience of *CHRIST*; says *Aspasio*.—“Can you possibly think, replies Mr. *Wesley*, that “*St. Paul* meant this?”—Before I answer this Question,

* *Take fast Hold on*—thus I would translate that emphatical compound Word *επιλαβωνται*. Which agrees with the Experience of the Christian, and is not without the Authority of the Critic.—With *the Experience of the Christian*. Since Believers, by the Exercise of Faith, producing all good Works, are continually maintaining and increasing their Hold of *CHRIST*; and of that eternal Life, which is given them in Him.—With *the Authority of the Critic*. For the Word signifies, “To seize with great Vehemency; to lay Hold on with both Hands, as upon a “Thing we are glad to have got, and will be loth to let “go again.” *LEIGH's Crit. Sacr.*—That it does not, in this Connection, denote an apprehending of somewhat, not taken hold of before, is evident from Verse the twelfth, where this very Exhortation is directed to *Timothy* himself; who was an eminent Man of GOD, and the Subject of particular Prophecies; was a Believer of the first Class, and an undoubted Heir of Life and Immortality. Who needed not, therefore *to attain*, but to live in the steadfast Hope and unintermitted Expectation of the glorious Inheritance.

Question, give me Leave to ask another. Have you, Sir, done Justice to *Aspasio*? Is what you quote, the whole of his Interpretation? Have you not secreted a Sentence, which speaks the very Thing, you blame for omitting?

A Member of the House of Commons, haranguing the honourable Assembly, took the Liberty to assert; “The Gentlemen in the Ministerial Interest, never propose any Thing for the Good of their Country.”—This was no sooner uttered, than a warm Partizan of the other Side starting up, complained loudly of Calumny and Scandal. Hold, Sir, for a Moment, said the interrupted Orator. Let me just finish my Sentence, and then give Vent to your vehement Invectives. My Intention was to have added; “but we in the Opposition readily agree to their Measures.”—Upon hearing this Explanation, the House smiled, and the hasty Zealot sat down ashamed.

Let me produce the whole Period, now under Consideration. Then I believe, the Reader will allow, that Mr. *Wesley* has imitated this hasty Gentleman, in one Instance; and whether he has not some Reason to imitate him in another, I shall leave to his own Determination.—Immediately after the Display of free Justification, or of *Righteousness imputed without Works**, *Aspasio*, aware of the Possibility of abusing his Doctrine, asserts the indispensable Necessity of Holiness. This done, as quite cleared from the Accusation, he triumphs with the Apostle; “Do we then make void the Law, through Faith, in the imputed Righteousness of our LORD? GOD forbid! Yea, we establish the Law. Considered as

“ the original *Covenant* of Life ; we provide for its
 “ Honour, by the perfect Obedience of *CHRIST*.
 “ Considered as the invariable *Standard* of Duty ;
 “ we enforce its Observance, by the most rational,
 “ manly, and endearing Motives *.”—Here, Sir,
 was hardly any Room for the Precipitancy of Inter-
 ruption, because the whole Passage lay before you.
 And it is a little surprizing, that you should see and
 animadvert upon the former Clause ; yet neither see,
 nor regard the Clause immediately following.

“ Did such a Thought (of establishing the Law,
 “ by the Atonement and Righteousness of *CHRIST*)
 “ ever enter into St. *Paul*'s Mind ?”—Let the pre-
 ceding Context determine. Has the Apostle been
 opening the true Sense of the Precepts, that they
 might be rightly understood ? Has he been incul-
 cating the inviolable Obligation of the Precepts, that
 they might be duly practised ? Has he not been as-
 serting a Justification absolutely free, effected by the
 Righteousness of *GOD*, without any Co-agency
 from the Righteousness of Man ? Does he not, in
 the last Words, professedly encounter the Objection,
 which, in every Age, has been raised against this
 sacred Doctrine ? “ Hereby you neglect and dis-
 “ honour the divine Law.” No ; says the inspired
 Apologist, the Law is hereby *established*, and shewn
 to be more stable than Earth or Heaven. The grand
 Legislator Himself shall be humbled to its Obedi-
 ence ; the *GOD* who gave the Law, shall bleed for
 its Penalties ; rather than a Tittle fail of its due
 Accomplishment.—Magnified thus, the Law indeed
 is, and made for ever honourable. And though *As-
 pasio* does not exclude our practical Regards, I do
 verily,

* *Theron* and *Aspasio*, Vol. I. p. 200.

verily, for my own Part, believe; that the former Sentiment, against which you exclaim, was uppermost with the Apostle, and is the chief Design of the Text.

Yes, Sir; it was the Apostle's chief Design, to shew the perfect Consistency of free Justification with the most awful Glories of the DEITY; and thereby lay a firm Foundation for the Hope of a Sinner. Had Justice, which is the essential Glory of GOD's Nature, or the Law, which is the revealed Glory of his Will—had either of these been violated, by the evangelical Scheme; benign and desirable as it is, it must have been utterly rejected; it could never have taken Place; the whole World must have perished, rather than such an Injury be offered to any of the Divine Perfections. Therefore St. *Paul* most sweetly teaches, and most satisfactorily proves, that instead of being injured, they are most illustriously displayed by the Obedience and Death of *CHRIST*. By this Means, *JEHOVAH* is inflexibly just, even in justifying the Ungodly; and his Law is highly exalted, even in absolving the Transgressor, that believeth in *JESUS*.

Here is firm Footing; here is solid Rock.

Solid Rock, on which the Sinner may rest, who is well nigh sunk in Despair; while the Waves and Billows of divine Indignation go over his alarmed Soul.—*Firm Footing*, on which he may proceed, who sees the Importance of his eternal Interests, and does not risque them on the vague Notion of mere Mercy. Dares not give into the modish Religion, which leaves such venerable Things, as the Justice

of the most High and the Law of the most Holy, destitute of their due Honour. And leaves such impotent Creatures as Men, to shift for themselves, by doing the best they can.

“ The plain Meaning is, we establish both the true Sense, and the effectual Practice of the Law: We provide for its being both understood and practised in its full Extent.”—How can you make this Provision, if you set aside the consummate Obedience of *CHRIST*? *Who is the End of the Law for Righteousness*; for accomplishing that Righteousness, which its Precepts describe, and its Constitution demands.

O! Sir, did you consider, what that meaneth, which the Apostle styles *το αδυναλον τε νομω*, you would not use this Language. Can *we*—can such miserable Sinners as *we*, ever dream of effectually practising, in its full Extent, that Law, which condemns every Failure; which requires Truth in the inward Parts, which insists upon Perfection, absolute Perfection, in every Instance, and on all Occasions; charging us,

*With Act intense, and unremitting Nerve,
To hold a Course unfaultering,*

to the very End of our Lives, and from the Beginning of them too.—Attend, I entreat you, Sir, to this most sublime Sanctity of the divine Law. Then, instead of saying, We provide for its Performance in the *full Extent* of its Demands; you will probably say, with a more becoming Modesty, we provide for its Performance, in a Way of willing, chearful, sincere Obedience. Still looking unto HIM for Justification,

fication, who has, in our Name, and as our Surety, fulfilled it to the very uttermost.

It is, I apprehend, one of your leading Errors, that you form low, scanty, inadequate Apprehensions of GOD's Law. That Law, which is a bright Representation of his most pure Nature; a beautiful Draught of his most holy Will, and never, since the Fall, has been perfectly exemplified in any living Character, but only in the Man *CHRIST JESUS*.—From this Error, many others must unavoidably follow. A Disesteem of imputed Righteousness, and a Conceit of personal Perfection. A Spirit of legal Bondage, and, I fear, a Tincture of Pharisaical Pride.

Should Mr. *Wesley* ask; Why I harbour such a Suspicion, concerning his Sentiments in this Particular? I answer; Because, here, he speaks of practising this Law, which is so exceeding broad, in its full Extent. Because, elsewhere, he represents the Violations of this Law, whose least Tittle is of greater Dignity than Heaven and Earth, as small Matters; as petty Offences; or, to use his own Words, as “ Things not exactly right.”—But more of this hereafter.

Aspasio, to vindicate the Equity of the future Judgment, declares; “ I see nothing arbitrary in
 “ this Procedure; but an admirable Mixture of just
 “ Severity, and free Goodness. On those, who
 “ reject the Atonement, just Severity. To those,
 “ who rely on their SAVIOUR, free Good-
 “ ness.”—Mr. *Wesley*, as though he would exculpate the Ungodly, asks, “ Was it ever possible for
 “ them, not to reject?”—What says our infallible
 Counsellor;

Counsellor ; the TEACHER sent from GOD ? They will not come to ME, that they may have Life. They rejected his Counsel. They would not cease from their own Works, and betake themselves wholly to the Righteousness of CHRIST. This Method of Salvation they disliked. It was Foolishness unto them. Therefore, they were disobedient to the heavenly Call.—Does this take away their Guilt? Must GOD be reckoned unjust in punishing, because Men are obstinate in their Unbelief ?

GOD does not require me, as you too injuriously hint, to “ touch Heaven with my Hand,” in order to escape Damnation. But He invites and requires me, to accept of CHRIST and his Salvation. If, intent upon any imaginary Accomplishments of my own, I over-look the Gift ; or if, eager in the Pursuit of worldly Gratifications, I trample upon it ; is not the Fault entirely my own ? Does it not proceed from the Folly of my Mind, or the bad Disposition of my Heart ; and leave my Conduct without Excuse ?

Justification is complete, the first Moment we believe ; and is incapable of Augmentation. Thus *Aspasia* speaks. Thus Mr. *Wesley* replies, “ Not so.”—And has he, for his Authority, a single Text of Scripture ? No ; but the whole Council of *Trent*. One of whose Canons dogmatizes in this Manner. “ If any shall affirm, that Righteousness received is “ not preserved, and increased likewise, by good “ Works ; but that good Works are only the Fruits “ and Signs of Justification obtained, not the “ Means of increasing it also, let him be ac-
cursed.”

“curfed*.”—I am sorry, Sir, to fee you again in fuch Company. And I would hope, if it were not an unhandfome Reflection, you did not know your Associates. Yet it is ftrange, that a *Proteftant* Divine fhould have been fo inattentive, to the main Part of his Character; or fhould be able to forget, that complete Juftification, through the Righteoufnefs of our LORD alone, is the very Effence, Soul, and Glory of the *Reformation*.

But let us examine the Point.—Juftification, I apprehend, is one fingle Act of divine Grace. It muft, therefore, be either done, or undone. If done, in my very Idea of the Act, it includes Completeness. So that to fpeak of incomplete Juftification, is a Contradiction in Terms. Like fpeaking of dark Sun-fhine, or a round Square.

An incomplete Juftification feems, in the very Nature of Things, to be an abfolute Impossibility. Even an earthly Judge cannot juftify, where there is the leaft Departure from Integrity. He may overlook; he may fhew Clemency; he may forgive. But he cannot, in fuch a Cafe, pronounce righteous. Much lefs can we fuppofe, that Juftification fhould take Place before an infinitely pure and jealous GOD, unless *all* Guilt be done away, and the Perfon be rendered *completely righteous*.

Befides; can *that* Juftification be other than complete, which is brought to pafs by the moft majestic SON of GOD? By his perfectly holy Nature; by his infinitely precious Sufferings; and by his inconceivably

* *Si quis dixerit, juftitiam acceptam non conſervari, atque etiam non augeri coram Deo per opera bona: Sed opera ipſa fructus ſolummodo & ſigna eſſe juſtificationis adeptæ, non etiam ipſius augendæ cauſam, anathema eſto. Sefſ. vi. Can. 24.*

ceivably meritorious Obedience? This, if any Thing in the World, must be absolutely complete; beyond Compare, and beyond Imagination complete; to speak all in a Word, complete in Proportion to the Dignity, Perfection, and Glory of the Accomplisher.

Is any such Notion, as an incomplete Justification, to be found in the Bible? St. Paul says, *Whoever believeth is justified*; to all Intents and Purposes justified. No, says Mr. Wesley; he may be justified only in Part or by Halves.—He that believeth, adds the Apostle, *is justified from all Things*. No, replies Mr. Wesley; many that believe, especially in the Infancy of their Faith, are justified only from *some Things*. There is no Necessity, that Justification should be complete, when or where-ever it exists.

Is there no Necessity? Why then does the Voice of Inspiration assert; That *the Righteousness of GOD*, is upon them that believe? Can a Man have that incomparably magnificent Righteousness, and yet be incompletely justified?—Does not the same inspired Writer declare—That this perfect and divine Righteousness is upon *all*; not upon *some* only, but upon *all* Believers? Whether they be weak or strong; whether in the first Moments of their Conversion, or in the last Stage of their Warfare.—Yes; and he farther assures us, That *there is no Difference*. No Difference, with regard to the Righteousness itself; for it is the *one everlasting* Righteousness of the incarnate GOD. No Difference, as to the Reality of its Imputation; for it is *unto all, and upon all*. No Difference, in the Way of receiving it; which is *by Faith in JESUS CHRIST*. Consequently, no Difference in the Fruits or Effects; which are Pardon and Acceptance, free and full Justification.

Is Mr. *Wesley*, like the *Popish* Party, an Advocate for a first, for a second, for I know not how many Justifications? According to this Scheme indeed, Justification may be an incomplete Thing. But the Misfortune attending this Scheme, is, that it has no Foundation in Scripture. The Scripture knows nothing of it; the Scripture declares against it; and acknowledges, as but one Faith, but one Baptism, so but one Justification.

This is the grand scriptural Maxim; *HE bath, by one Oblation, perfected for ever, them that are sanctified.* The Oblation is one, needing no Repetition, and no Appendage. It does not partially accomplish, but perfects the Business of Justification. Perfects it, not at the last only, but from first to last; yea, for ever and ever. In Behalf of all those, who are sanctified; or made Partakers of this great Sacrifice, and this divine Atonement.

This is the fine scriptural Illustration; *The Heir, even while he is a Child, is Lord of all.* You have, perhaps, a Son born. Upon this Child you multiply your Favours and Careffes. He grows in Wisdom and Stature. Yet neither your Favours, nor his Growth, add any Thing to his Sonship, nor augment his Right to your Inheritance. With both these he was invested, the first Moment he drew Breath. So, we are no sooner justified, than we are Heirs; *Heirs of GOD, and joint Heirs with CHRIST.* The Perception and Enjoyment of this Privilege may increase. But the Privilege itself, like the Birth-right of the First-born, is incapable of Augmentation.

Would Mr. *Wesley*, with the Followers of *Armi-*
nus, exclude the Righteousness of *CHRIST*; and

introduce something of Man's, as the efficient, or as a concurrent, Cause of Justification? Then likewise his Notion of a gradual, a variable, an incomplete Justification, must ensue. Whether it be Faith, which he would introduce for this Purpose, or Repentance, or sincere Obedience, or whatever else he pleases; according to the Measure of these Works or Graces, must be the Degree of Justification. And not only as to different Persons, but as to the same Person, at different Times.

Farther; since all these Endowments are, so long as we continue in the present State, imperfect; our Justification must, according to this Plan, unavoidably partake of their Imperfections. It cannot be entire and lacking nothing, till Mortality is swallowed up of Life.—But how contrary is this to a Cloud of Witnesses from the Scriptures! *Ye are, even now, justified. He hath, even in this present Time, reconciled you to GOD.* Through the Birth and Death of IMMANUEL, there is not only *Peace on Earth*, but *Good-will towards Men*; *εὐδοξία*, Favour, Complacency, and Love, from the holy GOD, to the fallen Soul. And is not this complete Justification?

“ There may be as many Degrees in the Favour, “ as in the Image of GOD.”—This Objection turns upon a Supposition, that the Favour of GOD towards us, is occasioned by the Image of GOD in us. Which is the Doctrine of the Law; the very Language of Heathenism; and has not a Savour of that Gospel, in which *CHRIST is all*. And I think myself more concerned, to remove such very prejudicial Mistakes, than to sift and adjust any nice Speculations, relating to Degrees of the divine Favour.

vour. *Aspasio* has touched this Point. Referring you to his Observation, I shall confine myself to a more interesting Subject.

It is *CHRIST*, who *has redeemed us to GOD*, to the Favour and Fruition of *GOD*, by *his Blood*. By his Blood alone, without any Aid from our Goodness, or any Co-operation from any Creature.—His Work pleases *GOD*. His Work magnifies the Law. His Work is incomparably the noblest of all Things in Heaven or Earth. This therefore is our Recommendation to the divine Majesty. Interested in this, we stand perfectly righteous before the *KING* immortal, and shall be eternally acceptable in his Sight.—It was only on Account of *Abraham's* Supplication, that *GOD* shewed Compassion to *Abimelech*. It was only on Account of *Job's* Intercession, that the *LORD* was pacified towards his three Friends. And it is only on Account of *CHRIST's* Righteousness, that the *HIGH* and *HOLY ONE* beholds any Child of *Adam* with Complacency and Delight. To *JESUS* alone belongs the Honour of reconciling, justifying, saving the innumerable Millions of redeemed Sinners. And is not the *LAMB* that was slain, worthy to be thus honoured, and thus exalted?

Is then our own internal and external Goodness of no Avail in this Matter?—Let us hear the eloquent *Isaiab*, the Evangelist of the *Jewish* Church. *The lofty Looks of Men shall be humbled, and the Haughtiness of Men shall be bowed down; and the LORD, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, alone, shall be exalted in that Day.*—Does this Text, it may be said, relate to the Gospel, and the Case of Acceptance with *GOD*? Or is it possible to make what follows,

consistent with such an Interpretation?—Let us see, whether it be not, by the HOLY GHOST himself, made perfectly consistent with such a Sense.

The Day of the LORD of Hosts, in the prophetic Scriptures, generally and principally signifies the Time of the Gospel-Dispensation. When the LORD puts the finishing Hand to his Revelation; gives the brightest Display of his Grace; and gathers together all Things in *CHRIST*.

This Day, and its Influence, shall cause a wonderful Revolution in, what is called, the religious, virtuous, moral World. It shall fall like a Thunderbolt upon every Idol, set up in the Hearts of Men. Shall prove their Wisdom to be Folly; their Ability to be Impotence; all their Works to be worthless.

This Prophecy, being so repugnant to our Notions, and so disgustful to our Inclinations, is asserted and enforced with the greatest Particularity, both as to Persons and to Things.

As to *Persons*.—For the *Day of the LORD of Hosts* shall be upon whom? Upon the sordid Wretch, or the scandalous Sinner? Rather upon *every one that is proud and lofty* in his own Conceit; pluming himself with the Notion of some imaginary Pre-eminence above his Neighbour. It shall be likewise upon *every one, that is lifted up* in the Esteem of others. Either on Account of *Roman* Virtue, or *Athenian* Philosophy, or *Pharisaical* Zeal. And, notwithstanding his aspiring Pretensions, or glittering Accomplishments, *he shall be brought low*; shall be degraded to the Rank of a lost, undone helpless Sinner.

So that none shall have it in his Power to say, “ I
 “ am better than thou. I stand upon more honour-
 “ able Terms with my MAKER, and am a fitter
 “ Object

“ Object for his Favour.” They shall all be like Prisoners, confined in the same Dungeon, and liable to the same Condemnation. Every one of them equally destitute of any Plea for Justification; and all of them, as to Acceptance with their CREATOR, without any Difference. No Difference, in this respect, between the accomplished Gentleman, and the infamous Scoundrel; no Difference between the virtuous Lady, and the vile Prostitute. No Difference at all, as to the Way and Manner of their obtaining Salvation. So that the Whole may appear to be of Grace.

As to *Things*.—This Part of the Subject is illustrated by a grand Assemblage of Images; comprehending all that is most distinguishable in the visible Creation, and denoting whatever is most admired or celebrated among the Sons of Men.—Oaks and Cedars are the most stately Productions of vegetable Nature. Therefore *the Day shall be upon all the Cedars of Lebanon, and upon all the Oaks of Basban*.—Hills and Mountains are the most conspicuous and majestic Elevations of the Earth. Therefore the Day shall be *upon all the high Mountains, and upon all the Hills that are lifted up*.—Towers and Cities are the most magnificent Works of human Art. Therefore the Day shall be *upon every high Tower, and upon every fenced Wall*.—*The Ships of Tarshish* are put for the Wealth, the Advantages, and the various Improvements, procured by Navigation and Commerce. *Pleasant Pictures* may represent every elegant and refined Embellishment of civil Life.—The whole Collection of Metaphors, seems to express all those Attainments, Possessions, and Excellencies, which are supposed to add Dignity to our Nature, or Stability

bility to our Hopes; to constitute a Portion, in which we ourselves may rest satisfied, or a Recommendation, which may entitle us to the Favour of Heaven.

Yet all these Things, before the Requirements of GOD's Law, and before the Revelation of his Righteousness, shall be eclipsed and disgraced. *Thrown to the Bats*, and consigned over to Obscurity; *thrown to the Moles*, and trampled into the Dust. So that in the Pursuit of eternal Life, none shall regard them; or else regard them, only to despise them.

Thus, says the Prophet a second Time—To render the Work of Humiliation effectual, he redoubles his Blow. May our whole Souls feel the Energy of his vigorous Expressions! Thus *shall the Loftiness of Man be bowed down, and the Haughtiness of Men shall be laid low*. All Notion of personal Excellency set aside, they shall be base and vile in their own Eyes. Acknowledge the Impossibility of being reconciled by any Duties of their own, and place all their Confidence on the propitiating Death and meritorious Obedience of *JESUS CHRIST*. *They less than nothing; HE all in all*.

With this important Sentiment I close my Letter; not without an ardent Wish, that it may sink into our Thoughts, and dwell upon both our Hearts.

Yours, &c.

LETTER



L E T T E R V.

REV. SIR,

YOUR last, and several of your other Objecti-
ons, appear more like Notes and Memorandums,
than a just Plea to the Public, or a satisf-
actory Explanation of your Opinion. They have
rather the Air of a Caveat, than a Confutation;
and we are often at a loss to discern, how far your
Remonstrance is either forcible or apposite.

Brief Negatives, laconic Assertions, and quick In-
terrogatories, opened by no pertinent Illustrations,
supported by no scriptural Authority, are more likely
to stagger, stun, and puzzle, than to *settle our No-
tions in Religion*. You seem, Sir, to have forgotten,
that Propositions are not to be established, with the
same Ease, as Doubts are started. And therefore
have contented yourself with a Brevity, which pro-
duces but little Conviction, and more than a little
Obscurity.

This Brevity of yours, is the Cause, and I hope,
will be the Excuse, of my Prolixity. Which, I per-
ceive, is growing upon my Hands, much more than
I intended. If you had been pleased to shew your
Arguments at full Length, and to accompany with
Proof your Glosses upon Scripture, the Reader would
then have been able to determine the preponderating
Evidence, between yourself and *Aspasio*. And my

Trouble had been considerably lessened, perhaps quite spared.

An Instance of the foregoing Remark, is the Objection which follows.—St. *Paul* often mentions a *Righteousness imputed*, says *Aspasio*. “Not a Righteousness, says Mr. *Wesley*; never once; but “simply Righteousness.”—St. *Paul* mentions *δικαιοσύνη*, the Righteousness which is imputed, both with and without the *Greek Article*. And do neither of these signify a Righteousness? This is a Piece of Criticism, as new to me, as it is nice in itself.—Besides, where is the Difference between a Righteousness, and Righteousness? Is not every Righteousness, a Righteousness? Is not every Person, a Person? And every prodigious Refinement, a prodigious Refinement?—I thought, Mr. *Wesley* had known how to employ his Time better than in splitting, or thus attempting to split Hairs.

To what Purpose, Sir, is this excessive Refinement? Many of your Readers, I apprehend, will find it difficult to conjecture. For my own Part, I freely confess, that I could not, for a considerable Time, discern your Aim. Nor can I, even now, discover any other Design, than a forced Endeavour, to exclude the Righteousness of *CHRIST*; and introduce a mistaken Something of your own, to officiate in its Stead.—As the Thread of your Criticism is spun extremely fine, we must examine it with the closest Attention. But first let me just take Notice—

That *Aspasio*, in Consequence of his Observation, deduced from the Apostle's Language, asks; What or whose Righteousness can this be? To which Mr. *Wesley* answers; “He tells you himself:

“Faith.

“ Faith is imputed for Righteousness.”—But have you never read *Aspasio’s* Interpretation of this Text? If not, be so impartial, as to cast your Eye upon the *tenth* Dialogue. There he considers this Passage at large, and lays before you his Exposition of the Words. Not imposing it, without assigning a Reason. But together with his Exposition, presenting you with the Grounds of his Opinion. If you can overthrow them, try your Strength and your Skill. They stand ready to receive your Attack; being, at present, in full Possession of the Field.

However, if you will not advert to *his* Thoughts; allow me, if I can, to penetrate *yours*. “ St. Paul never mentions *a* Righteousness, but simply Righteousness.” Thus, I presume, you argue—“ Not *a* Righteousness; that might seem to denote some *real* Righteousness; some actual Conformity to the divine Law, imputed to Sinners for their Justification.—Whereas, if Faith be substituted, instead of this real Righteousness; if Faith be all that to us, which our own Obedience to the Law should have been; and which *Aspasio* supposes, the Righteousness of *CHRIST* is appointed to be; if Faith itself be all this to us, then we are made righteous without *a* Righteousness. Something is accounted to us for Righteousness, which is really no such Thing.—Then we shall be under no Necessity of submitting to the Righteousness of our GOD and SAVIOUR, but may easily be furnished out of our own Stock.”

Is not this, or something like this, your Way of Reasoning? Do you not, in this Manner, understand Faith imputed for Righteousness? Not as deriving all its Efficacy, all its Significancy, from its

most magnificent Object. But as being itself the Efficient of Justification; the very Thing, for which we are accepted. In Opposition to “the wicked and vain Commentaries of the *Calvinists*, which say, that all this is resident in *CHRIST*, and apprehended by Faith.”

This led me to use that singular Expression, “a mistaken Something.” Since this is an egregious Mistake of Faith; of its Nature, its End, its Import.—Of its *Nature*. For, it is a going out of Self, and a flying to *CHRIST*, for Pardon, for Peace, and for every spiritual Blessing.—Of its *End*. For, it is ordained, to preclude all Boasting. That itself may be nothing. That its Owner may be nothing. That the Grace of *GOD*, and the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, may be all in all.—Of its *Import*. For it says, according to the Prophet; *In the LORD*, not in myself, *have I Righteousness*. It would expostulate, in the Words of the Apostle, with its over-weaning and doating Admirers; ye Men of *Israel*, why look ye so earnestly on me; as though by my own Power or Dignity, I had procured your Reconciliation, and rendered you accepted? The *GOD* of *Abraham*, *Isaac*, and *Jacob* has glorified his *SON JESUS*, and appropriated this Honour to *his* Obedience and Death. In the Matter of Justification, it is my Business, not to furnish a Contingent, not to supply any Part, but to receive the Whole from his Fulness.

On *CHRIST*'s Death Sinners are to rely, as the Cause of their Forgiveness; on *CHRIST*'s Obedience, as the Ground of their Acceptance. “How does this agree with pag. 58?”—Be pleased to turn back, Sir; and with a very little Attention, you

you will perceive the Agreement. Then let me desire you to turn inward; and you will, probably, discern more than a little Disingenuity, in your own Procedure. Since you resolve to stop your Ears against the Author's Explanation, his very particular Explanation and Restriction of his own Meaning*.—If you was examining a mathematical System, you would always carry in your Memory, the leading Problems or introductory Axioms. If you did not, your own Judgment would blame you. And when you neglect to do the same, in canvassing a theological Treatise, does not your own Conscience reprove you?

Our LORD commends such Kinds of Beneficence *only*, as were exercised to a Disciple, in the Name of a Disciple. Here Mr. *Wesley* asks; “Is not this a Slip of the Pen?”—Read the Passage, Sir; and answer yourself. What are our LORD's Words? *Inasmuch as ye have done it to these my Brethren.* Have you not then as much Reason, to charge our divine MASTER with a Slip of the Tongue, as to charge *Aspasio* with a Slip of the Pen? It is undeniably plain, that he does in Fact commend only such Kinds of Beneficence, as was exercised towards *his Brethren.* And I presume, you

G. 4

will

* In pag. 58. *Aspasio*, speaking of the Obedience and Death of *CHRIST*, professedly declares; “However, therefore, I may happen to express myself, I never consider them, as acting in the *exclusive* Sense; but would always have them understood, as a grand and glorious Aggregate. Looking upon our SAVIOUR's universal Obedience, which commenced at his Incarnation; was carried on through his Life; and terminated in his Death;—looking upon all this, in its *collective* Form, as the Object of my Faith, and the Foundation of my Hope.”

will readily grant, that *his Brethren*, the nobler Relation, cannot be more extensive than *his Disciples*, the inferior.

“ Will not our LORD then commend all Kinds “ of Beneficence, provided, &c.”—Excuse my cutting short your Speech. You are rambling from the Point. What *CHRIST* will do, is quite another Question. *Aspasio* neither denies, nor affirms any Thing, on this Subject. All that he considers, is, what appears to be really done, in that particular Description of the last Day, and its awful Process. Nor will he scruple to affirm, a second Time, that our LORD applauds such Acts of Beneficence *only*, as were exercised to a Disciple; to Believers; to his Brethren.

The righteous Judge specifies this Sort of Munificence, because it is a sure Indication of one begotten by the Word of Truth. It is a Test, which none but the Saints and Faithful in *CHRIST JESUS* will come up to. And a Christian is most properly distinguished, not by what he does in common with others, but by the different Principle from which he acts.—Of this Particularity *Aspasio* takes Notice, on Purpose to warn, as well as to exhort his Readers. *Exhort* them, that they may abound in Works of Generosity. *Warn* them, that their Works may spring from the right Source, — Faith in the divine REDEEMER.

“ You are not willing to call Works of Benefi-
“ cence, though exercised to a Samaritan or a Hea-
“ then,” transient Bubbles.—No more is *Aspasio*,
in the Sense and Manner, which you would insinuate. He calls them such, not absolutely, but relatively. Not in themselves, but with respect to an
Affair,

Affair, infinitely too great for them to transact, either in Whole or in Part. In this View (as relative to Justification) St. Paul calls them *Dung*, which is despicable and sordid. Surely then *Assasio* may call them *Bubbles*, which are shewy but insignificant.—I don't call the Desk, on which I write, a mere Egg-Shell. Yet I should not hesitate to say; It is scanty as an Egg shell, if appointed to transport an Army to the *Indies*; feeble as an Egg-shell, if set up as a Wall of Munition, against a Battery of Cannon.

How must Christians exceed the Scribes and Pharisees? To this *Assasio* replies. Not only in being sincere; in having Respect unto all GOD'S Commandments; but also in possessing a complete Righteousness. Nor can this be any Thing less, than the perfect Obedience of our great MEDIATOR.—“Did our LORD mean this? Nothing less.”—Peremptorily affirmed. But not so easily proved.—Yes, you add; “He specifies in the following Parts
“of his Sermon, the very Instances, wherein the
“Righteousness of a Christian exceeds that of the
“Scribes and Pharisees.”—He does so. But is it not an absolutely complete Righteousness? A Meekness, without the least Emotion of Resentment. A Purity, without the least Stain of evil Concupiscence. A Love, a Long-Suffering, a Perfection, such as our FATHER which is in Heaven exercises. Now if this does not exceed the Righteousness of all the Christians in the World, or if this is to be found in any Character, save only in the Character of our great MEDIATOR, I retract, most freely retract my Opinion.

The Discourse relates to that Righteousness, by which we are saved; or, by Virtue of which, we enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. And why, Sir, why will you not resign the Honour of obtaining Salvation, to the most blessed IMMANUEL's Blood and Obedience? Why will you hedge up your People's Way to the immortal Mansions, by teaching them to depend upon Duties and Attainments of their own?—Should any one, hearing this Doctrine, that the Law of the ten Commandments requires a perfect, sinless Obedience; that none can be delivered from the Wrath to come, or enjoy eternal Life, without this unsinning, perfect Obedience; should such a one, struck with Surprise and Anxiety, enquire; “Who then can be saved?” What Answer would Mr. *Wesley* give?—The Answer we would make, is obvious and full of Consolation.

“No

* *Christus magna asseveratione pronuntiat, pharisaicam illam justitiam, quæ non perfectissime habet integram legis impletionem, non posse ingredi regnum cælorum. Suorum igitur justitiam vult esse abundantiosem, hoc est, suos vult ad iudicium Dei, afferre abundantissimam, plenissimam, & perfectissimam justitiam, ut per ac propter eam possent ingredi regnum cælorum. Eam vero, quia in se non inveniunt, fide quærun & apprehendunt in impletione legis, a Christo pro nobis præstita. Vid. CHEMNITII Harm. Evang. p. 722.*

A truly valuable Work. In which the learned Reader will find many Traces of lively Devotion; many Pieces of solid Criticism; and many fine Views opened, to see more clearly, the Wisdom, Beauty, and transcendent Excellency of our blessed REDEEMER's Life. This Book is particularly estimable, for displaying with great Perspicuity, and enforcing with proportionable Zeal, that distinguished Article of Christianity, *Justification through the Righteousness of JESUS CHRIST*. Which is, as our Author very emphatically speaks, *Ipsissimum evangelii fundamentum*.

“ No Man, by his own Performances. But Salvation is to be fought, Salvation is to be obtained, by the Righteousness of Another. Even by the consummate Obedience of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*.”

He brings this specious Hypocrite to the Test.—“ How does it appear, you ask, that this young Ruler was a Hypocrite ?”—It appears from his Conduct. For, he came kneeling to our SAVIOUR, as one sincerely desirous of learning his Duty ; yet, when instructed in it, he would not perform it.—It appears from your own Character of him. You say, “ He loved the World.” Then the Love of the FATHER was not in him. That he pretended to the Love of GOD, is evident from his own Words. That he had no real Love, is certain from your own Acknowledgment. If Pretence, without Reality, be not Hypocrisy, please to inform us, what is.—It is farther apparent, from your Descant on the Case. “ Therefore he could not keep any of the Commandments in their spiritual Sense.” And it is a sure, as well as important Truth, that whoever pretends to keep the Commandments, yet does not keep them in their spiritual Meaning, is a Deceiver of himself ; a Deceiver of others ; a Hypocrite.

“ The keeping of the Commandments, says Mr. Wesley, is undoubtedly the Way to, though not the Cause of eternal Life.”—How then came it to pass, that our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*, should declare ? *I am the Way*. The Way, to what ? To the Favour of GOD : to the Fruition of GOD ; to every spiritual Blessing ; or, in other Words, to eternal Life.—After such a Claim, from such a Person,

son, may I not, without the Imputation of undue Confidence, deny your Assertion in your own Form of Speech? “The keeping of the Commandments “undoubtedly cannot be the Way to eternal Life;” since this is an Honour, this is a Prerogative, which the all-glorious REDEEMER has challenged to himself.

Hence your Distinction, between the *Way* to, and the *Cause* of, appears to have no Countenance from Scripture. And will it not, upon a Review, appear to have as little Support from Reason? Cast your Eye upon yonder Bridge. It is thrown over a deep and wide River. It is the *Way*, the only *Way*, whereby I cross the Water, and arrive at the opposite Bank. If so, is it not likewise the *Cause* of my safe Arrival on the other Side? There may be, in this Case, other Causes, concomitant or subordinate. But the Bridge is the grand one; that which every Body chiefly regards; and to which my Passage is always ascribed.

CHRIST therefore is the *Way*, the only *Way*, to Life and Immortality. By his precious Blood, and by his divine Righteousness, we pass the Gulph of Wrath and Destruction. By the Things which He has done, by the Pains which he has endured, we enter the Realms of Peace and Joy. Accordingly, we are exhorted to *walk in Him*; and are assured, that as many as walk in this *Way*, shall renew their Strength. This is, what the Apostle calls, *the new and living Way*. This is, what the Psalmist styles, *the Way everlasting*. And though other Ways may seem right unto a Man, yet the End thereof are the Ways of Death.

A Doubt,

A Doubt, perhaps, may arise in the Reader's Mind, suggested by the Words of the Prophet; *An High-Way shall be there, and a Way, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness.* True. The Way is *CHRIST*, the incarnate *GOD*, with all his Gifts, Privileges, and Blessings. *It shall be called the Way of Holiness* *. None can enter and advance therein, yet continue carnal and unclean. All that travel this Road, renounce the hidden Things of Darkness, and do the Works of Righteousness. It does not indeed find, but it assuredly makes, the Passengers righteous. And though Holiness is not their Way, yet it is a principal Part of their Business, while they walk in *CHRIST*.

Asposio,

* *Isa.* xxxv. 8. Upon this Subject, Dr. Owen speaks excellently. "*CHRIST* is the Medium of Communion between *GOD* and us. In Him we meet; in Him we walk. All Influences of Love, Kindness, Mercy from *GOD* to us, are through Him; all our Returns of Love, Delight, Faith, Obedience unto *GOD*, are all through Him. He being that *one Way*, *GOD* so often promiseth his People: And it is a glorious Way, *Isa.* xxxv. 8. *An High-Way, a Way of Holiness*, a Way that none can err in, that once enter it. Which is further set forth, *Isa.* xlii. 16. All other Ways, all other Paths but this, go down to the Chambers of Death: They all lead to walk contrary to *GOD*."

See a Treatise, entitled *Communion with GOD*. By JOHN OWEN, D. D. Which presents us with the Spirit and Quintessence of the Gospel; with the noblest Privileges and strongest Consolations of Christianity; animating us thereby to all the Duties of holy Obedience.—Here are Pinks and Roses in the Path. Milk and Honey in the Cup. Marrow and Fatness on the Table. In many Treatises, the Author has done worthily; but in this, I think, he excelleth them all.

Aspasio, having Occasion to speak of *Abraham's* Faith, quotes the Words of the Apostle; *By Works his Faith was made perfect*. Which he thus explains; “His Faith hereby answered its proper End, and appeared to be of the true, the triumphant, the the scriptural Kind. Since it overcame the World, overcame Self, and regarded GOD as all in all.”—To this Mr. *Wesley* replies, with the Solemnity of a Censor, and the Authority of a Dictator; “No. The natural Sense of the Words is, By the Grace superadded, while he wrought those Works, his Faith was literally made perfect.”—Your Proof, Sir. What have you to make good this Interpretation? There is not a Word in the Text about Grace superadded. This is not assigned as the Cause of a perfected Faith. Nay, the sacred Writer expressly assigns another. *By Works*, says St. *James*, his Faith was made perfect. No, says Mr. *Wesley*; but by *Grace superadded*. St. *James* affirms one Thing; Mr. *Wesley* affirms the contrary; and who am I, that I should decide between two such Disputants? But I believe, the Reader will, without my Interposal, easily chuse his Side.

Perhaps, you will reply; if this is not the true Sense, produce a better.—One less opposite to the natural Import of the Words, and the apparent Meaning of the Apostle, is already produced. Do you insist upon another? I will then refer you to abler Judges.—Shall I send to an *Éxpositor*, whom you yourself admire? Dr. *Doddridge* thus comments upon the Text. “*His Faith was perfected by Works*; the Integrity of it, was made fully apparent, to himself, to Angels, to GOD.”—Shall I remit
 you

you to an Expositor, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived? The GOD of Glory says; *My Strength is made perfect in Weakness. Made perfect!* How? Is there any such Thing, as a Super-Addition to GOD Almighty's Power, while He exerts it in Behalf of his People? This none can imagine. But it is hereby manifested, to their Comfort, and his Glory. The same Word is used concerning *Abraham's* Faith, and concerning the GOD of *Abraham's* Strength. Why then should it not be understood in the same Sense? Here, it is *τελεισθαι*; there it is *ελελιωθη*. And, in both Places, it signifies, not "literally made perfect," but illustriously displayed.

Shall I send you to a familiar Illustration? I view, from my Window, a young Tree. The Gardener, when he planted it, told me; It was a Fruit-Tree, a Pear-Tree, a right *Beauté du Roy*. It may be such a Tree, and have its respective Seed in itself. But this did not then appear. If, when Autumn arrives, its Branches are laden with Fruit, with Pears, with that delicious Kind of Pears; this will be a Demonstration of all those Properties. This will, not make it such a particular Tree; no, nor make it a good and fruitful Tree; but only shew it to be of that fine Sort, or make its Nature, and Perfections evident.

St. *James* speaks of the Justification of our Faith; thus proceeds *Aspasio*. And thus replies Mr. *Wesley*; "Not unless you mean by that odd Expression, our Faith being made perfect."—I mean such a Perfection of Faith, as is mentioned above. Other Perfection I find not, either in Books or Men. Was Faith perfect, in *your* Sense of the Word, Love, Joy, and all Holiness would be perfect likewise.

Correspondent

Correspondent to the Principle, would be the State of the Production. There would be no longer any Cause for that Petition, which the Disciples put up; *LORD, increase our Faith.* Nor for that Supplication, which you and I, so long as we continue Members of the Church of *England*, must use; Give unto us the Increase of Faith, Hope, and Charity!

You call the Justification of our Faith an “odd Expression.”—Is it not founded on the Tenour of the Apostle’s Discourse? Is it not the native Result of the Apostle’s Inquiry? *Shew me thy Faith.* Prove it to be real and unfeigned. Prove it by such Acts, as demonstrate, you trust in *JESUS* alone for everlasting Life. If it stands this Test, we shall acknowledge it to be that precious Faith, whose Author is *GOD*, and whose End is Salvation.—Is not *that* a Justification of Faith, which displays its Sincerity, and renders it without Rebuke? Somewhat like this, would be reckoned a Justification of any Person, or of any other Thing, and why not of Faith?

Something, you see, Sir, may be said, in Vindication of this Expression. However, if it be thought improper; if it tend to create any Confusion in our Sentiments; or to draw off our Attention from that grand Idea, which is peculiar to the Word Justification; the Idea, I mean, of being made righteous before *GOD*. I freely give it up; I will alter it in my Book; and use it no more.

He that doeth Righteousness, is righteous. He manifests the Truth of his Conversion, and justifies his Profession from all Suspicion of Insincerity.—“Nay;” says Mr. *Wesley*, the plain Meaning is, he alone is “truly righteous, whose Faith worketh by Love.”—

Your Exposition may be true, and *Aspasio's* no less true. I leave the Reader to determine, which is most exactly suitable to the Apostle's arguing.—He is speaking of the *Christian* Righteousness. That which renders us righteous before GOD. That which Flesh and Blood could never have discovered. Which therefore was graciously revealed in the Gospel, and is the principal Subject of Gospel-Preaching. As then there were, and always would be, many Pretenders to the noble Privilege, St. *John* lays down a Maxim or a Touchstone, to distinguish the Sincere from the Hypocrite. *He that uniformly doeth Righteousness, in a Way of Sanctification; he, and he only, is to be acknowledged by us, as truly righteous by Way of Justification.*

Far be it from me, Sir, to be fond of wrangling. Where you hit upon the Truth, or come pretty near it, I shall never be eager to oppose. On the contrary, I shall be very desirous to agree; and preserve, as much as possible, both the Unity of Opinion, and the Harmony of Affection.—Your own Interpretation shall take place. Only let your *Working* be the Sign and Fruit of a righteous State, not that which makes or constitutes us righteous. The Righteousness of fallen Creatures, is not of themselves, but of me, saith the LORD. It is brought in and accomplished by HIM, whom GOD hath set forth to be their MEDIATOR and SURETY. So that we are made righteous, not by doing any Thing whatsoever, but solely by believing in *JESUS*. Our Character as the Redeemed of the LORD, is, ΟΙ ΕΚ ΠΙΣΤΕΩΣ; *Men*, having their Existence, their Subsistence, their all, by *Faith*. Hence it comes to pass, that we really are, what the Apostle affirms,

the following Words; *Righteous, even as He is Righteous.* Not barely righteous, as the moral Heathens, by Dint of human Resolution. Not barely righteous as the reputable *Jews*, by the Influence of their legal Sanctions. But righteous with that *very Righteousness*, which adorns, and exalts, and will eternally distinguish the only begotten SON of GOD.

It remains to be enquired; *What Faith is most likely to operate, in this excellent and happy Manner?* I mean, to *work by Love.*—Let me illustrate the Point by a short Apologue; then release the Reader from his Attention, and the Writer from his Task.

A certain King had two Favourites, whom he honoured with his peculiar Regard, and enriched with a ceaseless Liberality. They both, insensible of their vast Obligations, became Traitors and Rebels. Being convicted of Treason against their Sovereign, he was determined to overcome their Evil with Good. Accordingly, when they had nothing to plead in their own Behalf, he generously forgave them both. The one he dismissed from Prison, and suffered to live unmolested on his private Inheritance. The other he restored to all his high Preferments, and public Employments. He adorned him again with the Robe of Honour, and admitted him again into the Bosom of Favour.—Which of them, now, will feel the warmest Affection for their Sovereign? Which of them will be most ready to serve him on all Occasions? And, if Need be, to hazard even Life in his Defence?—He, doubtless, on whom most was bestowed.

And is not *that* Person most likely to work and obey, from a Principle of Love; who believes, that

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his divine LORD, has not only bore the Curse, but fulfilled the Law for Him? Has given Him, not barely an Exemption from Punishment, but a Title to eternal Life? Yea; has cloathed him with his own most perfect and glorious Righteousness. By Virtue of which, He will, ere long, be presented faultless before the Throne of Judgment, and have an abundant Entrance into the everlasting Kingdom.—Will not the Faith of such unspeakably rich Grace, pacify the Conscience, and purify the Heart? Awaken Gratitude to our heavenly Benefactor, and enkindle Zeal for his Glory? Cause us to discharge all the Duties of our Station chearfully, and withstand every Allurement to Evil resolutely?

Surely, we may say of this Faith, what *David* said of *Goliath's* Sword; *There is none*, there is nothing like it. For all these blessed Purposes, it is beyond Compare, and I should think, beyond Dispute, efficacious.—That you, Sir, may know more of this Faith, and dispute less against it, is the sincere and fervent Wish of, &c.



L E T T E R VI.

REV. SIR,

AS this Letter may probably be pretty long, I shall not increase the Prolixity by a Preface; but enter upon it, without any farther Introduction.

Whoso doeth these Things, saith David, shall never fall. Which *Aspasio* thus interprets, “shall never fall into final Apostacy.”—You are pleased to reply; “*David* says no such Thing. His Meaning is, whoso doeth these Things to the End shall never fall into Hell.”—It would be a great Wonder, I must own, if he should. But if he happens to fail, at some Times, and in some Instances, what becomes of him then?—However, let you and I, Sir, be at as little Variance as possible. Where is the extraordinary Difference, between yourself and *Aspasio*? If a Professor of Religion falls into Hell, must he not previously fall into final Apostacy? And if he falls into final Apostacy, must he not inevitably fall into Hell?

When you insert the Clause, *to the End*, do you interpret? Do you not rather interpolate the sacred Text? The Words of the Psalmist relate to the present Time, עשה *doeth*, not יעשה *shall do*. They contain an Encouragement to those, who, at this Instant, bring forth the Fruits of evangelical Righteousness. The Encouragement is deduced from the comfortable Doctrine of final Perseverance. It carries this cheering Import; “Whosoever believes in J E H O V A H, as laying all his Sins upon C H R I S T, and giving him eternal Life freely; whosoever, from this Principle of Faith, sincerely loves and willingly obeys G O D; He shall never fall.”—The Words are לא ימוט לעולם, *He shall never be moved*. A Phrase, common among the *Hebrews*, to denote the Stability of a Man’s Happiness. An immoveable Thing never falls, either one Way or another. So, this righteous Person shall never fall; either

either into final Apostacy, which is the greatest Misery here; or into Hell, which is the Consummation of Misery hereafter.

But I begin to apprehend what you mean, and of what you are jealous. Your Exclamation unravels all; "How pleasing is this to Flesh and Blood!"—Under Favour, Sir, I cannot conceive, how this Doctrine should be pleasing to Flesh and Blood. Flesh and Blood, or corrupt Nature, is proud. Any Scheme of Perseverance, to be accomplished by our own Strength, would indeed be agreeable to the Vanity of our Mind. But a Perseverance, founded on the Fidelity and the Power of GOD; a Perseverance, which acknowledges itself owing, not to any human Sufficiency, but to an Union with *CHRIST*, and the Intercession of *CHRIST*; this is a disgusting Method. This is what the natural Man cannot away with. You will find the Generality of People utterly averse to it.—Flesh and Blood will not submit, either to be made righteous before GOD, by the imputed Righteousness of *CHRIST*; or to be made faithful unto Death, by the never-failing Faithfulness of *CHRIST*. Try your Friends; try your Followers; try your own Heart, on this Point.

To the humble Believer, I acknowledge, this is a most pleasing and consolatory Doctrine. He, who feels his own Impotence; who knows the Power of his inbred Corruptions; and is no Stranger to the Wiles of his spiritual Enemy; he will rejoice in the Thought, that *nothing shall pluck him out of his almighty REDEEMER'S Hand*. That his Advocate with the FATHER, will suffer *neither Principalities, nor Powers, nor Life, nor Death, nor Things present, nor Things to come, nor any other Creature, to separate*

him from the Love of GOD.—Without such a Persuasion, we might too truly say of the Christian's Joy, what Solomon said of worldly Merriment; *I said of Laughter, it is mad; and of Mirth, what does it?* If he, who is to Day basking in the divine Favour, may before the Morrow be weltring in a Lake of Fire; then Joy, even Joy in the HOLY GHOST is unreasonable; and Peace, even that Peace which passeth all Understanding, is chimerical. A Building without a Basis; at least, *a bowing Wall, and a tottering Fence.*

Let us examine the Doctrine, which Mr. Wesley says, is so pleasing to Flesh and Blood; or, in other Words, to carnal People.—What is the Thing, which the Psalmist teaches, and *Aspasio* professes? That the Persons, who are described in the Psalm *, shall never apostatize, from the true Faith, or from true Obedience. Is this so agreeable to carnal People? Is it not rather unwarrantable in Mr. Wesley to suppose, that carnal People either possess true Faith, or perform true Obedience, or can be pleased with either? Especially, since the Apostle assures us, that *the carnal Mind is not subject to the Law of GOD, neither indeed can be.*

* The xvth Psalm, I apprehend, describes the perfect Character. That Perfection, which CHRIST really fulfilled; and is the Righteousness, in which GOD is well pleased. The Children of the Truth are, by the same SPIRIT, led to imitate this Character, according to the Measure of their Faith. Yet so imperfectly, that when compared with it in their own Persons, they have Reason to pray, *Forgive us our Trespases.* Though, when considered as clothed with the Fulfilment of all in CHRIST, they may assure themselves of Acceptance with GOD, and an everlasting Title to the divine Favour.

Besides; are not the Duties, mentioned by the Psalmist, offensive to Flesh and Blood? Do they not require, or imply, the Mortification of our carnal Appetites, and the Discipline of our unruly Affections? Can it be a welcome Piece of News to Flesh and Blood, that this Mortification shall take place? Instead of being remitted, shall increase? And never, never be discontinued, till Mortality is swallowed up of Life?—If so, *the old Man which is corrupt*, must be pleased with the Curb, and the Dagger must delight in its own Restraint, and its own Destruction.—Such a Paradox we must believe, before we can espouse Mr. *Wesley's* Notion; That Flesh and Blood are pleased with the Doctrine of a final Perseverance in Self-denial, in Righteousness, and true Holiness.

“Should your Repentance be without a Failure, and without a Flaw; I must still say to my Friend, as our LORD replied to the young Ruler, *One Thing Thou lackest*. In all these Acts of Humiliation, you have only taken Shame to yourself. Whereas, a Righteousness is wanting, which may magnify the Law, and make it honourable.”—These are *Aspasio's* Words; upon which Mr. *Wesley* animadvert. “One Thing thou lackest, the imputed Righteousness of *CHRIST*. You cannot think this is the Meaning of the Text.”—Neither does *Aspasio* affirm this to be the Meaning. He only uses the Words by Way of Accommodation. Could you demonstrate, that our LORD intended no such Thing, yet the Sentence may not improperly express *Aspasio's* Opinion. And if so, be not unfit for his Use.

However, let us enquire into the exact Meaning of the Text. A very little Search will yield the de-

fired Satisfaction. *Sell all thou hast, and give to the Poor, and thou shalt have Treasure in Heaven. Treasure in Heaven* was what the young Gentleman lacked. Could this be any other than *CHRIST* himself? Is not *CHRIST* the Treasure, hid in the Field of the Gospel? Is not *CHRIST* the Inheritance, reserved in Heaven for us? Is not a Communion with *CHRIST*, and an Enjoyment of *CHRIST*, the supreme Felicity of our Nature?—*David* was of this Mind, when he publicly declared; *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee?*—*St. John* was of this Mind, when he solemnly averred; *He that hath the SON, hath Life.*—Whoever is of another Mind, has very inadequate, very unworthy Notions of Heaven and its Happiness.—Now if *CHRIST* himself was the *One Thing* needed, surely his Righteousness could not be secluded. His Blood and Obedience inseparably accompany his Person. He that hath the Bridegroom, hath his Riches also.

In Opposition to this Sense, it is affirmed, “Certainly the one Thing our LORD meant, was the Love of GOD.”—The Love of GOD is certainly an eminent Blessing. Possessed, I should imagine, only by those, who have first obtained eternal Life, by *knowing the true GOD and JESUS CHRIST*. But does our Love of GOD magnify the Law; satisfy Justice; or obtain Heaven? Are we pardoned, are we reconciled, are we justified, on Account of our Love of GOD?—The young Ruler wants *that*, which may open to him the Kingdom of Heaven; and *that*, whereby he may inherit eternal Life. *Mr. Wesley*, setting aside Pardon, Reconciliation, Justification, together with the one perfect Righteousness, which procures them, ascribes all to
our

our Love of GOD. And, by this Means, not to the true Love, arising from the Knowledge of Him, as manifested in the Gospel; as having first loved us, in granting us Remission of Sins, freely through *JESUS CHRIST*.—This Notion may pass current at *Rome* *, not among the *Protestant* Churches. Our own Church has most expressly disclaimed it. Speaking of *CHRIST* and his precious Blood-shedding, she adds; “Whereby *alone* we are made Partakers “ of the Kingdom of Heaven.”

“Is the Obedience of *CHRIST* insufficient to “ accomplish our Justification?”—Here you would correct both the Language, and the Doctrine. The Language: for you say, “Rather I would ask, is the “ Death of *CHRIST* insufficient to purchase it.”—To purchase Justification, you suppose, is more proper and expressive, than to accomplish. As this may seem a Strife of Words, I shall dismiss it without much Solicitude. Only I would transiently observe, that to accomplish, denotes more than to purchase. It denotes the constituent Cause; what the School-men call, the Matter of Justification; or the very Thing which effects it. If your favourite Phrase implies all this, let it have the Pre-eminence.

Next, you correct the Doctrine, by saying; “I “ would rather ask, is the Death of *CHRIST* insuffi- “ ent to purchase Justification?”—I answer; if you

* The Council of *Trent*, by her Interpreter *Andradius*, thus expresses herself; *Christus obedientia sua non meruit credentibus in ipsum salutem & vitam æternam; sed hoc tantummodo meruit, quod propter ipsum infunditur nobis charitas inherens; ut illa demum sit, quæ hominem Deo non tantum gratum, sed pergratum; non tantum acceptum, sed peracceptum reddat ad vitam æternam.* Vid. *Chemnit. Exam. Conc. Trident.* p. 146.

consider the Death of *CHRIST*, as exclusive of his Obedience, it is insufficient. If you do not, there is no great Reason for your starting a Doubt, where we both are agreed. And indeed it is scarce worth my while, to take Notice of it. I will therefore return to the Distinction, which you think proper to make, between accomplishing and purchasing Justification.—Why, Sir, would you set aside the former Phrase? Does it not imply, that which justifies? That very Thing, which commends us to *GOD*? That *very Righteousness*, in which we stand accepted before Him? Does not this Way of expressing guard most effectually against the Errors of Popery, and exclude all Co-efficiency of Faith, of Works, or any Thing else whatever?—I said, the Errors of Popery. For a *Popish* Synod will allow; that we are not justified without the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, by which He hath merited Justification for us. But declares, at the same Time; if any Man shall say, we are formally righteous, by that very Righteousness, let him be accursed.—According to this, which is no very good Confession, the Righteousness of *CHRIST* purchases, but does not accomplish; it merits our Justification, but does not constitute our justifying Righteousness. See, Sir, whither your Refinements are leading you.

The Saints in Glory, says *Aspasio*, ascribe the whole of their Salvation to the Blood of the *LAMB*. “So do I, replies Mr. *Wesley*; and yet I believe, “He obtained for all a Possibility of Salvation.”—Is this Objection pertinent? Does *Aspasio*’s Assertion contradict your Belief? Does it not comprize, all that you avouch, and much more? Is it possible, that Mr. *Wesley*, who is such a Master of Logic, should

should argue in this Manner? “ The Saints in Glory
 “ ascribe all their Salvation to *CHRIST*’s Blood;
 “ therefore He did not obtain a Possibility of Sal-
 “ vation for all Men.” What a forced Conclusion
 is this! What wild Reasoning is here! Such Pre-
 mises, and such an Inference, will probably incline
 the Reader to think of a Sun-Beam and a Clod, con-
 nected with Bands of Smoke.

If you was determined to make this Passage faulty,
 you should have opposed it with the following De-
 claration of your Faith; “ Yet I believe, that
 “ *CHRIST* obtained *no more than* a Possibility of
 “ Salvation for any.” Then you would have some-
 thing suited to your Purpose; but not agreeable,
 either to sound Sense, or sound Doctrine.—Not to
sound Sense. Your Possibility of Salvation, is, if
 People perform the Conditions. How then can they
 ascribe *the whole* Glory to *CHRIST*? At this Rate,
 they do a Piece of Injustice to their own Resolution
 and Diligence; As these, by fulfilling the Condi-
 tions, had a Hand in obtaining the Reward, these
 ought to have a Share in receiving the Honour.—
 Not to *sound Doctrine*.—*Aspasio* believes much
 more than a Possibility of Salvation by *JESUS*
CHRIST. He believes a full and complete
 Salvation; according to that noble Text, *It is*
finished. A Salvation, not to be acquired, but
 absolutely given; according to that precious Scripture,
GOD hath given to us eternal Life. Not upon some
 Terms or Pre-requisites, but without any Condition
 at all; according to that most gracious Invitation,
Whoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely.
 —This I look upon as sound Doctrine. But will
 your Notion of a conditional Salvation, proposed by
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Way of Bargain, and granted upon Terms, comport with this *Gift of Grace*?

No more than a *Possibility* of Salvation!—Yes, Sir, *CHRIST* obtained a great and a free Salvation. *Great*; for it comprizes the Pardon of all Sin, original and actual; a Restoration to entire and unalterable Favour; together with a Title to everlasting Life and Glory.—This is such a Provision for our Happiness, as becomes the immense Goodness, and inconceivable Majesty, of an incarnate *G O D*. Such as not only supplies our Wants, and satisfies our Desires, but surpasses our very Wishes. Transporting us with Wonder, and filling us with Joy.—To accomplish all this, we may reasonably suppose, nothing less could be sufficient, than the active and passive Righteousness of *H I M*; who is gone into Heaven, Angels and Authorities and Powers being made subject unto Him.—Since this matchless Ransom has been paid; since these grand Conditions are performed; there is no Obstruction from the divine Justice, or the divine Truth. All that ineffable and eternal Blessedness is now become *free*: Is granted to Sinners, to Rebels, to the most unworthy; they are allowed, yea, invited to receive it, to possess it, to rejoice in it as their own Portion: And without the Proviso of any good Thing in themselves, purely on Account of their *S A V I O U R*'s all-sufficient Work.

I read in sacred History of *Eleazer the Son of Dodo the Abobite*, one of the three mighty Men with *David*; how he arose, and smote the *Philistines*, until his Hand was weary, and his Hand clave unto his Sword; and the *L O R D* wrought a great Victory that Day; and the People returned after Him only to spoil. And were not these mighty Men typical, faintly typical
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of our almighty REDEEMER? Did not *JESUS* also arise, and work a great Victory? Has He not triumphed gloriously over Sin, and all our Enemies? And what have we to do, but only to return, and divide the Spoil, and share the Benefits of his Conquest?—May we not boldly say? “ My Sin is done
 “ away, because *CHRIST* has bore it on the cursed
 “ Tree. I stand accepted before *GOD*, because
 “ *CHRIST* has finished the Righteousness, which
 “ renders me unblameable and unproveable. I
 “ shall receive the *HOLY GHOST*, because
 “ *CHRIST* is my Advocate; and prays the *FATHER*,
 “ that He will give me another Comforter.
 “ This sacred Comforter, by shewing me the Riches
 “ of *CHRIST*, will more and more sanctify my
 “ Nature.” To think and live in this Manner, is
 to take the Spoil after our victorious Leader.

Let me close and confirm this Sentiment, with a Passage from that inimitable Penman, the Prophet *Isaiab*. Who, for his remarkably clear Views of *CHRIST*, may almost be admitted into the Number of Evangelists; and, for his exquisitely fine Descriptions of *CHRIST*, greatly exceeds all Orators and all Poets. *Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed Garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his Apparel, travelling in the Greatness of his Strength?— I that speak in Righteousness, mighty to save.—Wherefore art Thou red in thine Apparels, and thy Garments like Him that treadeth in the Wine Fat?—I have trodden the Wine-Press alone, and of the People there was none with me.*

The Prophet, like one thrown into a sudden Surprise, with a beautiful Abruptness, cries out, *Who is this? What extraordinary Appearance discovers itself to my Sight? Is it a human, or a divine Form,*
 that

*See
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that I behold? He cometh from Edom the Country, from Bozrah the Capital, of our professed national Enemies. Is He for us, or for our Adversaries?—The first Question seems to proceed from a distant and indistinct View. He then takes a nearer Survey, and describes the wonderful Personage with greater Particularity. This that cometh *with dyed Garments*, like some terrible and victorious Warrior, that has scarcely sheathed the Sword of Slaughter. Who is all encrimsoned, and still reaking with the Blood of the Slain.

The Vision becomes clearer and clearer. I see Him (adds the rapturous Prophet) *glorious in his Apparel*. Highly graceful, as well as extremely awful. Bearing in his Aspect, in his whole Person, in his very Dress, the Marks of transcendent Dignity. *Travelling in the Greatness of his Strength*. Not faint with Toil, nor wearied with the Fatigue of the dreadful Action; but like one, that is indefatigable in his Zeal, and irresistible in his Power; and therefore still pressing forwards, to new Victories; still going on, from conquering to conquer.

The majestic Object is, all this while, advancing. At length, He approaches near enough, to hold a Conference with this devout Enquirer. One would naturally expect, that his Speech should be like his Aspect, alarming and tremendous. But Grace is on his Tongue, and his Lips drop Balm. *I that speak in Righteousness*: All whose Words are Faithfulness and Truth; an immoveable Foundation for the Faith of my People. *That speak of Righteousness* * :

* *Vox דבר loqui constructa cum præfixa ב, notat passim, phrasi sacra, loqui de re.*

Of that mysterious Righteousness, which is the Delight of my FATHER, and the Life of the World. To bring in which, is the Design of my Appearance on Earth, and to reveal it is the Office of my SPIRIT. By means of this Righteousness, I am *mighty to save* : To save thee ; to save any lost Sinner ; to save them, as with the Arm of Omnipotence, beyond all that they can think, even to the very uttermost.

Here, the Prophet seems to be somewhat at a Loss, and takes Leave to renew his Enquiry. If thou art come, not to destroy Men's Lives, but to save ; *Wherefore art thou red in thine Apparel, and thy Garments like Him that treadeth in the Wine-Fat ?* These indicate, not Deliverance, but Destruction. These are Tokens, not of forbearing Mercy, but of inexorable Vengeance.—'Tis true, replies the illustrious Hero, *I have trodden the Wine-Press* * ; I have

* *Trodden the Wine-Press.*—I can hardly forbear taking Notice of the great Impropriety, with which this Text and this Metaphor are frequently used by our theological Writers. They apply both to CHRIST, as bruised by his almighty FATHER ; and bearing the Weight of that Indignation, which was due to the Sins of Mankind. Nothing is more common, than to make this Text descriptive of his Agony in the Garden.—If indeed it had been said, *I am trodden in the Wine-Press*, the Image might not be improper. But when it is said, *I have trodden*, nothing can be more unsuitable to a State of Humiliation and Suffering. This Phrase evidently denotes Conquest and Triumph ; Enemies vanquished and totally destroyed. It should never therefore be applied to the agonizing, but to the triumphant SAVIOUR ; not to JESUS prostrate on the Ground, but to JESUS making his Foes his Footstool.

As I have taken Leave to animadvert upon a common Mistake, I would also take Liberty to pay Merit its due Honour ;

have crushed my Foes; I have trampled them under my Feet; and Repentance was hid from my Eyes. But thy Enemies were the Object of mine Indignation. Sin, and Death, and Hell are the vanquished Adversaries. It is their Blood, that is sprinkled upon my Garments, and that stains all my Raiment.— This Victory I have gained, by myself *alone*. Being infinitely too great in my Power, to want an Associate; and infinitely too jealous of my Honour, to accept of any Assistance. *Of the People*, whether in Heaven or on Earth, *there was none with me*; to afford the least Succour, or to take the least Share in the glorious Work. The Salvation of Sinners; their Deliverance from Wrath, and their Redemption to GOD; is, in all its Parts, my Act, even mine, and mine only. Yours be all the Benefit; mine all the Glory.

The Terms of Acceptance for *fallen Man*, were, A full Satisfaction to the *divine Justice*, and a *complete Conformity* to the divine Law. “ This, says

Honour; by recommending to my Reader a poetical Version of this Passage, given us by Dr. *Lowth*, in his very elegant Work, entitled *De sacra Poesi Hebræorum*. Where he understands the Text, in the Sense suggested above; and translates it, in the very Spirit of *Virgil*. As the Lines are few, and the Book may not be in the Hands of all my Readers, I will present them with a Transcript.

— — — *Ille patris vires indutus & iram,
Dira rubens graditur, per stragem & fracta potentium
Agmina, prona solo; prostratisque hostibus ultor
Insultat; cæx præla novo spumantia musto
Exercens, salit attritas calcator in uvæ,
Congestamque struem subigit: Cæde atra recenti
Crura madent, rorantque inspersæ sanguine vestes.*

“ Mr. *Wesley* to *Aspasio*, you take for granted, but I cannot allow.”—That *Aspasio* does not take these Points for granted, I thought, even his Enemies would confess. That he has attempted, at least, to make good his Opinion, all the World, besides yourself, Sir, will acknowledge. What else is the Design of Dialogue the *third* and *fourth*? What else is aimed at, in Dialogue the *seventh*, *eighth*, and *ninth*? The former treat largely of the full Satisfaction, given to divine Justice. The latter treat still more largely of the Conformity, demanded by the divine Law, and yielded by the divine *JESUS*.

These Things, however, “ You cannot allow.”—Not allow a full Satisfaction of divine Justice to be necessary! Are you not then acceding to the *Socinian*? Not allow a complete Conformity to the divine Law to be necessary! Are you not then warping to the *Antinomian*? See, Sir, how you approach the Rocks, both on the right Hand, and on the left. May the KEEPER of *Israel*, preserve yourself and your Followers, from suffering Shipwreck!—Every one, I think, must allow, what you deny; who believes the divine Justice to be infinite, and the divine Law to be unalterable. A Justice, that will admit of any Satisfaction, less than complete, can never be deemed infinite. And if the divine Law can rest satisfied with an Obedience that is defective, it is not so venerable as the Law of the *Medes* and *Persians*.

“ *The Terms of Acceptance for fallen Man*, you say, are Repentance and Faith.”—I must own, I don't much like the Expression *Terms*, unless it be referred to the Mediation of *CHRIST*. And you yourself, if you would act consistently, should not be over-fond of it, because it is not scriptural.

Though, for my own Part, I have no Quarrel against the Word, because it is not the exact Phraseology of Scripture, but because I dislike the Idea it conveys. Shall *we* treat with the DEITY, as free States or sovereign Princes treat with each other? The one obtaining from the other, Peace or some advantageous Concession, by complying with his Terms?

To confirm your Opinion, That “the Terms of “Acceptance for fallen Man, are Repentance and “Faith,” you produce the following Text; *Repent ye, and believe the Gospel.*—Here you write, like a Man of Sense; who knows, what just Disputation means. You lay aside your *certainlies*, your *undoubtedlies*, your *unquestionablies*; and urge a Proof from Scripture.—Whether you rightly understand, and duly apply this Proof, must now be enquired.

Repent ye, and believe the Gospel. This may be the Meaning of the Exhortation. *Repent*; relinquish all your wrong Notions, relating to the Way and Manner of finding Acceptance with the DEITY. *Believe the Gospel*; which opens a most unexpected Avenue, for the Communication of this Blessing. Which brings you Tidings of a Salvation, fully procured by the incarnate GOD, and freely offered to the unworthy Sinner.—The Word you know, is *μετανοεῖτε*. Which, in its primary Signification, denotes not so much a Reformation of Conduct, as a Change of Sentiment.

Suppose it to signify a Reformation of Conduct. The Meaning then may be as follows. *Repent*; forsake all your Vices, and all your Follies; mortify every evil Temper, and renounce every evil Way. In order to render this practicable, *believe*
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the Gospel. Wherein a SAVIOUR is preached and displayed. Who makes Peace for such Offenders; reconciles them to GOD; and obtains eternal Redemption for them. This will sweetly withdraw your Affections from Iniquity, and sweetly attach them to the blessed GOD. Whereas, without this powerful Expedient, you will never be delivered from the pleasing Witchcraft of your Lusts. Sin will always have Dominion over you, so long as you are under the Law, and not under Grace.—Repentance, thus understood, is not the Condition of obtaining Salvation, but the Fruit of Salvation obtained.

Besides; if Repentance be a Gift, it cannot be a Term or Condition. He must be a Stranger to the Import of Language, and the common Ideas of Mankind, who will take upon him to affirm the latter; and he must be yet a greater Stranger to the holy Word of GOD, who will offer to deny the former.—*CHRIST is exalted*, saith the Apostle, *to give Repentance.* Not to require it, as a Condition of Blessedness; but to give it, as a most eminent Blessing. Not require Repentance of fallen Man, who is not able to think a good Thought; but give it, from his unsearchable Riches; and work it, by his almighty Power.

You say, “The Terms of Acceptance for fallen Man, are, &c.”—Methinks, I should be glad to know, what you mean by *fallen Man*. Do you mean (as you tell us, in your Collection of Sermons) “One dead to GOD, and all the Things of GOD? Having no more Power to perform the Actions of a living Christian, than a dead Body to perform the Functions of a living Man?”

What Terms, I beseech you, can such a one fulfill? Be they ever so difficult, or ever so easy, it maketh no Difference. The Hand, stiff in Death, is no more able to move a Feather, than to remove a Mountain.—Whatever, therefore, others may affirm, you, Sir, cannot talk of Repentance, to be exercised by *fallen* Man; until he is quickened and enabled by Fellowship with *CHRIST*, the living and Life-giving Head. Unless you chuse, either to contradict your own Assertion, That fallen Man is absolutely dead to all Good. Or else think proper to maintain, That the Dead may not only act, but perform some of the most excellent Acts, and important Offices.

You should likewise, Sir, if you would write correctly and argue forcibly, have told us, what you mean by Faith. Otherwise, you may intend one Thing, and I another, even while we both use the same Word. In this Case, our Dispute might be as endless, as it must be fruitless.

By Faith I mean, what St. *John* calls, *A Receiving of CHRIST*. A Receiving of Him and his Benefits, as they are freely given, in the Word of Grace and Truth. If this, which is the Apostolical, be a proper Definition, then it seems not to come under the Denomination of a Condition. They must be excessive Refiners indeed, who would call my receiving a rich Present, the Terms or Conditions of possessing it. Or would esteem my eating at a plenteous Feast, the Terms and Conditions of enjoying it. Is not this to subtilize, till sound Sense is lost?

Faith, according to St. *Paul*, is a Persuasion, that *CHRIST* loved me, and gave himself for me. Where

is any Trace or any Hint of Conditionality, in this Description? I don't hear the Apostle saying; He loved me, provided I repent. He gave Himself for me, in case I think this, or do that. But He gave Himself for me, when I was ungodly, and *had* performed no Conditions; when I was without Strength, and *could* perform no Conditions.—Thus He gave Himself for me, that I might have Remission of Sins, through his Blood; and eternal Life, through his Righteousness.—Believing these delightful Truths, and receiving these heavenly Privileges, I love my most adorable Benefactor; and abhor those Iniquities, for which he wept, and groaned, and died.—That Love of *CHRIST*, is vital Holiness; and this Abhorrence of Sin, is practical Repentance. And both are the Fruits, therefore cannot be the Conditions, of Salvation by *JESUS*.

Some holy Men and excellent Writers, I confess, have not scrupled to call Faith and Repentance the Conditions of our Salvation. Yet I cannot prevail on myself to admire or approve the Language. I fear, it tends to embarrass the sincere Soul; to darken the Lustre of Grace; and to afford too much Occasion for Boasting.

To embarrass the sincere Soul—For, if I am saved on Conditions, this will naturally divert my Attention from the grand and all-sufficient Cause of Justification, the Righteousness of *CHRIST*; which alone gives solid Comfort. Instead of delighting myself in the *LORD REDEEMER*, I shall be engaged in an anxious Concern about the supposed Conditions. Whether I have performed them? Whether I have performed them aright? Whether there may not be some latent Defect, that spoils all,

and renders my Labour fruitless? The more serious our Minds are, and the more tender our Consciences, the more shall we be liable to Perplexity and Disquietude on this Head.

It eclipses the Lustre of Grace.—Ye are saved by Grace, says the Oracle of Heaven. But if Salvation be upon Conditions, it cannot be of Grace. It must, in some Measure at least, be of Works. Since it depends upon working the Conditions; it is obtained by working the Conditions; and the Candidate has Reason to look principally unto his Performance of the Conditions. They are to him, by incomparable Degrees, the most important Point. Because, without their all significant Interposition, every Thing else is as nothing. Even GOD's everlasting Love, and CHRIST's everlasting Righteousness, are, till the Conditions are fulfilled, but Cyphers without the initial Figure.

It affords too much Occasion for Boasting.—May I not, in this Case, thank my own Application and Industry? They, they exerted themselves successfully; and behold! the promised Reward is mine. What then should hinder me, from sacrificing unto my own Net, and burning Incense unto my own Drag?—At this Door the Notion of Merit will unavoidably creep in. Because my Performance of the Condition is meritorious of the *covenanted* Reward. So far meritorious, that the Reward is my due. I may demand it, as a Debt. And it will be an Act of apparent Injustice to with-hold it.—But shall these Things be said unto the ALMIGHTY? Will these Things redound to *the Praise of the Glory of his Grace*? Do these Things hide Vanity from Man; or consist with a Salvation, that is *without Money,*

Money, or without Price? Not quite so well, I believe, yourself will acknowledge, as the following Lines.

*Let the World their Virtue boast,
 Their Works of Righteousness;
 I, a Wretch undone and lost,
 Am freely sav'd by Grace:
 Other Title I disclaim,
 This, only this is all my Plea;
 I the chief of Sinners am,
 But JESUS died for me.*

“ Fallen Man, you say, is justified, not by perfect Obedience, but by Faith.”—“ Not by perfect Obedience.” Ah, Sir! If you had remembered the Immutability of GOD, and the Spirituality of his Law, you would not have challenged this Expression.—“ But by Faith.” Here, ’tis true, you use the Language of Scripture. Nevertheless it behoves a Watchman in *Israel*, to shew how the Language of Scripture may be abused. Faith, you allow, is imputed to us for Righteousness; therefore (you infer) not the Righteousness or perfect Obedience of *CHRIST*. This, if you mean any Thing, or would speak any Thing to the Purpose, must be your Way of arguing. So you would set Faith and *CHRIST*’s Righteousness at Variance. The former shall exclude the latter from its Office. Whereas, the former is only the Pitcher at the Fountain, while the latter is the very Water of Life. Is that blessed, glorious heavenly Expedient, which, received by Faith, justifies, sanctifies, saves.

According to your Gospel, Faith will say to the Righteousness of the REDEEMER; “ Depart

“ hence. I have no Need of thee. I myself act as
 “ the justifying Righteousness. *I stand in the Stead*
 “ *of perfect Obedience, in order to Acceptance with*
 “ *GOD*.*”—To this may we not reply? Was
 Faith then crucified for you? Has Faith magnified
 the divine Law? Or is it by Means of Faith, that
 not one Jot or Tittle of its Precepts pass unfulfilled?

If Faith, in this Sense, is imputed for Righteousness, how can you subscribe that emphatical Article, which declares; “ We are accounted righteous before GOD, *only* for the Merit of our LORD “ and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.” Surely, Sir, you are accounted righteous, for the Sake of *that*, whatever it be, which stands in the Stead of perfect Obedience. That, whatever it be, may claim the Honour; and to that Justice itself cannot but award the Prize.

If your Notion be true, the Believer ought to have his own Faith principally in View. Whatever presents me perfectly obedient before GOD, is my greatest Good; is my choicest Portion; the best Foundation for my Hope, my Peace, my Joy. To this, therefore, so long as I know my own Interest, I must chiefly look. Whereas, *look unto JESUS*, is the Direction of the HOLY GHOST. Look unto his perfect Atonement, and complete Righteousness, *and be saved*; is the grand unchangeable Edict, issued from the Throne of Grace.

Perhaps, you will say; Are not the Words of Scripture expressly on my Side? *Faith is imputed for Righteousness*. True. But is the Sense of Scripture on

* These are Mr. Wesley's own Words, in his Explication of this very Doctrine. See his Sermon on *the Righteousness of Faith*. Vol. I. p. 111.

on your Side? Suppose, I should undertake to prove, that *David* was purged from Guilt, by the Hyssop which groweth on the Wall; this you would think a wild and an impracticable Attempt. But should I not have the Words of Scripture expressly on my Side? *Purge me with Hyssop, and I shall be clean.* Yet should I not have the least Countenance imaginable from the Spirit and Sense of those sacred Writings. Has the Hyssop, a mean worthless Shrub, any Kind of Fitness, to stand in the Stead of the sacrificial Blood, and make the Atonement for Sin? No more Fitness has Faith, to stand in the Stead of perfect Obedience; to act as our justifying Righteousness; or procure our Acceptance with GOD.

“What *CHRIST* has done.”—Here Mr. *Wesley* himself speaks of what *CHRIST*, has done. He represents it by a very magnificent Image. He lays it as the Foundation of that first and most comprehensive Blessing, Justification. In this I most cordially agree with him. Hoping, that we shall unanimously join, to defend this important Sentiment, against all Opposition; and endeavour to display the REDEEMER’S Work, as well as his Passion, in all its glorious Excellency.

“What *CHRIST* has done is the Foundation of our Justification, not the Term or Condition.”—The Prophet *Isaiab* had other Notions of this Matter; *If thou shalt make his Soul an Offering for Sin, He shall see his Seed.* *If** is the hypothetic Language; denotes a Term; expresses a Condition;
on

* *Isa. liii. 10.* וְשַׁחֵט וְזָבַח, Si posueris. *Vocula* וְזָבַח valet conditionem, & recte vertitur per si. Patet enim clarissime, conditionem hic conjungi cum privilegio, praestita conditione obtinendo. VITRIN.

on the Performance of which, the MESSIAH *should see his Seed*; should have a numberless Multitude of Sinners, pardoned and renewed; born again of the SPIRIT, and made Heirs of Salvation. The grand Term, on which all these Blessings depend, and by which they are made sure to Believers, is, the pouring out of the MESSIAH's Soul, as a Sacrifice for their Sins, and a Ransom for their Persons.

“The Foundation, not the Condition.”—Methinks, you should offer some Reason for this Distinction. Especially, since St. *Paul* assures us; that *CHRIST* is, in the Work of Salvation, not this or that only, but He is ALL.—Especially, since *CHRIST* himself declares; *I am*, in that grandest of all Affairs, the Redemption of Sinners, *the Beginning and the Ending*. And well He may be so, since He is, as it follows in the Text, *the ALMIGHTY*.

Your Meaning, I presume, is; what *CHRIST* has done, is a Foundation for the Influence and Significancy of our own Doings. That they, under the Notion of Terms and Conditions, may come for a Share, and be his Co-adjutors in the great Work. This was the Doctrine, established by the Council of *Trent*; this is the Doctrine, still maintained in the Conclave of *Rome*; and is, perhaps, of all their Abominations the most refined, yet not the least dishonourable to our SAVIOUR. It bears the greatest Opposition to the Truth of his Gospel, and the Freeness of his Redemption.

I have heard it insinuated, that Mr. *Wesley* is a Jesuit in Disguise. This Insinuation I rejected, as the grossest Calumny; I abhorred, as Falsehood itself. I acquit you, Sir, from the Charge of being
a Jesuit

Jesuit or a Papist. But no body, I apprehend, can quit your Principles, from halting between Protestantism and Popery. They have stolen the unallowed Fire, and are infected with the Leaven of Antichrist. You have unhappily adopted some specious Papistical Tenets, and are listening to the Mother of Abominations, more than you are aware.

Amidst all your Mistakes (and from Mistakes who's exempt) I verily believe, your principal Aim is, the Honour of *CHRIST*, and the Edification of souls. Therefore I speak the more freely. Was you a Bigot to Selfishness, or a Devotee to Vain-Glory, such Liberty might be displeasing. But I am persuaded better Things of Mr. *Wesley*. He has publicly declared, That "wherein soever he is mistaken, his Mind is open to Conviction; and he sincerely desires to be better informed." This is written in the true Spirit of a Christian. To this Spirit I address myself. Begging of you, Sir, with the Sincerity and Tendernefs of a Brother, to consider these Hints impartially. Lest, being misled yourself, you mislead your thousands and ten thousands.

In the mean Time, I hope, you will not take it amiss, if, to my affectionate Entreaties, I add my earnest Prayers. That you, Sir, and your People, may be in the Number of those *blessed Men, unto whom GOD imputeth Righteousness without Works*. Which I take to be the first and great evangelical Privilege; as I am very sure, it is the richest Benefit, I know how to crave, either for you, or for your most, &c.



L E T T E R VII.

REV. SIR,

PERSONS skilled in the Dissection of animal Bodies, frequently mention *comparative Anatomy*. May I borrow the Term, and apply it to Theology? I do then freely declare, that in Case you censured *Aspasio*, for Points of Divinity, *comparatively small*, you should have no Opposition nor any Check from this Pen.

Some People for Instance, are of Opinion, that the Belief of a Parent is considerably beneficial to his Children. That, when St. Paul says to the anxious Jailor; *Believe on the LORD JESUS, and thou shalt be saved, and thy House*; he promises some special Good, that should redound to the Man's Household, from his own Receival of *CHRIST*. It seems, indeed, that the Apostle must intend something of this Nature; more than barely to say, Thy Family also, provided they follow thy Example, shall obtain Salvation with eternal Glory. If this were the whole of his Meaning, he need not have confined it to the Jailor's Domesticks, but might have extended it to all the Inhabitants of *Philippi*.

Such Tenets, whether admitted or rejected, affect not the *main* Point. Men may embrace which Side of the Question they think proper, and yet be found in the Faith of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. But Errors, relating

relating to *that Righteousness*, which is the one efficient Cause of Justification ; in which alone GOD is well pleased, and all his Perfections glorified ; which is the only Spring of solid Peace, and true Godliness ; such Errors are extremely pernicious. These we must withstand with Resolution and Zeal. We may not give Place to their Encroachment, no, not for an Hour. The former may be compared to a Fly, settled on the Dish ; the latter are more like Poison, mixed with our Food. To dislodge *that*, may not be amiss. But to prevent, or expel, or antidote *this*, is absolutely necessary. In the former Number, perhaps, the Reader will rank your Observation, which follows. But as I have undertaken to follow you Step by Step, I must not disregard it.

Aspasio, speaking of *David*, expresses a high Esteem for that Hero, King, and Saint. Allowing, that his Esteem were carried a little too far ; where would have been the great Hurt, or the grievous Offence ? How, Sir, could this have led to “ unsettled Notions in Religion * ? ”—I was inclined to answer your Reflections, as the Hero himself answered his censorious Brother, *Is there not a Cause ?* Then passing on to another Subject, as He, perfectly Master of himself, and nobly superior to the Affront, turned to another Person. But as you seem to have injured *David*, and not done Justice to the Truth, I shall hardly be excused, if I dismiss the Matter, without some more particular Notice.

GOD himself dignifies *David* with the most exalted of all Characters, says *Aspasio*.—“ Far, very far

* The Reader will please to remember, that the Pamphlet, which contains the Remarks under Consideration, is entitled *A Preservative against unsettled Notions in Religion*.

“ far from it; says Mr. *Wesley*. We have more
 “ exalted Characters than *David's*.”—Where, Sir? Shew me, in any of the Saints, or in any of the sacred Writers, a more devout, or a more divine Spirit, than that which breathes in the Pen Man of the *Psalms*. For my own Part, I know nothing superior to it, in any Author, or in any Language. Neither can I conceive a more exalted Character, than the Character given of *David*, *A Man after GOD's own Heart*. If GOD be an unerring Judge, if *his* Approbation be the infallible Standard, this Description must express the most consummate human Worth. Say whatever you will of a Person, it does not, it cannot, exceed this most illustrious Testimony.

“ But this is said of *David* in a particular Respect.”—Ay! Notwithstanding the HOLY SPIRIT has declared concerning him; *A Man after mine own Heart, who shall perform all my Will*. If you was expounding this Text, would you think it right to say? He shall perform *all my Will*, that is, he shall serve me in *some particular Respect*.—“ It was not said, with regard to his whole Character.” No! Not when the SPIRIT of Inspiration has borne this Witness to *David*; *His Heart was perfect with the LORD his GOD*. Could his Heart be *perfect*, yet not influence his *whole* Conduct?—“ But it was said in the second or third Year of *Saul's* Reign.” Therefore it was not applicable to him, during the future Years of his Life. This is the Inference you would draw. But can you really think it a just one? Or would you call *that* Person, a Man after GOD's own Heart; who is singularly pious in the Days of his

his Youth, but swerves and declines in his advanced Age?

Notwithstanding all these Remonstrances, you push Matters to the utmost. As though it was a Point of the last Importance, to prove *David* an errant Backslider. With this View, you add; “But was he a Man after *GOD*’s own Heart, all his Life, or in all Particulars? So far from it, that”—Stop, Sir, I beseech you. And, before you speak unadvisedly with your Lips, hear what the *LORD* himself replies, to both your Interrogatories; *David did that which was right in the Eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any Thing that he commanded him, all the Days of his Life, save only in the Matter of Uriah the Hittite.* Surely, you was not aware, that such Things are written in the Book of *GOD*. Otherwise, you would not have contradicted them, with so much Boldness. I will, therefore, put the most charitable Construction upon your Procedure, and say with the Apostle; *I wot, that through Inadvertence you did it.*

There is not a just Man upon Earth, that sinneth not, is a Text quoted by *Aspasio*. Upon which Mr. *Wesley* observes; “*Solomon* might truly say so, before *CHRIST* came.”—According to this Insinuation, what *Solomon* said in his *Proverbs* and other Books, was said only by a short-sighted Mortal. Who might adapt his Instructions to the present Oeconomy; but was not able to plan a System of Morals for Futurity. Whereas, I always supposed, that his Writings were dictated by that infinitely wise *SPIRIT*, before whom all Times are present, and to whom all Events are known. Agreeably to this Supposition, *St. Paul* informs us; That *whatsoever*

ever

ever Things were written afore-time, whether by Solomon or any other Prophet, were written for our Learning.—No; suggests Mr. Wesley. Here is something written, which appertains not to us Christians. We are above it.—Are you so? Your Reason for these lofty Apprehensions?—Why, “St John affirms, “Whosoever is born of GOD, sinneth not.”

True; he sinneth not habitually. It is not his customary Practice. Thus the Passage is explained by another Apostle; *Sin*, though it may make Insurrection, does not reign in his mortal Body. Though it may assault him, yet it has not Dominion over him.—

Again; He sinneth not, is the same Way of speaking, and to be understood with the same Limitation, as that Text in Job. HE giveth not Account of any of his Matters. How, Sir, would you interpret these Words? It is undeniably certain, that sometimes GOD giveth Account of his Matters. He gave it to Abraham, when Sodom, and Gomorrah, and the Cities about them, were to be destroyed with Brimstone and Fire from Heaven. You would therefore, I presume, in some such qualified Sense expound the Passage; “He giveth not Account; it is not his usual Way. Not a customary Procedure with the supreme Disposer of Things. He generally requireth his Creatures to transact with Him upon Trust. To give themselves up, with an implicit Resignation, to the Veracity of his Word, and the Good-Pleasure of his Will.”—The Harmony of Scripture, and the Necessity of the Case, call upon you to give the same Exposition of the Text before us.

I said, The Necessity of the Case. For, you will please to observe; the Thing affirmed, is affirmed in
such

such a Manner, that it must be applied to every individual Christian, and at the very Instant of his commencing a true Christian. The Apostle says not, A Saint of the first Rank, but *whosoever*. He says not, After such a one has been, for a considerable Time, born of GOD; but *whosoever is born*, is but just entered upon the desirable State, *sinneth not*. The Character belongs to the very weakest Believer. The Description is suited even to Babes in *CHRIST*. To suppose, therefore, that it implies an entire Freedom from Sin, Infirmary, and Defect; is to suppose, that all the Children of the Regeneration, are born in a State of Manhood; or rather, are more than Men, even while they are Infants of a Day.

Our Sense of the Passage is free from this Impropriety, yet gives no Countenance to Immorality. *Whosoever is born of GOD sinneth not*. He does not, he cannot sin, like the Devil, or one actuated by the diabolical Nature. This Interpretation is rendered probable, by the Apostle's Antithesis; *He that committeth Sin is of the Devil*. It is rendered necessary, by the preceding Remark, and by the Experience of Christians.—The Text, thus interpreted, is applicable to the Babe in *CHRIST*, as well as to the Adult. Though either of them may fall, through the Violence or Surprise of Temptation, yet neither of them can live and die in allowed Iniquity, whether of Omission or Commission. They cannot have a settled Love to any known Sin, nor can they commit it with the full Consent of their Will.

Solomon, when he uttered those humbling Words *, had his Eye upon what you somewhere call, “ the
“ inconceivable Purity and Spirituality of the sa-

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“ cred

* Eccl. vii. 20.

“ cred Precepts.” Upon that universal Obedience which they require, in every the minutest Instance.—That we do nothing, great or small, which they forbid. Leave nothing undone, in Heart or Life, which they enjoin.—That we do all this, in the most perfect Degree. Not only serving the LORD, but serving Him with all our Strength. Not only loving our Neighbour, but loving him as our own Soul. Ever exercising the utmost Regularity of Affection and Desire; ever maintaining the utmost Rectitude of Temper and Thought.—If you also, Sir, had your Eye fixed upon the same Law, as it delineates and demands this “inconceivable Purity and “Spirituality;” you would not scruple to acquiesce in the wise Man’s Confession, nor think much to adopt it as your own. You would acknowledge it calculated, not only for the *Mosaic* Æra, and the Meridian of *Judea*, but for all Times and all Places; till those new Heavens, and that new Earth appear, wherein dwelleth consummate Righteousness.

In many Things we offend all. “That St. *James* “does not speak this of himself, or real Christians, “will clearly appear to all, who impartially consider the Context.”—I wish, Sir, you had made this appear to *one*; even to him, whom you honour with this Address. Then I should not have been obliged to ask; Of whom speaketh the Apostle?—He says, *My Brethren*. Does not this imply true Believers, and real Christians?—He says, *We Teachers**. Does not this comprehend himself, and describe his Office?—He adds, *We all*. If he himself, and real Christians, are not included in this most comprehensive

* The Original is, not *κυριοι* *Masters*, but *διδασκαλοι* *Teachers*.

henfive Clause; I would desire to know, in what Terms they could possibly be comprised.

According to this Interpretation, the Arguing is just, and the Conclusion forcible. As though he had said,—“ My dear Brethren; though you are
 “ truly converted to Christianity, yet do not unad-
 “ visedly engage in the arduous and awful Work of
 “ the Ministry. Remembering, that we Ministers
 “ of the Gospel, shall be subject to a stricter Judg-
 “ ment*, than Christians in ordinary Life; and if,
 “ upon Trial, we are found faithless, shall receive a
 “ heavier Condemnation †.—The Danger, let me
 “ add, is very considerable. Because, such is the
 “ Frailty of our mortal State, that the very best
 “ among us, and those conversant in sacred Things,
 “ cannot always walk uprightly; but, in many In-
 “ stances, we trip, we stumble, we offend.”

Whereas, if neither the Apostle himself, nor real Christians, be meant; I can see no Propriety, nor Force in the Reasoning. Nay; I can see no Reasoning at all; though the illative Particle *for* evidently requires it. Nothing but a most insipid and frivolous Assertion. “ For, in many Things, we
 “ that are not real Christians, offend.” Is this a Discovery, worthy of Apostolical Wisdom? Is this all, that the inspired St. *James* meant to declare? You and I could have told him and his People a great deal more. Whosoever is not a real Christian offends, not in *many* Things only, but in *every* Thing. To such a one nothing is pure. His Mind and Conscience are defiled. His whole Life is Sin.

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We

* † *Judgment, Condemnation*—The Word *νεμωα* may be taken in both these Significations.

We have examined this Objection, as it stands in itself. Let us now take a View of it, as it may appear in its Consequences.—*In many Things we offend all.* “The Apostle speaks not of himself, nor of “real Christians.” What fine Work would our Adversaries make with the Scriptures, if we should allow them Mr. *Wesley’s* Liberty of Interpretation! Tell a *Pelagian*, that all Mankind is depraved. Prove the universal Depravity, by that abasing Text; *All we, like Sheep, have gone astray.* How easily may he reply; *All we,* does not mean all Mankind. The Prophet speaks not of himself, nor of virtuous Persons. But only of profane People, and Men of the baser Sort.—Tell an *Arian*, that our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* is very *GOD*. Confirm the glorious Truth, by that most cogent Text; *In HIM dwells all the Fulness of the GODHEAD.* The Heretic has nothing more to do, than, in Mr. *Wesley’s* Manner, to answer; *All Fulness* does not mean all the divine Perfections, but only some Pittance or Portion of them.—Dear Sir, whenever you are disposed to criticise again, let me beseech you to consider a little, the Import of Language, and the Consequences of Things.

Had the Words been, *In many Things we offend*, you might, by disregarding the Context, have borrowed some slight seeming Countenance for your Criticism, from Verse the ninth. Where the Apostle is supposed to personate the Wicked, *Therewith curse we Man.* But in the Place under Consideration, he enlarges the Sentiment, and strengthens the Language. Though free from that particular Crime, he was not free from this general Charge. Here therefore he spares not himself. He takes Shame

to himself. And teaches the most upright of the human Race, to plead guilty before their Judge. We the Servants of GOD; we the Ambassadors of *CHRIST*; we *all**—not one excepted—in many Things offend.—Where then could *they*, and O! where can *you* and *I*, look for our Perfection; but only in our divinely gracious SURETY, BRIDE-GROOM, HEAD? There let us seek it, where some excellent Lines (whose Author you may probably know) have taught us to find it.

*Now let me climb Perfection's Height,
And into nothing fall;
Be less than nothing in thy Sight,
While CHRIST is all in all.*

In the Paragraph which begins, “ O Children of *Adam*,” you don't distinguish what the Law is *made* to speak, according to a new Scheme of Divinity; and what it really *does* speak to true Believers, on the Principles of the Gospel. Give me Leave, to rectify your Mistakes; and to point out the Manner, in which you should have expressed yourself.

To rectify your Mistakes—You suppose the Law, upon *Aspasio's* Plan, speaking to this Effect. “ O Children of *Adam*, you are no longer obliged to love the LORD your GOD with all your Heart.” Indeed you are. The Obligation remains, and is unalterable. But it has been fully satisfied, as the Condition of Life and Immortality, by the Believer's glorious SURETY.—“ Once I insisted on absolute Purity of Heart. Now I can dispense with some Degrees of evil Desire.” No such Thing. Every

* *Ne seipfos quidem excipiunt Apostoli.* BENGEL. in loc.

Degree of evil Desire I condemn with inexorable Rigour. But every such Offence has been thus condemned, and thus punished, in the Flesh of your crucified LORD.—“ Since *CHRIST* has fulfilled the Law for you, you need not fulfil it.” Rather, you need not fulfil it, in order to the Justification of your Persons, or to obtain eternal Life and Glory. This, to you the greatest of Impossibilities, has been performed in your Behalf, by a *MEDIATOR* and a *REDEEMER*, to whom nothing is impossible.—“ I will connive at, yea, accommodate my Demands to your Weakness.” Not this, but what is much better. I see no sinful Weaknesses in you. Because, they are all covered * with the resplendent Robe of your *SAVIOUR*’s Righteousness. Therefore, I no longer curse, but bless you, and sign your Title to everlasting Happiness.—Thus the Enmity of our Nature is slain. Thus the Precepts, even the strictest Precepts, become amiable and desirable. We love the Law, which, through our dear *REDEEMER*, is no longer against us, but on our Side. Is a Messenger of Peace, and bears Witness to our Completeness in *CHRIST*.

The Manner, in which you should have expressed yourself—This is what the Law speaks, according to *Aspasio*’s Doctrine. “ O Believers in *CHRIST*, I
“ am,

* *Psal.* xxxii. 1. *Blessed is he, whose Iniquities are covered.* Upon this Text *St. Jerom* very ingeniously, and very comfortably descants; *Quod tegitur, non videtur; quod non videtur, non imputatur; quod non imputatur, non punietur.* That which is covered, is not seen; that which is not seen, is not imputed; that which is not imputed, shall not be punished.

“ am, like my divine Author, consummate and un-
 “ changeable. I did require, I do require, and
 “ ever shall require, perfect Love to GOD; per-
 “ fect Charity to your Neighbour; and perfect Ho-
 “ linefs, both in Heart and Life. Never abating
 “ one Tittle of these my Requirements, I shall de-
 “ nounce the Curse upon every Disobedience; upon
 “ the least Departure from absolute Perfection.—
 “ But this is your Comfort, Believers; that the
 “ Curse is executed upon your most holy SURETY.
 “ This is your Comfort, Believers; that my Pre-
 “ cepts have been fully obeyed by *JESUS* your
 “ SAVIOUR. As this was done, in your Nature,
 “ and in your Stead, I am satisfied, and you are
 “ justified. Now, though I can never dispense with
 “ any Fault, nor connive at any Infirmary; yet I
 “ behold all your Faults laid upon IMMANUEL.
 “ I behold all his Righteousness put upon you.
 “ And on *his* Account, I acquit you; I accept you;
 “ and pronounce you righteous*.”

This is the Language of the Law to the Faithful,
 as they are in *CHRIST JESUS*. This is the
 Spirit of *Aspasio's* Conversation with his Friend *The-
 ron*. The native Tendency of this Doctrine, and its

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* I think, it is no Misrepresentation, to suppose the
 Law speaking, in this Manner, to the Believers.—Be-
 cause, to them *all Things are become new*. Consequently,
 the Voice of the Law is new.—Because, *all Things are
 theirs*. If so, the Sentence of the Law is theirs. Not to
 overwhelm them with Confusion, but to make them joy-
 ful through Hope.—Because, this is the Language of the
 almighty LAWGIVER, to the Redeemed of the *LORD
 JESUS*; and surely the Law will not jar, but harmonize
 with its Author, saying; *How shall I curse whom GOD
 hath not cursed? Or how shall I defy, whom the LORD
 hath not defied?*

powerful Agency in producing true Holiness, are professedly displayed in the tenth Letter; and not obscurely hinted, in various other Places. If you can prove, that it has a contrary Tendency; you will prove, that *the Grace of GOD* does no longer *teach us to deny*, but prompt us to commit *Ungodliness*. An Attempt, in which, with all my Esteem for your Person, and Deference to your Abilities, I cannot wish you *GOD speed*.

“ Does the Righteousness of GOD ever mean “ (as you affirm) the Merits of *CHRIST*?”— Where do I affirm this, Sir? Be pleased to produce the Passage. At least refer us to the Page.—*Aspasio*, in the Place which offends you, speaks of what *CHRIST* has done and suffered; of his active and passive Obedience. These Expressions you change into “ The Merits of *CHRIST*.” Which, being an ambiguous Phrase, may serve to perplex the Cause, rather than clear up the Difficulty. Give me Leave, therefore, to restore *Aspasio*’s Words, and to state the Question fairly.

“ Does the Righteousness of GOD ever signify “ the active and passive Obedience of *CHRIST*?” To this Mr. *Wesley* replies, “ I believe not once in “ all the Scripture.”—Why then, Sir, do you not disprove, what *Aspasio* has advanced, in Support of this Interpretation? *You* believe one Thing: *He* believes another. And there is this *little* Difference, in the Ground you respectively go upon. He appeals to Argument, and Scripture. You rest the whole Matter, upon this single Bottom, “ I believe so.”

You proceed—“ It (that is the Righteousness of “ GOD) often means, and particularly in the “ Epistle to the *Romans*, GOD’s Method of justifying

“ fying

“ fying Sinners.”—Suppose, I should say, in my Turn; This Phrase never means, no, not in the Epistle to the *Romans*, GOD’s Method of justifying Sinners. I should then argue in your own Way. Bring a Shield, suited to your Sword. Just as good an Argument to defend, as you have brought to destroy my Opinion. What would the judicious Reader say, on such an Occasion? Would he not smile, and cry; “ A goodly Pair of Disputants truly !”

But let me ask; Does the Holiness of GOD signify his Method of sanctifying Sinners? Does the Wisdom of GOD signify his Method of making Sinners wise? This no Mortal has suspected. This you yourself will hardly venture to assert. Why then should we take your Word, when, without assigning the least Reason, you dictate and declare, “ The Righteousness of GOD means his Method of justifying Sinners?”—You must pardon us, Sir, if we prefer St. *Peter’s* Judgment. His Judgment, in that memorable Passage; *Who have obtained like precious Faith in the Righteousness of our GOD, even of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.* This Sentence is a Key to all those Texts in the New Testament, and many of those in the Old, which mention the Righteousness of GOD. Here, it necessarily signifies the Righteousness of *CHRIST*; because, none else is our GOD and SAVIOUR. Here, it confessedly signifies the Object of justifying Faith. Which cannot be the essential Righteousness of an absolute GOD, but must be the vicarious Righteousness of an incarnate GOD. And why should you scruple to call the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, the Righteousness of GOD? Since his Blood is called, the Blood of GOD. His Life, which

which he laid down for us, is called the Life of GOD. And he himself, as the Author of our Salvation, is called *J E H O V A H* (or GOD self-existent and everlasting) *our Righteousness*.

It is possible, you may produce some Commentators of Eminence, who coincide or have led the Way, in this your Interpretation. But may we not ask them, as well as yourself, on what Authority they proceed?—Is this the plain and natural Signification of the Words? No; but an apparent Force upon their natural Import.—Does this tend to fix and ascertain the Sense of the Passage? No; but it gives the Passage such a rambling Turn, as will accommodate itself to the Sentiments of Arians or Socinians, Arminians or Papists.—Is this reconcilable with the Tenour of Scripture? *He hath made HIM to be Sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of GOD in Him.* Make a Trial of your Interpretation upon this distinguished Text. See, how it will accord with common Sense, or the Analogy of Faith. That we might be made the Righteousness of GOD; that is, “That we might be made GOD’s Method of justifying Sinners.” Can you yourself, Sir, upon an impartial Review, be pleased with *such* Interpretations of sacred Writ?

How much more noble, and how much more comfortable, is the easy and obvious Sense; which the Words, in a most beautiful Climax, afford! He made *CHRIST*, who was perfectly free from Sin, both in Heart and Life; GOD made Him to be Sin, justly chargeable with it, and justly punishable for it. That we, who are full of Sin, both original and actual, might be made *righteous*—and not barely righteous, but (which is a much stronger Expression)

sion) *Righteousness itself*—yea, that we might be made, what exceeds all Parallel, and passes all Understanding, *the Righteousness of GOD* *. Might have that very Righteousness for our Justification, which the GOD of all Perfection, uniting Himself to our Nature, wrought, finished, and infinitely enobled.

Mr. *Samuel Clarke*, in his Annotations on this Verse, on *Rom. i. 17.* on *Rom. x. 3.* writes in the same vague and unsatisfactory Manner as yourself. I could mention another celebrated Commentator, who leans to this timid and trimming Scheme.—I speak thus freely, because I look upon the Article of Justification through the Righteousness of our GOD and SAVIOUR, to be the supreme distinguishing Glory of Christianity. Because, I consider it as the richest, incomparably the richest Privilege of the Christian. To have a Righteousness—a consummate Righteousness—the very Righteousness of the incarnate GOD—dignified with all the Perfections of the divine Nature—to have this Righteousness imputed for our Justification! Matchless, inconceivable Blessing!

* *St. Chrysostom* expounds the important Passage, in much the same Manner. His Words are worthy, not only to be copied in a Note, but to be written on our Hearts. Ποιῶ ταῦτα λογος, ποιος ταῦτα παρασῆσαι δυνατῆσαι νος; Τον γαρ δικαιον, φησιν, εποιησεν αμαρτωλον, ινα τες αμαρτωλους ποιηση δικαιους. Μαλλον δε εδε ειπεν, αλλ' ο πολλω μειζον ην. Ου γαρ εξιν εθηκεν, αλλ' αυτην την ποιοληα. Ου γαρ ειπεν, εποιησεν αμαρτωλον, αλλ' αμαρταν. Ινα κη ημεεις γενωμεθα, εκ ειπε, δικαιοι, αλλα δικαιοσυνη, κη Θεε δικαιοσυνη. *What Words can express, or what Thoughts can conceive, the Greatness of these Things? He made the RIGHTEOUS ONE a Sinner, that He might make wretched Sinners righteous. This, though marvellously great, is not all. The Word is not in the Concrete, but in the Abstract. He made the JUST ONE, not a Sinner, but Sin; that we might be made, not righteous only—but Righteousness itself—yea, the Righteousness of GOD.*

Blessing ! This fills the Believer's Heart with inexpressible Comfort and Joy. This displays the Grace of GOD, in the most charming and transporting Light. This constitutes the most engaging Motive to Love, to Holiness, and to all willing Obedience.

Let us not then treat of it, in such *diluting* Terms, or in such a *compromising* Strain, as shall defeat the Efficacy of the heavenly *Cordial*, or deliver up the precious *Depositum* to the Enemies of the Gospel. Let us rather, by a clear and full *Manifestation of the Truth*, of this capital and leading Truth especially, *commend ourselves to every Man's Conscience*. Their Humour may dislike it, their Prejudice may reject it; but their Conscience, whenever it awakes, and gains the Ascendant, will embrace it; will cleave to it; and rejoice in it.

But stay. Let me proceed cautiously. Not triumph immaturely. You rally your Forces, and prepare for a fresh Attack. *Aspasio* tells his Friend; That the Righteousness of GOD, signifies a Righteousness of the most super-eminent Dignity. Such as is worthy to be called by his Name, and may justly challenge his Acceptance. To this you reply, "I cannot allow it at all."—*Aspasio* supports his Opinion by Scripture, by Reason, and by a very respectable Authority. All which Mr. *Wesley* would confront and overthrow, by that one irrefragable Proof, "I cannot allow it at all."—Surely, said I, upon reading such controversial Triflings, delivered with the Air of Oracular Responses; surely this Letter must have stolen its Way into the World. It was designed as a Preservative for Mr. *Wesley's* private Societies only. It could never be intended for public View, and general Examination. Since every
Reader

Reader is treated, not as his Judge, no, nor as his Equal, but as his Pupil. Not as one, that is to be addressed with Argument, and convinced by Reasoning, but as a tame Disciple, that is to acquiesce in the great Preceptor's solemn "SAY SO."

To your next Paragraph I have no material Objection. I might indeed complain of an unfair Quotation. But I shall only observe, that you would discard the Expression, *Imputation of Righteousness*, and insert in its Stead, *Interest in CHRIST*. You had not always, Sir, such an Aversion to the Phrase imputed. Witness that Stanza in one of your Hymns;

*Let Faith and Love combine
To guard your valiant Breast,
The Plate be Righteousness divine,
Imputed and imprest.*

However, in this Place I am willing to gratify you. Because, it will be difficult to shew, how a Sinner can have a real Interest in *CHRIST*, in what he has done and what he has suffered, any other Way, than by Imputation. I am willing to gratify you, provided you do not entertain that strange Conceit, of an *incomplete* Interest, or an Interest in Half the *REDEEMER*. But look upon the Holiness of his Nature, the Obedience of his Life, and the Atonement of his Death, as the one undivided inestimable Treasure, in which every believing Sinner is interested. As that which is the all sufficient Cause of his Justification; rendering acceptable, first his Person, then his Performances; and, at the last, introducing him, with Dignity and Triumph, into everlasting Habitations.

Here I lay down my Pen; unless you will permit me to relate a little Piece of History, not foreign to your last Sentiment.—A certain General, happened to observe a common Soldier distinguishing himself, on the Day of Battle, with uncommon Activity and Courage. Determined to reward Merit, wherever it was found, he advanced the brave Plebeian to a Captain's Post. Who had not long enjoyed the Honour, before he came to his Benefactor, and, with a dejected Countenance, begged Leave to resign his Commission. The General, surpris'd at such an unexpected Request, asked him the Reason. Your Officers, said the Petitioner, being Gentlemen of Family and Education, think it beneath them to associate or converse with a Rustic. So that, now, I am abandoned on every Side; and am less happy, since my Preferment, than I was before this Instance of your Highness's Favour.—Is this the Cause of your Uneasiness? replied the General. Then it shall be redress'd, and very speedily. To Morrow I review the Army, and to Morrow your Business shall be done.—Accordingly, when the Troops were drawn up; and expected, every Moment, to begin their Exercise; the General calls the young Hero from the Ranks; leans his Hand upon his Shoulder; and, in this familiar endearing Posture, walks with him through all the Lines.—The Stratagem had its desired Effect. After such a signal and public Token of his Prince's Regard, the Officers were desirous of his Acquaintance; and courted, rather than shunned, his Company.

And will not the Favour of the blessed *JESUS*, give us as great a Distinction, and as high a Recommendation, in the heavenly World? Will not the

Angelic Hosts respect and honour those Persons, who appear washed in his Blood; cloathed with his Righteousness; and wearing the most illustrious Tokens of his Love, that he himself could possibly give?—In these Tokens of his Love may we and our Readers be found! Then shall we meet one another with Courage and Comfort, at the great Tribunal; with Honour and Joy, amidst the Angels of Light; with everlasting Exultation and Rapture, around the Throne of the L A M B.

Under such pleasing Hopes I take my Leave at present, and remain your, &c.



L E T T E R VIII.

REV. SIR,

YOU introduce the Paragraph, that comes next under our Consideration, by a very just Distinction. *Aspasio* had observed, that a Rebel may be forgiven, without being restored to the Dignity of a Son. To which you reply; “A Rebel against an earthly King may; but not a Rebel against GOD. In the very same Moment that GOD forgives, we are the Sons of GOD.”—This is perfectly right. But hence to infer, that the Conversation of our two Friends is no better than “an idle Dispute,” is not very polite, and not at all conclusive. Because, Remission of the Offence, and Restoration to Favour, may come, in the same Moment, and yet be different

different Blessings. That afflicted Patient, mentioned in the Gospel, had, at the same Instant, his Ears opened and the String of his Tongue loosed. Were these Effects, therefore, one and the same Kind of Healing?—Besides; why are Forgiveness and Sonship united in the divine Donation? Because, the Sufferings of a Sinner, and the Obedience of a Son, were united in the divine REDEEMER. So that we must still have our Eye, our believing and adoring Eye, upon the meritorious Righteousness of our LORD.

“ Pardon and Acceptance, though, &c.” Here I see nothing but the *crambe repetita*.—“ The Words “ of Job, &c.” Here I see nothing but the usual Argument, our Master’s *ipse dixit*. Therefore we will pass on to the next Period.

Two Texts of Scripture are produced. You set aside *Aspasio’s* Interpretation, to make Way for one of your own. Which might have passed without Suspicion, if it had appeared in your Sermons, or been delivered from your Pulpit. Where a Person may be content with the general Sense, without entering upon a critical Nicety. But, by rejecting *Aspasio’s* Exposition, you seem to intend a peculiar Degree of Accuracy. Let us then examine the Passages, with such a View.—*Grace reigneth through Righteousness unto eternal Life*; “ that is, the free “ Love of GOD brings us, through Justification “ and Sanctification to Glory.”

In this, I question, Sir, whether you are exactly orthodox. You lead the Reader to suppose, that Sanctification is as much the Cause of Glory as Justification. That *CHRIST’s* Work, and our Graces, have just the same Weight; act in the very same Capacity;

Capacity; have, at least, a joint Influence, in procuring eternal Life.—You should rather have expressed yourself in some such Manner; “The free
“ Grace of GOD brings us, through the joyful
“ Privilege of Justification, first to Sanctification,
“ or the Love of his blessed Self; then to Glory, or
“ the Enjoyment of his blessed Self.”

Besides; you neglect the Significancy of that beautiful and emphatical Word, *reigneth*. On this much Stress ought to be laid in reading the Sentence; therefore, it ought not to be totally over-looked in explaining the Sentence. Grace is *discovered* in other Instances. Grace is *exercised* in other Blessings. But by giving us eternal Life; by giving it freely, even when we are undeserving guilty Creatures; this ever amiable Attribute *reigneth*. It is manifested with every grand and charming Recommendation. It appears, like the illustrious *Solomon*, when seated on his inimitably splendid Throne of Ivory and Gold: Or like the magnificent *Ahasuerus*, when he shewed the Riches of his glorious Kingdom, and the Honour of his excellent Majesty.

Another Particular I cannot persuade myself to admire. You change the Word *Righteousness* into *Justification*. Instead of saying, “Brings us through
“ Righteousness;” you say, “Brings us through
“ Justification.” By this Language, you scarce distinguish yourself from any Heretic. You may rank with the Arian, or with the Sectarist of any Denomination. They will, every one, allow the Necessity of Justification, in order to final Felicity. But not the Necessity of a Righteousness adequate to the Demands of the Law, as a Foundation for this blessed Hope.—You do just the same Injury to

CHRIST and his Righteousness, which obtain this inconceivable Recompence of Reward; as you would receive from a Messenger, who carries a rich Present to your Friend, but will not acknowledge from whom it comes. It comes, he confesses, from some Man; but obstinately refuses to say from Mr. *John Wesley*. Whereas, *Aspasio* scruples not to own, nay, rejoices to declare, from whence the invaluable Benefit of Justification proceeds. Not from Works of the Law; no, nor from Works of the SPIRIT; from nothing done by us, from nothing wrought in us; but wholly from the Blood and Obedience of *JESUS CHRIST*.

The next Passage, on which you descant, is; *That they may receive Forgiveness, and a Lot among the Sanctified*. Thus, you translate the Original. *Aspasio*, not affecting needless Novelty, is content with the common Version. *That they may receive Forgiveness of Sins, and Inheritance among all them that are sanctified, by Faith that is in ME.*—Why do you omit the Word *Sins*? Forgiveness, I own, implies it. But the Apostle chuses to express it. By which means, the Sentence becomes more full and emphatical. Grace is more highly honoured, and Man more deeply abased.—I wonder also, why you should prefer *Lot* to *Inheritance*, which is the usual Translation. The latter Word conveys a much more noble and pleasing Idea to the *English* Reader, than the former.—*Receive Forgiveness of Sins*; not earn it (let us mark this) by performing Conditions, but receive it, as an absolute Gift. Just as *Joseph's* Brethren received the Portions, sent them from the Viceroy of *Egypt's* Table.—*Receive an Inheritance*; consisting of all spiritual Blessings here, and a Title to everlasting

ing Blessedness hereafter. All which are bestowed as freely, as the several Portions of Land in *Canaan* were, by *Moses* and *Joshua* consigned over to the Tribes of *Israel* for a Possession.—Among those that are sanctified. If you should enquire, how Sinners are sanctified? The Answer is added; *By Faith which is in ME.* Not for Faith, as your conditional Scheme supposes; but by Faith. By accepting the Blessings mentioned; by looking upon them as our own; through the divine Gift; and by living in the delightful Enjoyment of them. Thus our Hearts are won to GOD, and filled with his Love. Thus they are weaned from Vanity, and renewed in true Holiness.

Is the Satisfaction made by *CHRIST*'s Death, sufficient to obtain both our full Pardon, and our final Happiness? *Aspasio* has answered this Question in the Negative. He has confirmed his Opinion, by the Authority of Scripture, and the Testimony of Reason. Mr. *Wesley* thinks it enough to reply; “Unquestionably it is sufficient, and neither of the “Texts you cite prove the contrary.”—How easy, by this Way of arguing, to overthrow any System, and silence Demonstration itself!—But pray, Sir, be pleased to recollect yourself. Did you not, a little while ago, extol *Aspasio* as “unquestionably right,” because he made the *universal* Obedience of *CHRIST*, from his Birth to his Death, the one Foundation of his Hope? Yet here you condemn him, as “unquestionably wrong,” because he does not attribute all to *CHRIST*'s Death *exclusively*. Will Mr. *Wesley* never have done with Self-Contradiction? Why will he give me such repeated Cause to complain?—*Quo teneam vultus, &c.*

If it was requisite for Christ to be baptized, argues *Aspasio*, much more to fulfil the moral Law.—“ I cannot prove, replies Mr. *Wesley*, that either one or the other was requisite, in order to his purchasing Redemption for us.” Why then do you admit his Obedience to the moral Law, as an essential Part of the Foundation of your Hope? A tottering Foundation methinks, which is laid in a Doctrine you cannot prove.

But if you cannot prove it, may not others prove it for you? You are not called to prove this Point, Sir, but only to disprove, what *Aspasio* has advanced, in Confirmation of it.—That it was requisite for our LORD to be baptized, He himself acknowledges. Speaking of that sacred Rite, he says, *Thus it becometh us to fulfil all Righteousness. It becometh*; was it not requisite for CHRIST, always to act the becoming Part? In every Circumstance to demean himself, according to the utmost Decorum and highest Dignity of Character?—“ This was not requisite to purchase Redemption for us.” For what then was it requisite? Not to wash away any Stain from the holy JESUS. Not to obtain any Blessedness for the SON of the HIGHEST. Since, as the SON of the eternal GOD, He had an undoubted Right to all the Blessings of Heaven and Earth, of Time and Eternity.

“ But it was not requisite, that He should fulfil the moral Law.”—No! Do you then establish the Law? Are not you the *Antinomian*, Who would have sinful Man saved, yet the divine Law not fulfilled, either by them or their SURETY? This is a strange Way of magnifying the great Standard of

of all Righteousness. Rather, it is the sure Way of dishonouring and debasing it. — What says our LORD? *I came, not to destroy the Law, but to fulfil**. Did this signify, as some expository Refiners suggest, only to vindicate and illustrate, the Law; to explain its highest Meaning, and rescue it from the false Glosses of the Scribes; the Business might have been done by the Prophets and Apostles. No Occasion for the KING of Heaven to appear in Person. His Ambassadors might have transacted the whole Affair of Vindication and Explanation. But to fulfil every Jot and Tittle, prescribed in its Commands; to suffer all the Vengeance and the whole Curse, denounced in its Penalty; this was a Work worthy of the SON of GOD—practicable by none, but the SON of GOD—and, being executed by HIM, is truly meritorious of Pardon and Life for poor Sinners; of their Restoration to the divine Favour, and of their Admission into the heavenly Kingdom.

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* *Matt. v. 17.* Some Expositors would persuade us, that the Word *πληρῶσαι* signifies *fully to explain*. This Sense I am far from discarding; but in this Sense I can by no means acquiesce. It neither gives us the whole, nor the principal Part of our LORD's Meaning. Let us place the Matter in a different Light; then I believe the Scantiness of the Interpretation, and the Impropriety of the Notion, will appear unto all Men.—We will suppose an ungodly Person who has learned from Books, the spiritual and extensive Import of the divine Law. Having a ready Utterance, he explains it clearly, properly, fully. Does any Mortal say of this Lip-Practitioner, that he *fulfils the Law*? No such Thing. A System of Precepts can never be fulfilled, without a due and punctual Obedience. To open, to adjust, to enforce a Set of Injunctions, is as far from fulfilling them; as to give a Description of a Battle and a Conquest, are different from fighting the Enemy, and gaining the Victory.

The moral Law is inviolable in its Nature, and of eternal Obligation. This is a Truth of great Importance: With this is connected, and on this depends, the absolute Necessity of a vicarious Righteousness. I am no longer surpris'd, that you dispute against the latter, since you question or deny the former.—But consider, what our LORD says farther upon this Subject, in the fifth of St. *Matthew*, and the eighteenth Verse. Perhaps, you will reply; “I have both considered it, and expounded it, in my Sermons.” You have. But in such a Manner, as, I hope, you will live to retract. Thus you expound the awful Text, and turn it into a Piece of unmeaning Tautology. “*One Jot or one Tittle shall in no wise pass, till Heaven and Earth pass; or as it is expressed immediately after, till all (or rather all Things) be fulfilled, till the Consummation of all Things*.*” You would make *εως αν παρελθη ο κρανος η η γη*, and *εως αν παντα γενηται*, synonymous Phrases, expressive of the same Thing. Thus stands the Passage, interpreted according to your Criticism. “Till the Consummation of all Things, one Jot or one Tittle shall in no wise pass from the Law, till the Consummation of all Things.” See! to what miserable Subterfuges a Man of Learning is driven, in order to evade the Force of a Text, which militates strongly for the meritorious Obedience of *CHRIST*.

How much more just, more noble, more useful, is the common Exposition, and the obvious Meaning? Which we may thus introduce—These are the Terms of Life and Happiness to Man. Whosoever falls short, GOD himself pronounces accursed.

And

* Sermons by JOHN WESLEY, Vol. II. pag. 173.

And will the UNCHANGEABLE go back from his Purpose; make Abatement in his Demands; or come to a Composition with his Creatures? No verily. *He is of one Mind, and who can turn Him**. *It were easier for Heaven and Earth to pass †, for all Nature to be unhinged, and the Universe to drop into Dissolution; than for one jot or Tittle of this unalterable Law to pass, without a perfect Accomplishment ‡ in every the minutest Instance.*

By CHRIST's Sufferings alone the Law was not satisfied; says *Aspasio*. "Yes, it was;" replies Mr. Wesley.—Then all the indefatigable and important Labours of his Life, all his exemplary and shining Graces, must be mere Superfluities. At

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least,

* Job xxiii. 13.

† *Εως αν παρελθη ο υραν & η γη*, A proverbial Expression, to denote the utmost Impossibility. See it explained *Luke xvi. 17*. In this Connection, it signifies the absolute Certainty of our LORD's Declaration, both as to its Truth and as to its Accomplishment.—If I may borrow the Language and the Imagery of *Horace*, they will not unfitly express, what is affirmed concerning the Law.

*Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Immobilem ferient ruinæ.*

‡ *Εως αν παντα γενηται*. "The Word *All*, says Mr. Wesley, does not mean all the Law, but all Things in "the Universe." How forced a Construction! How contrary to Grammar! Since the Law, and the Things which it comprehends, are the immediate Antecedent.—How much more properly and consistently has Dr. *Doddridge* explained the Passage! "Till all Things, which "the Law requires, or foretells, shall be effected. The "Translation here given, is most literal, and most comprehensive. The Law *has its Effect*, when its Sanctions "are executed, as well as when its Precepts are obeyed."—Let me add; In case of a violated Law, *then only* it is fulfilled, or has its Effect, when both the former and the latter respectively obtain their End.

least, they could have no Merit, but were necessary only by Way of setting us an Example.

The Prophet was of another Mind. *The LORD is well pleased for his Righteousness sake.* By this Righteousness, not barely by his Sufferings, *He will magnify the Law and make it honourable**.—The Apostle was of another Mind. *GOD sent forth his SON, made of a Woman, made under the Law.* What? Only to bear its Curse? Only to undergo its Penalty? Not to fulfil its preceptive Part? Which is confessedly the principal Part in every Law; and to enforce which, all Penalties are added.—You yourself ought to be of another Mind. For you have already and truly observed, that Pardon and Acceptance always go together. “In the same Moment that “GOD forgives we are the Sons of GOD.” And wherefore? The Reason is, because the Sufferings of a Sinner, and the Obedience of a Son, went together in the REDEEMER. And without this Union, the Redemption of Man had not been complete.

“The Law required only the Alternative, obey or “die.”—Some of your Errors are less considerable; this I take to be a first-rate Mistake. According to this Supposition, *Cain*, and *Judas*, and all the Damned, are righteous. Because they *die*; they bear the Curse; they suffer everlastingly; and thereby conform

* *Isa. xlii. 21.* I am sensible, there are Expositors, who give a different Turn to these noble Words. But I had rather take the Voice from Heaven for my Guide, than all the Expositors in the World. Even that Voice, which declared concerning *CHRIST*, and his Work, *CHRIST* and his Righteousness, In these *I am well-pleased.* Which is one of the most capital Sayings in the Bible, and a Clue to lead us into its whole Meaning.

form to one of the Law's Alternatives.—One of the *Law's Alternatives*? No. Here I am wrong. It is one of *your Alternatives*. The divine Law knows no such Thing. No Law on Earth knows any such Thing. Sanctions and Penalties annexed to a Law, are never looked upon as equivalent to Obedience; but only as Preservatives from Disobedience.—In all the Compass of your Reading, have you ever met with a Law, that makes such Proposals to its Subjects? “ Conform to the Regulations established, “ and you shall enjoy my Privileges, you shall share “ my Honours. Or, if you chuse to violate all my “ wholesome Institutions, only submit to the Penalty, “ and you shall have an equal Right to the Immu- “ nities and Preferments.”

“ The Law required no Man to obey and die “ too.”—But did it not require a Transgressor to obey and die? If not, then Transgression robs the Law of its Right, and vacates all Obligation to Obedience.—Did it not require the SURETY for sinful Man, to obey and die? If the SURETY dies only, he only delivers from Punishment. But this affords no Claim to Life; no Title to a Reward. Unless you can produce some such Edict from the Court of Heaven, Suffer this, and thou shalt live. I find it written, *In keeping thy Commandments there is great Reward*. No where do I read, *In undergoing thy Curse, there is the same Reward*.—Whereas, when we join the active and passive Obedience of our LORD; the Peace-speaking Blood, with the Life-giving Righteousness; both made infinitely meritorious, and infinitely efficacious, by the divine Glory of his Person; how full does our Justification appear! How firm does it stand! It has all that the

Law can demand, both for our Exemption from the Curse, and for our Title to Bliss.

Before I take my Leave of this Topic, let me make one Supposition, for which your Way of thinking affords the juster Ground. Suppose, our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* had yielded a perfect Conformity to the Precept, without ever submitting to the Penalty; would this have been sufficient for the Justification of a Sinner. Here is one of your Alternatives performed. Upon the Foot of your Principles, therefore, it would, it must have been sufficient.—But this is so wild an Opinion, so contrary to the whole Current of Scripture, that to produce it, is to refute it.

Where Scripture ascribes the whole of our Salvation to the Death of *CHRIST*, a Part of his Humiliation is put for the Whole. To this Mr. *Wesley* objects; “I cannot allow it without Proof.”—I wish you would remember the golden Rule, (of doing as you would be done by) and, since you insist upon Proof from others, not be so sparing of it in your own Cause: I wish likewise you would impartially consider what *Aspasio* has advanced, upon the Subject—Has he not given you the Proof you demand?—“No; He was obedient unto Death is no “Proof at all.”—But is that the only Thing urged? If one Argument is inadequate, must all be inconclusive? Because you have routed one Detachment, have you therefore conquered the whole Army? However let us see, whether this Detachment, weak as you suppose it, may not be able to sustain your Attack.

Does not the Scripture ascribe the whole of your Salvation to the Death of *CHRIST*? To this Question

Question *Aspasio* replies, This Part of our LORD's meritorious Humiliation is by a very usual Figure put for the whole—The Death of *CHRIST* includes not only his Sufferings, but his Obedience—The shedding of his Blood was at once the grand Instance of his Sufferings, and the finishing Act of his Obedience; in this View it is considered, and thus it is represented by his own Ambassador, who, speaking of his divine Master, says, “He was obedient unto Death, even the Death of the Cross.”—“This, you reply, is no Proof at all, as it does not necessarily imply any more, than that he died in Obedience to the FATHER.”

How do some People love to cramp the enlarged, and debase the magnificent Sense of Scripture! Surely this Text implies; and not implies only, but forcibly expresses both the active and passive Obedience of *CHRIST*. It is not *απεθανεν*, *He died*; but *γενόμενος υπηκουος*, *He became obedient*.—Can you see nothing of his active Righteousness in these Words? For my Part I can see very little besides—This is what the following Clause confirms—Let common Sense be Judge—Obedient, not barely *in* Death, but *unto* Death, like that Expression of *JEHOVAH*, by the Prophet, *Unto hoary Hairs I will carry you*.—Does not this give us a retrospect View of Youth and Manhood, as well as lead our Attention forward to old Age! In like Manner, *Obedient unto Death*. Does not this refer us to all the previous Duties and Virtues of a righteous Walk; while it leads us to the closing Scene of all, a resigned Exit? Does it not most naturally mean, obedient through the whole Course of Life, even to the last all-compleating Instance, a voluntary Submission to Death?—How

easy and obvious is this Interpretation? How grand and graceful is this Meaning!

I can no more admire your Taste (considered) as a Critic, than I can admire your Doctrine (considered) as a Divine. Give me the Expositions of Scripture, which act, not like the nocturnal Damp, but like the Morning Sun; not shrivelling and contracting, but opening and expanding those Flowers of Paradise the Truths of the Gospel, that they may display all their charming Beauties, and breathe out all their reviving Odours. I think, upon the whole, we have very sufficient Cause to assert and to abide by our Assertion; that when the Scripture ascribes the whole of our Salvation to the Death of *CHRIST*, a Part of his Humiliation is put for the Whole; and in thus speaking, the *HOLY SPIRIT* copies after himself. For, if the Death inflicted on the first *Adam* included every Evil consequent upon the Fall; the Depravity, as well as the Misery of the Creature, it was meet that the Death to which the second *Adam* submitted, should include every Good, needful for our Recovery; the Obedience as well as the Sufferings of the *REDEEMER*. It was meet that the Price, expressed by the same Word, should be as extensive as the Punishment.

“ But how does it appear that he undertook this “ before the Foundation of the World?” At what Time does Mr. *Wesley* suppose, that *CHRIST* undertook the Work? Not till Sin entered and Man apostatized? Was it then an incidental (upstart) Expedient, fetched in to remedy some unforeseen Disaster? Was it a Device, which owed its Birth to some unexpected Contingency, occasioned by the Perverseness of the Creature? Far, far from it.—It

was the grand, original, all comprehending Plan, the Way in which GOD, long before Time commenced, decreed to manifest the Glory of his Grace, and the Lustre of all his Perfections. The World was made as a proper Theatre, on which to display and execute this most magnificent Scheme; and all the Revolutions of human Affairs like so many under Plots in the Drama, are subservient to the Accomplishment of this capital Design.—“Known unto GOD are all his Works,” determined by GOD are all his Counsels, from the Beginning of the World, more especially this grandest of all the divine Dispensations; this Master-piece of his unsearchable Wisdom.

“But was this by a positive Covenant between “CHRIST and the FATHER?” *Aspasio* proceeds to illustrate and confirm the Doctrine of an everlasting Covenant between the almighty FATHER and his co-equal SON. He produces several Texts of Scripture, to each of which you object as insufficient for his Purpose: Each of your Objections I shall answer, only by adding a short Comment, explanatory of their Spirit and Force—“This proves no previous Contract,” that is, I deny it, and therefore it cannot prove your Point. “Neither does this prove any such Thing.” That is, I cannot or will not see the Proof. And therefore there is none.—“That Expression does not necessarily imply any more” than I please to allow.—“In the Way or Method he had chosen;” of which I am the sole complete Judge, and my Judgment ought to be decisive in the Case.—Thus would Mr. *Wesley* have, not *Aspasio* only, but the Public also, receive his Dictates (*tanquam a Tripode*) as absolute Oracles.

Oracles.—For here is only bare Assertion, or bare Denial, without any Vouchers, but his own Word, without any Authority, but his own Declaration.

In *Pſalm* the xlth, the Conditions of the Covenant are circumſtantiſially recorded, which were the Incarnation and Obedience of the eternal SON. “ A Body haſt thou prepared me—Lo ! I come to “ do thy Will.” “ Nay, here is no Mention of “ any Covenant, nor any Thing from which it can “ be inferred.” *How many Times ſhall I adjure thee, ſaid Ahab to Michaiab, that thou tell me nothing but that which is true ?* And how many Times ſhall I intreat Mr. *Wesley* to object nothing, without aſſigning ſome Reason for his Objection ? At leaſt not to think of convincing my Judgment, and converting me to his Opinion by a bare *ſay ſo*.—But I have done—perhaps I have trespaſſed upon the Patience of the Reader, in expreſſing my Diſappointment ſo frequently ; perhaps I may alſo bear too hard upon Mr. *Wesley* in aſking for Proofs, when it may be no ſmall Difficulty to produce them. To return—“ Nay here is “ no Mention of any Covenant, nor any Thing “ from which it can be inferred.”—That the Word Covenant is not mentioned is very true, that there is no Reference to any ſuch Thing is not ſo certain : Let us conſider the whole Paſſage—“ Sacrifice and “ Burnt-Offering thou didſt not require :” If Sacrifices and ſlain Beaſts are not the Object of the divine Complacency, in what will the LORD delight ? The next Words declare, “ A Body haſt thou prepared me :” Since the Law cannot be fulfilled without *doing*, nor Juſtice ſatiſfied without *dying*, “ Lo ! I come, ſays the ſecond Perſon in the TRI- “ NITY, to undertake both, ſince this Undertak-
“ ing

“ ing must be accomplished, by ONE who is finite,
 “ that he may die ; and infinite, that he may con-
 “ quer Death ; I will accomplish it in the divine
 “ and human Nature. For this Purpose a Body
 “ hast thou prepared me, in this Body lo ! I come,
 “ willingly and chearfully I come, to perform, to
 “ sustain, to fulfil all ; and so to do thy great, thy
 “ gracious Will.”—May we not rationally suppose
 this spoken by Way of (Restipulation, or) Com-
 pliance with the FATHER’s Demands ? That the
 Matter is thereby brought to a solemn Contract ?

Dr. *Hammond* thought this no irrational Supposi-
 tion, therefore gives us, upon the following Words,
 a perfectly corresponding Comment. In the Volume
 of the Book it is written of me. “ Which is no
 “ other than a Bill, or Roll of Contract between
 “ the FATHER and CHRIST ; wherein is
 “ supposed to be written the Agreement, prepara-
 “ tory to that great Work of CHRIST’s Incar-
 “ nation, wherein He, undertaking to fulfil the
 “ Will of GOD, to perform all active, and also
 “ all passive Obedience, even unto Death, had the
 “ Promise from GOD, that he should become the
 “ Author of eternal Salvation to all that obey him.”

Thus says our learned Countryman. And what
 says the blessed Apostle ? Whose Exposition and Ap-
 plication of the Passage, you seem to have forgotten,
 at least not to have thoroughly weighed. Having
 quoted the Passage, argued from it, and displayed the
 Benefits obtained by this all-sufficient Propitiation,
 he adduces a Text from *Jeremiah* relating to this
 very Subject, and explaining its Nature : Whereof
 the HOLY GHOST also is a Witness ; of what ?
 of the Justification and Sanctification of Sinners,
 both

both founded on, both effected by, the Sacrifice of the dying *JESUS*. Transactions, which both the Prophet and the Apostle consider under the Notion of a Covenant, as is plain from the following Quotation, “ For after that he had said before, “ this is the Covenant which I will make with them “ in those Days.” Hence it appears, that the Author to the *Hebrews* saw something in the Words of the Psalmist, from which the Doctrine of a Covenant might be inferred.

Another Copy of this grand Treaty is recorded *Isa.* xlix. from the first to the sixth Verse. “ I have “ read them but cannot find a Word about it in all “ those Verses; they contain neither more nor less “ than a Prediction of the Salvation of the Gen- “ tiles.” They contain a Prediction and somewhat more, they describe the Way whereby this most desirable Event shall be brought to pass. This the LORD himself declares shall be by Way of Covenant; “ I will give thee for a Covenant to the Peo- “ ple.”—This Verse we may look upon as a Key to the preceding. It teaches us to consider them as descriptive of the august Covenant; of its Establishment, its Parties, and its Terms: Indeed the Verses themselves lead us to the same View, for what is a Covenant? A Contract, wherein a Condition is prescribed; a Promise is made, and both are ratified by a mutual Agreement—The Condition is prescribed in those Words; *Thou art my Servant O Israel**, in whom I will be glorified. The Promise is

* *Israel* is the Name of the Church, often given to her in this Prophecy, *CHRIST* and his Church, by Virtue of the Union between them, have the same Names. As she is sometimes called by his Name, “ The LORD “ our Righteousness.”—So he is here called by her Name *Israel*. See *Jer.* xxxiii. 16.

made in those Words, *Thou shalt raise up the Tribes of Jacob; restore the preserved of Israel, and be my Salvation unto the Ends of the Earth.* The Agreement is specified or implied in those Words (*I have spent my Strength for nought, yet) surely my Judgment is with the LORD, and my Work with my GOD.*

The great *Vitringa*, after having expounded the whole Clause, concludes in this Manner: “ Antequam ab his verbis, sensu foecundissimis, summam doctrinae Evangelicae complexis, discedam, monere velim, eadem clarissime deformare totum mysterium conventionis pacis, inter Deum patrem & Messiam filium ejus, in humana carne apparitum, initae, perinde ac in locis quae ex aliis excerpo, *Psal. xl. 7. Zech. vi. 13.* Pater ut Dominus, filio ut Messiae, offert gloriam longe amplissimam, mediationis & salvationis Judaeorum & gentium, quae gloria, omnium quae mente concipi possunt, est maxima, sub lege sive sub conditione profundissimi obsequii servilis; eaque stipulatio utrinque rati habetur *.

If

* *Vitring. in loc.* Before I leave this Paragraph which is so rich in Sense, and contains the very Substance of Evangelical Doctrine, I would observe that it most clearly and exactly delineates the mysterious Counsel of Peace, planned between GOD the FATHER, and his divine SON. The FATHER as supreme LORD, offers to his SON the MESSIAH the highest Glory, that which shall result from justifying, sanctifying, and saving, with an everlasting Salvation, both Jews and Gentiles. This Glory, the greatest which Thought can conceive, is proposed on the Terms, or under the Condition of his deep Humiliation, even to the State and Obedience of a Servant. The whole passes into a solemn Contract, and is ratified on either Side.

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Here

If upon a stricter Review, this Prophecy be found to express no such Thing as a Covenant, I am very willing to give up the Proof. So much the rather as it makes no Part of *Aspasio's* Discourse, is only just mentioned in a Note; and stands not in the main Body, but only as a Corps de Reserve.

By the Covenant of Works, Man was bound to obey in his own Person.—Here you take *Aspasio* up very short, and reply, “So he is under the Covenant of Grace, though not in order to Justification.” This is the very Thing he means. Nor could you easily have mistaken his Meaning if you had only done him so small a Piece of Justice as to

Here our Author subjoins an Extract from ברשית רבה a Rabbinical Treatise. Which is very remarkable; for such a Writer, singularly just; one of the most curious, as well as valuable Pieces of *Jewish* Antiquities that ever fell in my Way. I believe it will afford no unpleasing Entertainment, perhaps some spiritual Benefit to the Reader. For which Cause I take Leave to transcribe it.—

“GOD began to enter into a Covenant with the MESSIAH, and said, MESSIAH, my righteous one, the Sins of thy chosen People are likely to bring Thee into a State of great Toil and extreme Affliction; Thy Lips shall taste Gall, Thy Tongue shall cleave to the Roof of thy Mouth, Thy Body shall be wasted with Sorrow and Sighing. Is thy Love to thy People inviolable? Art thou willing to rescue them on these Conditions? If thou undertakest their Recovery, well; if not, they are rejected from this Moment, and perish for ever.—To this MESSIAH replied, LORD of Eternity, I am pleased with the Office, I accept these Conditions; and am willing to undergo all Tribulation, that my People may enjoy a Resurrection (to the Life of Grace and the Life of Glory.)—Then said the holy, blessed GOD, be it so. Immediately the MESSIAH took upon him our Miseries, as it is written in the Book of the Prophet *Isaiah*, He was oppressed and He was afflicted.”

read the whole Paragraph, of which, since you seem either willingly or through Inadvertence to be ignorant, I will beg leave to transcribe it;—"Between the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace, this I apprehend is the Difference. By the former, Man was indispensibly bound to obey in his own Person, by the latter, the Obedience of his SURETY is accepted instead of his own. —The Righteousness required by both, is not sincere, but complete, not proportioned to the Abilities of fallen Man, but to the Purity of the Law, and the Majesty of the LAW GIVER." You see the whole Argument turns upon a *complete* Righteousness, such as satisfies the Law, and is an adequate Ground for Justification: This, I imagine, fallen Man is not obliged by the Covenant of Grace to perform, if so, we shall be at a Loss to find any such Thing as Grace; if so, we can have no Hope of obtaining Salvation with eternal Glory. There will be too much Reason for applying to all Mankind those awful Words of the Prophet; *In the Day thou mayst make thy Plant to grow, and in the Morning thou mayst make thy Seed to flourish; but the Harvest shall be a Heap, in the Day of Grief and desperate Sorrow.*

Blessed be GOD the melancholy Strain is superseded.—Though the Terms in the first Covenant were a perfect Obedience, though the Terms once fixed continue unalterable, yet in the new Covenant there is a Change and Substitution as to the Performer; without any Relaxation as to the Performance. Instead of personal Obedience we are justified through the Obedience of our MEDIATOR, *We are made the Righteousness of GOD in him*: That is, we are furnished with a Plea, as prevalent for our Justification

tion and Admission into the divine Favour, as if we had retained our Innocence untainted; and in every Respect conformed ourselves to the Righteousness which the Law of GOD requires*.—Thus the Salvation of Sinners, neither clashes with the Truth, nor interferes with the Justice of the supreme LEGISLATOR.—On the contrary, it becomes a *faithful* and *just* Procedure of the most high GOD, to justify *him that believeth on JESUS*.

The Obedience of our Surety is accepted instead of our own. “This is neither a safe, nor a scriptural Way of Speaking.”—That the Obedience of *CHRIST* is accepted for our Justification, is a Doctrine warranted by Scripture, it may therefore very justly be reckoned a scriptural Way of Speaking. And if *his* Obedience is accepted for this Purpose, *our own*, was it ever so considerable, could come in for no Share of the Work. Our own, though ever so gorgeously arrayed, must stand aside, or be cast into Shades, just as the Stars hide their diminished, or rather extinguished Heads, when the Sun appears in his meridian Splendour, because the Obedience of *CHRIST* is of infinite Dignity and Value. And infinite Value is such, as not only transcends all other Services, but renders them mere
 Nothings

* 2 Cor. v. 21. This is Dr. Doddridge’s Interpretation of the Passage; and it speaks a noble, a joyful Truth, only it does not express the whole Truth. The Righteousness of GOD is more than equivalent to untainted Innocency; is more than tantamount to the most perfect human Obedience. It is a Righteousness of infinite Worth, far surpassing the Integrity of *Adam* in Paradise, or the Sanctity of Angels in Heaven. It is a Gift, incomparably, yea, incomprehensibly great, efficacious, glorious.

Nothings in the Comparifon. For this Reason, the Apoftle counted all Endowments, but *Loſs* for *CHRIST*, and the Prophet represents all Nations as nothing before *GOD*.

“ I would fimplly fay, we are accepted through “ the Beloved.”—If you rightly underftood what is meant, when the Apoftle ſpeaks of being accepted in the *BELAVED*, you would have no Fault to find with *Aſpaſio*’s Comment. *St. Paul* means we are accepted, not by any Obedience performed in our own Perſons, but ſolely by the Obedience of that infinitely excellent, and infinitely beloved *ONE CHRIST JESUS*, whoſe Righteouſneſs being imputed to us, and put upon us, cauſes us not only to be pardoned, but to be highly eſteemed, dearly beloved, and bleſſed with all ſpiritual Bleſſings.

Here I cannot but obſerve, that you have changed the Apoftle’s Expreſſion. He ſays, “ Accepted * in “ the Beloved ;” you ſay, “ Accepted *through* the “ Beloved.” I am willing to believe this was an Oversight, you had no ſiniſter Deſign, but ſtill I think you ſhould take more Heed to your Pen, and not alter the inſpired Word, leſt you blemiſh the Language, or injure the Senſe. Perhaps you will aſk, What Difference is there between accepted *through*, and accepted *in*, the Beloved? I will illuſtrate the Difference by a Similitude. A creditable Houſe-keeper gives a good Character to a Servant that leaves him, by Virtue of which he is accepted, and admitted to ſome other valuable Employ. This Character is his Introduction, yet this makes no Addition to his real Value. Acceptance through the Beloved, may import no more, than ſuch an Ad-

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miſſion

* ΕΧΑΡΙΤΩΣΕΝ ΗΜΑΣ ΕΝ ΤΩ ΗΥΧΑΤΗΜΕΝΩ.

mission through such a Recommendation. Whereas accepted *in* the Beloved, implies not only a recommendatory Passport from *CHRIST*, but a real Union with *CHRIST*, whereby we are incorporated into his sacred Body, and partake as truly of his Righteousness, as the Members partake of the Life which animates the Head. By this our Persons are really ennobled. This imparts the highest Dignity to our Nature. We are not only recommended to, but rendered meet for, the Favour, the Complacency, the beatific Presence of *GOD*, being one with *JESUS*, and therefore loved even as *JESUS* himself is loved*.

The second Covenant was not made with *Adam* or any of his Posterity, but with *CHRIST* in those Words. “For any Authority you have from these Words, you might as well have said, it was made with the *HOLY GHOST*.”—No; *CHRIST*, not the *HOLY GHOST*, was the Seed of the Woman.—This is an Answer much in your own Strain.—But let us consider farther.

You allow, I presume, that the first Covenant was made with *Adam*, as our public foederal Head—That all his Posterity were included in it, being to stand or fall together with him: Herein, says the Apostle, “*Adam* was a Figure of him that was to come.” If so, the second Covenant must be made with *CHRIST*, as our public foederal Head. He and all his Seed are included in it, and as it was impossible for him to miscarry, they must be joint Partakers of the Benefits. Accordingly, he is stiled the

* *John* xvii. 23. They in me, says our *LORD*. Therefore, on this Account, or viewed in this Relation, *Tbou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.*

the MEDIATOR of the new Covenant, by whose most acceptable and prevailing Interposition, all its Blessings are obtained: He is stiled the Surety of the Covenant, engaging to pay the whole Debt for poor insolvent Creatures; the Debt of penal Suffering, and the Debt of perfect Obedience.—The Testator of the Covenant, whose are its Riches, and whose are its Privileges, who has also of his unbounded Goodness bequeathed them as so many inestimable Legacies to indigent Men. Methinks those are such charming Truths, such divinely comfortable Doctrines, that you should consider them thoroughly before you oppose them, lest you do a greater Act of Unkindness to your Readers, than that which is charged, though very injuriously, upon *Job*: *Thou hast stripped the Naked of their Cloathing, and sent Widows away empty.* And when you are disposed to consider these Points thoroughly, ask yourself this Question. Is it possible to conceive that *CHRIST* should be the MEDIATOR, the Surety, the Testator of the Covenant, if it was not made with him, and the Execution of it undertaken by him?—Or, is it possible to suppose, that the all-glorious SON of GOD should be the MEDIATOR, the Surety, the Testator of the Covenant, yet leave others to perform the Conditions? which are incomparably the most important, interesting, and difficult Parts of the Transaction?

“ These Words were not spoken to *CHRIST*,
 “ but of Him.” True, of Him as given for a Co-
 venant of the People. “ There is not the least In-
 “ timation of any such Covenant.” You will not
 deny that *CHRIST* is signified by *the Seed of the*
Woman.—It is said, *He shall*; a Language expressing

Authority, and requiring Conformity, as *CHRIST* is the supreme uncontrollable *GOD*, this could not be required; and would never have been said, without his actual Consent: Here then is implied his Approbation of the Office. It is farther said, the Serpent shall bruise his Heel.—He shall become incarnate, and after a Life of much Sorrow, and many Tribulations, shall be put to a most tormenting Death.—Here is the Condition of the Covenant. It is added, he shall bruise the Serpent's Head, shall destroy the Works of the Devil, and repair the Ruins of the Fall, shall deliver from the Wrath deserved, and recover the Inheritance forfeited.—Here is the Recompence or Reward of the Covenant.

Should you ask; Is it supposable that *Adam* understood the Words in this Compass of Meaning? Perhaps not. But if we do not understand them in a more exalted and extensive Sense, than our first Father; what Advantage do we reap from the full Revelation of the Gospel?—The full Revelation of the Gospel, pours as much Light upon this, and other of the ancient Oracles, as the Experiments of our modern Anatomists have poured upon the Structure and Oeconomy of the human Body.—This grand original Text, read with the Comment of the New Testament, speaks all that *Aspasio* has suggested; all that our fallen State could want, or our very Hearts can wish.

You have mustered up several Objections, yet there is Room for more; I will therefore for once act as your Auxiliary, and turn against *Aspasio*. “ He
 “ supposes the Covenant to be made with *CHRIST*.
 “ Whereas the Scripture represents the Covenant
 “ as made with various Men, particularly and per-
 “ sonally,

“sonally, in various Ages.”—True, it is recorded that GOD made a Covenant with *Abraham*, with *Isaac*, with *Jacob*, and with *David* the Father of *Solomon*: But were they in a Capacity to enter into Covenant with their Maker; to stand for themselves or be Surety for others? I think not—The Passages mean no more, than the LORD’s manifesting, in an especial Manner, the grand Covenant to them; ratifying and confirming their personal Interest in it, and farther assuring them that *CHRIST*, the great Covenant Head, should be of themselves, and spring from their Seed.

This accounts for that remarkable and singular Mode of Expression, which often occurs in Scripture; *I will make a Covenant with them*; or, *this is my Covenant with them*.—Yet there follows no mention of any Conditions, only a Promise of unconditional Blessings; because the former have already been performed, and nothing remains but to confer the latter; so that the Meaning of the divine Speaker is, I will admit them to an Interest in this Covenant, and make them Partakers of its Privileges.

I should now conclude, but Mr. *Wesley* will not suffer me to quit the Subject. He farther insists, “The Words manifestly contain, if not a Covenant made with, a Promise made to *Adam* and all his Posterity.”—*If not*—He begins to hesitate in his Assertion; to fluctuate in his Opinion; and I could hope, to see his Mistake.—“The Words contain a Promise”—And have you never read, that the Covenant of GOD, or the various Renewals and Ratifications of the Covenant of Grace, are styled *Covenants of Promise*? Which consist of pure Promises, and dispense free Gifts?

Observe

Observe the Tenour of the new Covenant, as it stands engrossed by the Pen of Inspiration. *This is the Covenant, which I will make with the House of Israel after those Days, saith the LORD, I will put my Laws into their Mind, and on their Hearts will I write them : And I will be to them a GOD, and they shall be to me a People. And they shall not teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying, know the LORD—For all shall know me, from the least of them, even unto the greatest of them.—For, I will be merciful unto their Unrighteousnesses, and their Sins and their Iniquities will I remember no more.—*Where are your Conditions in this Draught? Where are any Terms required of impotent Man? Is it not all Promise, from the Beginning to the End? That Repentance, and that Faith, for whose Conditionality you plead, are they not both comprehended in this heavenly Deed? And comprehended under the Form of Blessings vouchsafed, not of Tasks enjoined.—Does the Contract run in this Manner? I require and command. Or in this Strain? I grant and bestow. The LORD says, *I will put my Laws; I will write them.—*The Work shall not be laid on my Creatures, but done by myself. *They shall be my People, and I will remember their Sins no more. What? Provided they perform such and such Duties. I read no such Clause. I see no such Proviso.—*All is absolutely free; dependent on no Performance of ours; but flowing from sovereign, supreme, self-influenced Goodness.

Just such is that delightful Declaration, *I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my Fear in their Heart, that they shall not depart from me.*

me.—What you call Conditions must be comprised in *my Fear*. This is represented as a singular Benefit, which GOD imparts; as a gracious Temper, which GOD implants; and both as dependent, not on the Fidelity of Man, but on the Power and Veracity of GOD.—Another of your Conditions, I presume, is, Perseverance unto the End. This, in the Covenant of Grace, is not enjoined, but secured; secured, not by a strict Prohibition of Apostacy, but by the omnipotent Interposition of JEHOVAH. *I will put my Fear*; so put my Fear into their Hearts, *that they shall not depart from me*; shall never draw back unto Perdition.—Thus the Covenant becomes not transient, but everlasting. Thus the Promise is not precarious, but sure to all the Seed. There seems to be as great a Difference, between this evangelical, and your legal Method of stating the Covenant; between suspending the Benefits on human Endeavours, and grounding them on divine Agency, as between hanging the Anchor on the Top of the Mast, and fixing it at the Bottom of the Sea.

Let me add one more Text, which now occurs to my Thoughts, *Ye are the Children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which GOD made with our Fathers, saying, unto Abraham, and in thy Seed shall all the Kindreds of the Earth be blessed**. Here the Covenant is first mentioned in general; then particularly specified.—*In thy Seed shall all the Kindreds of the Earth*—Be laid under Conditions? Be obliged to execute Terms? No; but, *shall be blessed*. Blessed with all Blessings, temporal, spiritual, eternal—*In thy Seed*—That is in *CHRIST*—Without any Regard to Qualifications

* Acts iii. 25.

Qualifications or Deeds of their own; entirely by Virtue of an Interest in his consummately excellent Actions, and consummately precious Sufferings.— Then the Apostle singles out one special and distinguished Blessing of the Covenant; a Conversion from *Darkness to Light*, and from the Power of Satan to the Service of GOD. Or, as it is expressed in the following Verse, *A turning from all Iniquity*.—This is still exhibited to our Contemplation, as the Fruit of the Covenant of Grace; as the Thing for which it makes Provision, not introductory to, but consequent upon, our Participation of it.

If therefore, in speaking of Holiness and Obedience, we represent them as the Promises, rather than the Demands of the Covenant, we evidently follow the Apostle's Example. Were we to take the contrary Course, we should act as prudently as the Sportsman, who, entering his Horse for a Plate, chuses to have him walk backwards, rather than run forwards: Would this increase his Speed? Would this help him to outstrip his Rivals? or enable him to win the Prize?—Shall we, in order to avoid the Charge of *Antinomianism* rush into this Absurdity? I am persuaded you could not wish to see so egregious a Piece of Folly, even in your Enemy; much less in

Your, &c.



L E T T E R IX.

REV. SIR,

I WISH you would consider with some Attention, that emphatical Memento of the Apostle, *Since ye knew the Grace of GOD in Truth.* Here he intimates, that we may have a Knowledge of Grace, which is not genuine; not free from corrupt Mixture, not true.—It may be so discoloured with Error, or blended with so much of the Law, as no longer to appear like itself.—The Language of such Persons, is somewhat like the Language of the *Israelites*, after their Return from Captivity, who spoke neither the *Hebrew*, nor the Heathenish Dialect; but expressed themselves half in the Speech of *Ashdod*, and half in the Speech of *Sion*.

It is true, says *Aspasio*, I cannot perform the Conditions.—“It is not true,” says Mr. *Wesley*. This is pretty blunt, and pretty bold too; for it is, in effect, affirming, that a Man dead in Trespasses and Sins is able to perform Conditions. Mr. *Wesley* is not aware, that “*CHRIST* strengthening us,” is one of the Benefits of the Covenant, comprehended in these Words, *I will put my Laws into their Minds.*

“The Conditions of the new Covenant are, repent and believe.” It has been already shewn, that they are represented by the *HOLY GHOST*,
not

not as Conditions, but as Blessings; not as Conditions required, but as Blessings bestowed; not Conditions on which depends the Accomplishment of the Covenant; but as happy Fruits, or precious Effects, of the Covenant; made, and making good to Sinners, who are wholly without Strength.

'Tis equally true, says *Aspasio*, this is not required at my Hands. " 'Tis equally true, says Mr. *Wesley*, " that is absolutely false."—This is, doubtless, a *home Thrust*.—It behoves us to provide some Armour of Proof for our Defence; and this the Scripture furnishes abundantly. It furnishes us with more than *robur & æs triplex*. The Scripture sets forth Justification, Salvation, and all Blessedness, as Things perfectly free; detached from all Works; dependent on no Conditions, but the Gifts of sovereign Goodness, and infinitely rich Grace.

Though you, Sir, treat *Aspasio* in so unceremonious a Manner, we will be more complaisant; you shall receive such Entertainment from us, as the King of *Babylon's* Ambassadors received from *Hezekiah*. We will on this Occasion, shew you *the House of our precious Things, the Silver and the Gold, the Spices and the precious Ointment, and if not all, yet some of the House of our Armour* *.

We are saved, that is, we have all the Benefits of the new Covenant—By Grace—By Grace ye are saved.—It is of Grace and no more of Works.—Who hath saved us, not according to our Works, but according to his Purpose and Grace †.

Freely

* 2 Kings xx. 13.
2 Tim. i. 9.

† Eph. ii. 5. Rom. x. 6.

Freely—Being justified freely.—The Things that are freely given to us of GOD.—Whosoever will, let him take the Water of Life freely*.

By Way of Gift—If thou knewest the Gift of GOD.—The Gift of GOD is eternal Life.—The free Gift came upon all Men, to Justification of Life †.

Without the Law—The Righteousness of GOD without the Law.—That we might be justified, not by the Works of the Law.—If the Inheritance were of the Law ‡.

Not by Works—Not of Works, but of him that calleth us.—Not by Works of Righteousness, which we have done, but according to his Mercy he saved us.—Not having mine own Righteousness, which is of the Law ||.

By Righteousness, not performed, but imputed—Faith (in CHRIST, as our all) is imputed for Righteousness.—GOD imputeth Righteousness, without Works.—To whom it (that is the Merit of a dying and rising SAVIOUR) shall be imputed §.

Not by guiltless Behaviour, but by Remission of Sins—Blessed are they whose Iniquities are forgiven, and whose Sins are covered.—GOD was in CHRIST, reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them.—To give Knowledge of Salvation by the Remission of their Sins †.

Not each by himself, but all by one—They shall reign in Life, by one CHRIST JESUS.—By the Obedience of one, shall many be made righteous.—By one Offering,

* Rom. iii. 24. 1 Cor. ii. 12. Rev. xxii. 19.
 † John iv. 10. Rom. vi. 23. v. 18. ‡ Rom.
 iii. 21. Gal. ii. 16. iii. 18. || Rom. ix. 11.
 Tit. iii. 5. Phil. iii. 9. § Rom. iv. 5, 6,
 23, 24, 25. † Psal. xxxii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 19.
 Luke i. 77.

Offering, he hath perfected for ever those that are sanctified.*

By Faith alone—*Being justified by Faith.—A Man is justified by Faith, without the Deeds of the Law.—Through him, all that believe are justified from all Things †.*

Not on Account of Faith, as a Condition performed; but on Account of *CHRIST*, the Pearl of inestimable Price; which Faith receives, applies, and uses—*Who has by himself purged away our Sins, by himself finished our Transgressions, made Reconciliation for our Iniquities, and brought in an everlasting Righteousness ‡.*

This is the Doctrine of Scripture. Because it is of the greatest Importance, you see, with what Care it is stated, and with what Copiousness displayed, with what Zeal it is urged, and with what Vigilance guarded.—How solicitously the sacred Writers use every Form of Speech that may exclude all human Works; may set aside all Conditions and Pre-requisites, in order to supersede all Glorifying, and ascribe the Whole of our Justification to the free Grace of *GOD*, and the sole Merits of *CHRIST*.

After all these Testimonies of Scripture, shall we still maintain, that the Covenant of Grace consists of Conditions; depends upon Conditions; is such as we cannot expect to have made good till certain Conditions are, by us, duly and truly fulfilled? *Dagon* may as well stand in the Presence of the Ark, as such a Notion in the Face of these evangelical Texts.

All,

* Rom. v. 17, 18, 19. Heb. x. 14.
v. 1. iii. 28. Acts xiii. 39.
Dan. ix. 24.

† Rom.
‡ Heb. i. 3.

All, all is free to us Sinners, though it was not free to *CHRIST* our SAVIOUR.—He paid the Price. He performed the Conditions. If you would know what *Price* was paid; what *Conditions* were performed, and on what *Terms* we inherit the Blessing; you, Sir, may receive Information from Mr. *John Wesley*, who says, in his Comment; “ All the “ Blessings of the new Covenant are secured to us “ by the one Offering of *CHRIST*.” According to this Commentator, they are not only procured for us, but *secured* to us. How could either of these be true—Much more, how could the latter be fact—if the Blessings were suspended on any Performance or any Acquisition of ours? If I am not to enjoy them *until* I discharge this or that Duty, they are not procured for me; if I am not to enjoy them *unless* I become possessed of this or that Quality, they are not secured to me; not secured to me, as the Estate is to an Heir, even whilst he is a Minor, but only as the Prize is to a Racer, in case, by exerting his Speed and his Strength, he arrives first at the Goal; which was never yet called Security, but allowed to be mere Uncertainty.

As to this Point, *others* may receive Information from the Prophet *Zechariah*. *By the Blood of thy Covenant, I have sent forth thy Prisoners out of the Pit, wherein was no Water* *. *Thy Prisoners*, those wretched Creatures, who were in a State of Guilt, and under the Sentence of Death; subject to the Tyranny of the Devil, and liable to the Damnation of Hell. In this dismal State they were, as in a *Pit* unfathomably deep; from which there seemed no Possibility of Escape, nor any Method of Deliverance. A Pit,

N

in

in which there is *no Water*, nothing but absolute Misery, without a Gleam of Hope, or a Drop of Comfort. *I have sent them forth* into a Place of Liberty; where they obtain Pardon, and enjoy Peace, are satisfied with the Plenteousness of my House, and drink of my Pleasures as out of a River. All this, by the *Blood of thy Covenant*.—Blood was the righteous Term, Blood was the dreadful Requirement, even that infinitely precious Blood of *CHRIST*, on which the Covenant of our Freedom was established, and by which its rich Blessings are procured. Which is called *thy Covenant**, *O Daughter of Sion*, thou Church of the First-born, because it was made in thy Name; made with thy divine Surety, and for thy unspeakable Good.

This is not only false, but “most dangerously false—If we allow this, Antinomianism comes in with a full Tide.” Pray, Sir, what do you mean by *Antinomianism*? Such a Contrariety to the Law, as debases its Dignity; deprives it of its proper Honour and proper End †?

Surely then, not *Aspasio*'s, but Mr. *Wesley*'s Tenets, are chargeable with this Kind of Heterodoxy. Since they would cause the Law to be put off with a Mite, when Millions of Talents are its Due—Oblige it to be content with errant Deficiency, when the

most

* *Thy Covenant*. The Words are not addressed to *CHRIST*, but to his Church. As the *Hebrew* אֲנִי being in the feminine Gender intimates.

† The End of the commanding Law is Righteousness, *Rom. x. 4*. The End of the violated Law is Punishment, *Gal. iii. 10*. Both these Ends are answered by the Interposition of an obedient and crucified REDEEMER, but on no other Scheme, and in no other Manner whatever.

most sinless Obedience, and the most exalted Perfection are what it demands.

Do you mean by *Antinomianism*, such a Contrariety to the Law, as disregards its Duties, and violates its Precepts? Then the Apostle *Paul* shall reply, *The Grace of GOD, which bringeth Salvation, hath appeared unto all Men; teaching us, that denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly.*—*The Grace of GOD*, his infinitely free Favour, of which we have a Specimen in the preceding Texts, which scorns to be shackled with Conditions, or meanly dependent on human Endeavours—This Grace, requiring nothing of the Creature, but *bringing Salvation*, spiritual and eternal Salvation, finished by the incarnate CREATOR, and free for the chiefest of Sinners.—This Grace being revealed in the Gospel, being discerned by Faith, and thus appearing in Lustre, and with Power, to *all Men*—To Men of every Rank, every Age, every Character; making no Difference between the Servant and his Master, between the ruddy Stripling and the hoary Sire; between the vile Prostitute and the chaste Vestal, but opening its inexhaustible Treasures, to be received by one as well as the other—This Grace does what? “Cause Antinomianism,” or practical Ungodliness, “to come in with a full Tide?” Quite the reverse—It represses it like an immoveable Barrier. It teaches us to deny*, to renounce Ungodliness, *all Ungodliness*;

N 2 not

* The Word is *αρνησαμενοι*, which does not signify, to abolish totally, or to destroy utterly; but to disavow and renounce, to refuse Admittance, or not to yield Compliance. There may be, even in the Regenerate, some

not only external gross Abominations, but *worldly Lusts* also, every vicious Inclination, and every irregular Desire. Farther, it teaches us to live *soberly*, with regard to ourselves, *righteously* towards our Neighbours, and *godly* to our great CREATOR.

The original Word is particularly beautiful and significant, it is not *τασσει*, *prescribeth*, by way of Rule, nor *επιτασσει*, *enjoineth*, by way of Authority; but *παιδευσα*, *teacheth*, by way of Instruction, pointeth out the effectual Method of obeying the Precepts, and conforming to the Rule. A Tyrant may command his Slave to write, or make a Proficiency in Writing. A kind Tutor forms him to it, shews him how to do it, and renders, what otherwise would be an irksome, perhaps an impracticable Task, both easy and pleasant.—So this Grace clearly manifested in the Understanding, and cordially apprehended by the Will, renders every Duty of Holiness both practicable and pleasant; it gives us a Heart, and a Hand, and Ability to exercise ourselves unto universal Godliness.

CHRIST has performed all that was conditional for me, says *Aspasio*. “Has he repented and “believed for you?” says Mr. *Wesley*; a Question already answered in the Dialogues.—“No; replies “Mr. *Wesley*, not answered, but evaded. He per-
 “formed all that was conditional in the Covenant
 “of Works, is nothing to the Purpose, for we are
 “not talking of that, but of the Covenant of Grace.”
 Give me Leave to tell you, Sir, that you are greatly mistaken here, we are talking, at least we ought to be talking, of the Covenant of Works, when we
 talk
 some Reminders of Ungodliness, but influenced by Grace, they will constantly turn a deaf Ear to its Solicitations, or resolutely say Nay to its Demands.

talk of the Covenant, which *CHRIST* came under. It was a Covenant of Works to him, which, by his Execution of it, became a Covenant of Grace for us. He became answerable for our Debt, the Debt was exacted, without the least Abatement. In this Respect *GOD spared not his own Son.* And is not this the Tenour, are not such the Effects of a Covenant of Works?

CHRIST is called the *Surety of a better Covenant*, that is, a Surety provided and admitted by a better Covenant: In this Peculiarity, infinitely momentous and comfortable, the new Covenant is better, because it brings in a Substitute, to discharge what was contracted under the old, which neither provided, nor allowed, nor knew any such Thing.—It is written, *CHRIST was made under the Law*; therefore not under a Covenant of Grace. If you can shew me, in the Construction of the Law, any Hint of Faith in the Merits of another, or any mention of Repentance unto Life, I will retract my Opinion, that *CHRIST* performed whatever was conditional; I will do Honour to those genteel Expressions, and submit to those cogent Arguments, “ ’Tis not true—
“ ’Tis nothing to the Purpose—’Tis absolutely false.”

“ If *CHRIST*’s perfect Obedience be ours, we
“ have no more Need of Pardon than *CHRIST*
“ himself. The Consequence is good, you have
“ started an Objection which you cannot answer.”
—It is answered in the Dialogues—Whether in a satisfactory, or insufficient Manner, the Reader must determine.—But suppose we admit the Consequence; it implies no more, than the Apostle affirms—*By one Offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.* Let me transcribe your own * Ex-

plication of this Passage.—“ He hath done” (observe, you yourself speak of *CHRIST*’s doing; in this Place *only* of *CHRIST*’s doing, yet I would not be so injurious to your good Sense, as to imagine that you exclude his *Suffering*) “ all that was need-
 “ ful, in order to their full Reconciliation with
 “ GOD.” This Exposition I approve, as far as it goes, only you have omitted one very weighty Circumstance, comprehended in the Word “ ever;” by this doing and suffering, Believers are fully and perfectly reconciled, not for a Day only, or for any particular Time, but *for ever*. The Pardon is irrevocable; the Blessing unalienable. Not like the *Moon*, which now waxes, and anon wanes, but like the *Sun*, which is always the same; ever shines with the same Plenitude of Rays; and needs only to appear, in order to appear unchangeably bright.

This reminds me of a more direct Answer to your Difficulty. The repeated Pardon, which Believers implore, is only a Witness-bearing to the Truth, or a repeated Manifestation of it to our Consciences.—Will you find Fault with this Doctrine? Might you not, for the very same Reason, say, if the Atonement of *CHRIST*’s Death, was absolutely perfect, there could be no Need of his Intercession at *GOD*’s right Hand? Yes, for the actual Application of the great Atonement, and the continual Communication of its happy Fruits, this Intercession is necessary. So, though our Justification is complete, though our Sins have all been laid upon our *LORD*; and are not to be done away by some Duties of our own, but already done away by the *Sacrifice* of *HIMSELF*; yet the Application of this Blessing, the Revelation of it to our Hearts, is daily,
 hourly,

hourly, incessantly needful. Therefore he saith, speaking of his Vineyard the Church, *I will water it every Moment.*—Whereby? In what Manner? What spiritual Blessings correspond with, watering the thirsty Soil?—The Discovery of complete Pardon, of complete Acceptance, of complete Salvation in *CHRIST*. This will make the Soul like a watered Garden—This will cause Joy and Holiness to blossom as a Rose.

Both the Branches of the Law, the preceptive and the penal, in the Case of Guilt contracted, must be satisfied. “Not so.”—If not, one of them must pass unsatisfied, and unfulfilled. Whereas, our *L O R D* declares, that *Heaven and Earth shall pass away, sooner than one Jot, or one Tittle of the Law shall fail of its Accomplishment.* Will you undertake to prove, either that the preceptive, or else that the penal Part of the Law, does not constitute so much as one Jot or one Tittle of its Contents? Then, and then only, your Assertion may consist with our *L O R D*’s Declaration. This will be an Undertaking as adventurous as your next is disingenuous.

“Not so, *CHRIST* by his Death alone (so our Church teaches) fully satisfied for the Sins of the whole World.”—*By his Death alone*, that is, in Contradistinction to all human Works, as efficient or adjutant Causes: *Fully satisfied*, that is, without having, and without needing the Concurrence of any human Satisfaction. It is spoken in Opposition to our Endeavours, not to his own most glorious Obedience. But do you really want to be informed that our Church means no such Thing, as you would insinuate? Have you never heard her profess, and

require to believe, what *Aspasio* maintains? If not, be pleased to read the Quotations from her Homilies, which he has produced, Vol. II. Pag. 316, 317 *. Read these, and I cannot but think, you have Modesty enough to blush at an Attempt, to palm upon the Public, such an apparent Misrepresentation of our venerable Mother.

“ The same great Truth is manifestly taught in “ the xxxist Article.”—What? That *CHRIST*, by his *Death alone*, or by *shedding his Blood alone*, without fulfilling the Law perfectly, satisfied for the Sins of the World? Then the Articles and the Homilies most flatly contradict one another.—Upon this you ask; “ Is it therefore fair, is it honest, for any “ one to plead the Articles of our Church in Defence of absolute Predestination?” Indeed, Sir, I know not what you mean by this Interrogatory,
or

* As this Pamphlet may possibly fall into the Hands of some Persons, who have not the Book, entitled *Theron* and *Aspasio*; I will, for their Sakes, transcribe one of the Testimonies, to which we are referred.

In the Homily concerning the Salvation of Mankind, we read the following Words.—“ The Apostle toucheth “ three Things, which must go together in Justification. “ On GOD’s Part his great Mercy and Grace. On “ *CHRIST*’s Part, the Satisfaction of GOD’s Justice, “ or the Price of our Redemption, by the Offering of “ his Body, and shedding of his precious Blood, with “ fulfilling of the Law perfectly. On our Part, true “ and lively Faith in the Merits of *JESUS CHRIST*, “ which yet is not ours, but by GOD’s Working in us.” You see, according to the Judgment of our Reformers, not only the Offering of *CHRIST*’s Body, and the Shedding of *CHRIST*’s Blood, but also his perfect fulfilling of the Law, are the adequate Price of our Redemption. Yet Mr. *Wesley* is pleased to exclude the latter; and ventures to affirm that he has the Authority of our Church for such an Opinion, and for such a Practice.

or at what you aim. Does *Aspasio* plead the Articles for any such Purpose? Not that he should be afraid, in Case there was an evident Occasion, to advance such a Plea, and perhaps might put Mr. *Wesley* to greater Difficulty than he is aware of, in order to elude the Force of it.—But he does not in this Place come within View of the Point; nor so much as remotely hint at it. No, nor in any Part of the three Volumes, does he once touch upon *absolute Predestination*, much less does he plead the Articles of our Church in its Defence. So that your inferential Word “therefore,” is a Conclusion without Premises.

Absolute Predestination is a Phrase not to be found in all the Dialogues, or in any of the Letters. But it is a Phrase which Mr. *Wesley* thinks to be alarming and disgusting, on which Mr. *Wesley* has learned to say many horrible and shocking Things; therefore be it right or wrong, be it true or false, *Aspasio* shall be charged with the obnoxious Expression.—When he mentions Predestination, it is in the very Words of Scripture; without dwelling upon the Subject; without resting his Cause upon it; without attempting either to explain, or to establish it. This he leaves, and ever will leave, to clearer Heads and abler Pens.—As to your “absolute,” this is not what *Aspasio* speaks, but what Mr. *Wesley* would make him speak, a Word, which in this Connection he never used, nor so much as dreamt of using, for which Reason, I call it, not *his*, but *yours*.—May I not then retort your own Question? And ask, is it fair, is it honest, to put into your Friend’s Mouth Words which he never used, and then exclaim against them?

What

What follows in this Paragraph is prodigious indeed, “ Seeing the xviith Article bearily defines the “ Term;” that is, the Church does not believe the Doctrine, nor require any such Belief from her Members? Why then does she select it for one of the Articles? Why pronounce it agreeable to GOD’s Word: Why forbid Disputation against it? Pity, but we had been acquainted with this fine Distinction when we were Students at *Oxford*—We then declared our Approbation of the academical Statutes; we engaged to observe them all, and confirmed our Engagement with an Oath.—But how easily might we have eluded the Obligation, if, when called upon for Conformity and Obedience, this Salvo had come into our Heads; “ The University does not in “ these Statutes, set forth our Duty, but barely de- “ fines the Terms; she does not insist upon a Con- “ formity, but only flourishes a little upon Terms, “ and leaves us to obey or disobey, as we shall feel “ ourselves inclined.”

“ Barely defines the Term, without either af- “ firming or denying the Thing.”—How! Does she not affirm the *Thing*, when she styles it an *excellent Benefit of GOD*? Declares it to be *full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable Comfort* to the Godly? That it *greatly establishes and confirms their Faith of eternal Salvation, and fervently kindles their Love towards GOD*? “ Not affirm the Thing!”—When she expressly ascribes such Fruits and Consequents to it! This is not only affirming, but affirming with the highest Approbation, like proclaiming the King, and placing the Crown upon his Head.

In one Part of your *Preservative*, you enumerate, and very properly display, what you call “ the five “ Bene-

“ Benefits of Baptism.” Suppose a *Quaker*, upon reading this Passage should say, “ Friend *Wesley*, thou barely
 “ definest the Term, thou neither affirmest nor de-
 “ niest the Thing—This is no Proof that thou thy-
 “ self believest a Tittle of Water Baptism, or would-
 “ est have thy Readers believe the Reality of any
 “ such Ordinance.” Should the *Quaker* argue thus, he would argue just like yourself. But I apprehend he would not be so boldly disingenuous, he would rather confess; “ Friend *John* doth certainly main-
 “ tain and believe these Things; but his Opinion
 “ is mistaken, and his Arguments are inconclu-
 “ sive.” “ The xxxist Article totally overthrows
 “ Predestination, and razes it from the Foundation.”

If so, it makes one Article contradict another: Consequently, weakens the Authority, and undermines the Credibility of them all. In this Article are two Points more particularly proper for our Enquiry. The *great Salvation*, and the *Number of the Saved*—I cannot but query, whether you believe the former, or rightly understand the latter?

The *great Salvation*, expressed in the following Words; “ The Offering of *CHRIST* once made,
 “ is that perfect Redemption, Propitiation, and Sa-
 “ tisfaction for all the Sins of the whole World,
 “ both original and actual.” If I take these Words as I am enjoined, in the literal and grammatical Sense, I must believe, that *CHRIST* engaged to satisfy offended Justice, for every Sin which I have committed, or shall commit, throughout my whole Life. My past Sins at that Time, had no more Existence, than my future Sins have at this Hour, but both were equally laid upon my LORD.

Having undertaken this greatest of all Works, I must believe that he fully accomplished it; and actually satisfied for all my Transgressions, of every Kind and every Date.—A Possibility, or mere *Chance* of being redeemed, can never be reckoned a perfect Redemption; neither would our SAVIOUR have paid down a positive Price for a precarious conditional Good, much less would he have paid an immense, an infinite Price, upon a bare Uncertainty, whether it should take any Effect, or ever obtain its desired End—I believe therefore, that the Satisfaction is made for *me*, that GOD has received the all-sufficient Atonement in Behalf of all my Provocations, and that there is no more Ground of Condemnation for me a vile Sinner, than there is Room for the Prosecution of an Insolvent, all whose Debts are defrayed, even to the very last Mite.

The *Number of the Saved*, expressed in those Words—*The Sins of the whole World*. This I acknowledge to be the Language of Scripture; and I promise myself you will bear with me, while I offer my Thoughts, concerning the Occasion and the Import of such Language.

In the *Antediluvian* and *Patriarchal* Ages, the LORD JEHOVAH confined his Favour to a few particular Families.—When he formed his *Israel* into a Commonwealth, he chose them to himself, and separated them from all other Nations. To them he gave his Oracles, his Ordinances and his Covenants, yea, he honoured and indulged them with his divine Presence: In this the *Israelites* gloried; they appropriated this Privilege to themselves, and held other People at a Distance, looking upon them as Strangers, and without GOD in the World; hence

hence that chosen Seed spares not to say, “ We are
 “ thine; thou never barest Rule over them; they
 “ were not called by thy Name.”—At the Com-
 mencement of the MESSIAH’s Kingdom, the
 LORD purposed to change the Scene, and vary
 the Dispensation, by admitting both *Jews* and *Gen-
 tiles* to an Interest in the great Salvation; as they
 were equally chargeable with Sin, and equally liable
 to the Curse, they should now stand upon a Level;
 be equally Sharers in that divine SAVIOUR, who
 submits to be made Sin, and to be made a Curse for
 both alike. This the HOLY GHOST expressly
 and repeatedly promised, *He* (that is, the REDEEM-
 ER which is to come) *shall speak Peace unto the Hea-
 then; His Dominion shall be from Sea, even to Sea,
 and from the River even to the End of the Earth.*

Notwithstanding such Prophecies, and such Pro-
 mises, our LORD himself, when he entered upon
 his Ministry, acted a discriminating Part, and kept
 up the *Partition Wall*; in Pursuance of that Decla-
 ration, *I am not sent, but unto the lost Sheep of the
 House of Israel.* When he sent forth his Disciples
 to preach and to teach, he gave them also a Com-
 mand to shew the same partial Regard; *Go ye not
 into the Way of the Gentiles.* This Conduct of our
 LORD, both under the old Testament and the
 new, confirmed the *Jews* in their self-flattering No-
 tion, that they were, and ever should be, a favourite
 Nation, and a peculiar People. The *Gentiles* on
 the other Hand, were no less discouraged; apprehending that as they were, so they ever should be,
Aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel. But in order
 to convince the *Jews* of their Mistake, in claim-
 ing the Blessing of *Abraham* to themselves, and in
 order

order to assure the poor discarded *Gentiles* that they should be *Fellow-Heirs and of the same Body*; our **LORD**, in his last Charge to his Apostles, alters the Stile of his Commission, and enlarges the Sphere of their several Departments. It is now no longer, *Go not into the Way of the Gentiles*, but quite the reverse, *Go teach all Nations, all the World, yea, and every Creature, whosoever believeth, whether Jew or Gentile, shall be saved.*

Still the *Jews* were hardly induced to give the right Hand of Fellowship to their Brethren the *Gentiles*—For *St. Peter* cries, with some Indignation; *Not so, LORD.* Still the *Gentiles*, hardly persuaded that they should be Partakers of the Grace, reasoned against themselves; *The LORD hath utterly separated me from his People.* Therefore the **LORD**, to intercept all the desponding Objections of the latter, and to bring down the high disdainful Imaginations of the former, declares in a Variety of Places, that the Difference no longer subsists, that **CHRIST** has thrown down the Partition Wall, and laid all plain and common, and free.—Though the giving of the Law pertained to *Israel only*, the **LORD JESUS** gave himself a Ransom for **ALL PEOPLE**. Though the paschal Lamb extended its Influence only to the Circumcision, the **LAMB of GOD** is a Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World, even though it be not circumcised. And now **GOD** would have all Men, whether bond or free, *Jews* or *Gentiles*, *Greeks* or *Barbarians*, to be saved, by coming unto the Knowledge of the Faith.

This Account gives us the true Cause, and points out the intended Use, of such universal Phrases. They are calculated to abate the Pride of the *Jews*,

to encourage the despised *Gentiles*, and by excluding *none*, they give Encouragement for *all* to come, because, though every *individual* Person will not be saved, yet *whosoever cometh shall in no wise be cast out*.—By this Interpretation, the Phrase is neither inconsistent with other Texts, neither does our Church contradict herself.

Upon the whole, you will please to observe, that I should never have touched upon this Subject, had not your Objections, far fetched and forced as they are, given me a Kind of Challenge. And now I have touched upon the Subject, it is not as a Champion for the Cause, but only to shew the Weakness and the Inconsistency of your arguing, how little you avail yourself even on a Point, where you think Opposition vain, and your Arm irresistible.

“Believers, who are notorious Transgressors in themselves, have a sinless Obedience in *CHRIST*,” this Passage you select as faulty, I presume, because it is opposite to your favourite Tenet, “*Perfection in personal Holiness*.”—By *notorious*, I mean *acknowledged, confessed, indisputably such*. If you are not such a Transgressor, why do you daily confess yourself “a miserable Sinner?” Why do you acknowledge, that you are “tied and bound with the Chain of your Sins,” and declare before all Men, that “there is no Health in you?” All this Mr. *Wesley* speaks with his Lips, and I would hope, believes in his Heart. Yet all this does not amount “to a *notorious* Transgressor.” Pray then, good Sir, inform us, what Sort of Transgressor is described by all these Expressions.

You cry out, “O Syren Song!” The Psalmist would have taught you a better Exclamation. If

this is the Case, *let us rejoice with trembling*—Are we notorious Transgressors in ourselves? The Consciousness of this is the strongest Motive to Humility—Have we a sinless Obedience in *CHRIST*? The Belief of this is an abundant Source of Joy. When you add “pleasing Sound to *James Wheatly!* “*Thomas Williams! James Relly!*” I am quite ashamed of your Meanness, and grieved at your uncharitable Rashness. How unworthy is such a Procedure, either of the Gentleman, the Christian, or the Man of Sense! Unworthy the *Gentleman*, to stigmatize by Name, and expose to the most public Infamy. Unworthy the *Christian*, whose Charity concealeth, rather than divulgeth and proclaimeth upon the House Tops.—Unworthy the *Man of Sense*, who knows that the Miscarriages of a Professor, are no Argument against the Soundness of a Doctrine; if they were, would not your own Principles totter? Nay, how could Christianity itself stand?

Elijah failed in his Resignation, and even *Moses* himself spake unadvisedly with his Lips. “It is true, says Mr. *Wesley*. But if you could likewise fix some Blot upon venerable *Samuel*, and beloved *Daniel*, it would prove nothing.” I have no Desire to fix a Blot, but if I find it in the most accomplished Character, this proves the Proposition, which *Aspasio* maintains; “That the very best of Men fall short, that the very best of Men will be found guilty, if tried by the righteous Law—That the very best of Men, have nothing more to plead for Acceptance with the HIGH and HOLY one; than the Criminal, who Yesterday murdered his Benefactor; To-morrow is to be executed for his
“ Crime,

“ Crime, and is now flying to the Redemption that
 “ is in *CHRIST JESUS* for the Chief of
 “ Sinners.”

“ No Scripture teaches that the Holiness of Chris-
 “ tians is to be measured by that of any *Jew*.” I
 should be afraid to advance such a Position, after
 having read that general Exhortation, *Be ye Followers*
of them, who through Faith and Patience inherit the
Promises ; and those more particular References to
 the ancient Saints, comprised in the *eleventh Chapter*
to the Hebrews. Were not they *Jews*? Does not
 the Apostle propose them as *Patterns* for our Imita-
 tion? Is not this his Language, *let us also in Con-*
formity to their Practice?—*The Spirit of CHRIST*
was in them ; and “ they obtained, (even from the
 “ supreme JUDGE) a good Report.” Agreeably to
 this divine Testimonial, we are directed to learn
 from *Abel*, a fiduciary Dependence on the great
 Atonement ; and from *Enoch*, a Life of Commu-
 nion with a reconciled GOD. The Prophets are
 recommended to our Contemplation, as “ Examples
 “ of suffering Affliction, and of Patience.” *Eli-*
jab is set before us as an Instance of persevering and
 successful Prayer: And we are directed to walk in
 the Steps of our Father *Abraham's* Faith. This was
 the Counsel of an Apostle to others ; this was the
 Aim of an Apostle with regard to himself ; therefore
 I think, it can never be unworthy of you, or unfit
 for the most advanced among your Disciples. For
 my Part, I shall reckon myself truly happy ; I shall
 bless the Day, whereon I was born ; if I may but
 be enabled to follow the Footsteps of these illustrious
 Leaders, though

— — *Non passibus æquis.*
 O

That

That Christians ought to rise above the Level of the common *Jews*, I freely own. Mr. *Wesley's* Mistake seems to lay in confounding the *common* with the *uncommon*, in not discerning the Difference between *any* and *every*; between *some* and *all*. Some *Jews* were blessed with extraordinary Endowments, they had distinguished Communications of the Spirit of Wisdom and Holiness. They were as the "Stones of a Crown, lifted up as an Ensign upon his Land." Their great Achievements and eminent Attainments are described in the aforementioned Chapter, which may truly be stiled the *Golden Legend*; great Things impossible to Flesh and Blood, they both performed and suffered. Such as characterise a Saint of the highest Rank.—To imitate these is the Duty of *all* Christians; to equal them is the Privilege of *few*.

Let me *illustrate* this Sentiment; the Reader, I apprehend, will hardly think it needs *Confirmation*.—Every Graduate in the University, much more every Minister of the Gospel, ought to exceed the School Boy in Learning and Knowledge.—Yet there have been School Boys with whom few Ministers, and fewer Graduates, will venture to compare themselves. A recent Instance of this Kind, we have in the famous *Baratier*. This wonderful Youth when he was but four Years old, spoke *French* to his Mother, *Latin* to his Father, *High Dutch* to his Maid. At the Age of six, he explained the *Hebrew Text*, as ready as if it had been his native *German*. When other Lads are scarce able to read with Fluency and Propriety their mother Tongue, he was not only acquainted with, but Master of, five several Languages. In his eleventh Year he published a
learned

learned *Latin* Dissertation, and translated a Book of Travels, out of *Hebrew* into *French*. While a mere Boy he was qualified to dispute with Professors of the Sciences, was honoured with a Seat at an ecclesiastical Synod, and admitted to the Degree of Doctor in Philosophy. Upon this Narrative I shall only observe, that many of the *Jews*, whose Names are immortalized in Scripture, were, in Faith, in Godliness, and all that is exemplary, so many *Baratiers*.

“ Do not the best of Men frequently feel Disorder in their Affections? Do they not often complain, when I would do good, Evil is present with me?” “ I believe not.” What a Proof is here! How well suited to its Office; which is to controul the Current, and over-rule the Evidence of ancient and modern Consent. But why don't you believe what *Aspasio* supposes? Is your Disbelief grounded on Fact? Are you acquainted with any People, who feel no Disorder in their Affections? Who always do good in the completest Manner? And never have Evil present with them? If so, what are their Names? Where do they live? We would go many Miles to see them. You have no Aversion to the Mention of Names, when Censure is the Motive, and public Disgrace the Effect, why should you be so reluctant, when Honour and distinguished Respect would be the Consequence?

Do they not say, *we groan, being burdened with the Workings of inbred Corruption?* “ This is not the Meaning of the Text. The whole Context shews the Cause of that Groaning was their longing to be with *CHRIST*.” You need not on this Occasion rummage the Context, or take a Journey to find what is at your Door. The Sentence

tence itself shews, as plainly as Words can shew, the Cause of their Groaning. We groan, it is not said because we long to be with *CHRIST*. This might be a Truth; but this is not the Cause assigned, “We groan because we are burdened.” Burdened with what? *Aspasio* answers with a Body of Sin and Death, or with what the Apostle himself styles *το θυνηλον*. This, whatever it means, was the Load that encumbered them, oppressed them, and made them sigh ardently for Deliverance. Does not this signify all the Infirmities and Disorders of the present mortal State? Among which the sad Effects of inbred *Corruption*, are none of the least. These gave those magnanimous, but pious Souls, more Uneasiness than all other Kinds of Affliction whatever*.

The Cure of Sin will be perfected in Heaven. “Nay, surely in Paradise.”—*Aspasio* knows no Difference between Paradise and Heaven; Paradise is the Kingdom where *CHRIST* reigns; and is not this Heaven? Paradise is the Region where the Tree of Life grows; and is not this Heaven? Heaven denotes the Place, Paradise describes its Nature, a Place of consummate Bliss and absolute Perfection, where is the Fulness of Joy and Pleasure

* “We groan, being burdened, with a Sense of our spiritual Infirmities, and with the Workings of inbred Corruption.” This is *Aspasio*’s Interpretation. “We groan, being burdened with numberless Infirmities, Temptations and Sins.” This is Mr. *Wesley*’s Interpretation in his Expository Notes on the New Testament. Yet here he denies what there he affirms.—It is said, I think of *Ishmael*; *His Hand will be against every Man*. Mr. *Wesley* goes a Step farther. His Hand is against *himself*, as well as against every Body else.

sure for evermore.—However, if it can be proved, that they are different Abodes, and imply different States * ; then *Aspasio* would be understood to say, the Cure of Sin is completed in Paradise ; or as soon as the Believer drops his Flesh, and enters the invisible World.

This (a perfect Conformity to G O D) is a noble Prerogative of the beatific Vision. “ No ;” says Mr. *Wesley*. Though St. *John*, one would think, had settled and ascertained this Point beyond all Contradiction—*We shall be like him, for we shall see him, as he is.*—“ We shall,” which intimates, that at present we are not perfectly like him—“ For,” which denotes the efficient Cause of this Advancement and Felicity ; this complete Transformation into the divine Image—“ We shall see him,” no longer through a Glass, but Face to Face. We shall receive the clearest Manifestation of his ineffable Holiness and Glory, which will have just the same Effect upon our Souls as the imprinted Seal has upon the melting Wax.

“ It would then come too late. If Sin remains
“ in us till the Day of Judgment, it will remain

O 3

“ in

* St. *Paul*, I am aware, speaks of Heaven and speaks of Paradise, 2 *Cor.* xii. 2, 4. So does *David* speak of rising up into the Hill of the LORD, and of standing in his holy Place.—But as the same Thing, though variously expressed, is meant by the *Psalmist*, I think we may not unreasonably understand the *Apostle* in the same Manner. If they had been different Habitations, methinks he would have mentioned *Paradise* first, and then the third Heavens. Otherwise he tells the Story but awkwardly ; for he first mentions his Arrival at the third Heavens, and then at Paradise, that is, according to Mr. *Wesley* ; first he was led into the *Presence*, and then introduced to the *Ante-Chamber*.

“in us for ever.” You suppose, that the beatific Vision is not enjoyed, till the Day of Judgment. But in this you seem to err, not knowing the Scripture. I have a *Desire*, says the Apostle, *to be dissolved*.—And what is the Consequence, the immediate Consequence of Dissolution? *To be with CHRIST*; in his Presence; before his Throne; and is not this the beatific Vision? *Willing* (says the same inspired Writer) *to be absent from the Body, and present with the LORD*.—Here is no Hint of any intermediate State, but the very Moment in which the Saints depart from their Bodies, they are present with the LORD; and if with the LORD, then in the highest Heavens; then at the Fountain Head of Felicity; then amidst the *beatific Vision*.—To Heaven *Elijah* was conveyed in his fiery Chariot; and into Heaven the first *Martyr* was received by his compassionate SAVIOUR.—Neither of them waited in some intervening Mansion, as a Kind of *Lobby* to the Heaven of Heavens. This is the *Papish* Notion, and very closely connected with the Chimera of Purgatory; so closely connected, that if you take away the former, the latter drops into nothing—I am sorry, your Opinions, Sir, are so much like the Errors of the Man of Sin.

Our present Blessedness does not consist in being free from Sin. “I really think it does.” Spoke like Mr. *Wesley*. “I think,” is still the *Argumentum Palmarium*. “I think,” is the heavy Artillery, which is to demolish Brigades at a Blow, only here it is strengthened and enforced by that emphatical Word “really.”—But if our present Blessedness does *really* consist in being free from Sin, where

where are your blessed Persons? We may truly say,

Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto. VIRG.

No; this can hardly be said, *Virgil's* Description is too full, instead of seeing a very few, here and there one, popping up their Heads, in the great and wide Ocean of the World; we are not able to find so much as an *Individual*; shew us *one*, only *one* of these Angels in Flesh and Blood, and it sufficeth us. Whereas, if you persist in maintaining your *sinless Perfection*, yet cannot produce a single Instance, to exemplify your Notion, will you not give too just a Handle for that sarcastic Reflection, used on another Occasion?

*With Witnesses many this Cause did abound,
With some that were hang'd, and some that were drown'd,
And some that were lost, and some never found.*

These are *Aspasio's* Words—"It (our present Imperfection) perpetually reminds us of a most important Truth, that our present Blessedness consists, not in being free from all Sin, but in having no Sin imputed to us." He took particular Care to guard his Meaning from Misconstruction, by adding the Word *all*: Lest this Word, because it is little of Stature, should be overlooked, he printed it in *Italics*. But all this Precaution is thrown away upon Mr. *Wesley*. He takes no Notice of this same little Word; nay, he shuts it entirely out of his Quotation; as though he should say, "Where is the Harm of clapping under the Hatches such a puny insignificant Monosyllable? I would have it to know, I shall ere long turn adrift more plump and portly Words than that."

Aspasio also took Care to confirm his Sentiments by a Reference to Scripture, he supported himself by the Authority of King *David*.—Mr. *Wesley* having a little while ago laboured to depreciate, now ventures to contradict the royal *Psalmist*. *Blessed*, (says the *Psalmist*) *is the Man*—Who is free from Sin? Who is perfectly sanctified? This is not the Doctrine, which the sweet Singer of *Israel* teaches, but blessed is he, *whose Transgression is forgiven, whose Sin is covered*. Deeply impressed, and quite charmed, with the Contemplation of this most substantial Happiness, the sacred Writer proclaims it; repeats it; yes, a third Time he celebrates it; crying out with Ardour of Joy, *Blessed is the Man, unto whom the LORD imputeth no Iniquity* *. Neither that Iniquity which was formerly committed, nor that which still defiles †.) Blessed indeed! May I live under a firm Persuasion of my own particular Interest, in this unspeakable Privilege! May I find it made good to my Soul, at the universal Judgment! Then let others take the Kingdoms of this World, and all the Glory of them.—And as for *Aspasio*, he may reckon his Credit safe, and his Opinion fully authorised, while he espouses the Doctrine, and uses the very Words of the unerring SPIRIT.

“ If we are not free from Sin, we are not Christian Believers.—What an Assertion is here! *Assertion*, for I dare not call it a *Truth*.—If it was, who then could be saved? Not one of a thousand; not two of a Million; no, nor Mr. *John Wesley* himself, since

* *Psal.* xxxii. 1, 2. Shou'd any Objection arise from the next Sentence, the Reader may see it anticipated, and superseded, in *Theron* and *Aspasio*. Vol I. pag. 289, 290.

† *Psal.* xv. 3.

since out of his own Mouth he stands condemned. He makes this Acknowledgment, concerning himself and his Followers, “ We know by melancholy
 “ Experience what it is to neglect Works of Righteousness.” To corroborate his Confession, he adds, “ We know and feel by melancholy Experience, what it is to swerve from our first Love. “ We feel by Experience” — He is willing to run the Hazard of Tautology, rather than any should suspect the Sincerity and Truth of his Protestation.—And can you after such a Confession, after such a Protestation, pretend to be free from Sin? Is all this, which you know of yourself, and *feel by Experience*, consistent with a *sinless* State? Just as much as a *Lethargy* is consistent with the Vigour of *Health*, or a shameful *Flight* with a glorious *Victory*. See, Sir, how you are entangled in your own Net, how, without being chased by an Enemy, you run yourself aground. Nor will all your Dexterity, so long as you avow such palpable Inconsistencies, be able to set you clear.

You attempt to confirm your Opinion by the Apostle’s Declaration; *Being made free from Sin*.— But he and you mean different Things by the same Words—He means being freed from the *Dominion of Sin*—This is agreeable to his own Explanation, Sin (*ου κυριευσει*) shall not lord it over you—It may assault you; it may harass you; it may gain some *Advantage* over you; but it shall not obtain a *final Victory*, nor play the *Tyrant* over you. To the Expedience and Necessity of this Freedom, if ever we would approve ourselves Disciples of *CHRIST*, or Christians indeed, I readily subscribe—Whereas, you mean being free from the very *Remainders* of Sin.

“ Having

“ Having a Purity (’tis your own Explanation) free
 “ from all Mixture of its Contrary, and a Resigna-
 “ tion excluding every Degree of Self-will.” Against
 the Existence, or the Possibility of this Freedom, so
 long as we sojourn in a Body of Flesh, I enter my
 Protest.

If we were perfect in Piety, *CHRIST*’s priestly
 Office would be superseded. “ No, we should still
 “ need his Spirit, and consequently his Intercession.”
 But were we perfect, we should receive the Spirit
 without an Intercessor—An Intercessor implies an
 Alienation between the two Parties; or something
 which, without the Intervention of a third Person,
 would create Alienation.—The priestly Office, whe-
 ther of atoning, or of interceding, is founded on a
 State of Guilt, to this it bears an essential and in-
 variable Relation.—Does *CHRIST* exercise his priestly
 Office in Behalf of Angels? No, because they excel
 in Strength, and are perfect in Holiness—Will
CHRIST exercise his priestly Office, when all his
 Saints are received into Glory? No, because then
 there will be an absolute Consummation both in
 Body and Soul, both in Righteousness and Happi-
 ness, and the mediatorial Kingdom be delivered up
 to the FATHER.—Did *CHRIST* exercise his
 priestly Office before *Adam* fell? No, because Sin
 had no Existence then, and then the Language was,
*Let Man be blessed; not, Deliver him from going down
 into the Pit.*

The Objections laid to my Charge in this Para-
 graph, and the whole Side of the Leaf, proceed upon
 your favourite Notion; *Perfection* of Holiness, even
 while we continue in Houses of Clay. As I look
 upon your Foundation to be a mere Delusion, I must
 of

of course conclude, all that you build upon it to be chimerical and delusory; therefore, till you prove your Supposition, I have no Reason to concern myself with any of your Consequences deduced from it, or with any of your Allegations relating to it. On one Clause, however, let me bestow a slight Animadversion.

Aspasio says, a Sense of remaining inbred Corruption will reconcile us to Death; Mr. *Wesley*, replies, “Indeed it will not: Nor will any Thing do this like perfect Love.”—Here I think you have missed the Mark. Nothing can reconcile us to Death but that which takes away its Sting; and this is done only by the Atonement of *CHRIST*. Nothing can reconcile us to Death but that which delivers us from its Terror, and this is effected only by the Sacrifice of our great *HIGH-PRIEST*, which has converted the King of Terrors, into a Messenger of Peace: Nothing can reconcile us to Death, but that which makes it desirable to depart, and Gain to die; and this is owing, wholly owing to him who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

Old *Simeon* found, that nothing could reconcile him to Death, so much as a believing View of the *LORD's CHRIST*, seeing *GOD* made Flesh; seeing him as his own *SAVIOUR*, he was enabled not only to acquiesce in the Summons, but to welcome it as a Deliverance—He was enabled to say with Composure, and Complacency, *LORD, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace*—Not because I am weary of this imperfect State; not because I am perfect in divine Love; but because *mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation*.—Though you may not like to imitate

tate a *Jew*, I most heartily wish for myself; let me die the Death of this most venerable *Hebrew*, and let my latter End be like his!

If you still persist in your Opinion, that nothing can reconcile you to Dissolution like the imagined *Perfection* of your Love, not the *Blood*, by which the Saints overcame; not the *Righteousness*, by which they reign in Life; not the Grace and Power, which have swallowed up Death in Victory; I must then caution you to take heed lest you cross, or attempt to cross the *River*, in the Boat of *vain Confidence*. You have abridged, if I mistake not, the *Pilgrim's Progress*, therefore can be at no loss to understand my Meaning.

One Clause, I said—But I correct myself—There is another, so very extraordinary, that you might justly charge me with Inattention little short of Stupidity, if I should pass it over without Notice. These are the Words—“ If we were perfect in Piety (St. *John's* Word is, perfect in Love) we should still be encompassed with Infirmities, and liable to Mistakes, from which Words or Actions might follow, even though the Heart was all Love, which were not exactly right.”

This is strange! Wondrous strange indeed! Perfect, yet “ encompassed with Infirmities!” Perfect, “ yet doing Actions, and speaking Words not exactly right!” You are as singular in your *Idea*, as you are strenuous for the *Doctrine of Perfection*.—I know not any *Protestant* Writer that pretends to maintain the latter, yourself only excepted; and as to the former, I think it could never enter into the Head of any Thing living, but Mr. *Wesley's* only. Perfect, “ yet encompassed with Infirmities,” is just as
found

found Divinity, as true, yet addicted to lying, is found Morality.

This is not the worst Property of your Notion of Perfection, that it is absurd and self-contradictory. A Sentiment may be *absurd*, yet not very *pernicious*. But this is an Error of the most malignant Kind, this was at the Bottom of the Pharisees Pride, and spirited them on to seek Justification by the Works of the Law; they knew full well, that their Obedience was not complete, it did not come up to their sacred and exalted Standard, but they had learnt to soften and extenuate their Disobedience, into Matters “not exactly right.”—This is the Cause, why People professing Christianity, see no Form or Comeliness in *CHRIST*, so as to desire him, with Desires that cannot be uttered; 'tis true they are not perfect, they often offend,—but then the Offences are only human *Infirmities*; Words and Actions “not exactly right.” With this, which is indeed “the Syren Song,” they lull their Souls into an Insensibility of their ruined State, and a Disregard of the all-sufficient REDEEMER.

Cursed (says the Law) *is every one, that continueth not in all Things*, whether they be great or small—And will you regard that, as a mere Infirmity, and consistent with Perfection, on which the divine Law denounces a Curse? Which the divine Law threatens with all Misery here, and with everlasting Vengeance hereafter? The Apostle would probably chastise the Author, or Abettor of such a Conceit, in the following Manner; “Wilt thou know, O vain
“ Man, that what thou callest a Matter “not ex-
“ actly right,” is most horribly odious in the Eye
“ of GOD's infinite Purity; deserves eternal Death
“ in

“ in the Estimate of his infinite Justice ; and could
 “ never have been pardoned but by the atoning
 “ Death of his infinitely majestic Son !”

“ Encompassed with Infirmities, yet the Heart all
 “ Love ! Words and Actions not exactly right, yet
 “ the Man all Perfection !” These are all Paradoxes
 which I never saw equalled, only in the Writings
 of some high-flown Papists. Mr. *Wesley's* Words are
 not far from a Translation, they are to a Nicety the
 Sense, of those very offensive Passages, which I meet
 with in a Couple of Popish Zealots. *Andradius*, In-
 terpreter of the Council of *Trent*, writes thus ;
 “ Venialia peccata * tam sunt minuta & levia, ut
 “ non adversentur perfectioni charitatis, nec im-
 “ pedire possunt perfectam aut absolutam obedien-
 “ tiam.”—*Lindenus*, another Champion for the same
 bad Cause, expresses himself in a more elegant, but
 in no less shocking a Manner ; “ † Levicula vitiola
 “ lapsuum quotidianorum, aspergines & nævulæ
 “ sunt : quæ per se non maculant & contaminant,
 “ sed quasi pulvisculo leviter aspergunt vitam christi-
 “ anam : ut nihilominus tamen per se sint perfecta,
 “ & undique immaculata Renatorum opera in hac
 “ vita.”—If Mr. *Wesley* pleases to consider these
 Passages,

* Venial Sins are so minute and trivial, that they do
 not oppose the Perfection of our Love, nor can they hin-
 der our Obedience from being absolutely perfect.

† The little trifling Faults which are owing to our daily
 Slips or Mistakes, are like Specks, or almost impercepti-
 ble Moles upon the Body, which of themselves do not
 stain or defile ; but as it were, with small Particles of
 fine Dust, lightly sprinkle the Christian Life ; so that
 nevertheless the Works of the Regenerate may be of them-
 selves perfect, and in all Respects immaculate, even in
 this Life.

Passages, I hope, he will be induced to alter his Phrase, and rectify his Notions.—If he pleases to translate these Passages, his Followers may have an Opportunity of seeing, how nearly he approaches to some of the worst Errors of Popery. And may hence be admonished, not to imbibe, without due Examination, his Doctrines; nor submit, with an implicit Credulity to his Dictates.

“ The Charges of the Law are all answered.”— At this Sentence Mr. *Wesley* is highly offended. As the Lion is said to lash himself into Rage, so my Objector stirs himself up into a graceful Indignation; stirs *himself*, for there is nothing in the Passage, or in the Context, to awaken such a Flame of Zeal. If Mr. *Wesley* had understood *Aspasio*, according to the whole Tenour of his Discourse, there would have been no Room for bringing Count *Zinzendorf* upon the Carpet, nor for making that injurious Conclusion, *then neither GOD nor Man, can claim any Obedience to the Law.*—This is what *Aspasio* means: The Claims of the Law, as a Covenant of Works—The Claims of the Law, as being the Condition of Life and Glory—The Claims of the Law, as requiring perfect Obedience on Pain of eternal Death. These Claims are all satisfied by our most blessed and gracious SURETY.—If not, they are still incumbent upon us, and upon every Child of Man. A Burden this, which neither *we nor our Fathers were able to bear*, which, heavier than the Sands of the Sea, would have sunk us all into the nethermost Hell.—This Doctrine, therefore, is not “ *Antinomianism without a Mask* ;” but it is the Doctrine

of *Righteousness without Works* *, and of Justification *without the Deeds of the Law* †.

“ Then neither GOD nor Man can claim any “ Obedience to the Law.” Yes, GOD Almighty may, and GOD Almighty does claim our Obedience to the Law ; as a Rule of Life, he requires a Conformity to its Precepts, as to the Image of himself ; he demands a Performance of its Duties, as the Means of bringing Glory to his Name, and paying Submission to his Authority. And none will be so readily disposed, none will be so effectually enabled, to obey the *whole* Law ; as those who see themselves made righteous by the Obedience of *CHRIST*, who are thereby delivered from that tremendous Curse, denounced on all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men.

Aspasio thus exhorts his Friend—Let me desire you to imagine, rather may the blessed SPIRIT enable you to believe, that your Sins are expiated, through the Death of *JESUS CHRIST*: That a Righteousness is given you, by Virtue of which you may have free and welcome Access to GOD.—“ This “ is not scriptural Language,” says Mr. *Wesley*. Therefore it cannot be sound Doctrine, is his Way of arguing. Harmless enough I must own. But what follows is not quite so modest. “ I would “ simply say ;” and surely what *I* would say, must be *unexceptionably right* : This is the Conclusion we are to make ; otherwise what you alledge, is of no Weight at all.—“ I would simply say, By him we have Access to the FATHER.” This is beyond all Objection, proper—It is taken from the Apostle, and it includes what *Aspasio* expresses.—The Apostle’s
Language

* Rom iv. 6.

† Rom. iii. 28.

Language is the Ingot of Gold; *Aspasio's* Sentiment is a Thread drawn, or a Leaf beaten from it. Methinks before I dismiss this Topic, I would desire you to turn back a Moment, and reconsider what you have affirmed—Your Sins are *expiated*, is not this scriptural Language?—What else meaneth that Expression of the Apostle? *Εἰς τὸ ἰλασθεσθαι τὰς ἀμαρτίας τοῦ λαοῦ.* “To make Expiation for the Sins of the People*.”—A Righteousness is given you, is not this the scriptural Way of speaking? “They who receive *the Gift of Righteousness*, shall *reign in Life.*”—“By which you have *free Access to GOD;*” is not this both the Dialect, and the Doctrine of the HOLY GHOST? “We have *Access with Confidence* (not through our punctual Performance of any Conditions, but) through *the Faith of him;*” by a fiducial Reliance on our LORD's most precious Obedience, Blood, and Merit.

“I have seen such terrible Effects of this unscriptural Way of speaking.”—Here I fancy you slip into a little Mistake, you forgot the Distinction between the *Use*, and the *Abuse* of a Doctrine, a Distinction which you can easily make on other Occasions; you have doubtless seen People, who use the most scriptural Way of speaking, yet act unsuitably to their Language; what Reflections arose in your Mind, and what Inference did you draw upon observing such an Inconsistency? You said perhaps, “Their Voice is *Jacob's* Voice; but their Hands are the Hands of *Esau*—Hence it appears, that
 P “they

* Heb. ii. 17. *Εἰς τὸ ἰλασθεσθαι.*—*Ad expiare, i. e. ut expiaret peccata populi, quibus expiatis, Deus nobis redderetur propitius.*

“ they are Hypocrites—They pretend one Thing, and are really another.”—Make the same Reflection, and draw the same Inference, when you hear People talking of *Imputed Righteousness*, yet see them loosing the Reins to Ungodliness, then you will be consistent with yourself, and with Truth; ascribing the terrible Effects, not to the wholesome Doctrine, but to the vitiated Mind.

Where Sin abounded, &c. Mr. *Wesley* rejects *Aspasio's* Interpretation of this Text, and offers one of his own, one, which he had given us a little while ago; and now serves a second Time without any considerable Variation at our Table.—I shall only refer the Reader to Page 144, where he will find this Text considered, and Mr. *Wesley's* Exposition canvassed.

In this and the two following Paragraphs you find Fault with the Phrase *Imputed*; yet you say, “ Concerning the Thing there is no Question.” You would discard that particular Form of Expression; yet you add, “ As to the Doctrine we are agreed.” Then according to your own Confession, all these your Objections are a mere Strife of Words. Surely such a Man as Mr. *Wesley* should know how to make a better Use of Pen, Ink, and Paper, than to litigate about Letters and Syllables.—If I thought myself contending only about the most precisely proper Form of expressing the same Thing, I should be ashamed of my Employ, and would this Instant lay down my Pen; whereas I apprehend, that we are not agreed as to *Doctrine*, that there is a material and very wide Difference between us.—My Opinion, or rather, my *Faith* is, that our LORD's Obedience to the moral Law in professed Submission to its Authority,

thority, and in exact Conformity to his Precepts; his Performance of all holy Duties, and his Exercise of all heavenly Graces, that all this is a most essential and distinguished Part of his Merit, that this is of higher Dignity and greater Value than the whole World, and all the Righteousness in it—That the divine Law is hereby more signally honoured, than it could have been honoured by the uninterrupted Obedience of *Adam* and all his Posterity—That GOD's Justice, Holiness, Truth, receive greater Glory from these unparalleled Acts of Duty, than from all the Services of Angels and Men in their several wonderful Orders; that this *active* Righteousness, together with his most meritorious *Sufferings*, are the Ground and Cause of my Acceptance with GOD, are the very Thing which procures and effects my Justification, making me not barely acquitted from Guilt, but truly righteous, yea, perfectly righteous, and that before the GOD of infinite Penetration and Purity.—This is a View of the Doctrine, incomparably magnificent and inexpressibly comfortable. If you agree with your Friend in all these Particulars, speak and write conformably to such Agreement, then you will never again hear from him in this Manner, neither will he receive any more such Favours from you as the Letter now under Consideration, then we shall be perfectly joined together “in the same Mind, and in the same Judgment.”

Alas! this Union, I fear, is not so easily to be effected—Mr. *Wesley* still insists, and still urges, “The Authority of our Church (which *Aspasio* pleads) and of those eminent Divines (whose Testimony *Aspasio* alledges) does not touch those par-

“ ticular Forms of Expression.”—Justification thro’ imputed Righteousness, or being made righteous through the Obedience of *CHRIST*, I suppose are the Forms of Expression intended. These, it seems, none of the Quotations confirm, establish, no, nor touch, in Mr. Wesley’s Opinion at least; but I am inclined to hope, that the Generality of Readers will be of a different Persuasion, and allow that the Quotations and the Expressions touch and resemble one another, as much as the Wings of the Cherubim in the ancient Sanctuary*.

“ Does not touch.” No! not yet? Then we must have Recourse to some other Authority, and such a one I have at Hand as you would hardly venture, or even wish to gainsay, I mean the Authority of *John Wesley*, M. A. who declares in his Exposition to the New Testament—“ This is fully consistent with our being justified by the Imputation of the Righteousness of *CHRIST*.” Now I shall only remonstrate in Imitation of the Apostle; “ If thou thyself usest this Phrase, why wouldest thou compel others to lay it aside? Or, why art thou displeas’d with others for a Practice which thou allowest in thyself?”

Surely you will not say, *Imputation* of Righteousness is quite a different Thing from *Imputed* Righteousness.—Does not the former evidently include the latter? Can there be Proclamation of Pardon, without a Pardon proclaimed? Can there be the Purchase of an Estate, without an Estate purchased? Or the Imputation of Righteousness, without a Right-

* Both the Cherubims were of one Measure, and one Size: And their Wings touched one another in the midst of the House, 1 Kings vi. 25, 27.

Righteousness imputed? If others should affect such subtle and self-deluding Evasions, Mr. *Wesley* cannot, Mr. *Wesley* must not, he has precluded himself, nay, he has, with his own Mouth, given a Verdict against himself. Is it not recorded in those Lines subjoined to your Character of a Methodist?

*Let Faith and Love combine
To guard your valiant Breast,
The Plate be Righteousness divine,
Imputed and imprest.*

This *Imputed Righteousness* was once a delightful Theme; your Song in the House of your Pilgrimage. Why is it now a burthensome Stone, which you would fain shake off, from yourself and others? Are you become *rich* in yourself, and *increased with Goods* of your own acquiring? We know full well for what Reason the *Phrase* and the *Doctrine* are rejected, exploded, and reproached by the *Romish* Superstition, because they display in the brightest Light the Beauty of FREE GRACE. They hold the Door against all kind of human Merit, they cut off every, the most distant Pretension for glorying in Man; and refer all the Honour of Salvation to *JESUS CHRIST* alone. Admit Justification through the imputed Righteousness of *CHRIST*, and the grand Bulwark, or the main Pillar of *Poper*y, falls to the Ground; while a solid Foundation is laid for that Triumph and Gratitude, expressed in the inspired Hymn, *Let us be glad and rejoice exceedingly, but give the Honour* (all the Honour) *to HIM**.

The Righteousness of *GOD*, signifies the Righteousness which *GOD*-Man wrought out, "No;"

P 3

says

* Rev. xix. 7.

says Mr. *Wesley*. Your Reason, Sir, for this Negative? A Child may deny; A Man of Judgment will disprove.—Does not Mr. *Wesley* disprove, when he adds? “It signifies GOD’s Method of justifying Sinners.”—Just as forcibly as the “*Jews* disproved the Messiahship of *JESUS* of *Nazareth*, when they cried; “Thou the MESSIAH! “No; thou art a *Samaritan* and hast a Devil.” What they alledged, wanted a Proof altogether as much, as what they denied.—What Mr. *Wesley* here alleges is a Thread-bare Objection, already considered and already confuted. Yet, since it relates to a Point of the utmost Moment, and that which is the main Hinge of our Controversy, I shall not be deemed officious, if, as the Shot has been once again discharged, I once again lift up my Shield against it.

“The Righteousness of GOD, signifies GOD’s Method of justifying Sinners.” We have already shewn, how low an Interpretation this is; how insipid in itself, and incompatible with the current Language of Scripture: On the other Hand, how sublime and consolatory, is the Sense which *Aspasio* gives! A Righteousness, which GOD HIMSELF has provided without any Co-operation from his Creatures—The Righteousness of that most exalted, yet most condescending SAVIOUR, who is GOD and Man in one *CHRIST*, a Righteousness, dignified with all the Perfections of the GODHEAD, therefore worthy to be the Comfort, the Joy, the never-ceasing Boast of his People; and sufficient, infinitely sufficient, to save even the most vile, the most base, the most desperately ruined Sinners.

This is a Righteousness, as much superior to all human Attainments, to all angelic Accomplishments, as the Heaven of Heavens is higher than a Clod of the Vallies.—This is a Righteousness which could never have entered into the Heart of Man or Angel to conceive, but will be the Cause of their Admiration, and the Subject of their Wonder to endless Ages—This Sense fully accounts for those rapturous Expressions of the Prophet, when speaking of the all-surpassing Gift, he thus addresses his fellow Sinners; *Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Sion; shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee—He is righteous, and having Salvation.* He is completely righteous in his Nature, has fulfilled all Righteousness in his Life and Death, and has thereby obtained for thee, a full Pardon, a finished Salvation, a sure Title to eternal Glory.—This accounts for those more rapturous Expressions of the sacred Writers, when, in the Fervour of their Gratitude, they call upon the whole Creation, to celebrate the Goodness of the incarnate J E H O V A H. *Sing, O ye Heavens; for the L O R D hath done it, shout, ye lower Parts of the Earth; break forth into singing, ye Mountains; O Forest and every Tree therein, for the L O R D hath (in his own Person, by his own Obedience and Sufferings) redeemed Jacob, and glorified (not human Abilities, not human Works, but) himself, and his own Righteousness, in the Restoration of Israel*.*

In

* *Isa.* xlv. 23. Should any one say, is this the Sense of the Prophet? I ask, is not this the fullest, grandest, divinest Sense? Is it not a Sense perfectly true? Is it not warranted by the Gospel Revelation? Is it not demanded

In short, this is a Righteousness, which exalts GOD's Justice; which magnifies the Law; displays all his awful and amiable Attributes in their fullest Lustre.—To contrive it, was unsearchable Wisdom, to bestow it, is invaluable Treasure.—It answers in the compleatest Manner, all the grand and gracious Purposes both of GOD's Glory and of Man's Salvation. True Gospel this! Glad Tidings indeed! An Expedient for our Recovery greater than our Hearts could wish. We may truly say, while meditating on this Gift of consummate Righteousness; *Where Sin has abounded, Grace has much more abounded.* The Bricks are fallen down, but the most glorious Repairer of our Breaches has built with hewn Stone. Well might the Apostle, having this supremely excellent Righteousness in his View, look down with the most sovereign Contempt upon every other (Cause of) Confidence; upon every other Object of Trust; and reckon them *Dross* and *Dung*. —Well

by that Declaration of our SAVIOUR; *They* (the ancient Scriptures) *testify of Me?* Some Writers, I am aware, interpret this and other similar Passages, without taking in the unspeakable Blessings of CHRIST and his Grace. But these Interpreters seem to act a very injudicious, and no less unfaithful Part—I will suppose them expounding and illustrating that great Command of creating Power, *Let the Earth bring forth Grass, and the Herb yielding Seed.*—Will they model their Exposition, or fetch their Illustration from what appears on the Ground in the barren Month of *December?* Surely, if they have any Taste or Judgment, they will form their Comment, by the Fertility, the Plenty, the unbounded Luxuriancy of *April* and *May*. There is much the same Difference between the Righteousness of an incarnate SAVIOUR and all other Gifts of divine Goodness, as there is between the vegetable Productions of the vernal, and the almost total Sterility of the wintry Months.

—Well might he declare that he would never be ashamed of the Gospel, in which is this transcendently noble Righteousness, in all its Magnificence, Riches and Glory.

Do you think me rather too warm upon the Subject? Let me once again remit you to St. *Chrysoſtom*, read his Exposition of that charming Sentence, *The Righteousness of GOD, Hows &c.* This venerable Father of the Church speaks the Thing as it is. He does not mingle our Wine with Water, but gives us the genuine Truth, and triumphs because of the Truth.

The Doctrine of an imputed Righteousness seems to have been typically taught, by the remarkable Manner of Clothing our first Parents. All they could do for their own Recovery, was like the patched and beggarly Mantle of Fig-leaves; this they relinquish, and GOD himself furnishes them with Apparel; Animals are slain, not for Food, but Sacrifice; and the naked Criminals are arrayed with the Skins of those slaughtered Beasts.—The *Victims* figured the Expiation, made by *CHRIST*'s Death, the *Clothing* typified the Imputation of his Righteousness. “That does not appear,” cries Mr. *Wesley*. *Aspasio* has produced an Authority from the famous *Milton*. I could reinforce it by another from the elegant *Wisſus*. If you are not satisfied with either, or both these Testimonies, I will give you a Reason for the Sentiment—The *Victims* most properly shadowed forth the Expiation of Guilt, by the Redeemer's Blood; because it is the peculiar End of Sacrifice, to make Atonement for Sins; the *Clothing* most pertinently denoted the Saviour's Righteousness, which is described, both by the Prophet and the Apostle under this very Image—*He hath covered*

me with the Robe of Righteousness, says the Prophet *Isaiab*. The fine Linen which arrays the Bride of the Lamb, is the perfect Righteousness of the Saints*— says the beloved Disciple. It is like a royal Vesture, or a rich Suit of Apparel, upon all them that believe, adds the Apostle *Paul*. The impartial Reader, I promise myself, will allow these Passages, if not to be absolutely decisive, yet to have somewhat more Weight, than that Atom in your Scale, “this does not appear.” As for Sanctification, this may very reasonably rank among the Effects of being cleansed by the Blood, and adorned with the Righteousness of *CHRIST*. These Blessings produce Peace of Conscience, and Love of *GOD*. Just as commodious Cloathing produces Warmth, and promotes Health. And what is Love of *GOD*, but Holiness of Heart in the Seed, and Holiness of Life in the Fruit?

As this (the Nature of true Holiness) is a Matter of the last Importance; is a Point, on which Multitudes, I fear, are mistaken; I will leave it uppermost in your Thoughts, in the Reader's, and in those of, Rev. Sir, your, &c.

LETTER

* *Rev.* xix. 8. Τα δικαιωματα, being in the plural Number, I think may be translated, *Justitia omnibus numeris absoluta*. A Righteousness of all Kinds, and all Degrees, or comprehending every Kind, and defective in no Degree.—Would you see the Beauty of this fine Linen, or the Wardrobe in which it is deposited, consult *Isa.* xlv. 24. *Theron* and *Aspasia*, Vol. II. pag. 340, &c. where the Passage is explained, with Copiousness and Particularity; O! that it was also explained with a Propriety and Energy suitable to its eminent Importance!



L E T T E R X.

REV. SIR,

WE are now entering upon a new Province. Our Business will be chiefly of the *philological* Kind. We shall treat principally of *Words*. But as they are the Words, which the HOLY GHOST teacheth, they are like the Combs erected in yonder Hive. Not empty Syllables, made only for Sound; but rich with divine Sense, and full of the Honey of the Gospel, replete with the Manna of Heaven.—May this Pen be, to the Reader, like *Jonathan's* Rod; when, dipt in the delicious Juice, it *enlightened his Eyes*, refreshed his Spirits, and cheared his Heart!

“ Almost every Text, you are pleased to affirm, “ quoted in this and the following Letter, in Support of that particular Form of Expression, (imputed Righteousness) is distorted above Measure “ from the plain, obvious Meaning, which is pointed out by the **Context**.”—Let us examine these abused and distorted Texts, in order to discover, from whence the Misfortune happened; how the Violence was done; whether by Mr. *Wesley's* Pen, or by *Aspasio's* Tongue.

The first is from the Book of *Job*. Which, as it is greatly venerable for its Antiquity, and singularly to be regarded for its Importance, I shall beg leave

to consider at large.—A Sinner is described, lying under a dangerous Sickness; and brought, by the Force of his Disease, to the Brink of the Grave; by the Multitude of his Sins, to the very Borders of Hell. In this deplorable Condition, *If there be a Messenger with Him, an Interpreter, one of a thousand, to shew unto Man his Uprightness; then he is gracious unto him, and saith, deliver him from going down into the Pit; I have found a Ransom**.

If there be with him a Messenger of the living GOD; a faithful Ambassador of CHRIST, who may administer spiritual Assistance to the poor afflicted Creature.—An Interpreter, who knows how to open the Scriptures, and rightly to divide the Word of Truth. Who is a Preacher of Righteousness, and can properly apply the Word of Grace.—This is not every one's Talent; nor within the Compass of every Man's Abilities. He is One of a thousand, to whom GOD hath given the Tongue of the learned; enabling Him to speak a Word in Season, and suit the Condition of each respective Patient.—To shew unto Man his Upright-

* *Job xxxiii. 23, 24.* I have the rather chosen to lay this whole Passage before the Reader, because a new Interpretation is given to the Word *Messenger*. Here, it is supposed to denote a faithful and skillful Minister of the Gospel. In the Dialogues, it is supposed to describe our LORD JESUS CHRIST himself. I scarcely know, which Sense to prefer. Perhaps, both may be included, the Author, as well as the Instrument, of Comfort to the sick and sinful Man.—However, the Point in Debate between Mr. Wesley and *Aspasio*, is not affected by the different Application of this Word. *His Uprightness*, according to either Exposition, may signify the MESSIAH's Obedience and Sufferings; *must* signify these Things; provided these are the only justifying Righteousness of a Sinner; the only Way of obtaining the divine Favour, and removing every Evil.

Uprightness; that is, says Mr. Wesley, “to convince
“ *Him* of GOD’s Justice, in so punishing Him.”

But is this the Instruction, which such a distressed Sufferer wants? Is this the Word of Reconciliation, which every true Minister, in ancient Times did preach, and in later Times does preach? Or is there any Need of a choice Instructor—One skilled in the Counsel of GOD, to teach what the common Dictates of Reason demonstrate?—In this Interpretation, I can neither discern the true Critic, nor the clear Reasoner, nor the sound Divine.

Not the *true Critic*. He would acknowledge, that the Antecedent in this Clause *אֲדָמָה*, is not GOD, but Man. To *Man* therefore, if we regard grammatical Propriety, the Pronoun *his* must be referred.—Not the *clear Reasoner*; He would observe the Emphasis of the Word *then* *. Implying some Discovery, or some Conviction, in Consequence of which, Deliverance from Death ensues; or with which it is connected. Can this be a Discovery or a Conviction of GOD’s Justice, in punishing Him? No verily.—Much less therefore can I discern the *sound Divine*. He knows, and affirms constantly, that this is the Consequence of the MESSIAH’s Righteousness alone. Which, being imputed to the Sinner, becomes, for the blessed Purpose of Justification unto Life, *his* †.

So

* Verse 24.

† “*The Uprightness*, says Mr. Caryl, chiefly intended
“ here, is *the Righteousness of CHRIST*, in and by which
“ we are reconciled to and made one with GOD. We
“ never see, where our Uprightness is, till we see there
“ is nothing that makes us stand upright in the Court of
“ Heaven, but only *CHRIST* our Righteousness.—This

is

So that *Aspasio* seems to have the Import of Language, and the Scope of the Context, both on his Side. And I may venture to add, he has the consolatory Genius of the Gospel, yet more strongly pleading for his Interpretation. It must yield but cold Comfort, to tell a poor Wretch, confined to the Bed of languishing, and alarmed with Apprehensions of eternal Vengeance; but cold Comfort must it yield, to tell such a one, that he has deserved all this Misery, and is justly punished. Whereas, to inform him of a Righteousness, sufficient to do away all his Transgressions; sufficient to reconcile him, and render

“ is the great Duty of the Messengers and Interpreters
 “ of *CHRIST*, to declare to Man this Righteousness for
 “ his Uprightness. And that hence it is (as *Elibu* speaks)
 “ that *GOD* is and will be gracious unto him.”

Mr. *Caryl*, in expounding the Book of *Job*, has acquitted himself like a Master in *Israel*. His Thoughts are beautiful and animated. His Criticisms are correct and judicious. His Language, considering the Time in which he wrote, is remarkably pure and strong. His Doctrines are truly edifying, because, generally speaking, they are evangelical.—What is a very necessary, but very difficult Task, in explaining this Part of Scripture, the Connection of the Sentiment is discovered, the Bearings and Dependencies of the Argument are pointed out; and the Transitions from one Passage to another, shewn to be, not wild and disorderly, but just, regular, and graceful.

The only Fault attending this Work, is Prolixity. I wish some skilful Hand would, by rendering it less copious, render it more useful. I cannot but think, it might be a profitable Employ for young Students in Divinity, to exercise themselves in abridging Mr. *Caryl*, Dr. *Owen* upon the *Hebrews*, Mr. *Charnock* upon the Attributes, or some such valuable, but voluminous Authors. These, and many other Works of the same luxuriant Growth, would, if put into the Alembic, afford us the very Spirit of the Gospel, and the richest Cordials for our Souls.

der him acceptable, even to the chastising GOD; sufficient to obtain his Deliverance, very probably from Death, most assuredly from Hell; this is a reviving Report indeed. This will make the Bones, which Sin and Misery had broken, to rejoice.

Then, the Sinner and the Sufferer, attentive to this Instruction, and applying this Righteousness, is made Partaker of Pardon. GOD, the sovereign LORD of Life and Death, *is gracious unto him; and saith*, in the Greatness of his Strength, as well as in the Multitude of his Mercies, *deliver him from going down into the Pit of Corruption*, as a Pledge of his Deliverance from the Pit of Perdition. For *I have found a Ransom*, satisfactory to my Law, and to my Justice. I have received an Atonement, in Behalf of this once obnoxious, now reconciled Transgressor.

He shall receive the Blessing from the LORD, and Righteousness.—This you would render *Holiness*. But have you no *Hebrew Lexicon* to inform you, that the Word which signifies Holiness, is very different from the Expression used by the Psalmist? He says צדקה, whereas Holiness is expressed by קדש.—Besides, have you not observed, that *your Interpretation* would betray the Psalmist, into apparent Tautology? He had, in the preceding Verses, displayed the Duties of practical Godliness, and the Graces of inherent Holiness. The Person he describes, possesses the latter, and practises the former. To say, therefore, he shall receive Holiness, when he has it already, would not suit *David's Correctness*; however, it may suit *Mr. Wesley's Fancy*, or *Mr. Wesley's Design*.—In this Clause, the evangelical Moralist touches upon another Particular, which enters, as an essential Part, into

into the Character of a godly Man; even *the Righteousness which is of Faith*. Denoted by the Blessing of Pardon, and the Gift of Righteousness. Take away this, and there is no Acceptance with GOD. Take away this, and the Gates, mentioned in the Close of the Psalm, are unalterably shut. Unless we are furnished with this Passport, the everlasting Doors never lift up their Heads.—If you exclude this Peculiarity, the Description is very imperfect, and the Picture extremely deficient. Whereas, this adds the finishing Touch, and gives *true Perfection* to both.

Several Passages are quoted, in which the Word צדקה occurs. Sometimes you would have it signify *Mercy*; sometimes *Justification*; sometimes *spotless Holiness*. But what Proof do I find, for establishing any of these Significations; which differ so much from one another, and still more from the Truth? Nothing but the customary Argument, “So it unquestionably means.”—Now you must unquestionably know, at least every Novice in the Language knows, that the genuine and native Sense of צדקה is *Righteousness*. The Word expressive of Mercy, is חסד; neither in Sense nor Sound alike.—As to *Justification*, the Phrase never denotes that blessed Effect, but the divine and meritorious Cause, which produces it.

Shall I, in this Inquiry, appeal to the best Lexicons, the most approved Translations, or the ablest Interpreters? No, I will refer you to the Decision of an Interpreter, who is superior to all Lexicons and all Translations; I mean, the Author of the Epistle to the *Hebrews*. He translates this very Word, as it enters into the Name of *Melchisedec*. And he translates

translates it, not Mercy, not Justification, no, nor spotless Holiness, but Righteousness. Even that Righteousness, whose Fruit is Peace with GOD, and Peace in our own Conscience. Now, will you play the Critic upon this inspired Writer? and say, Unquestionably it means, not what the Apostle has determined; not what *Aspasio*, supported by his Authority, has adopted; but what I think fit to dictate?

An Opposer of our LORD's imputed Righteousness, who had more Discretion or more Subtily than Mr. *Wesley*, would have argued in this Manner. "The original Word, I must confess, ought to be translated *Righteousness*. This is undoubtedly the principal and leading Signification of the Term. But then the Circumstances and the Context oblige us to understand it, in the Notion of Mercy, of spotless Holiness, or of any Thing else, that serves our Purpose." — This would be more modest and more plausible, though not more just and solid, than your confident Assertion.

Suppose, we should admit this Pretence, what does the Critic gain thereby? Must he not have Recourse to that noble and comfortable Doctrine, for which we plead? Let the Word be translated *Mercy*. Why is Mercy shewn to Sinners? Is it not on Account of the Righteousness of their SURETY? Let it be translated *Goodness*. Wherefore is Goodness exercised to rebellious Men? Is it not because of the Satisfaction, made by their crucified LORD? Render it whatever you please, provided it conveys the Idea of Favour vouchsafed, or of the Benefits conferred, it must terminate, still terminate, in that

grand central Point, the Incarnation, Obedience, and Death of IMMANUEL.

Sion shall be redeemed with Judgment—“After severe Punishment,” you say.—The *Hebrew* Preposition, signifying *after*, is אַחֲרַיִם. I find no Trace of any such Word, in my Edition of the Bible. You may as well render or interpret the Passage, *in the Midst*. And then, if some other Critic should be inclined to translate it, *before* or *round about*; we should have a large Compass of Meaning, but where would Precision and Exactness be found?—But why is *Sion* to be redeemed *after* severe Punishment? Has her Punishment any Influence or Sway in the Work of her Redemption? Does the Punishment of Man pave the Way for the Salvation of GOD? Are Sinners to wait for Pardon and Reconciliation, till they have been severely punished? This is very discouraging Doctrine. And, blessed be GOD, it is absolutely without Foundation. The Gospel says; *To Day, even to Day, Sinners, if ye will hear his Voice, ye shall enter into Rest*. You need not tarry, till you have been severely chastised; but this Instant, believe in the LORD JESUS, and you shall be saved. The LORD JESUS has been wounded and bruised in your Stead. He has received all the Punishment, which you have deserved. Yea, as a Ransomer, he has paid double, as a Victim, he has suffered Double*, for all your Sins.—Considering these Things, I am still disposed to abide by *Aspasio's* plain and obvious Interpretation. Not to go out of my Way, in quest of the pricking Briar and grieving Thorn; when I meet with Roses and Lilies in the common Road.

In

* Isa. xl. 2.

In the LORD have I Righteousness. This will not satisfy our Critic. It must be *through* the LORD. —What piddling Criticism is this, even in case it was true, and answered some specious End! but it is by no means true. Every Body knows, that the Prefix \beth signifies *in*; and every Body but Mr. *Wesley* would blush to assert the contrary. Neither does it answer any valuable End, but the Reverse. It degrades the exalted Sense, and impoverishes the rich Blessing. To have Righteousness *in* the LORD, is abundantly more expressive of glorious Grace, than barely to have Righteousness *through* the LORD. *Mordecai* had Riches and Honours, *through* *Ahasuerus*, and his royal Favour; *Esther* had Riches and Honours, *in* *Ahasuerus*, as her royal Husband. *He* by being a Courtier, *she* by being a Consort, to the most magnificent Monarch in the World.

If Mr. *Wesley* piddled in the foregoing, he flashes in the following Passage. He assures us that \beth means, *spotless Holiness*. This is really a bold Stroke in Criticism. But, like many other bold Enterprises, it is likely to prove, not a Birth, but an Abortion.— \beth *spotless!* You might as well have rendered it *toothless*. It has no more to do with the Idea of spotless, than it has to do with the Idea of an Ivory Tooth, or a polished Tooth-pick. Literally translated, it signifies *Ages*; and may denote the *Perpetuity* of this Righteousness, and of its beneficial Effects. It *was* from the Beginning, it *is* at this Day, and it *will be* even unto the End, mighty to save. It is the one Refuge and Hope of Sinners, in every Age of the World, and under every Dispensation of Religion. Through all the Changes of Time it has been, and through the unchangeable

Q 2

Eternity

Eternity it will be, their chief Joy, and their Crown of Rejoicing.

What Righteousness shall give us Peace at the last Day, inherent or imputed? To this Question *Aspasio* has replied, in a very explicit Manner, by presenting us with a pertinent Extract from *Bishop Hall*, and by commenting upon a most important Prophecy of *Isaiab.* In both which, all human Righteousness is set aside, and our Peace is derived entirely from the glorious SHILOH*. From Him, who made Peace by the Blood of his Cross, and whose Name is THE PRINCE OF PEACE. Having this heavenly Blessing, and the Right of conferring it, as the peculiar Privilege, or unshared Prerogative of his Crown.

Mr. *Wesley* is pleased to deny this Doctrine, and to associate with the Papists †, in ascribing our Peace (and if our Peace, then our Salvation) “partly to inherent, partly to imputed Righteousness.”—But does our Church so? Hear her own Words. We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful LORD, trusting in our own Righteousness; much less then will she dare to approach his Judgment-Seat, trusting in any such Thing.—Does the

* *Gen.* xlix. 10. שִׁילֹה *Schilo.* *Nomen Messie peculiare, tranquillatorem designans.* That is, the Maker of Peace, and the Author of Tranquillity, for rebellious and wretched Men.

† The Doctrine of the Papists, avowed by a Writer of their own, is; “Our Confidence and Hope in the Day of Judgment dependeth, not only upon our Apprehension of *CHRIST*’s Merits by Faith, but also upon our Conformity to *CHRIST*, in Charity and good Works.”—The Reader may see this Presumption rebuked, and this Error refuted, in Dr. *FULK*’s *Annotations on the Rhe-mish Testament.* 1 John iv. 17.

the Apostle *Paul* do so? Hear his own Protestation. *That I may be found in CHRIST, not having mine own Righteousness, which is of the Law; which consists of my personal Obedience, and inherent Holiness. But having this, as the Source of my Peace, and the Strength of my Salvation, the Righteousness which is of GOD by Faith; even that inconceivably precious Righteousness, which GOD my SAVIOUR wrought, and which a Sinner by Faith receives.—* Did Mr. *Wesley* himself always do so? Let those Lines bear Witness; of which neither the Poet, nor the Divine, need be ashamed.

*My righteous Servant and my SON
Shall each believing Sinner clear,
And all who stoop t'abjure their own,
Shall in his Righteousness appear.*

Will that Righteousness give you Peace, which you *abjure*? Or, is it pious, is it prudent, is it consistent, to trust in a Righteousness, which you absolutely renounce? That which you abjure (a stronger Word could not be used) You consider, not barely as despicable, but as utterly abominable. Whereas, that which gives you Peace at the awful Tribunal, must not only be excellent, but incomparably excellent and valuable.—See, my Friend, how *thine own Mouth condemneth thee, and not I: Yea, thine own Lips testify against thee* *. O! that you may return to your first Sentiments, and to your first Love †! And no longer expose yourself and your

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* Job xv. 6.

† That Mr. *Wesley* may not be ashamed to retract a mistaken Sentiment, I will break the Ice, and lead the Way. If it be shameful to renounce Error, and sacrifice all to

Doctrine, to be a bye Word among the People. If you persist in such palpable Inconsistencies, who can forbear taking up that taunting Proverb, *A double-minded Man is unstable in all his Ways.*

But stop. A Passage from St. *John* is introduced, to support this Opinion. “*CHRIST* died for us, “ and lives in us, *that we may have Boldness in the “ Day of Judgment.*”—That *CHRIST* died for us, and lives in us, I readily acknowledge. But
 where

Truth, I do very willingly take this Shame to myself.—In a Copy of Verses, which I formerly wrote, sacred to the Memory of a generous Benefactor, I remember the following Lines.

*Our Wants reliev'd by thy indulgent Care,
 Shall give thee Courage at the dreadful Bar,
 And stud the Crown, thou shalt for ever wear.*

These Lines, in whatever Hands they are lodged, and whatever else, of a like Kind, may have dropt from my Pen, I now publicly disclaim. They are the very reverse of my present Belief. In which I hope to persevere, so long as I have any Being.

Far be it from me to suppose, that any Work of mine, should, in order to create my Peace, or cherish my Confidence, *be coupled with CHRIST's most holy Act.* I speak the Words of our Church, and I speak the Sense of the Prophet. *I will trust, and not be afraid.* Wherefore? Because I am inherently holy? Rather, *because GOD is my Salvation.* GOD manifest in the Flesh, has finished my Transgression, and made an End of my Sin. And in this most magnificently gracious Work will I rejoice.—I speak agreeably to the Declaration of the HOLY GHOST. *Fear not, for thou shalt not be ashamed, neither shalt thou be confounded.* Why? Because thy inherent Goodness shall prevent thy Confusion? No; but on a Footing, infinitely more solid; for a Reason, infinitely more satisfactory, *Because thy MAKER is thy Husband.* The Consequence of which is, all thy Debts and Deficiencies are upon Him; all his consummate Righteousness is upon thee.

where do you find any of the Apostles, from these Premises, drawing *your* Conclusion? St. *John*, whom you quote, has no such Logic. His Inference is deduced from a very different Topic. You give us a Fragment of the Apostle's Words; why don't you exhibit the golden Bowl complete? We shall then quickly perceive, that it contains a more sweet and salutary Draught, than you have provided for our Refreshment.

ΕΝ ΤΑΥΤΩ ΤΕΤΕΛΕΙΩΘΑΙ, Η ΑΓΑΠΗ ΜΕΘ' ΗΜΩΝ, ΙΝΑ ΠΑΡΡΗΣΙΑΝ ΕΧΩΜΕΝ ΕΝ ΤΗ ΗΜΕΡΑ ΚΡΙΣΕΩΣ. Which we translate, *Herein is our Love made perfect, that we may have Boldness in the Day of Judgment**. As you are fond of criticising upon the original Scriptures, here you might have done it justly and honourably. Here you might have altered and reformed our Translation; while every capable Judge would have owned your Service, to be seasonable and important. The true Sense of μεθ' ημων, is *with us, or with regard to us*. That is, GOD's Love, celebrated with inimitable † Energy and Beauty in the preceding Verse; GOD's Love towards us is herein made perfect; this is its grand and crowning Effect, that we should

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have,

* 1 John iv. 17.

† Ο Θεος αγαπη εστιν, *God is Love*. This I call *inimitable*. Nothing can be more simple, yet nothing is more sublime. For my Part, I know not how to attempt an Illustration of the noble Sentiment. It strikes the Mind, as Light strikes the Eye. No Art can make *this* more bright; and no Paraphrase can make *that* more delicate, more majestic, more affecting.—How flat, some of the finest Things, said by the ancient Philosophers; how flat they read, when compared with this animated Stroke of divine Eloquence, the Reader, if he pleases, may see in

CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE STARRY HEAVENS.

have, not a bare Hope, but an unappalled Boldness at the Day of Judgment.

As though he had said, GOD, having reconciled us to himself, by the Blood of his SON—having renewed us after his own Image, by his blessed SPIRIT, testifying of CHRIST in our Hearts—having carried us through all the Dangers of Life, and raised our Bodies from the Dust of Death—He crowns and consummates all these most indulgent Acts of his Grace, by giving us an undaunted and triumphant Confidence, at the Day of universal Audit.—According to this Interpretation, your own Text is against your Opinion, and refers this joyful Assurance, not to our Love of GOD, but to his Love of us; not to inherent Righteousness, but to free Grace*.

Aspasio thus translates St. Peter's Words; *Who have obtained like precious Faith in the Righteousness of our GOD and our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST* †. Mr. *Wesley* gives us to understand, that this Translation is wrong. It should be Faith *through*—and not through the Righteousness, but through *the Mercy* of our GOD and SAVIOUR.—He will not allow the *Greek* Preposition *εν* to signify *in*; though I can prove it, to have been in peaceable Possession of this Signification, for more than two thousand Years.

• Should it be said, in case you *thus* interpret the first Part of the Text, how will it connect with what follows? Perfectly well.—And none need wonder, that we shall appear with such Boldness at his Coming; since they cannot but observe, that *as He is, so are We in this World*. We are actuated by his SPIRIT; we resemble Him in all our Conversation; and hence it is evident, that we are one with Him.

† 2 *Pet.* i. 1. Τοις ισοδημον ημιν λαχασθε πιστην εν δικαιοσυνη τε Θεου ημων κη σωτηρος ημων Ιησου Χριστου.

Years. And the Substantive δικαιοσυνη must not denote *Righteousness*, though it pleads, as a Warrant for this weighty Sense, the incontestable Authority of *St. Paul*. Give me Leave to tell you, Sir, that I can produce a Multitude of Proofs, to overthrow your first puny Alteration; but produce, if you can, a single Passage from the whole New Testament*, to uphold your last daring Innovation.

Here, I cannot but observe; you abandon your favourite Commentator *Bengelius*; of whose Merit and Excellence you speak so highly and so justly. He says, in his Notes upon the Place, the Righteousness of GOD our SAVIOUR, is the Righteousness of *CHRIST*; which Faith apprehends, and which is opposed to a Man's own Righteousness.—What is more surprising, you depart from your own Comment; nay, you expressly contradict your own Comment. To edify the Readers of your Exposition, you inform and assure them, that this Phrase signifies “both the active and passive Righteousness” of *CHRIST*. To gainsay what *Aspasio* has advanced, you more than insinuate, that it signifies no such Thing, but only “the Mercy of our LORD.”—Nay, to corroborate the true Sense, and determine the Words invariably to the active and passive Righteousness of *CHRIST*, you add, “It is this alone, by which the Justice of GOD is satisfied.” If then Mr. *Wesley* would reconcile, what he writes in his expository Notes, with what he writes in his
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* *The Righteousness of GOD, the Righteousness of GOD our SAVIOUR*, never denotes, in all the apostolical Writings, the Attribute of *Mercy*. If it does, and Mr. *Wesley* can make it appear, I will confess myself mistaken, and thank him for correcting my Error.

Animadversions on *Aspasio*, he must maintain, that by the *Mercy* of GOD alone, his Justice is satisfied.

I will not exclaim, on this Occasion, as you have too freely and not very genteelly done, in your Letter to Mr. *Law*, “Exquisite Nonsense*!” But this I may venture to say, Contradiction, didst thou ever know, so trusty a Friend, or so faithful a Devotee? Many People are ready enough to contradict others. But it seems all one to this Gentleman, whether it be another or himself, so he may but contradict.

Permit me, for a Moment, seriously to expostulate the Case. Why should you be so averse to the Righteousness of our GOD and SAVIOUR? Why should you ransack all the Stores of your Learning and Knowledge; nay, descend to unwarrantable Criticisms, and quite unworthy your superior Abilities, in order to exclude this most glorious Truth from the Bible; in order to exterminate this most precious Privilege from the Church? Attempt, if you think proper, to pluck the Sun from the Firmament, to hide the Light from our Eyes, and withdraw the Air from our Lungs. But do not attempt to rob us of what is far more valuable than all these Blessings, by depriving us of this inestimable Treasure, the Righteousness of CHRIST.—

Which,

* Mr. *Wesley*, in the *Abridgment* of his Letter to Mr. *Law*, inserted in the *Preservative from unsettled Notions*, has expunged this and some other indecently harsh Expressions. In so doing, he has done well. Since the contemptuous and the reproachful, even when really deserved, can have no Tendency to confirm our Argument, but to provoke Resentment. They are not the most promising Means of joining us together, in the same Mind and the same Judgment; but rather the sure Way, to widen the Breach, and increase Animosity.

Which, being a Righteousness, immaculate, all-surpassing, divine, swallows up and annihilates our Guilt; as the immense Waves of the Ocean, would swallow up and annihilate the Drop of Ink, that now hangs on the Point of my Pen.—Which, being a Righteousness, immaculate, all-surpassing, divine, will present us before our GOD, and before his Angels, without Spot and Blemish; in Robes, more beautiful than the Colours of that resplendent Bow, which is bended on the Skirts of yonder Cloud.

Therein is revealed the Righteousness of GOD—“GOD’s Method of justifying Sinners.” See this Interpretation examined, and this Objection answered before.

We establish the Law, as we expect no Salvation, without a perfect Conformity to it*—namely, by *CHRIST*. “Is not this a mere Quibble?” says Mr. *Wesley*.—Quite the reverse. It is no *low Conceit*, but an exceeding serious and momentous Truth. It is no *Play upon the Sound of Words*, but expresses a Doctrine of great Solidity, and of the last Importance. Tell me, ye that cavil at this Method of establishing the Law, by what other Expedient you propose to effect it?—By your past Conduct? That, you must acknowledge, has been more or less a Violation of the Law.—By the present Obedience? That, you cannot deny, falls short of the sublime Requirements of the Law.—By your future Behaviour? Well, I will suppose, that, in some future Period,

* The Reader is desired to peruse *Aspasio’s* own Words, Vol. II. Pag. 369, 370. There his Sentiments are more fully explained; but the Passage is not transcribed, on Purpose to avoid increasing the Size of this Piece. Which already swells to a larger Bulk than the Writer proposed.

Period, you reach the very Summit of Perfection. Still the Law will have much to complain of, and will lay much to your Charge. You have not magnified it by a holy Nature. You have not presented it, with the consummate Righteousness of your whole Heart, and your whole Conversation. You have not begun, from the first Moment of your Existence, and persevered in this perfect Conformity, to the last Breath you drew. In this Case, either the Law must recede from its most righteous Demands, and the immutable GOD must compromise Matters with his Creatures, or else you can never enter into Life. *Unless* you renounce all such impotent Attempts, and arrogant Conceits; talk no more of “practising it, in its full Extent,” but betake yourself to *CHRIST*, who is the End of the Law*, for accomplishing that Righteousness, which its Precepts demand, but which the Frailty of Man cannot perform.

Thus we establish the Law, as the consummate Standard of Righteousness; as the original Condition of Life; and as that most venerable System, with which, as well as with its divine Author, there is no Variableness or Shadow of changing.—And does this Method of securing the Dignity of the Law, hinder or

* *Rom. x. 8. CHRISTUS*, saith *Bengelius*, est τέλος νόμου; justitiam & vitam, quam Lex ostendit, sed dare nequit, tribuens. *CHRIST* is the End of the Law. How? By bringing in that Righteousness, and giving that Life, which the Law shews, and shews the Want of, but neither itself gives, nor can enable us to acquire.

CHRISTUS, saith *St. Augustine*, est legis finis, interficiens & perficiens. The ceremonial Law he has slain, and taken out of the Way. The moral Law he has fulfilled for us, and we in him. Inasmuch as, through Faith in his Name, his Obedience becometh ours.

or discourage a dutiful Observance of its Commands? If not, your Objection derived from that well-known Text, *Without Holiness no Man shall see the LORD, is*

— — *Telum imbellis sine ictu.*

If this be the most rational, and the most sure Way of producing the Love of GOD, which is the very Effence of true Holiness, then your Objection recoils, and falls upon the Head of your own Cause.— Can there be a more powerful, a more endearing Motive to love the LORD my GOD, than a Persuasion of his ineffable Love to me, in giving his dear SON, so to fulfil, so to satisfy the Law on my Behalf, that I am thereby delivered from all my Offences; am vested with a perfect Righteousness; and, on the Foot of Justice, as well as Mercy, stand entitled to eternal Life?

“ Though I believe, that *CHRIST* hath lived
 “ and *died* for me, yet I would speak very tenderly
 “ and sparingly of the former.”—How widely then does your Practice differ from the Apostle’s? *We believe, and therefore have spoken*, confidently and incessantly, in Season, and out of Season. No, says Mr. *Wesley*, “ We believe, and therefore we speak
 “ tenderly and sparingly.”—If you believe, that *CHRIST* has lived for you, and fulfilled all Righteousness in your Stead, surely you should give him the Honour of this wonderful Loving-Kindness, and both preach, and talk, and sing of his Goodness. It should be as a Fire shut up in your Bones; and you should speak, that yourself may be refreshed, and your LORD may be glorified.

But you “ fear dreadful Consequences:” What? Where the divine Holiness fears none? And the di-

vine Prescience sees none? Are you then more deep-sighted, to discern these distant Evils, than Omniscience? Methinks, I would not have spoken thus, unless I had been wiser than the SPIRIT of Inspiration.—Do you not, by cherishing, and avowing such Apprehensions, find Fault with the glorious Gospel, in which this Righteousness is revealed? Revealed, as its most eminent Article, and most distinguishing Peculiarity?—A Doctrine taught, and a Blessing granted, and both from Heaven! Yet not fit to be displayed, inculcated, and insisted on! What a contemptible Idea must this give of our holy Religion, and of our holy Revelation, to an inquiring Infidel?

“ I would never speak of them (the active and passive Righteousness of *CHRIST*) separately.”—This insinuates, what *Aspasio* disavows; and what you cannot hint, without apparent Injustice to his Sentiments.—“ I would speak of it (the former) as sparingly as do the Scriptures.” Here, you appeal to those Writings, which must either condemn your Conduct, or their own Propriety. At your Leisure consider the Case, and you will find the Dilemma unavoidable.—In the mean Time, be so candid as to read a short Note, inserted in *Theron* and *Aspasio*, Vol. II. Page 394. Where you may see, that the Scriptures are far from speaking sparingly on this Point. It is their favourite and fundamental Topic. It runs through them, as a golden Woof through a Warp of Silver; or as the vital Blood through the animal Structure.—And whatever you, Sir, may be inclined to do, I hope, no Lover of *CHRIST* will be persuaded to secrete this invaluable Truth of the Gospel. Shall such a Truth skulk in a Corner, or speak

Speak only in a Whisper? No; let us proclaim it upon the House-Tops; and wish, that the joyful Sound may reach the very Ends of the Earth.

The Gift of Righteousness must signify a Righteousness not their own.—*Aspasio's* Expression is, not *originally* their own. Originally he said, with a View of hinting, that, in some other Sense, it was and is their own. Their own, by way of Imputation, though not by way of Operation. This Word, in order to make the Sentence appear absurd, Mr. *Wesley* drops. But whether such a Practice be free from Guile, or what the Apostle calls *cunning Craftiness*, let the impartial Reader judge.

Aspasio's Interpretation of the Phrase, authenticated by the Language of Scripture, Mr. *Wesley* sets aside; and introduces another, whose only Recommendation to the Public is, “I come from Mr. *Wesley's* Pen.”—Do you so? Then we will allow you all proper Regard. But, because you come from Mr. *Wesley's* Pen, must you therefore displace Propriety, and supplant Truth? Make an inspired Writer argue incorrectly, nay, jar with himself? This is rather too much for you to assume, even though you came recommended by a greater Name.

“The Gift of Righteousness signifies the Righteousness or Holiness which GOD gives to and works in them.” Let us observe the Apostle's Aim, and the Process of his Reasoning.—His Aim is to illustrate the Manner of our Justification. For this Purpose, he forms a Contrast between *Adam's* Transgression, and *CHRIST's* Obedience. *Adam's* Transgression, which he himself committed, ruins all that spring from him. This is the leading Proposition. Now, if the sacred Disputant knows how

to reason accurately, or to draw a Conclusion justly, the Conclusion must be to this Effect; So likewise *CHRIST*'s Obedience, which he himself performed, recovers all who believe in Him. Through *Adam*'s Disobedience, without the Consideration of their own Misdoings, the former are made Sinners. Through *CHRIST*'s Obedience, without the Consideration of their own good Qualities, the latter are made righteous.—Though I am far, very far from disesteeming the Holiness wrought in us, yet what Place has it here? In the Article of Justification it is utterly excluded. It has no Share in the Accomplishment of that great Work; and every attentive Reader will see, that it enters not into the Apostle's present Argumentation.—Besides; if the Gift of Righteousness signifies the Holiness wrought in us, then we shall reign in Life, by means of a personal, not of an imputed Righteousness, by means of an imperfect, not of a complete Obedience.—Then all the People of *GOD* will be justified, not by the Obedience of *ONE*, but each by his own, severally and distinctly. Which is contrary, not only to a single, but to many express Passages of this very Chapter.

I said, “Every attentive Reader will see”—Some, perhaps, may say within themselves; Is not this spoken in Mr. *Wesley*'s Manner? The loose presumptive Way of Arguing, which you blame in Him?—To which it is answered; I am far from resting my Point upon this presumptive Proof. It is not the Pillar, which supports my Cause; but only a Festoon, which adorns my Pillar.—However, was it accompanied with no Proofs, satisfactory to others; it must to Mr. *Wesley*, whom I suppose one of the

attentive Readers, have the Force of Demonstration. Hear his own Words, in his Comment on this very Portion of Scripture. “ As the Sin of *Adam*, without the Sins which we afterwards committed, brought us Death: So the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, without the good Works, which we afterwards perform, brings us Life *.”—It is a Righteousness, without the good Works, which we afterwards perform; therefore, it is a Righteousness, not originally our own, but Another’s. It is not that, which *G O D* works in us, but prior to it, and independent on it. If *Aspasio* had suborned an Evidence, and put Words into his Mouth, he could not have devised a more direct and full Confirmation of his Doctrine, than this volunteer Witness deposes. —I thank you Sir, for giving me so valuable an Explanation of the *Gift of Righteousness*, and its blessed Effects. I thank you likewise, for furnishing *Aspasio* with so incontestable a Vindication, against the Objections of the Author of *The Preservative*.

The Obedience of *ONE*, so highly extolled by the Apostle, is *CHRIST*’s actual Performance of the whole Law.—This you deny. I wish you had favoured me with your Reasons for this Denial. But my Wishes of this Kind are constantly disappointed. However, I will follow our *LORD*’s Direction, and do unto others, even as I would they should do unto me. I will give you a Reason for my own or *Aspasio*’s Interpretation.—The Apostle is treating of *Adam*’s actual Breach of the Law. If so, the proper Antithesis must be *CHRIST*’s actual Performance of

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* Here Mr. *Wesley* speaks in perfect Agreement with *St. Chrysostom*; Ο Χριστος τοις εξ αυτου, καθις η διακονησασα, γεγονη προξενος της δικαιοσυνης.

the Law.—In the following Verses he explains himself. Let *them* be the Comment on our Text, and the Gift of Righteousness means, *The Righteousness of ONE; the Obedience of ONE.* This Righteousness we have in *JESUS CHRIST* our LORD; all other is inherent in ourselves. Justification by this Righteousness, is alone consistent with free Grace; Justification by any other, is (inconsistent with it, is) subversive of it.

Farther; as you are a Critic in the *Greek*, you need not be informed, that St. *Paul* uses three several Words, *δικαιωμα, δικαιοσυνη, υπακοη.* Now can you shew any Passages, in which all these Words are used to signify Sufferings or Death? Nay, can you shew me any single Passage, in which any one of them, occurs in this Signification? If you cannot, what Shadow of Authority have you, for putting this Construction upon the Words, in the present Case? What Shadow of Authority for saying, with that unlimited Confidence; *CHRIST's* “dying for
“ Man, is *certainly* the *chief* Part, if not the *whole*
“ which is meant by that Expression *?”—If you attend to the Tenour of the Apostle's Argument, or enquire into the Import of his Language, perhaps, you will see Cause, not only to alter, but even to reverse, this your positive Assertion.

Let me subjoin an Extract from St. *Chrysoptom*; suited to this and the preceding Paragraph; and
worthy

* The Obedience of One, St. *Chrysoptom* expounds by, *εὐσεβως*. Would Mr. *Wesley* venture to affirm, that *dying well*, not *doing well*, is *certainly* the chief Thing signified in *εὐσεβως*? A pretty daring Criticism this! Does not the Word rather signify, A Course of Well-doing; terminated (if you please) in, not constituted by, a correspondent Death?

worthy of our serious Consideration. From which it will appear, that *Aspasio* is by no means singular in his Sentiments, but speaks the Doctrine of the ancient Church.

Τυπὸν εἰν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ ὁ Ἀδάμ· ὡς τυπὸν, φησιν; ὅτι ὡσπερ ἐκεῖν τοῖς ἐξ αὐτοῦ, καίτοιγε μὴ φαγεῖν ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου, γεγονην αἰνὸν θανάτου διὰ τὴν βρωσίν εἰσαχθέντι, εἶω καὶ ὁ Χριστὸς τοῖς ἐξ αὐτοῦ, καίτοιγε καὶ δικαιοπραγήσασιν, γεγονην προξενός * δικαιοσύνης, ἣν διὰ τοῦ σώματος πασίν ἡμῖν ἐχαρισάτο· διὰ τοῦτο ἀνω καὶ κατω τὸ ἘΝΟΣ ἐχέται, καὶ συνεχῶς τὸ εἰς μέσον φερεῖ λέγων, Ὡσπερ δι' ἘΝΟΣ ἀνθρώπου ἡ ἀμαρτία εἰς τὸν κόσμον εἰσηλθεῖ καὶ, ἐν τῷ τῷ ἘΝΟΣ παραπτώματι οἱ πολλοὶ ἀπέθανον· καὶ, Οὐχ ὡς δι' ἘΝΟΣ ἀμαρτήσαντι, τὸ δῶρημα· καὶ, Τὸ κρίμα ἐξ ἘΝΟΣ εἰς κἀκρίμα· καὶ πάλιν, Εἰ γὰρ τῷ τῷ ἘΝΟΣ παραπτώματι ὁ θάνατος ἐβασίλευσε διὰ τὸ ἐν· καὶ, Ἀρα ἐν ὡς δι' ἘΝΟΣ παραπτώματι καὶ πάλιν, Ὡσπερ διὰ τῆς παρακοῆς τοῦ ἘΝΟΣ ἀνθρώπου ἀμαρτωλοὶ κατέστησαν οἱ πολλοὶ· καὶ ἐκ ἀφιστάται τοῦ ἘΝΟΣ, ἢ ὅταν λέγη σοὶ ὁ Ἰσραηλ, ὡς, ἐν καλορθωσάντι τοῦ Χριστοῦ, ἡ οἰκουμενὴ ἐσώθη; δυναθῆς αὐτῷ λέγειν, ὡς, ἐν παρακυσάντι τοῦ Ἀδάμ, ἡ οἰκουμενὴ κἀλεκρίθη †.

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* Προξενός, an expressive Word! It seems to denote such a Procuring of Righteousness for Sinners, as corresponds with the Provision made, by some hospitable Householder, for the Strangers who are come to be his Guests. In which they bear no Part, either of the Expence, or of the Trouble. Προξενῶ σοὶ τὸ εἶω, *Hujus rei sum tibi auctor; hanc rem tibi comparo.* Steph. Thesaur. in voc.

† Chrysof. Tom. III. pag. 71, 72. Edit. Savil. “Adam is a Type of CHRIST. How? In this Respect; as the former was the Cause of Death to all his Descendants, though they did not (like him) eat of the forbidden Fruit; so CHRIST is the Cause (προξενός) Author, Procurer of Righteousness to all his Seed, though they have not (like Him) been personally obedient;

“ even

That the Righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us. That is, by our Representative, and in our Nature.—“Amazing!” cries Mr. Wesley. But why amazing? Is not this the common Import of the most common Actions? Do not you and I make Laws in and by our Representatives in Parliament? May not every Debtor, when his Surety has given full Satisfaction to the Creditor, say; I have satisfied, I have paid, in my Bondsman?

To invalidate this Interpretation, you alledge; That the Apostle “is not speaking here of the “Cause of our Justification, but the *Fruits* of it.” Among all the excellent Things, which, in your Studies and in your Travels, you have learned; have you never learned, that, between saying and proving,

“even of that Righteousness, which he finished for us on
 “the Cross. For this Reason,—to ascertain and appropri-
 “ate the Honour of this Righteousness to CHRIST; as a
 “Work, not wrought by us, nor wrought in us, but completed
 “for us on the cursed Tree.—He insists and dwells upon
 “that very observable Circumstance, *One*. He iterates
 “and reiterates the emphatical Word *ONE*. He intro-
 “duces it again and again, and can hardly prevail upon
 “himself to discontinue the Repetition. As by *one Man*
 “Sin entered into the World—Through the Offence of
 “*One* many be dead—Not as it was by *One* that sinned,
 “so is the free Gift—The Judgment was by *One* to Con-
 “demnation—By *one Man*’s Offence Death reigned by *One*
 “—As by the Offence of *One*, Judgment came upon all
 “Men unto Condemnation—As by the Disobedience of
 “*One* many were made Sinners.—Thus does the Apostle
 “again and again introduce the Word *ONE*, and can
 “hardly prevail on himself to discontinue the Repetition.
 “That if a Jew should ask, How can the World be saved
 “by the Well-doing of *One*, or by the Obedience of
 “CHRIST? You may be able to reply on his own
 “Principles; How could the World be condemned by the
 “Evil-doing of *One*, or by the Disobedience of *Adam*?”

proving, there is a wide Difference? Never did I meet with a Person, who seemed so totally ignorant of this very obvious Truth.—Well; we must take your Word, without Proof; but I hope, not without Examination. “The Apostle is speaking of the “Fruit.” Is then the fulfilling of the Law, the Fruit of Justification? This is the first Time, I apprehend, that any such Thing was deliberately affirmed. It is the Cause, the adequate, the immediate, and indeed the only proper Cause of Justification. But the Fruits are Peace of Conscience, and Love of G O D; the Spirit of Adoption, and the Hope of Glory.

Shew me, Sir, where *δικαιωμα*, in Conjunction with *τη νομω*, signifies the Fruits of Justification; and not those Demands of the Law, which must necessarily be satisfied, before Justification can take place.—Especially, when the Phrase is corroborated by that other strong Expression, *πληρωθη*. An Expression, used by our L O R D, concerning himself, and the Design of his coming into the World. Applicable to Him alone, who is the End of the Law for Righteousness; and descriptive of that Obedience, by which alone the Law is magnified.

This Sense, says *Aspasio*, agrees with the Tenour of the Apostle’s Arguing. “Not here;” replies Mr. *Wesley*.—Let us then consider the Aim, and trace the Progress, of the Apostle’s Reasoning. He is clearing up and confirming that great Privilege of the Gospel, *There is no Condemnation to them that are in JESUS CHRIST*. This, you will allow, is not the Fruit of Justification, but Justification itself. As this wants no Argument to confirm it, let us proceed in our Attention to the sacred Writer.

There is no Condemnation to those, who are true Believers in *JESUS CHRIST*. Who, in Consequence of this Belief, walk not after the Flesh, but after the *SPIRIT*.

Perhaps, some Man will say; How can this be? Since even true Believers fall short. Nay, they offend; and therefore must be liable to the Curse.—*For this Reason, they are delivered from Condemnation; because the Law of the SPIRIT of Life in CHRIST JESUS, that new Dispensation, introduced in the room of the old Law, promises the Privilege of Pardon, and the Gift of the SPIRIT; in which Things the true Life and real Happiness of Mankind consist. Promises both freely, without any Works, purely on Account of the Righteousness which is in CHRIST JESUS. And hereby, this new, gracious, blessed Dispensation, hath made me free from the Law; which convinced me of Sin; condemned me for Sin; and bound me over unto Death.*

These are glad Tidings, doubtless. But are they not attended with two Inconveniencies? Does not this Procedure deprive the Law of its due Honour, and screen the Sinner from his deserved Punishment?—By no Means. *For that which was an absolute Impossibility, on Account of the Strictness of the Law, and the Weakness of human Nature, GOD, to whom nothing is impossible, has most wonderfully accomplished. By sending his own SON, in the Likeness of sinful Flesh, to live among Sinners; to come under their Obligations; and perform the Obedience demanded from them. By sending Him also to be a Sacrifice for Sin; to be charged with its Guilt, and undergo its Punishment. By this grand Expedient, he has provided for the Honour and perfect*
 Accomplishment

Accomplishment of the Law. He has also *condemned* and punished *Sin*, with the utmost Severity. And both these *in the Flesh*; in that very Nature, which was guilty, disabled, ruined.

Should you farther ask; Wherefore is all this? To lay the surest Foundation, or make the most complete Provision, for our Justification. *That the Righteousness of the Law*, both its righteous Sentence and its righteous Precepts, whatever either of Suffering or of Obedience it required from Transgressors, being fulfilled in *CHRIST* might be fulfilled in us. As it was all done in our Name; and as He and we are one. One in civil Estimation, for He is our Representative. One in legal Estimation, for He is our Surety. One in social Estimation, for He is our Bridegroom. For which Cause, his righteous Acts are ours, and his atoning Death is ours.

There was a Time, when you embraced these Sentiments. When you had such Views of Things. When such Language came out of your Mouth. Which even now stands upon Record, under your own Hand. See your "Principles of a Methodist." If you have forgotten them, permit me to remind you of them. "CHRIST, you say, is now the Righteousness of all them, that truly believe in Him. He for them paid the Ransom by his Death; He for them fulfilled the Law in his Life. So that now, in Him and by Him, every Believer may be called a Fulfiller of the Law."— Since you pronounce *my* Sense of the Apostle's Words unnatural, I adopt, I espouse *yours* *. And

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* Should Mr. Wesley say; Though I used these Words, I never intended them for a Comment on this Passage.—

so much the more readily, as it will puzzle Sagacity itself, to discern a Difference between them.

“ I totally deny the Criticism on *δικαιοσύνη* and “ *δικαιώματα.*” Then be so good as to suggest a better. Or, if this should be somewhat difficult, at least favour us with a Reason for this your total Denial. Not a Word of either. Strange! That a Man of ordinary Discernment; should offer to obtrude upon the Public, such a Multitude of naked, unsupported, magisterial Assertions! Should ever be able to persuade himself, that a positive Air will pass for Demonstration, or supply the Place of Argument! If this be to demonstrate, if this be to confute, the Idiot is as capable of both, as the Philosopher.— May I not cry out, in your own Strain? O how deep an Aversion to the imputed Righteousness of *CHRIST*, does this *Arminian* Scheme discover! Since it will make a Man gainsay, when he knows not why, or wherefore.

St. *Paul* declares, that the *Gentiles* who followed not after Righteousness, had attained unto Righteousness. Upon which *Aspasio* observes, that the Righteousness, here mentioned, could not be any personal Righteousness. To which Mr. *Wesley* replies, “ It was.” And to render his Reply quite irresistible, a perfect Thunderbolt in Argumentation; he adds, “ Certainly it was.”—How, Sir! Did they attain personal Righteousness without seeking after it? Are you becoming a *Calvinist*? You that had rather be an Atheist? Could the Zealot of *Geneva* go greater Lengths?

If you did not, I imagine, the Compilers of our Homilies, from whom they are taken, did. At least they regarded this Text as a Foundation, a Warrant, a Proof of their Doctrine.

Lengths?—*Aspasio* will not deny, that these Gentiles were sanctified, as well as justified, but he will venture to affirm, that no Degree of Sanctification can make the Persons righteous, who are once become Sinners. *CHRIST*, like *Elijah*, first casts his Mantle over them; and then, like *Elisha*, they forsake all, and follow Him.

The Righteousness, which the Gentiles attained, could not be a personal Righteousness. “Certainly “it was.”—Then it was the Righteousness of the Law. Whereas, the Righteousness which they attained, is expressly said, to be *the Righteousness of Faith*.—Then it was a Righteousness consisting of good Works and godly Tempers. Whereas, their Righteousness consisted in believing, according to the Apostle’s own Explanation. *With the Heart Man believeth unto Righteousness*.—Then it was the Righteousness of Man. Personal Righteousness and implanted Holiness pass, in the Scriptures, under that Denomination. Whereas, these Gentiles *submitted themselves to the Righteousness of GOD*.—If, what these Gentiles attained, had been a personal Righteousness, it would have been no Stumbling-Block to the *Jews*. Even they would have fallen in with such a System of Religion, as should ascribe Righteousness and Salvation, to their own Duties and their own Deeds.

You say; “It was *implanted*, as well as *imputed*.” Here, then, you acknowledge an imputed Righteousness. You yourself use the Phrase. You affirm it to be, if not the Whole, Part at least, of the Apostle’s Doctrine. I wish, you had been of this Mind, when you began your Letter. Then you would not have conjured me, by all that is venerable
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and important, to discontinue an Expression, which conveys—your own—the Apostle's Meaning—and the Meaning of the HOLY GHOST.

You join imputed and implanted Righteousness. So, in Case this Address to yourself should pass through the Printer's Hand, would I join a handsome Type and pertinent Reasoning. Yet I apprehend, when you sit down to examine the Essay, you will regard only the latter.—What you associate, you associate properly. The first is the Trunk, the last is one of the Branches, which spring from it. But the Apostle seems, in the Place before us, to be considering the first only. The last he reserves, for some future Occasion.—He is speaking of the Righteousness, by which we are saved; and that is solely the imputed Righteousness of *CHRIST*.—He is speaking of the Righteousness, which was an Eye-Sore and an Offence to the self-conceited *Jews*; and this was only the imputed Righteousness of *CHRIST*.—He is speaking of a Righteousness, contradistinguished to that Righteousness, which is described by *He that doeth these Things*; and this can be nothing else, but the imputed Righteousness of *CHRIST*.—Therefore, though Love of *GOD*, and Conformity to his Image; though the pure Heart, and the devout Affection; are the inseparable Concomitants, or rather the genuine Produce, of imputed Righteousness; yet here they come not under Consideration. To force them into this Passage, is to make them appear out of due Season. Such an Exposition, may bespeak a zealous Officiousness, not a distinguishing Judgment. Because, it confounds the Order of the Apostle's Plan; it defeats the

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the Design of his Argument, if it does not introduce Self-Contradiction into his arguing.

This Righteousness came upon the Gentiles, *as the former and latter Rain upon the Earth.* To them was fulfilled the Word spoken by the Prophet *Isaiah*; *Let the Skies pour down Righteousness.* As the Earth engendereth not the Rain; has not the least Influence, in forming, or the least Agency, in procuring, the refreshing Showers; but only receiveth them, as the mere Gift of Providence; so these Gentiles had not the least Influence in effecting, nor the least Agency in procuring, this Righteousness.—When the good News came into their Territories, they were totally destitute of it; they were utterly unconcerned about it; they knew nothing at all concerning it. But seeing it revealed in the Gospel; seeing it displayed, as the Work of GOD, and hearing it offered, as the Gift of GOD; they were not disobedient to the heavenly Invitation. They believed the Report; they accepted the Blessing; and relied upon it, for Life and Salvation.—Then, *as the Rain coming down and the Snow from Heaven, returneth not thither again, but watereth the Earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud; that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread to the Eater:* So, this inestimable Truth being admitted into the Soul, CHRIST and his Righteousness being received to dwell in the Heart*; all the Powers of intellectual Nature, or what St. Paul calls *the inner Man*, are exhilarated, quickened, and fructified. They bud as the Rose, and blossom as the Lily; they bring forth the Fruits of inward Love, of outward Obedience, of universal Godliness.

For

* Eph. iii. 17.

For Instruction in Righteousness, in the Righteousness of *CHRIST*. “Was there ever such a Comment before?” May I not answer, in your own Words; was there ever such a Method of Confutation used before?—But you add; “The plain Meaning is, *For training up in Holiness of Heart and of Life.*” I wish, you had thought of introducing this Interpretation, by the following short Preface, “I take it for granted.” You would then have been sure of saying *one* Truth.—But if this does not appear plain to me, as you see it did not to *Astasio*, methinks, you should lend me your Spectacles, or favour me with your Reasons.

If you please to examine the Passage, you will find Holiness of Heart and Life, comprehended in one of the preceding Expressions. *Πρὸς ἐπανορθωσιν* signifies, For Restoration of the Man, to a State of moral Uprightness. Which must include a Renovation of the Mind, and a Reformation of the Conduct. After this comes, very properly, and without any Tautology, very needfully, and to the exceeding Comfort of the Sinner; another most valuable Property of the Scriptures. They instruct the Reader in the *Christian Righteousness*; in the justifying Righteousness; in that mysterious, but incomparably precious Righteousness, which no other Book in the World displays, mentions, or so much as hints. Yet, without which, we could never stand in the Judgment; never find Acceptance with *GOD*; nor be admitted into the Realms of Glory.—If you reject this Sense, the Apostle’s Character of the sacred Volumes, is very defective. It leaves out, what is their supreme Excellence, and most distinguishing Peculiarity. What is first, and above all other Things, necessary
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for our fallen Race.—A Traveller undertakes to give an Account of some celebrated Picture Gallery. He describes the Dimensions of the Structure, the Form of the Windows, the Ornaments of the Roof, but he quite forgets, at least he totally omits, the Article of the Paintings. Is this a masterly Execution of his Design? Is this satisfactory to the Hearer's Curiosity?

He shall convince the World of Righteousness—“That I am not a Sinner, but innocent and holy.” How flat and jejune is this Exposition! Nothing can be more so, to my Taste.—“Innocent and holy!” Is this all the SPIRIT witnesses, concerning the most adorable and infinitely deserving SON of GOD? Does this come up to the inconceivable Dignity of his Person, and the immensely glorious Perfection of his Work? Is this sufficient to comfort the Conscience, smitten with a Sense of most damnable Guilt, and alarmed with the Terrors of eternal Vengeance?

The whole Clause contains a Platform or Summary of evangelical Truth. Of that all-important Truth, which Ministers are to teach and preach; which the HOLY SPIRIT will own and accompany with his Influence; and which is thereby made the Power of GOD to the Salvation of the Hearers.—He shall convince the World of *Sin*; of the guilty and miserable State, in which all Mankind are plunged by Nature; and in which every individual Person continues, so long as he is destitute of an Interest in *CHRIST*; so long as he believeth not in *HIM*, who died upon the Cross, and is gone to the *FATHER*.—Of *Righteousness*; He shall reveal the *REDEEMER's* most perfect and magnificent Right-

Righteousness in their Hearts. That Righteousness, which satisfies the Justice of the MOST HIGH, and brings complete Redemption to Transgressors. Testifying, not barely that he is innocent, such was *Adam* in Paradise: Not barely that he is holy, such are Angels in Heaven: Shall the eternal CREATOR, even after his Humiliation unto Death, have no higher a Testimony, than a Set of mere Creatures? Yes, verily; the HOLY GHOST will convince the World, that *CHRIST*'s Righteousness is the grand and capital Blessing, which the Prophets foretold; and which not only fulfills, but magnifies the Law. That it is the Righteousness, the very Righteousness of the incarnate JEHOVAH; and therefore renders every Soul, to whom it is imputed, unblameable, unprovable, complete. Glorious Office this! Worthy to be the Object of the almighty COMFORTER's Agency! In performing which, he administers strong Consolation.—Then he shall convince of *Judgment*. Shall condemn and cast out the Prince of this World, introducing a most happy Change into the Heart and Life. Shall begin and carry on the Work of Grace, Sanctification, Obedience. And all, through the joyful Knowledge, together with the personal Appropriation, of this justifying Righteousness.

That we might be made the Righteousness of GOD in Him. Which cannot be intrinsically, but must be imputatively.—This Interpretation *Aspassio* establishes, attempts at least to establish, from the Tenour of the Context; from the Apostle's Antithesis; and from several venerable Names. But what are all these to Mr. *Wesley*? No more than the Arrow and the Spear to *Leviathan*. Nay, not so much.

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That scaly Monster esteemeth Iron as Straw, and Brass as rotten Wood. But Mr. Wesley, cased in his own Self-Sufficiency, esteemeth all the aforementioned Evidences, as mere Nothings. He totally disregards them. Reason, Grammar, Precedents, are eclipsed by his bare Negative; and vanish into an Insignificancy, not worthy of Notice.

When *Aspasio*, supported by such great Authorities, says, This cannot be intrinsically, but must be imputatively. Mr. Wesley, supported by his greater Self, replies, “Both the one and the other.”—But does he duly advert to the Apostle’s Subject, or follow the Clue of the Context? The *Subject* is Reconciliation to GOD, Justification before GOD, or *that*, whatever it be, which is implied in not imputing Trespases. The *Context* intimates, that intrinsic Holiness is not yet taken into Consideration, but is reserved for the next Chapter. There the Apostle exhorts the *Corinthians*, not to receive this infinitely rich *Grace* of free Justification, in vain; but to shew its Efficacy, to shew its Excellency, and recommend it to the unbelieving World, by an unblameable Conversation, giving no Offence in any Thing.

Justification then is the only Point, which the Apostle, in this Passage, considers; and Justification is the Fruit of imputed Righteousness solely, not of inherent Righteousness in any Degree. This we must allow, unless we prefer the Impositions of *Trent*, before the Confession of our Church. “Faith
 “ says unto us, it is not I that take away your Sins,
 “ but *CHRIST* only; and to Him only I send you
 “ for that Purpose, forsaking therein all your good
 “ Words, Thoughts, and Works, and only put-
 “ ring

“ting your Trust in *CHRIST*.” Thus speaks and thus teaches our reformed Church.—“If any one say, that Man is justified only by the Imputation of *CHRIST*’s Righteousness, or only by the Remission of Sins, without the Co-operation of inherent Grace and holy Love, let him be accursed*.” Thus dogmatizes, and thus anathematizes, that Mother of Falshoods.—Choose now your Side. For my Part, I renounce and abjure the proud and iniquitous Decree. If you persist in your present Opinion, there will be an apparent Harmony between yourself and *Rome*, but an essential Difference between yourself and *Aspasio*.

“*GOD* through him, first accounts, and then makes us righteous.” How? Does *GOD* account us righteous, before he makes us so? Then his Judgment is not according to Truth. Then he reckons us to be righteous, when we are really otherwise. Is not this the Language of your Doctrine? This the unavoidable Consequence of your Notion? But how harsh, if not horrid, does it sound in every Ear? Is not this absolutely irreconcilable with our Ideas of the supreme *BEING*, and equally incompatible with the Dictates of Scripture? There we are taught that *GOD* justifieth the Ungodly.—Mark the Words. *The Ungodly* are the Objects of the divine Justification. But can He account the Ungodly righteous? Impossible!—How then does he act? He first makes them righteous †.—After what Manner? By imputing

* *Si quis dixerit, hominem justificari, vel sola imputatione justitiæ, vel sola remissione peccatorum, exclusa gratia & charitate, anathema esto.* Sess. vi. Can. 11.

† Agreeably to this, our Church speaks; *In Justification of unjust we are made just before GOD*; and adds, *This is the strong Rock and Foundation of Christian Religion.* Hom. of Justif. Part 2.

puting to them the Righteousness of his dear SON. —Then he pronounces them righteous, and most truly. He treats them as righteous, and most justly. In short, then he absolves them from Guilt; adopts them for his Children; and makes them Heirs of his eternal Kingdom.—In the grand Transaction, thus regulated, Mercy and Truth meet together. All proceeds in the most harmonious and beautiful Consistency, with the several Attributes of GOD; with his whole revealed Will; and with all his righteous Law.

“ The *Righteousness which is of GOD by Faith*, is both *imputed* and *inherent*.”—Then it is like interweaving Linen and Woollen; the motley Mixture, forbidden to the *Israelites*. Or rather, like weaving a Thread of the finest Gold, with a hempen Cord, or a Spider’s Web.—The Righteousness which is of GOD, is perfect, consummate, everlasting. Not so inherent Righteousness, your own self being Judge, and your own Pen being Witness.—In the Righteousness which is of GOD, the Apostle desires to be found, before the great and terrible Tribunal of the LORD. His own Righteousness, or the Righteousness which is inherent, he abandons, as absolutely improper for this great Purpose. Being no more fitted to give him Boldness at the Day of Judgment, than Dung and Filth are fit to introduce a Person, with Credit and Dignity, to Court.—The Righteousness which is of GOD, is unknown to Reason; is revealed from Heaven; and without the Works of the Law. Whereas, the Righteousness inherent, is discoverable by Reason; was known to the Heathens; and consists in a Conformity of Heart and Life to the Precepts of the Law.—By the
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latter,

latter, we act, we obey, and offer our spiritual Sacrifices unto GOD. By the former, we work nothing; we render nothing unto GOD; but only receive of his Grace.

They are, therefore, not the same, but totally distinct. To blend and confound them, betrays Unskilfulness in the Word of Righteousness; derogates from the Honour of *CHRIST*, and tends to cherish a legal Frame, or, what the Scripture calls, *A Spirit of Bondage*.—If you would approve yourself a Workman, that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth, thus you should speak, and thus you should write; the Righteousness of GOD, is always imputed. But, being imputed, it produces the Righteousness inherent. Being justified by the former, saved from Hell, and rendered meet for Heaven; we are sanctified also, and disposed to love the LORD, who has dealt so bountifully with us. And if to love, then to worship him; to serve him; to imitate him.

My Faith fixes on both the *meritorious Life and atoning Death* of *CHRIST*. “Here we clearly agree.”—How can you clearly agree, either with *Aspasio*; or with yourself; or with common Sense?—How with *Aspasio*? Since you question, in direct Contrariety to his Sentiments, whether the Death of *CHRIST* be not the whole of what St. Paul files *The Obedience* of ONE.—How with *yourself*? For, did you not declare, a little while ago, that fallen Man “is not justified by perfect Obedience?” Is not *CHRIST*’s meritorious Life perfect Obedience? If your Faith fixes on this perfect Obedience, is it not for the Purpose of Justification?—How with *Common Sense*? Since you suppose, that the “Scripture
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“ ture ascribes the whole of our Salvation to the
 “ Death of *CHRIST*,” so entirely ascribes it to
 the Death of *CHRIST*, that “ there was no Need
 “ of his fulfilling the moral Law, in order to pur-
 “ chase Redemption for us ;” what Reason, or Sha-
 dow of Reason can you have, to fix upon what *we*
 call the Merit of his Life?—If, what you suppose
 and affirm, be true, there was no Kind of meritori-
 ous Efficacy in his Life. His Life, and all his La-
 bours, were, in this Respect, a mere Superfluity.
 Salvation might have been obtained, and Redemp-
 tion purchased, without their Concurrence. There-
 fore, to fix upon them, is to fix upon a Phantom,
 and to rest your Hopes upon a *Thing of Nought*.

But stay. Am I not repeating the Misconduct,
 which proved so fatal to the famous Earl of *Warwick*
 and his Forces? At the Battle of *Gladmore*, while the
 Scale of Victory hung in Suspense, they saw a con-
 siderable Body of Troops advancing. Supposing
 them to be Enemies, the Bowmen made a general
 Discharge, and galled them with their Arrows. But
 they soon perceived their Mistake; that they had
 been opposing their Friends, and annoying their Al-
 lies. Perhaps, by this Time, you are become my
 Ally. You may have seen your Errors; may have
 corrected your Notions; saying, in Ratification of
 both, “ we agree.”

That is, “ I would no longer exclude the meritorious
 “ Obedience of *CHRIST*. But this, together with
 “ his atoning Death, I look upon as the only Cause
 “ of my Justification.—This I call his Righteous-
 “ ness; and this, being imputed to me, becomes
 “ my Plea, my Portion, and rational Foundation
 “ for my everlasting Felicity.—This I receive by

“ Faith. Which I now look upon, not as consti-
 “ tuting any Part of my Recommendation, but on-
 “ ly as receptive of the Fulness, laid up for me in
 “ *CHRIST*.—Though the Law of Works saith,
 “ do and live; I am now made sensible, that the
 “ Law of Faith says, be verily persuaded, that
 “ *CHRIST* is sufficient for thy Acceptance, with-
 “ out any doing of thy own at all.—Since *CHRIST*
 “ is given to me, in the sacred Record, given to me,
 “ as a Sinner; to be received, without any Condi-
 “ tions, I joyfully accept the Gift. I am satisfied
 “ with his doing and suffering. They are divinely
 “ excellent, and infinitely sufficient. I neither wish
 “ for, nor think of, any Thing more, to obtain my
 “ complete Salvation.—This Way of Salvation ef-
 “ fectually excludes boasting; and, at the same
 “ Time, produces those desirable Effects—that Love
 “ of *GOD*; that Delight in his Perfections; that
 “ Conformity to his Will; which the Law of
 “ Works requires in vain.”

If this is what you mean, by “ we agree,” I
 would seal and ratify the Agreement, with the last
 Wish, and the last Words, of the celebrated Father
Paul, Esto perpetua. Be this the Case, and you shall
 have, not only the right Hand of Fellowship, but
 the right Hand of Pre-eminence.—Only I crave one
 Favour in Return. Dismiss those injurious Insinua-
 tions, which cause your Readers to suspect, that *As-*
passio considers the meritorious Life of *CHRIST*,
 separate from his atoning Death. Whereas, he af-
 firms them to be inseparable, like the Correspondence
 of Motion between the two Eyes. Try, if you can
 make one of your Eyes move to the right, while the
 other wheels off to the left. When you have done

this, then, and not till then, may you have some reasonable Pretence for these your Suggestions.

Alas! *Quantâ de spe decidi!* I find my Hopes were too sanguine. We are not come to the desired Coalition. In this very Paragraph, you begin to fly off. By talking of imputed Righteousness, you tell us, “ We are exposed to an exceeding great Hazard; “ even the Hazard of living and dying without Ho- “ linefs.”—Pray, Sir, have you seen a little Piece, written upon this Subject by the Rev. Mr. *Witherspoon*? If you have not, let me recommend it to your Perusal. In case you are ignorant of that powerful Influence, which Justification through the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, has upon Sanctification and true Holiness, from this Treatise you may learn some valuable Knowledge. In case the Author of this Treatise is mistaken, in maintaining the indissoluble Connection of Justification with true Godliness; and the never-failing Efficacy of the REDEEMER’S Righteousness, to bring forth willing Obedience in the Believer; you may have an Opportunity of rectifying his Sentiments. You may give us, in your next Publication, a Preservative, not only against *unsettled*, but against *unsound* Notions in Religion.

Theron, speaking of *Gems*, says, when nicely polished, and prodigal of their Lustre, they stand Candidates for a Seat, on the *virtuous* fair one’s Breast.—This displeases Mr. *Wesley*. Would he then have *Gems* placed on the *vicious* or lascivious Breast? Or would he have them put to no Use at all, but buried in Darkness? Did the ALMIGHTY pour such Brilliancy upon them, only that they might be consigned over to Obscurity? Did he not rather array

them with Lustre and with Charms, that they might display something of his own Brightness; incite his rational Creatures to admire his transcendent Excellency, and teach his faithful People to apprehend the Emphasis of that animating Promise, *They shall be mine, in the Day that I make up my Jewels.*

“ I can't reconcile this with St. Paul. He says, “ *not with Pearls*: by a Parity of Reason, not with “ *Diamonds.*”—Do you rightly understand St. Paul? Don't you dwindle his manly and noble Idea, into a Meanness and Littleness of Sense? Such as befits the superstitious and contracted Spirit of a Hermit, rather than the generous and exalted Temper of a Believer; *who stands fast in the Liberty, wherewith CHRIST hath made him free?*—Our LORD says not, they that are *splendidly apparelled*, are apparelled unsuitably to Christianity, or in a Manner inconsistent with the Fear of GOD. But they *are in King's Courts*, and their Dress is adapted to their Station.—Neither does St. Paul forbid the Use of Pearl, or costly Array, when a Person's Circumstances will afford them, and his Situation in Life may require them. He rather cautions against the *Abuse*, against looking upon these glittering Things, as any Part of their true Dignity, on which they value themselves, or by which they would be recommended to others. The Word is not *ενδυσασθαι* put on*, nor *φορεω* wear †, but *κοσμεω* adorn. “ Let them “ not place their Excellency in such mean Distinc- “ tions; no, nor covet to distinguish themselves, “ by these superficial Decorations; but rather by the “ substantial Ornaments of real Godliness, and good
“ Works.

* Mark vi. 9.

† Matt. xi. 8.

“ Works. Which will render both them and their
 “ Religion truly amiable.”

The Apostle *Peter* observes the same Propriety of Speech, and the same Correctness of Sentiment. *Whose adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of wearing of Gold, or plaiting the Hair, or putting on of Apparel.* Was this an absolute Prohibition of the several Particulars mentioned, it would forbid all kind of Cloathing, or the putting on of any Apparel. Take the Passage in your rigorous Sense, and it concludes as forcibly against Garments, as against Ornaments; we must even go naked, and lay aside our Cloaths, as well as our Gems. Whereas, understood according to the natural Signification of the Words (*ων ο κοσμος*, not *ων το ενδυμα*) it conveys a very important, and a very reasonable Exhortation; “ Christians, scorn to borrow your Recommenda-
 “ tions from the Needle, the Loom, or the Toy-
 “ Shop. This may be the Fashion of a vain World.
 “ But let *your* Embellishments, or that which beau-
 “ tifies and distinguishes your Character, be of a su-
 “ perior Nature. Let it be *internal*; not such as the
 “ Sheep have wore, or the Silk-Worms spun; but
 “ such as is peculiar to the immortal Mind, or *the*
 “ *hidden Man of the Heart.* Let it be *substantial*;
 “ not such as the Moth corrodes, or such as perishes
 “ in using; but *that which is not corruptible.* Which
 “ being planted on Earth, will be transplanted into
 “ Heaven, and being sown in Time, will flourish to
 “ Eternity.—Let it be that adorning, whose Ex-
 “ cellency is unquestionable, and *whose Praise is of*
 “ *G O D*, even *the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spi-*
 “ *rit.* Which will render you, not indeed like the
 “ Grandees of the Earth, but like the SON of the

“ HIGHEST. Shewing, that you are united to
 “ him ; interested in him ; and Partakers of his di-
 “ vine Nature.”

“ In all Things I perceive, you are too favoura-
 “ ble, both to *the Desire of the Flesh, and the Desire*
 “ *of the Eye.*”—I rather think, Mr. *Wesley* is too
 censorious of others, and too indulgent to himself.
 Why may not *Theron* wear his richly embossed Gold
 Watch, and his Lady use her golden Buckle set
 with Diamonds, as well as you and I wear a silver
 Buckle*, or make Use of our silver Watch? Why
 may not an Earl or a Countess †, put on their Robes,
 sumptuous with Embroidery, or their Coronet, glit-
 tering with Jewels, as inoffensively, as you and I
 put on a Beaver-Hat, or trail after us a prunella
 Gown? There is no Necessity for this our Spruce-
 ness. A fustian Jacket would keep our Backs warm,
 and a flannel Cap our Heads, as well as our more
 elegant Array.—Methinks, therefore, we should
 either abstain from all needless Finery in our own
 Dress, or else forbear to censure it in others. Ra-
 ther, we should all, in our respective Stations, and
 accord-

* That Mr. *Wesley* may not suspect I am pleading for
 Self-Indulgence, I will give him my Word, that I have
 never wore my silver Buckles, since I was in Mourning
 for his *Royal Highness*. Neither shall I have one uneasy
 Thought, if I never put them on again.

† Should it be said, The Persons, to whom St. *Peter*
 wrote, were in mean Circumstances. Therefore such
 Grandees are out of the Question. I answer. The Per-
 sons for whom St. *Peter* wrote, were all Christians to the
 very End of the World. Among these, though there
 may not be many grand, nor many noble, yet, blessed be
 GOD, there are some. And when these go to receive
 their celestial Crown, we trust, it will be said,

— — *Uno ablato non deficit alter*
Aureus.

according to our respective Circumstances, use these Things, as not abusing them. Remembering, that the Fashion of this World passeth away. Looking, therefore, for that City of the living G O D, *whose Wall is of Jasper, whose Buildings are of pure Gold, and whose Foundations are garnished with all Manner of precious Stones.* But whose external Splendor is infinitely surpassed by the Glory of G O D, which lightens it, and by the Presence of the L A M B. which is the Light thereof.—When we are blessed with clear Apprehensions of this ineffable Glory, which shall be revealed; when we live under a delightful Persuasion, that G O D hath given to us this eternal Life; Gems will have but little Lustre in our Eye, and less and less Allurements for our Heart. All the Pomp of this transient World will appear to us, as the Palace of *Versailles*, or the Gardens of *Stowe*, would appear to some superior Being; who, from an exalted Stand in *Æther*, should contemplate the terraqueous Globe: and at one View take in its vast Dimensions, its prodigious Revolutions, and its most copious Furniture.

“ You are a gentle Casuist as to every Self-Indulgence, which a plentiful Fortune can furnish.”— I would consider the End, for which these Things were created; and point out, and enforce, their proper Improvements. They were created, not to tantalize, but to treat us; not to ensnare, but to gratify us. *Then* they are properly improved, when we enjoy them with Moderation, and render them Instruments of Usefulness. When they are regarded as pregnant Tokens of our C R E A T O R’s Love, and act as endearing Incitements of our Gratitude.— What you call my Casuistry, is built upon a Maxim, which

which will never be controverted ; *Every Creature of GOD is good, if received with Thanksgiving.* It is nothing else, but an Attempt to display what is affirmed in the former Clause, and to enforce, what is prescribed in the latter.

In the sixth Letter, in the ninth, and in other Parts, *Theron* enumerates some of the finest Productions, and most choice Accommodations, which the Earth, the Air, the Seas afford.—In Imitation of the Apostle, who, in one Sentence, expresses abundantly more, than my three Volumes contain ; *HE giveth us all Things richly to enjoy.*—In Imitation of the Psalmist also, who, in several of his Hymns, especially in *Psalm civ.* celebrates the profuse Munificence of JEHOVAH ; profuse, even in temporal Blessings, and with regard to our animal Nature.—Does our Nature call for something to support it ? Here is *Bread, which strengthens Man's Heart,* and is the Staff of his Life. Does our Nature go farther, and covet something to please it ? Here is *Wine, that maketh glad the Heart of Man ;* regaling his Palate, and exhilarating his Spirits. Is our Nature yet more craving, and desirous of something to beautify it ? Here is *Oil, that maketh the Face to shine.* That the Countenance may appear, both chearful and amiable. That Gaiety may sparkle in the Eye, while Beauty glows in the Cheek.—Now I cannot persuade myself, nor is all Mr. *Wesley's* Rhetoric powerful enough to convince me, that it is any Discredit, or any Error, to follow such Examples.

“ But I mention the exquisite Relish of *Turbot,*
 “ and the Deliciousness of *Sturgeon.* And are not
 “ such Observations beneath the Dignity of a Mi-
 “ nister of *CHRIST ?*” Mr. *Wesley* does not ob-
 serve

serve from whom these Remarks proceed. Not from *Aspasio*, but *Theron*. To make *him* speak like a Minister of *CHRIST*, or like a Christian of the first Rank, would be entirely out of Character. It would have betrayed an utter Ignorance, or a total Disregard of *Horace's* Rule;

Reddere personæ scit convenientia cuique.

However, I am willing to take all upon myself, and be responsible for the obnoxious Sentiments. I would only ask, is any Thing spoken of, which the ALMIGHTY has not made? and shall I think it beneath my Dignity, to magnify the Work of his Hands? Is any Thing spoken of, which the ALMIGHTY has not bestowed? and shall I think it a Diminution of my Character, to acknowledge the various Gifts of his Bounty? Has GOD most High thought it worthy of his infinite Majesty, to endue the Creatures with such pleasing Qualities, as render them a delicious Entertainment to our Appetites? and shall I reckon it a mean unbecoming Employ, to bear Witness to this condescending Indulgence of the DEITY?—Particularity in recounting Benefits, is seldom deemed a Fault. It comes under no such Denomination, in *my* System of Ethics. If *Mr. Wesley* has a better, in which Neglect and Insensibility are ranked among the Virtues, I must undoubtedly, upon those Principles, drop my Plea. Where *they* are commendable, my Conduct must be inexcusable, and if inexcusable, I fear, irreclaimable. For I shall never be ashamed to take a Fish, a Fowl, or a Fruit in my Hand, and say, “A Present this, from
“ our all-bountiful CREATOR! See its Beauty,
“ taste its Sweetness, admire its Excellency, and

“ love and adore the great Benefactor. To us he
 “ hath freely granted these, and other Delights.
 “ Though He Himself, in the Days of his Flesh,
 “ had Gall to eat, and Vinegar to drink.”

“ But the mentioning these in such a Manner, is
 “ a strong Encouragement of Luxury and Sensua-
 “ lity.”—If, to enumerate a *few* of these Dainties*,
 be a strong Encouragement to Luxury, how much
 more, to create them *all*, and clothe them with such
 inviting Properties, and recommend them by such
 delicate Attractives?—But “ The mentioning them
 “ in such a Manner.” What! Is this an Encou-
 ragement to Sensuality? To mention them, as so
 many Instances of divine Beneficence, and so many
 Motives to human Gratitude? This, methinks, is
 the Way to prevent the Abuse of our animal Enjoy-
 ments, and to correct their pernicious Tendency.
 This is the Way to endear their adorable GIVER,
 and render them Incentives to Love. And the Love
 of GOD, is a better Guard against Luxury, a bet-
 ter Preservative from Sensuality, than all the rigid
 Rules of the Cloyster or Monastery.

Upon the whole, however well affected Mr. *Wes-*
ley may be to our civil, he seems to be a Kind of
 Malecontent, with regard to our spiritual Liber-
 ties. Those I mean, which are consigned over to
 us, in the *Magna Charta* of the Gospel.

We have Liberty, through *JESUS CHRIST*,
 to use not one only, but every Creature of GOD.
 And to use them in a *sanctified* Manner, so that they
 shall not sensualize our Affections, but refine and
 exalt them, by knitting our Hearts more inseparably
 to their munificent CREATOR. According to
 that

* The Scripture calls them, *Royal Dainties*, Gen. xlix. 20.

that Clause in the heavenly Deed, *All Things all yours.* This you would curtail and diminish.

We have Liberty to look upon ourselves, as justified before GOD, without any Works of our own; made perfectly righteous in his Sight, without any personal Obedience whatever. Entirely through our Representative and Surety, what he has suffered, in our Name and in our Stead. According to those gracious Declarations, *In the LORD have I Righteousness, and by the Obedience of ONE shall many be made righteous.* This you would supersede and abolish.

We have Liberty to claim and receive this unspeakable Privilege, without performing any Conditions, or seeking any Pre-requisites. Having no other Qualification, than that of being lost Sinners, and needing no other Warrant, than the divine Grant, made and recorded in the Word of the Gospel. According to that most generous Invitation, *Come, buy Wine and buy Milk, without Money and without Price.* According to that most gratuitous Concession, *Whoever will, let him take of the Water of Life freely.* This you would clog and embarrass.

We have Liberty, through our LORD's Atonement, to look upon ourselves as made free from all Guilt. To consider our Sins, as absolutely blotted out, never to appear again, either to our utter Condemnation, or to our least Confusion.

The three first Articles of the Charge, I think, are made clear, too clear and undeniable, in the Course of the preceding Letters. Should you challenge me to prove the last, I refer you to your Assize Sermon. There you tell us, that the Sins of true Believers, as well as of Unbelievers, will be brought to Light,
and

and exposed before the whole World, at the Day of universal Judgment.

Here, I must do you the Justice to acknowledge, that you have not, as in your epistolary Animadversions on *Aspasso*, required your Audience to assent, merely because you affirm. You attempt to establish your Opinion by the Authority of *Solomon*; *GOD shall bring every Work into Judgment, with every secret Thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* But you seem to forget, that the Sins of the Believer are *τα μη οντα*, Things that are not. *CHRIST* has blotted out, as a thick Cloud, our Transgressions; yea, as a thin Cloud, our Sins*.—Consider them as moral Stains, or Causes of Defilement; they are washed away by the Blood of *JESUS*. And surely the Blood of *GOD*, must have as powerful an Effect on our Souls, as the Waters of *Jordan* had upon *Naaman's* Body †.—Consider them as contracting Guilt, or deserving Punishment; they are vacated; they are disannulled; and, like the Scape-Goat, dismissed into the pathless inaccessible Wilderness, *when sought for, they shall not be found.*—Consider them in either of these Respects, or under any other Character, and they are, not only covered or secreted, but abolished. Just as the Darkness of the Night is abolished,

* *Isai.* xliv. 22. נב נubes. נב נubecula. Thus *Houbigant* translates the Words; and, I think, very justly. The first seems to denote an immense Arrangement of Clouds, covering the Sky. The second signifies a loose detached Fragment, floating in the upper Regions. The first, fixed like a Vault; the last, sailing like a Skiff. This Sense diversifies the Prophet's Imagery, and, instead of Tautology, presents us with a beautiful Gradation.

† *2 Kings* v. 14.

abolished, by the Splendor of this clear, serene, delightful Morning.

Bring to our Sight, if you can, the Millstone, that is cast into the Depths of the Sea. Restore to its former Consistence, the Cloud that is dissolved in Rain. Or find one Dreg of Filthiness in the new-fallen Snow. Then may those Iniquities be brought again into Notice, which have been done away by the High-Priest of our Profession. Which have been expiated by the perfect, most effectual, and glorious Oblation of Himself.—His People, when rising from the Bed of Death, will *have no more Conscience of Sin* in themselves. They are fully and forever free from the Accusation of others. So free, that Sin shall not so much as be mentioned unto them; no, nor even remembered by the LORD their GOD any more. They are made holy, unblameable, and unprovable in his Sight. And they shall be presented, at the great Day, without Spot, or Wrinkle, or any such Thing.

Thus may we, and thus may our Readers, be presented! So shall we meet each other with Comfort at the awful Tribunal; with Joy amidst the Angels of Light, and with everlasting Transport around the Throne of the LAMB.—To promote this blessed Event, is the sole Aim of these Remonstrances, and the unfeigned Desire of,

Rev. Sir, Your, &c.

LETTER



L E T T E R XI.

REV. SIR,

MY last concluded with a Sketch of our Christian *Liberty*, extracted from the *Charter* of the Gospel. We have Liberty—to use all the Creatures, and in a sanctified Manner—to consider ourselves, as made perfectly righteous, through the Obedience of *CHRIST*—to receive this grand Prerogative, without performing any Conditions—to look upon all our Sins, as totally and finally done away, through the Blood of *JESUS*.

Perhaps, you will ask; Where is your Liberty from the *Power* of Sin? Does not this come within the Extent of your Charter?—Most certainly. You injure our Doctrine, if you deny it. We are undone irreparably, if we continue destitute of it. Every other Immunity, without this crowning Privilege, would be like the magnificent Palace and the beautiful Gardens of *Pharaoh*; while Swarms of Locusts filled them, with their loathed Intrusion.

But observe, Sir; Freedom from the Dominion of Sin, is the Result of all the preceding Blessings. By revealing these in our Hearts, and *CHRIST* the Author of them, the *HOLY SPIRIT* acts as the *SPIRIT* of Liberty. You are a Philosopher. You understand the Theory of Light. From the Association of various Rays, or the Mixture of many
Parent-

Parent-Colours, springs that first of Elements, and best of material Gifts, *Light*. So, from the Union, and united Enjoyment of all those heavenly Treasures, springs that most desirable Liberty, the *Liberty of Righteousness*.—This is that Truth, which makes us free. This is that Knowledge, by which we are renewed after the Image of HIM, that created us. And these are the exceeding precious Promises, by which we are Partakers of the divine Nature.—Hence we are taught to love the LORD our GOD, and to delight in his adorable Perfections. By this Means, they look with a smiling Aspect upon us, and are unspeakably amiable to us. Under such Views, we say of Sin; we say of all our evil and corrupt Affections; *Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate Thee? And am I not grieved with those, that rise up against Thee? I hate them with a perfect Hatred: I count them mine Enemies.*

Our SAVIOUR's Obedience. This Phrase disgusts Mr. Wesley. Therefore he cries; “ O say, “ with the good old Puritans, our SAVIOUR's “ *Death and Merits.*”—*Aspasio* speaks with St. Paul; *By the Obedience of One.*—He speaks with St. Peter; *Faith in the Righteousness of our GOD and SAVIOUR.*—He speaks with the Prophets *Isaiab* and *Jeremiah*; *In the LORD have I Righteousness*; and *JEHOVAH is our Righteousness.*—Having these Precedents, he need not be very solicitous, who else is for him, or who is against him.

Though not very solicitous about this Matter, he is somewhat surpris'd at your vehement Address; that you should exhort him so earnestly to “ speak “ with the good old Puritans.” Has not your Printer committed a Mistake? Did not the Clause stand

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thus

thus in your Manuscript? “With my good Friends “the *Arminians*.” They indeed disapprove this Expression. Because it is, when rightly understood, a Dagger in the Heart of their Cause.—But as to the Puritans, they are, one and all, on the contrary Side. Their Language is a perfect Union with *Aspasio*’s. They glory in the meritorious Obedience of their great MEDIATOR. They extol his imputed Righteousness in almost every Page; and pour Contempt upon all other Works, compared with their LORD’s.—What will not an Author affirm, who ventures to affirm or insinuate that the Puritan Writers disuse this Manner of speaking? For my Part, I know not any Set of Writers in the World, so eminently remarkable, for this very Doctrine, and this very Diction. I said, in a former Letter, we would enquire into this Particular. But the Enquiry is quite unnecessary. It would be like *Uriel*’s searching for the Sun, while he stands in its Orb, and is surrounded with its Lustre.

“We swarm with *Antinomians*.”—And we must swarm with Persons, whose Hearts are Enmity against the Law of GOD, so long as *your* Tenets find Acceptance. Who can delight in a Law, which neither has been, nor can be fulfilled by them? Which bears Witness against them, and is the Ministration of Death unto them? Testifying, like the Hand-Writing on Belshazzar’s Wall, *Thou art weighed in the Balances, and found wanting*:—Whereas, when we see it fully satisfied on our Behalf, by our SURETY’S Obedience; no longer denouncing a Curse, but pronouncing us blessed; not pursuing us, like the Avenger of Blood, but opening a City of Refuge, for the Safety of our Souls; we shall then

then be reconciled to its Constitution and Design. We shall then take Pleasure in its Precepts and Prohibitions. We shall say with the Psalmist; *LORD, what Love have I unto thy Law! All the Day long is my Study in it.*

My Mouth shall shew forth thy Righteousness and thy Salvation—“Thy Mercy which brings my Salvation,” says Mr. *Wesley*, in Opposition to the Sense, assigned by *Aspasio*. Which Sense has been vindicated already. I shall therefore not renew my Arguments, but only express my Wonder.

As Mr. *Wesley* is a Minister of the Gospel, I wonder, *that he* should studiously set aside, what is the Peculiarity and Glory of the evangelical Revelation. “Mercy which brings Salvation,” is what an unenlightened *Jew* might have preached; nay, what a more ignorant Heathen might have taught. But Salvation through a divine Righteousness, as the adequate and meritorious Cause thereof, is the distinguishing Doctrine and the sovereign Excellency of the Gospel.

As Mr. *Wesley* is a Sinner, I wonder, he should chuse to weaken the Foundation of his own and our Hope. Why *Mercy alone*? Is it not better to put our Trust in Mercy, erecting its Throne on a Propitiation, and thence holding forth the golden Sceptre? By the Obedience of *IMMANUEL*, the Law is satisfied, as to its Penalty; is fulfilled, as to its Precept; and is, in every Respect, unspeakably magnified. This shews us the inexhaustible Fountain of Mercy, unsealed; and every Obstruction to its free and copious Flow, removed.

As Mr. *Wesley* is zealous for the Honour of GOD, I wonder, he should not prefer that Method of Salvation, by which every divine Attribute is most abundantly glorified. This is not done, by expecting Pardon and Acceptance from Mercy alone; but by expecting and receiving them, through our REDEEMER's Righteousness and Blood. Then we have a Display, not only of infinite Love, but of inflexible Justice, and incomprehensible Wisdom. Here, they mingle their Beams, and shine forth with united and eternal Splendour.

Considering these Things, I am still inclined to embrace *Aspasio's* Interpretation of this, and such-like Passages of Scripture. Wherein Salvation is ascribed to divine Mercy, exercised through the Obedience and Death of *CHRIST*. Which gives as great a Heightening to the Blessing, as the Atmosphere gives to the Rays of Light, or as the Light itself imparts to the Scenes of Creation.

Those divine Treasures, which spring from the Imputation of *CHRIST's* Righteousness. “Not
“ a Word of his atoning Blood.”—I wish, you would turn back to *Aspasio's* Definition of this Phrase, as it is laid down at the Beginning of the Conference; to be the Ground-Work of all the Dialogues, and of all the Letters. You will then perceive, that there is not a Word of this Kind, but *CHRIST's* atoning Blood is included in it. Without this, his Righteousness had not been perfect. Without this, his Righteousness could not be imputed.—Some People have a treacherous Memory, and really forget Things. Others have a perverse Mind, and resolve not to regard them. Which of these is Mr. *Wesley's* Case,

Case, I presume not to say; let his own Conscience determine.

'Tis true, we “love to speak of the Righteousness of *CHRIST*.” Yet not because “it affords a fairer Excuse for our own Unrighteousness.” For indeed it affords no Excuse at all. On the contrary, it renders Unrighteousness quite inexcusable. Because it yields new and nobler Motives to all holy Obedience. But we love to speak of the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, because it is the most comprehensive Expression, and the grandest Theme in the World.—The *most comprehensive Expression*; as it denotes all that he has done and suffered, both his meritorious Life, and his atoning Blood.—The *grandest Theme*. Consider all those Blessings, which have been vouchsafed to *GOD*'s People, before our SAVIOUR appeared on Earth; add all the Blessings, which will be vouchsafed, until the Consummation of all Things: Consider all that Good, which is comprised in a Deliverance from the nethermost Hell; together with all that Bliss, which is contained in the Pleasures and Glories of the heavenly State. All these to be enjoyed, through a boundless Eternity; and by Multitudes of redeemed Sinners, numberless as the Sands upon the Sea-Shore. Then ask; What is the procuring Cause of all? Whence do these inestimable Benefits proceed? From the Righteousness, the sole Righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*.—Is it not then worthy to be uppermost in our Thoughts, and foremost on our Tongues? Might not the very Stones cry out, and reproach our Insensibility, if we did not *love* to talk of this divinely precious Righteousness?

Faith is a Persuasion, that *CHRIST* has shed his Blood *for me*, and fulfilled all Righteousness *in my Stead*. “I can by no Means subscribe to this Definition.”—You might very safely subscribe to this Definition, if you would suffer *St. Peter* to speak his genuine Sentiments. Describing the Faith of the primitive Christians, he calls it ΠΙΣΤΙΣ ΕΝ ΔΙΚΑΙΟΣΥΝΗ, *Faith in the Righteousness*. He says nothing of the atoning Blood. But does he therefore exclude it? He speaks of nothing but the justifying Righteousness. And will you totally discard it? It is the central Point in his Faith, and shall it have no Place in yours?—*Righteousness*, he assures us, was the Object of the Believer’s Faith, even the Righteousness of our *GOD* and *SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST*. But how could this be the Object of their Faith, if it was not fulfilled in their Stead? Or how could they truly believe in this Righteousness, if they did not regard it, as performed for them, and imputed to them?

“There are Hundreds, yea Thousands of true Believers, who never once thought, one Way or the other, of *CHRIST*’s fulfilling all Righteousness in their Stead.”—Then their Faith is like the Sight of the Person, *who saw Men as Trees walking*. He saw them indeed, but very dimly, indistinctly, confusedly. And ’tis pity, but they were more thoroughly instructed unto the Kingdom of *GOD*.—Not one of those Thousands, provided he fixes his Hope wholly upon the Merits of *CHRIST*, would reject this delightful Truth, if it was offered, with scriptural Evidence, to his Understanding. Reject it! No surely. He would joyfully embrace it, if offered, with that single, but undeniable Evidence;

dence; *CHRIST* was made Sin for us, though He knew no Sin, that we might be made the Righteousness of *GOD* in Him.

“ You personally know many, who to this Hour “ have no Idea of *CHRIST*’s Righteousness.”— Surely then it behoves you, as a Lover of Souls, and as an Ambassador of *CHRIST*, to teach them the Way of *GOD* more perfectly *. So doing, you will be employed much more suitably to your Function, and much more profitably to your Brethren, than in your present Attempt. By which, you would weaken the Hands, and defeat the Designs of those, who endeavour to spread abroad the Savour of this Knowledge, in every Place. And who, notwithstanding all that you personally know, must unalterably persist in their Method. Which is, to regulate their Definition of Faith, not by the State of your supposed Believers, but by the express Declaration of the unerring Word. And from this, they have Authority to maintain, that Faith in the imputed Righteousness of *CHRIST*, is a fundamental Principle to every Believer, who understands upon what Foundation he is saved.

These your Acquaintance, though they have no Idea of *CHRIST*’s Righteousness, yet “ have “ each of them a divine Evidence and Conviction, “ *CHRIST* loved me, and gave Himself for me.”— In this Case, don’t you take rather too much upon you? Have you then the apostolical Gift of discerning Spirits? If not, it will be impossible for you to

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know

* Mr. *Wesley* cannot say; What! Teach a Doctrine, which I disapprove? Since he himself has allowed it; has approved it; has set his Seal to it; again and again, in the Course of these his Remarks.

know the Man, exclusive of yourself, who is certainly possessed of this divine Evidence. You may form a charitable Judgment or a prevailing Hope. Which seems to be the utmost you can warrantably claim with regard to others. And while you entertain this Hope, we shall allow it to indicate the Benevolence of your Heart; but cannot admit it, as a Proof of your Point: That People may be full of Faith and Love, yet have no Idea of *CHRIST*'s Righteousness.—We would also caution you to take Heed, lest, through an immoderate Fondness for increasing the Number of your Converts, you are led to deceive yourself and others; registering those as real Believers, whom the *LORD* hath not registered. By this Means, you may be confirmed in your Unscriptural Notion, that the Righteous fall away, and the Faithful apostatize. Whereas, they who fall away, were righteous only in Appearance, and they who apostatize, were no otherwise than professionally faithful. What you see drop from the Sky, is not a Star, but a Meteor only.

Faith is the Hand which receives all that is laid up in *CHRIST*—*Aspasio* expresses himself thus; *CHRIST* is a Store-House of all Good. Whatever is necessary to remove our Guilt, whatever is expedient for renewing our Nature, whatever is proper to fit us for the eternal Fruition of *GOD*, all this is laid up in *CHRIST*. And all this is received by Faith, for our Application, Use, and Enjoyment.—To this Mr. *Wesley* subjoins a Word of Objection; but not in due Season. *Aspasio* is displaying the Efficacy of Faith; Mr. *Wesley*'s Argument is levelled against the Indefectibility of Faith. However, as it is your favourite Objection, it shall not

not be treated as an Intruder. “ If we *make Shipwreck of the Faith*, how much soever is laid up in *CHRIST*, from that Hour we receive nothing.”

Have you never heard of the Answer, which the *Spartan* States returned, to an insolent and barbarous Embassy, from *Philip of Macedon*? You may read it, in the Book you are censuring; and may receive it as a Reply to this, and your other Surmises of this Nature. It was all comprised in that single Monosyllable I F.—A mere Professor may make Shipwreck of the Doctrine of Faith; a true Believer does not make Shipwreck of the Grace of Faith. No, nor ever will, unless *CHRIST*'s Intercession be made of none Effect; *I have prayed, that such Faith fail not.*

288. Answered already, in Number 285.

Aspasio, describing the dreadful Nature of the Command, given to *Abraham*, says; Thy Hands must lift the deadly Weapon; thy Hands must point it to the beloved Breast; thy own Hands must urge its Way, through the gushing Veins and the shivering Flesh, till it be plunged in the throbbing Heart.—“ Are not these Descriptions far too strong?” This is submitted to the Judgment of the Reader. I would only observe, that the more strongly the Horrors of the tremendous Deed are represented, the more striking will the Difficulty of the Duty appear. Consequently, the more efficacious and triumphant the Power of Faith.—“ May not these Descriptions occasion unprofitable Reasonings in many Readers?” What unprofitable Reasonings may be occasioned, I do not pretend to guess. But the just and natural Reflection, arising from the Consideration of such a Circumstance, is; “ What has Faith wrought!

“ wrought ! It purifies and exalts the Affections. It
 “ invigorates and ennobles the Soul. Makes it bold
 “ to undertake, and strong to execute, every great
 “ and heroic Work. I see, therefore, it is not in
 “ vain, that the Scripture so frequently inculcates
 “ Faith; lays so remarkable a Stress upon Faith;
 “ and places it in the very Front of all Christian
 “ Duties.” *This is the Victory that overcometh the
 World, overcometh Self, overcometh all Things.*

How could he (*Abraham*) justify it to the World?
 “ Not at all.”—True; not to the unbelieving
 World. They will argue, as Mr. *Wesley* on another
 Occasion. “ What ! Stab his Son, his best-beloved,
 his only Son to the Heart? Could the GOD of
 Goodness command such a Piece of Barbarity? Im-
 possible ! I could sooner be a Deist, yea an Atheist,
 than I could believe this. It is less absurd to deny
 the very Being of a GOD, than to make Him an
 almighty Tyrant.”—But to the believing World,
 who fear the LORD, and hearken to the Voice of
 his Servants, *Abraham’s* Conduct will never stand in
 Need of a Vindication. By them it will be highly
 extolled, and greatly admired. It will be an undeni-
 able Demonstration of the Reality and Sincerity of
 his Faith; of its very superior Elevation, and in-
 vincible Strength.

You take the direct and certain Way to obtain
 substantial Comfort. The Righteousness of our
 LORD *JESUS CHRIST*, after which you enquire,
 about which you are solicitous, is a never-failing
 Source of Consolation. Thus *Aspasio* writes to *The-
 ron*.—“ What ! Without the Atonement ?” cries
 Mr. *Wesley*. To which he adds, in a following Para-
 graph; “ So the Death of *CHRIST* is not so much

“as named.” This puts me in Mind of an Objection, no very formidable one, made against that introductory Exhortation to the Common Prayer. Dearly beloved *Brethren*. So then, said a candid Examiner, *Women* have no Part in your Worship. They are not so much as named. But I forbear. If you are not ashamed of repeating, I am ashamed of refuting, so frequently refuting such an empty Cavil. And, I believe, the Reader is tired with us both.

306. I have no great Objection to your Alteration of *Aspasio's* Comment. Suppose, we compromise Matters, and consider the Oil, poured on *Aaron's* Head, and emptying itself from *Zechariah's* Olive-Tree, as typical both of the Merits and the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*. Which, like Light and Heat in the Sun, are indissolubly connected. Or, to make use of a sacred Illustration, are like the living Creatures and the Wheels in *Ezekiel's* Vision. *When the living Creatures went, the Wheels went by them. When the living Creatures were lift up from the Earth, the Wheels were lift up.* Whither soever the former were to go, the latter went also.—For the sake of obliging *Mr. Wesley*, I call this a Compromise. But if he can prevail on himself to read the Paraphrase on the two Passages, without Prepossession, he will find this Association of Senses anticipated by *Aspasio*.

Has the Law any Demand, says *Aspasio*? It must go to *CHRIST* for Satisfaction. From which you draw this injurious Consequence, “Then I am not obliged to love my Neighbour. *CHRIST* has satisfied the Demand of the Law for me.” This Objection has already received an Answer.

I shall therefore content myself with shewing, why I call your Conclusion injurious. Because, like the deaf

deaf Adder, it stoppeth the Ear, against my own Explication of my own Phrase. A Note is added, on purpose to limit its Sense, and obviate your Misrepresentation. This you totally disregard, and argue as if no such Precaution was used.—The Note informs you, that the Law—the commanding Law is satisfied with nothing less than perfect Obedience, and the broken Law insists upon condign Punishment. Now if it must not, for Satisfaction to both these Demands, go to *CHRIST* our divine Husband, where will it obtain any such Thing? Who is able to give it, among all the Children of *Adam*?

However, lest we offend, needlessly offend any Reader; I promise, that, in case the Providence of *GOD* and the Favour of the Public call for a new Edition, *Aspasio* shall alter his Language. Thus the Paragraph shall stand; “ Does the Law demand
 “ perfect Purity of Nature, and perfect Obedience
 “ of Life? It must go to *HIM* for Satisfaction.
 “ Do we want Grace, and Glory, and every good
 “ Gift? We may look to *HIM* for a Supply. To
 “ *HIM*, in whom it hath pleased the *FATHER*,
 “ that all Fulness should dwell.”

For all his People—With this Phrase *Mr. Wesley* is chagrined. This he will not suffer to pass without Animadversion. Though he *must* know, if Prejudice has not blinded his Understanding, that it is pure Scripture. Why does he not shew the same Dissatisfaction, with the Angel that appeared unto *Joseph*, and with *Zechariah* the Baptist's Father? The former of whom says; He shall save *his People* from their Sins. The latter declares; He shall give Knowledge of Salvation unto *his People*, by the Remission of their Sins. Why does he not put the
 same

same Question unto them, and draw the same Inference upon them? “ But what becomes of *all other People?*”—Sometimes Mr. *Wesley* is so attached to the Scriptures, that nothing will please him, but scriptural Expressions. Here he is so wedded to self-Opinion, that even scriptural Expressions will not pass current, when they seem to thwart his own Notions.

For *all his People*—From this Expression, though used by a Prophet, authorised by an Angel, and to be found in many Places of Scripture, Mr. *Wesley* deduces some very offensive and dreadful Consequences. So dreadful, that he “ would sooner be a *Turk*, a Deist, yea an Atheist, than he could believe them.”—My dear Sir, let me give you a Word of friendly Advice, before you turn *Turk*, or Deist, or Atheist—See, that you first become an *honest* Man. They will all disown you, if you go over to their Party, destitute of common Honesty.

Methinks, I hear you saying, with some Emotion; What do you mean by this Advice? Or what Relation has this to the Subject of our present Enquiry?—A pretty near Relation. Out of Zeal to demolish the Doctrine of Election, you scruple not to overleap the Bounds of Integrity and Truth.—Mysterious still! I know not, what you aim at.—Then be pleased to review a Passage, in your Book on *Original Sin*; where you have thought proper to make a Quotation from my Dialogues. It relates to that great Doctrine of the Gospel, *CHRIST* becoming the Representative and fœderal Head of Sinners. Upon this Occasion *Aspasio* says; “ As *Adam* was a public Person, and acted in the Stead of all Mankind; so *CHRIST* was a public Person, and acted

“ acted in Behalf of *all his People*. As *Adam* was
 “ the first general Representative of *this Kind*,
 “ *CHRIST* was the second and last.” Here, you
 substitute the Word *Mankind*, instead of *this Kind*;
 and thereby lead the Reader to suppose, that *Aspasio*
 considers our glorious Representative, as standing in
 this Capacity to the whole human Race; than
 which nothing can be more injurious to the Sense of
 his Words.

I at first thought it might possibly be the Effect of
 Inadvertency. But could a Person of Mr. *Wesley's*
 Discernment, allow himself to nod over a Passage,
 which he knew to be of a critical and controverted
 Import?—Perhaps, it might be the Printer's Fault;
 an Error of the Press. I would willingly have admit-
 ted one of these extenuating Circumstances, till I
 came to the Bottom of the Page. Where, to my
 great Astonishment, I found the following Words,
 inclosed within the Marks of the same Quotation,
 and ascribed to *Aspasio*. “ All these Expressions de-
 “ monstrate, That *Adam* (as well as *CHRIST*)
 “ was a Representative of *all Mankind*.” Then I
 could no longer forbear crying out; *There is Treachery,*
O Ahaziah! A false Quotation, not made only, but
 repeated, cannot be owing to Negligence, but must
 proceed from Design. And this, I should think,
 can never be defended, no, nor with a good Grace
 excused, by Mr. *Wesley's* most devoted Admirers. A
 studious Alteration of our Words, and an evident
 Perversion of their Meaning, are defensible by no Ar-
 guments, are excusable on no Occasion.

Quite inexcusable this Practice. And is not your
 Language equally offensive? Is not your Conclu-
 sion very precipitate? when you suppose *Aspasio*,

though using the Words of Scripture, yet representing GOD, as “an almighty Tyrant?”—Surely, you had better forbear such horrid and shocking Expressions. Especially, as you cannot deny, that many Passages in Scripture, seem at least to countenance this obnoxious Tenet. As you very well know, that many Persons, eminent for their Learning and exemplary in their Lives, have written in Defence of it, and bled for the Confirmation of it. As we have Proofs more than a few, that you are far from being infallible in your Judgment; yea, far from being invariable in your Opinion. Witness your former Notions of Matrimony: Witness the Character you formerly gave of the *Moravian* Brethren: And the Esteem which you once had, for the Mystics, and their Writings.—Considering yourself, therefore, it would better become you to be diffident on such a Subject, and say, “That which I know not, LORD “teach thou me.” And I imagine, it can never become you, on any Subject whatever, to break out into such Language, as ought not to be named among Christians: Ought to have no Place, but in the bottomless Pit.—This is an Admonition, which, while I suggest to you, Sir, I charge on myself.

The three following Paragraphs relate to a Doctrine, which *you* are fond to attack, and which *Affasio* studiously declines. It constitutes no Part of his Plan. It forms not so much as the Out-Works. Be it demolished or established, the grand Privilege, and the invaluable Blessing, of Justification through the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, remains unshaken, stands immoveable.—In applying this to ourselves, we proceed neither upon universal nor particular Redemption, but only upon the divine Grant, and the
divine

divine Invitation. We assure ourselves of present and eternal Salvation, through this perfect Righteousness, not as Persons *elect*, but as Persons, *warranted* by the Word of GOD; bound by the Command of GOD; and *led* by the SPIRIT of GOD.—Therefore, while you are encountering this Doctrine, I would be looking unto *JESUS*; be viewing the Glory of my LORD; contemplating HIS Perfection, and my own Completeness in HIM.

If I divert, for a Moment, from this delightful Object, it is only to touch upon one of your Remonstrances. You suppose, that, according to the *Calvinistic* Scheme, GOD denies what is necessary for present Comfort and final Acceptance, even to some who sincerely seek it. This is contrary to Scripture, and no less contrary to the Doctrine of your Opponents. However, to confirm yourself in this Misapprehension, you ask, “Would *you* deny “it to any, if it were in *your* Power?”—To shew the Error of such a Sentiment, and the Fallacy of such Reasoning, I shall just mention a recent melancholy Fact.

News is brought, that the *Prince George* Man of War, Admiral *Broderick's* own Ship, is burnt, and sunk, and above four hundred Souls, that were on board, are perished. Six Hours, the Flames prevailed; while every Means was used, to preserve the Ship and Crew; but all to no Purpose. In the mean Time, Shrieks and Groans, bitter Moanings, and piercing Cries, were heard from every Quarter. Raving, Despair, and even Madness presented themselves, in a Variety of Forms. Some ran to and fro distracted with Terror, not knowing what they did, or what they should do. Others jumped over board,
from

from all Parts; and, to avoid the Pursuit of one Death, leaped into the Jaws of another. Those unhappy Wretches, who could not swim, were obliged to remain upon the Wreck, though Flakes of Fire fell on their Bodies. Soon the Masts went away, and killed Numbers. Those, who were not killed, thought themselves happy, to get upon the floating Timber. Nor yet were they safe; for, the Fire, having communicated itself to the Guns, which were loaded and shotted, they swept Multitudes from this their last Refuge.—What say you, Sir, to this dismal Narrative? Does not your Heart bleed? Would you have stood by, and denied your Succour, if it had been in your Power to help? Would not you have done your utmost, to prevent the fatal Catastrophe? Yet the LORD saw this extreme Distress. He heard their piteous Moans. He was able to save them, yet withdrew his Assistance. Now, because you would gladly have succoured them if you could, and GOD ALMIGHTY could, but would not send them Aid; will you therefore conclude, that *you* are above your LORD, and that *your* Loving-Kindness is greater than His? I will not offer to charge any such Consequence upon you. I am persuaded you abhor the Thought.

“The Wedding Garment here means Holiness.”—Thus saying, you depart from *Bengelius*, for whom you profess so high a Regard. *Bengelius* overlooks your Exposition, and gives his Vote for *Aspasio*'s. *Hæc vestis est justitia CHRISTI.* Awed by so venerable an Authority, you have not ventured to exclude this Sense from your Comment. You have admitted it, into your expository Notes, yet will not allow *Aspasio* to admit it, into his Discourse with

Theron. These are your Words; “The Wedding-Garment, that is, the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, first imputed, then implanted.” Which, by the Way, is not perfectly accurate, nor according to the Language of the Gospel. The Gospel distinguishes between the Righteousness of *CHRIST*, and our own Righteousness. That which is imputed, goes under the former, that which is implanted, under the latter Denomination.

However, let us consider the Circumstances of the Case, and we shall find, that our common Favourite *Bengelius* has Probability and Reason on his Side. The Guests mentioned in this Parable, consisted of poor Outcasts, collected from the Highways and Hedges. Now we cannot suppose, that People in such a Condition, and coming at a Minute’s Warning, should be able to furnish themselves with a Dress of *their own*, suitable to the grand Occasion. Here then personal Holiness is put out of the Question.—But we must suppose, (which is conformable to the *Eastern Customs*) that the King had ordered his Servants, to accommodate each Guest from the royal Wardrobe. That each might have this additional Token of his Sovereign’s Favour, and all might be arrayed in a Manner, becoming the magnificent Solemnity. This exactly corresponds with the Nature of imputed Righteousness.

Farther; the Banquet you will readily allow, is the Pardon of Sin, and Peace with *GOD*, the divine *SPIRIT*, and eternal Life. From all which, uniting their happy Influence, true Holiness springs. To say, that Holiness is the Wedding-Garment, necessary for our Introduction to this Banquet, favours of Absurdity; like saying Holiness is necessary to
Holi-

Holiness—it is absolute Legality; for it makes the Performance of all Duties, the Way to the REDEEMER'S Grace—it implies an Impossibility; the Sinner, that can exercise Holiness, before he receives *CHRIST* and his *SPIRIT*, is like the dead Man, who arises and walks, before he is restored to Life.

The grand End which *GOD* proposes in all his favourable Dispensations to fallen Man, is to demonstrate the Sovereignty of his Grace. “Not so.”—Do you mean, *Aspasio* has not spoken so? That you have misrepresented his Sense? Have clipped and disfigured his Coin? If this is your Meaning, you speak an undoubted Truth. His Words are, “To demonstrate the Sovereignty, and advance the Glory of his Grace.” Why did you suppress the last Clause? Was you afraid it would supply the Deficiency, which you charge on *Aspasio*, and express the Idea of imparting Happiness? If so, your Fears are just enough.—Why did you not take into Consideration those Texts of Scripture, with which *Aspasio* confirms his Tenet? Ought you not to have overthrown those Testimonies, before you deny his Doctrine? Otherwise, you oppose your own Authority, to the Decision of a Prophet and of an Apostle.

“Not so, proceeds *Mr. Wesley*. To impart Happiness to his Creatures, is his grand End herein.”—The devout Prophet speaks otherwise; *I have created Him for my Glory*. The wise Moralist speaks otherwise; *The LORD hath created all Things for Himself*. The holy Apostle speaks otherwise; *To the Praise of the Glory of his Grace*. From which, and from innumerable other Places of Scripture, from

the Reason of the Thing, and from the very Nature of the SUPREME BEING, it appears, that the primary leading Aim, in all GOD's Works, and all GOD's Dispensations, is his own Glory. The Felicity of his Creatures, though not separated from it, though evidently included in it, is still subordinate to it. And surely it is very meet and right so to be. Can there be a nobler End, or more worthy of an infinitely wise Agent, than the Display of those sublime Perfections, for which, and through which, and to which, are all Things? Could GOD make any other Being the principal End of his acting, He would *undeify* himself, and give his Glory to another. Does any Creature imagine his own Happiness to be a higher End, than the divine Glory? He thereby usurps the GODHEAD, making, as far as in him lies, JEHOVAH the Subject, and Himself the Sovereign.

“Barely to demonstrate his Sovereignty.” The Word *barely* is not used by *Aspasio*. But it gives another Specimen of Mr. *Wesley's* Integrity, in stating Truth, and doing Justice to his Opponents.—It is not said, the *sole*, but the *grand* End. Therefore, would any unprejudiced Person conclude, there must be some other, though inferior Purpose. No, says Mr. *Wesley*; hence I infer, that it was *barely* to demonstrate his Sovereignty. Do you so? Then your Inference is of a Piece with the Quotation, *that* as valid, as *this* is faithful.

“Barely to demonstrate his Sovereignty,” is a Principle of Action fit for the great Turk, not for the most high GOD. Such a fraudulent Quotation I have not often seen, no, not in the critical Reviewers. To mark the Sentence with Commas, and

and thereby assign it to *Aspasio*, is really a Master-piece, especially, after you have thrust in the Word *barely*, and lopped off the Word *Grace*. You have treated the Passage worse than *Nabash* King of *Ammon*, treated the Ambassadors of *David*. They were ashamed to shew their Faces, under such Marks of Abuse and Disgrace. I am no less ashamed of the Clause, as you have mangled and disguised it. But restore it to its true State; let it wear its native Aspect; then see what is blameable, or what is offensive in it.

The grand End, which GOD proposes, in all his favourable Dispensations to fallen Man, is, to demonstrate the Sovereignty, and advance the Glory of his Grace.—The *Glory*, that it may appear rich, unbounded, and infinitely surpassing, all we can wish or imagine.—The *Sovereignty*, that it may appear free, undeserved, and absolutely independent on any Goodness in the Creature.—That Sinners may receive it, without waiting for any amiable Qualities, or performing any recommending Conditions.—That, when received, it may stop the Mouth of boasting; may cut off all Pretensions of personal Merit; and teach every Tongue to say, *Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy Name* be the Praise.

And should we not greatly rejoice in this Method of the divine Procedure? That the LORD orders all Things relating to our Salvation, *to the Praise of the Glory of his Grace*? Can any Thing be more honourable to our Nature, or more transporting to our Souls? Can any Thing so firmly establish, or so highly exalt our Hopes? Angels, Principalities, and Powers; all intellectual Creatures, in all Ages, and all

all Worlds; are to look unto *us*, unto us Men they are to look, for the most consummate Display of GOD's Grace. *Our* Exaltation and Felicity are to be the Mirror, in which the wondering Cherubim and Seraphim will contemplate the superabundant Goodness of JEHOVAH. How *great* must that Honour and that Happiness be, which are intended to exhibit the fullest, fairest, brightest View of GOD's infinitely glorious Grace! How *sure* must that Honour and Happiness be, which are so intimately connected with the Glory of the omnipotent King! Which can no more fail of their Accomplishment, than the amiable Attributes of GODHEAD can be stripped of their Lustre!

GOD is a boundless Ocean of Good. "Nay, that Ocean is far from boundless, if it wholly passes by nine Tenths of Mankind."—What, if it had passed by *all* Mankind, as it certainly did all the Devils, would it have been the less boundless on that Account? I wish, methinks, you would study the Evil of Sin more, and not so frequently obtrude upon us a Subject, of which neither you nor I seem to be Masters. Then we should neither have hard Thoughts of GOD, nor high Thoughts of ourselves.

You cannot suppose, GOD would enter into a fresh Covenant, with an *insolvent* and *attainted* Creature*. These are *Aspasio's* Words. To which Mr. *Wesley* replies; "I both suppose and know He did." *Satis cum imperio*. Then be pleased, Sir, to shew us, *where* the Almighty entered into a Covenant with fallen *Adam*; for of him we are speaking. Produce

* *Insolvent* and *attainted* Creature, Mr. *Wesley* has changed into "a Rebel."

duce the original Deed; at least favour us with a Transcript. And we will take your Word, when it is backed with such Authority.

GOD made the new Covenant with *CHRIST*, and charged Him with the Performance of the Conditions. “ I deny both these Assertions.” And what is your Reason for this Denial? Is it deduced from Scripture? Nothing like it. Is it founded on the Nature of Things? No Attempt is made towards it. But you yourself affirm, that these Assertions “ are the central Point, wherein *Calvinism* and *Antinomianism* meet.” Or, in other Words, they tend to establish, what you dislike; and to overthrow, what you have taught. This is all the Cause, which you assign for your Denial. I cannot but wish, that, whenever I engage in Controversy, my Adversary may be furnished with such Arguments.

You deny the Assertions now. But don't you forget, what you allowed and maintained a little while ago? when you yourself, adopting a Passage from *Theron* and *Aspasio*, called *CHRIST* “ a foederal Head?”—Pray, what is a foederal Head, but a Person with whom a Covenant is made, in Behalf of himself and others?—Here your Judgment was according unto Truth. Fit, perfectly fit for such an Office, is *CHRIST*; whose Life is all his own, who is able to merit, and mighty to save. But absolutely unfit for it, utterly incapable of it, is fallen Man; whose Life is forfeited, whose moral Ability is lost, and whose very Nature is Enmity against GOD.

I have made a Covenant with my chosen.—“ Namely, with *David my Servant*.” True; with *David* as in *CHRIST*, or rather as a Type of *CHRIST*.

CHRIST. You cannot be ignorant, that **CHRIST** is called by this very Name. The **LORD**, speaking by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, says, *I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my Servant David.*—Was *David* beloved*? **CHRIST** was incomparably more so.—Was *David* **GOD**'s chosen one? **CHRIST** was so likewise, and in a far sublimer Sense, and for infinitely more momentous Purposes.—Was *David* **GOD**'s Servant? So was **JESUS CHRIST**; and, by his Services, brought unspeakably greater Honour to the **LORD** his **GOD**, than all Kings on Earth, and all the Princes of Heaven.—Several Parts of this Psalm, *must* be applied to **CHRIST**; and if several of them *must*, the principal of them *may* and *ought*.

He will wash you in the Blood, which atones, and invest you with the Righteousness, which justifies. “Why should you thus put asunder continually what **GOD** has joined?” How difficult is it, to please Mr. *Wesley*! When *Aspasio* spoke of **CHRIST**'s Righteousness, without particularly mentioning his Blood, you said it was better to mention them both together; it behoved us, never to name the former, without the latter. Yet here, when both are mentioned, and the particular Use of each is specified, you complain of his putting asunder what **GOD** has joined, which, in Truth, is no disjoining, but an Illustration and Amplification of the unsearchable Riches of **CHRIST**.

GOD himself, at the last Day, pronounces them righteous, because they are interested in the Obedience of the **REDEEMER**. “Rather, because they are washed in his Blood, and renewed by his
“ **SPI-**

* *Beloved.* This is the Meaning of **דָּוִד** *David*'s Name.

“SPIRIT.” GOD will justify them in the last Day, in the very same Way, whereby he justified them in this World; namely, because they are interested in the Obedience of the REDEEMER. As for their Renewal by the SPIRIT, though it will then be perfect, yet it will be no Cause of their Acquittal, but the Privilege of those who are acquitted. —A Proof of this, at least an Attestation of it, the World has received from your own Pen. “For
 “neither our own inward nor outward Righteousness is the Ground of our Justification. Holiness
 “of Heart as well as Holiness of Life, is not the
 “Cause, but the Effect of it. The *sole* Cause of
 “our Acceptance with GOD, is the Righteousness
 “and Death of *CHRIST*, who fulfilled GOD’s
 “Law, and died in our Stead.” Excellent Sentiments! In these may I ever abide! To these may you also return!

F I N I S.

E R R A T A.

Pref. p. vi. l. 4. *for it in, read it is in.* P. vii. l. 17.
for 1765, read 1756.

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