

# Present Truth

*The Bible alone as the only rule of faith and practice; faith alone as the only means of acceptance with God; and Christ alone as the only mediator between God and men.*

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Jan. - Mar. 2010

Volume 10, Number 1

Editorial Introduction:

Effective Justification – p. 3

## **The Beatification of John Henry Newman – p. 6**

Reflections on Newman's Theology – p. 20

Faith in the Atonement – p. 24

Justification and the Work of the Holy Spirit – p. 25

Lead Kindly Light – p. 32

**Present Truth** is a magazine dedicated to the restoration of New Testament Christianity in this generation. It is especially committed to upholding the truth of justification by faith in this time when it is being threatened by humanism, emotionalism, and ecumenism. Our publication is based on the principle of *sola Scriptura* – the Bible and the Bible only as a rule of faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:15-17). We desire to give the gospel trumpet a certain sound (1 Cor. 14:7-9), that through words easy to be understood (Hab. 2:2) people may “be established in the present truth” (2 Pet. 1:12) and like Noah be proclaimers of the righteousness of Christ (2 Pet. 2:5).

**Editor:** Richard A. Marin

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January - March 2010

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## Editorial Introduction:

# Effective Justification

When we use the term “effective justification” we are not referring to the fact that “everyone God justifies he also sanctifies.” True justification is always followed by sanctifying results (effects) in the life of the believer. Rather, the term “effective justification” refers to the theory that when God declares a sinner to be righteous, his word effects what it declares. This expression comes from the Latin *justum efficare*, which was a slogan of the Roman Catholic opponents of the Protestant Reformation in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. *Justum efficare* means to make righteous.

The Protestant Reformers taught that *justification* meant “to declare righteous” while the Roman Catholic Church said it meant “to make righteous.”

Proponents of “effective justification” may argue from Numbers 23:19, that “God is not a man, that he should lie.” Or they may quote Deuteronomy 25:1, that says the judges of God’s people “shall justify the righteous, and condemn the wicked.” What answer can Protestants give to this logic? Before we answer that question let’s consider one key proponent of “effective justification.”

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century there was one man in England who sought to bridge the chasm that for three centuries separated Rome and the Reformation. Anglican clergyman, John Henry Newman (*Lead Kindly Light*) stood out among his peers proposing what he called a *via media* – a middle road – between Protestantism and Catholicism. At that time neither side was too pleased with his efforts; but today they are being hailed by both sides as the key to ecumenism. This “middle road” led Newman himself out of Protestantism and into Catholicism.



Cardinal John Henry Newman

In his “middle road” position John Henry Newman sought to combine the concept of “to declare righteous” with the concept of “to make righteous.” “Effective justification” was the result.

If justification is God’s declaration that a sinner is wholly righteous – *and it is* – on what basis can God justify the ungodly? Wouldn’t he be classed as an unjust Judge?

Unless we understand that the righteousness of justification is not a partial righteousness we may be carried away with this argument. When God justifies a person he is not stating that that person conforms to *a portion* of God’s will. No! God’s declaration of justification is that a person is in 100% conformity with God’s will. On what basis can he make such a declaration? On the basis of a perfect human life – the life of Jesus on this earth. By faith a person presents to God the righteousness of Christ his Substitute. God sees his Beloved Son and declares all those found in him to be perfectly righteous. This is Protestantism. God is “just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.” Rom. 3:26.

**Justification is solely a legal declaration.** It does not include the new birth mentioned in John 3:3. The fourth chapter of Romans makes repeatedly clear that it means “to reckon” “to account” or

“to impute.” These terms refer to something God does in heaven – not to something done in the believer’s heart on earth. John Henry Newman’s synthesis of “declaration” plus “transformation” flies directly in the face of the apostle Paul’s doctrine of justification.

In September of this year, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI will make an official visit to Great Britain on which he will pronounce John Henry Newman blessed – the second of three steps toward sainthood. Thirty-five years earlier Pope Paul VI stated: “Many of the problems which he [Newman] treated with wisdom – although he himself was frequently misunderstood and misinterpreted in his own time – were the subjects of the discussion and study of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council... Not only this Council but the present time can be considered in a special way as Newman’s hour.” – “Cardinal Newman’s Thought and Example Relevant Today,” *L’Osservatore Romano*. 17 Apr. 1975.

In this issue of **Present Truth** we will consider Newman’s “middle road” and where it leads. Former Catholic priest, Richard Bennett begins with a penetrating look at the Pope’s planned visit to Great Britain. We follow with a summary outline of Newman’s “middle road” theology. In “Some Concluding Reflections on Newman’s Theology” our former editor states that the doctrine of justification by faith is NOT the Gospel. He emphasizes that the Gospel is a story – an historical event – and so refutes Newman’s “middle road” theology. Then we include a few comments by some of Newman’s Anglican contemporaries. Finally we reprint significant portions from James Buchanan’s chapter titled “Justification: Its Relation to the Work of the Holy Spirit” from his masterful work *The Doctrine of Justification*. The Scriptural arguments he presents are powerful. Buchanan’s weak Calvinistic arguments concerning “effectual calling” are not included here for in this area Calvinism also proposes a “via media” that caters to Rome.

We stand with the Protestant Reformers affirming that justification is solely a legal declaration by God and does not include the new birth mentioned in John 3:3. Justification, acceptance with God, does not come by any work we do, nor by any work God does in us. As we clearly outlined in **Present Truth** Vol. 8 #1, justification means to *count* righteous, not to *make* righteous – that is its meaning!

Let’s search the Scriptures together.

RAM

# The Beatification of John Henry Newman

by **Richard Bennett** \*

John Henry Newman was born in London in 1801. His family was Anglican with strong bonds to biblical faith. But before his death in 1890 he migrated from his Protestant Anglican roots to what he called “a middle road” between Protestantism and Catholicism. As a leader in The Oxford Movement he challenged “*The Thirty-nine Articles*” of the Church of England and eventually joined the Roman Catholic Church in which he was elevated to the office of Cardinal.

This pivotal figure, John Henry Newman, is being used this year to enthrall the world with the glory of the Papacy and its renewed influence in British society. The Pope will be performing the second stage of the English cardinal’s canonization, or path to sainthood, by virtue of which Newman will be pronounced “Blessed.” In 1991,

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\* Richard Bennett hails from Ireland, from the Republic of Ireland. Trained by Jesuits in his early years, Richard received eight years of theological instruction and preparation for the priesthood with the Dominicans, completing his education at a University in Rome in 1964. He spent twenty-one years as a Catholic priest in Trinidad, West Indies, twenty years of which he served as parish priest. After a serious accident in 1972, in which he nearly lost his life, he began to study seriously the Bible. After fourteen years of contrasting Catholicism to Biblical truth, he was convicted by the Gospel message. In 1986, he saw that justification is not being inwardly just as Rome taught, but being accepted in Christ. He was then saved by God’s grace alone, and formally left the Roman Catholic Church and its priesthood. He has founded an evangelistic ministry to Catholics called “Berean Beacon.” Webpage: [www.bereanbeacon.org](http://www.bereanbeacon.org)

Newman was declared “Venerable,” the first of the three stages of the process of becoming a Catholic “saint.”

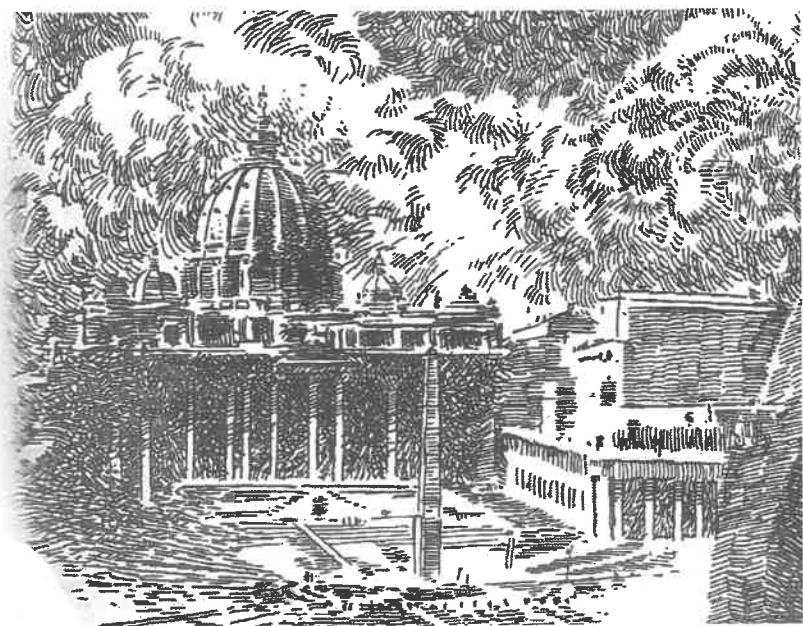
Pope Benedict especially desires personally to highlight Newman’s teachings that over the years have been a basis of the Vatican’s promotion of ecumenism. Many of the priests and members of the Church of England have already embraced Papal Rome. The Pope, in elevating Newman to the status of “blessed,” does much more. He seriously endeavors in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to recapture Protestant England back into the Roman Catholic fold. This is the culmination of what Newman himself set out to accomplish in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **The Treaty of Lisbon**

On December 1, 2009, the Treaty of Lisbon went into effect in the European Union (EU). The Treaty is a further step in the centralization of civil power within the EU. One of the major features of the Treaty is that it “introduces a single legal personality for the [European] Union.” [http://europa.eu/lisbon\\_treaty /glaunce/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/lisbon_treaty /glaunce/index_en.htm)) Consequently, this major move against the sovereignty of the member countries has to a large extent subsumed them as states or regions under a new realm or legal entity still bearing the same title of European Union.

Since the Vatican or Holy See is a sovereign nation in its own right and not a member nation of the EU, it does not come under the legal jurisdiction of that body. Nevertheless, the Pope as head of the Roman Catholic Church has a reliable fifth column within the member nations of the EU. Thus, the re-emerged Holy Roman Empire clearly has its Pope. This fifth column, whose first identity is Catholic, is required by the Papacy to “evangelize” by promoting Roman Catholic social policy. Thus, the Papacy wields immense power, both politically and spiritually, within the European Union.

With the Treaty of Lisbon in force, there is effectively a re-emergence of the Papacy as a cohesive political-religious power, which now has been given the opportunity to enhance its position on the Western stage. On March 16<sup>th</sup> 2010, less than four months after the ratification of the Treaty, Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom announced that “At the invitation of Her Majesty The



Queen, His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI will pay a Papal Visit to the United Kingdom from the 16th-19th September 2010....” [www.royal.gov.uk](http://www.royal.gov.uk), 4/8/2010. The Roman Catholic website, *Zenit*, gives fuller details:

“Benedict XVI will be visiting September 16-19. Government and Church leaders are welcoming the upcoming event. In a joint press conference, the state leaders together with representatives from the bishops’ conferences of Scotland, England and Wales, underlined the Pope’s visit as ‘an unprecedented opportunity to strengthen ties between the United Kingdom and the Holy See on global initiatives, as well as the important role of faith in creating strong communities.’ A press release from the British embassy to the Holy See reported that this is the first ever official Papal visit to that state, as the previous trip of Pope John Paul II in 1982 was a pastoral visit. The Pontiff ...will address the British civil society at Westminster Hall [both houses of Parliament].” <http://www.zenit.org/article-28654?l=english> 22/03/2010

It has been 477 years since 1533; the year England’s King Henry VIII divorced his first wife, Spanish Catholic, Catherine of Aragon, in order to marry Anne Boleyn. The respected historian, Merle d’Aubigne, places Henry’s divorce in its larger context,



“The divorce of Henry Tudor and Catherine of Aragon is a secondary event; but the divorce of England and the popedom is a primary event, one of the great watersheds of history...” J. H. Merle d’Aubigne, *The Reformation in England*, (Banner of Truth Trust, 1962) Vol. I, pp. 337-8.

King Henry VIII wanted a church that would give him his desired divorce. He also wanted financial freedom from the Church of Rome.

However, while Henry VIII broke with Papal Rome politically, he personally never got beyond Roman Catholic doctrine. Nevertheless, he came to see that he could use the growing Reformation movement for his own political ends. By allowing the biblical truths of the Reformation to permeate all levels of society to a certain extent, the clergy itself could be loosed from Rome’s dogma and, therefore, its control. But he did not ever plan for the clergy to be free from his own control as England’s sovereign.

In the course of events, King Henry appointed Thomas Cranmer as Archbishop of Canterbury. And Cranmer was basically responsible for what is called the “Thirty-Nine Articles.” Solid Christian doctrine was embedded in “The Thirty-nine Articles of Religion” that were propagated soon after Henry’s death and officially ratified by the Convocation of the Church of England, initially in 1553, and then more formally in 1562. The Articles affirmed that Scripture alone is the final authority on salvation, which is clearly defined as a gift of God given by grace alone, received through faith alone, and is in Christ alone. Thus, the *Thirty-Nine Articles* repudiate teachings and practices of the Catholic Church. Thomas Cranmer, together with other English martyrs, gave his life during the conflict that separated England from Rome.

Ever since Henry’s severance of England from Rome, the Vatican has been intent to regain her religious and political influence over the Church of England and its monarch. The proposed September 2010 Papal visit to the UK is no exception to this centuries-long Vatican policy. By choosing to elevate John Henry Newman in a thoroughly Roman Catholic ecclesiastical event at this particular time, Pope Benedict is mounting an offensive to demonstrate visibly to the world that the UK is being brought back under the influence of Roman Catholicism. The Papacy would then be in a much stron-

ger position to influence social policy in the U.K., including further enlistment of the civil government to force by civil law Roman Catholic social policy upon the populace as a whole.

### **Re-emergence of the Holy Roman Empire**

Against the backdrop of the re-emergence of the Holy Roman Empire, the nearly five hundred year battle between Protestant England and the Papacy has not decreased. In 1798, a little over two centuries ago, Napoleon's General Haller, a Swiss Calvinist, removed the then Pope from his throne in Rome, confiscated the church's properties, and left the struggling Holy Roman Empire in ruins. However, the Papacy itself, in spite of appearances, had not been permanently destroyed as a religious and civil power and it used the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to regain much of the ground it had lost.

Now in our time, 477 years after Henry VIII opened the primary conflict, comes the Pope officially as the head of a sovereign civil state, to address British civil society at both houses of Parliament in Westminster Hall. But equally important, he comes as head of the Roman Catholic Church in order to re-establish Roman Catholicism as the religion of the UK.

Thus, Pope Benedict XVI has chosen to use the beatification of John Henry Newman in the UK to promote both religious and political control of the Church of England. That this is the case cannot be denied from a study of the facts concerning John Henry Newman and the Oxford movement. It is further corroborated by the history of Catholic social doctrine as evidenced in the Vatican's "Compendium of Church Social Doctrine," the documents of Vatican Council II on ecumenism and numerous other ecumenical agreements since Vatican Council II. In addition, there was the Pope's call in June 2009 for a super-governmental body over the United Nations (UN) to enforce globally UN social policy, which is essentially Roman Catholic Church social policy.

### **Pope to arrive first in Scotland**

It is also highly significant that the visit is to be exactly 450 years since Catholicism, as the state religion, and the Pope's authority

were formally removed from Scotland. However, Scotland's national newspaper, *The Scotsman*, stated further, "Church leaders have revealed the Pope will use his visit to remind Britain of its Catholic roots"(March, 17, 2010). Thus, the Scots 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary of abolishing Papal authority in their realm will be remembered by a Pope reminding Britain of its "Catholic roots." More exactly, history documents the fact that Scotland has truly Christian roots going back to Columba in 563 on the island of Iona. There he founded a church and a base for training leaders to evangelize the nation with the Gospel.

### **The World Stage is set for the Pontiff**

The pivotal figure of John Henry Newman is to be used to enthrall the world with all the pomp and pageantry of Papal Rome in full glory mode. The televised ceremonies will culminate with a public Mass in Coventry, at which the Pontiff will beatify John Henry Newman. The Pope will be performing the second stage of the English cardinal's canonization, or path to sainthood, by virtue of which Newman will be pronounced "Blessed." In 1991, Newman was declared "Venerable," the first of the three stages of the process of becoming a Catholic "saint."

Pope Benedict especially desires personally to highlight Newman's teachings that over the years have been a basis of the Vatican's promotion of ecumenism. Newman's "reformulation of doctrine" and his teaching on "continuing revelation" have been particularly influential. The Agreed Statements of "The Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission" (ARCIC) established in 1967 has already been quite successful. Many of the priests and members of the Church of England have already submitted to Papal Rome. The Pope, in elevating Newman to the status of "blessed," does much more. He seriously endeavours in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to recapture Protestant England back into the Roman Catholic fold. This is the culmination of what Newman himself set out to accomplish in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Who was John Henry Newman?**

Some ask the question, "Who was John Henry Newman, and why he is important?" Logos Bible Software's Catholic Product Manager answers,



“From his evangelical youth to his leadership of the Anglo-Catholic Oxford Movement to his embrace of Roman Catholicism, the career and legacy of John Henry Newman is marked by brilliance and controversy. His engagement with liberal, evangelical and catholic movements within the Church of England in his time makes him a pivotal figure, important for understanding the Anglican Communion today...”  
[www.facebook.com/note.php?note\\_id=338121888230](http://www.facebook.com/note.php?note_id=338121888230), 5/14/2010.

John Henry Newman was born in London in 1801. Within Anglicanism, Newman’s family had maintained strong bonds to biblical faith, which had exercised considerable influence on his early religious life. In the autumn of 1816 he underwent what appeared to be a religious conversion. The tone of his mind at this time became Evangelical and Reformed and, significantly, he held to the conviction that the Pope was the Antichrist. In December of 1816 he was welcomed at Trinity College Oxford, and in June of the following year, went into residence there, graduating in 1821.

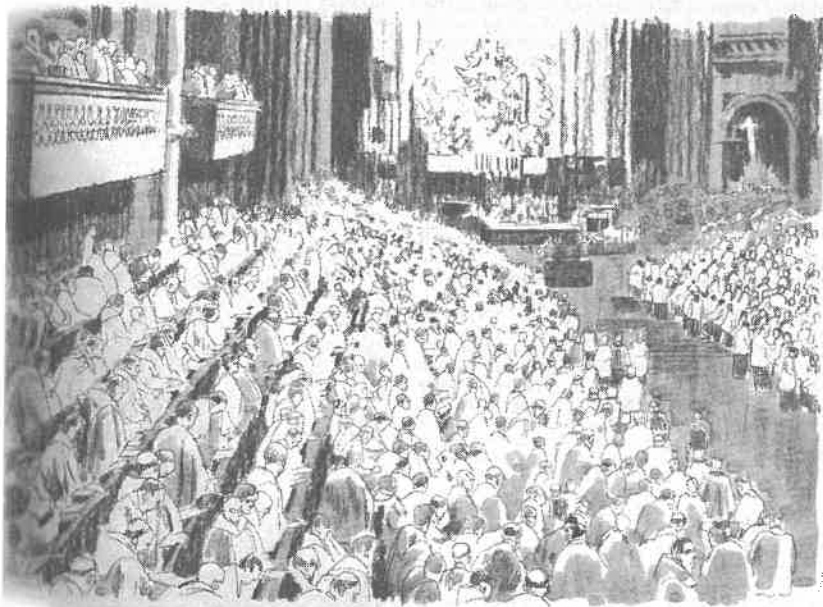
Looking to stay at Oxford, he studied to become a professor at Oriel College, which was at the time the acknowledged center of Oxford intellectualism. He was elected a professor in April, 1822. In 1824, he was ordained as an Anglican priest. Then at the suggestion of E. B. Pusey, who was also a professor at Oriel, he served as a curate of St. Clements, Oxford. In sermons that Newman preached at the time, he correctly distinguished between justification and regeneration. However, by 1825, the denial of the biblical concept of justification and an increasing acceptance of the unbiblical notion of conferred inner righteousness with leanings towards sacramentalism became apparent in his understanding. In that year, he wrote in his diary, “I think; I am not certain, I must give up the doctrine of imputed righteousness, and that of regeneration as apart from baptism.” (John Henry Newman, *Autobiographical Writings*, p. 203).

By 1833, Newman was completely won over to accepting what he saw as the Roman Catholic heritage of the Anglican Church,

including the papal dogmas of infused justification and baptismal regeneration. It had its consequences, as Anglican historian Walter Walsh recounts from the collected letters of Richard Froude and Newman,

“Cardinal Newman stated that he ever considered the 14<sup>th</sup> of July ‘as the start of the religious Movement of 1833.’ A few months before that date, Newman, in company with his friend, Richard Hurrell Froude... had visited Monsignor (subsequently Cardinal) Wiseman at Rome. ‘We got introduced to him...to find out whether they would take us in [i.e., to the Church of Rome] on any terms to which we could twist our consciences, and we found to our dismay that not one step could be gained without swallowing the Council of Trent as a whole.’

“While on this journey Newman fell seriously ill... and decided to return at once to England.... He tells us, ‘I sat down on my bed, and began to sob violently. My servant... asked me what ailed me, I could only answer him: – ‘*I have a work to do in England.*’ What that work was we now know full well. It was that of Romanizing the Church of England.” Walter Walsh, *The Secret History of the Oxford Movement*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. [London: Swan Sonneshine & Co., Ltd 1898] p. 263.



## “Romanizing” the Church of England

At Oxford Newman together with other “High Church” academics (including John Keble, Froude, William Palmer, and E. B. Pusey) formed a secret association from which Newman began to publish numerous tracts that were effective in spreading their message. The primary association became known as The Oxford Movement and was also called the Ritualistic Movement. Walsh documents the purpose of the Ritualistic or Oxford Movement from *Union Review*, one of their leading quarterly magazines,

“The great object of the Ritualistic Movement from its very birth, in 1833, was that of *Corporate Reunion* with the Church of Rome... As far back as 1867, a leading quarterly of the advanced Ritualists declared that, instead of seceding to Rome, ‘it would be much better for us to remain working where we are – for what would become of England if we [Ritualists] were to leave her Church? She would be simply lost to Catholicism... Depend on it, it is only through the English Church itself that England can be Catholicised.’” (Walsh, pp. 260-261)

The same article, referring to this corporate and visible unity with the Church of Rome declared, “‘Here you have *the real heart and soul* of the present Movement; *this is the centre from which its pulsations vibrate*, and from which its life-blood flows.’”

The same purpose of “corporate and visible unity” is stressed in Vatican Council II documents and the Vatican’s, “Compendium of Church Social Doctrine.” While the strategy used to achieve this in America is a bit different than that originally used on the Church of England, the ecumenical movement formally announced at Vatican Council II in the 1960s has been accomplishing the same end – “corporate and visible unity.” The Post Vatican Council II Document No. 42 titled *Reflections and Suggestions Concerning Ecumenical Dialogue* in Volume I Section VI, II states:

“...dialogue is not an end in itself... it is not just an academic discussion. [Rather,] ecumenical dialogue... serves to transform modes of thought and behavior and the daily life of those [non-Catholic] communities. In this way, it aims at preparing the way for their unity of faith in the bosom of a Church one and visible.”

This is the objective behind the Vatican’s reference to the purpose of the coming Papal visit to England as “an unprecedented

opportunity to strengthen ties between the United Kingdom and the Holy See on ...the important role of faith in creating strong communities [i.e., churches].’

For a number of years, Newman remained inside the Church of England. His plan was to transform it gradually, primarily by withholding from the congregation the great truths of Scripture concerning atonement, faith and works, and the free grace of God. In their place, he and others in his movement begin to slip in little by little the dogmas of Rome with their basis in ritual rather than in Scripture alone. The manner by which Newman and his associates carried out their objectives warrants them being tagged as, “wolves in sheep’s clothing.”

### Newman Perverts the Gospel

In his book, *Lectures on the Doctrine of Justification*, originally published in 1838, Newman put forth his exposition of the Gospel. He anticipated the rapprochement between Catholic and biblical positions seen in the ecumenical dialogue of the 20th century.



His teaching crucially distorts and undermines the pivotal truth – the truth that God’s righteousness in the Lord Jesus Christ is imputed or credited to the believer. Newman taught through these lectures what the Jesuit, Sheridan, defined as a “synthesis of justification and regeneration.” (Thomas L. Sheridan, *Newman on Justification*, [Alba House, 1967] p. 108). This was to be a hall-

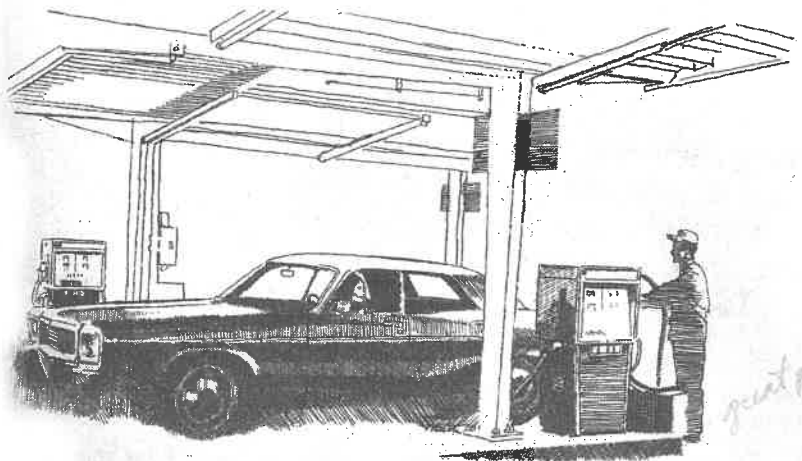
mark of the transformed Newman; he now denied what he had previously upheld. Thus, he wrote in his *Lectures on Justification*, "The Law written on the heart, or spiritual renovation, is that which justifies us" (p. 45). However, in Scripture the Apostle Paul states the opposite in Romans 3:24: "*Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*" And the apostle John says: "...*this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.*" 1 John 5:11. "*Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*" Rom. 3:20. The law as such convicts and condemns us, but can never justify us. As Martin Luther discovered, and the Reformation confirmed, this doctrine is at the very heart of the Gospel.

Newman was well aware of the forensic meaning of justification, basing it on the Greek and Hebrew texts of Scripture. The Apostolic message of the New Testament is that Jesus Christ died for our sins, was "*made a curse for us,*" "*suffered for the unjust.*" In the words of Scripture, "*God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. ...For He hath made Him [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*" God laid our sins on Jesus Christ by imputation, the just for the unjust. "*He was numbered with the transgressors.*" This is how He was "*made ... to be sin for us.*" (Gal. 3:13; 1 Pet. 3:18; 2 Cor. 5:19, 21; Isa. 53:12). There was nothing in Him worthy of death. However, having been made to be sin by imputation, He was condemned by the righteous judgment of God. In this sense, it was right and proper that Christ should suffer the wrath of God. He had to be treated *as if* He were a sinner.

It is on this same basis that God deals with us. He credits Christ's righteousness to the believing sinner. He declares that same sinner just and righteous in Christ's perfect righteousness, as wonderfully stated by the Apostle, "*being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*"

Newman knew the strength of this biblical argument and was not disposed to refute it, as many Roman Catholic scholars over many years vainly tried to do. Despite that, he contended that the word "justify" signifies a making righteous, rather than a receiving of imputed righteousness. On this controversial point, Newman achieved what appeared to be a brilliant synthesis between Scripture and Roman Catholic teaching.





### Newman Forges Tool for the Papacy

Newman believed that he had found a “middle way,” what he called a “via media,” between papal dogma and the Scriptures. His “reformulated doctrine” determined that creation and justification are exactly alike. Thus, he taught that just as in the beginning God said, “Let there be light, and there was light” and just as the Word of God and the work of God went together in creation, so it is again “in the regeneration.” Such a teaching may seem to have a form of godliness since it uses a biblical example as its model. It is false, however, in that it denies the repeated biblical statements concerning imputed righteousness. In justification, God does not create righteousness as a substance: rather, God imputes righteousness without works. This is as the Apostle stated, “*the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.*” Rom. 4:6. A declaration by God is a pronouncement and not a process.

Newman’s cunning theological synthesis attempts to make it possible to depend on the Church of Rome’s sacraments to be filled with goodness – like a filling station through which grace is channeled into the soul. Newman’s attempt to associate creation with justification, and thus to teach that justification includes subjective righteousness, is a violation of God’s infallible, written Word.

## **Newman – the Point Man to recapture England**

By 1840, the suspicion that Newman, still a priest within the Church of England, had become a campaigner for Catholicism neared certainty with the publication of his notorious “Tract 90.” In that tract, he used sophistry and casuistry to argue that the *Thirty-Nine Articles*, which state the biblical position of the Anglican Church on salvation, if rightly understood, were compatible with the doctrine and dogma of the Church of Rome. Although the *Thirty-Nine Articles* repudiate teachings and practices of the Catholic Church, this tract was subtly clever in undermining the Reformed Protestant identity of the historic Articles of the Church of England. For example, Section 5 of the conclusion of *Tract 90* states,

“They say that the Church has authority in controversies, they do not say what authority. They say that it may enforce nothing beyond Scripture, but do not say where the remedy lies when it does. They say the works before grace and justification are worthless and worse, and that works after grace and justification are acceptable, but they do not speak at all of works with GOD’S aid, before justification.”

Such sophistry was a blatant denial of the very principle of the authority of Scripture alone and clearly promotes an argumentative attitude towards it. After *Tract 90*, it became apparent that Newman was committed to defending papal doctrine. He was officially received into the Roman Catholic Church in 1845 and ordained a Catholic priest the following year.

Thus, in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Papacy used John Henry Newman as their point man to subvert the Church of England to Catholicism and thereby set in motion a developing plan to regain England as a Catholic country. We may think that all this is the sound of “far-off things and battles long ago.” However, the Vatican ever thinks in terms of centuries. Benedict XVI, a skillful politician, understands that England lost its sovereign status in December 2009 when the Treaty of Lisbon went into effect. Little wonder then that the second stage of the “beatification” of Newman has had to wait until now.

### **Conclusion**

The Lord’s people need not be misled by the enticing spectacle that is to be paraded before the world in September 2010. We

all know that we live in difficult, apostate days. In similar circumstances, J. C. Ryle encouraged believers in the UK in the 19<sup>th</sup> century to remain strong and not to compromise. He declared,

“This is the church, which does the work of Christ on earth. Its members are a little flock and few in number, one or two here and two or three there, a few in this district and a few in that. But these are they that shake the universe; who change the fortune of kingdoms by their prayers; these are they who are the active workers for spreading the knowledge of pure religion and undefiled; these are the lifeblood of the country, the shield, the defense, the stay and the support of any nation to which they belong.” --*The True Church*, R. C. Ryle, <http://www.the-highway.com/truechurch.html>

The Lord’s people must “*earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints*” (Jude 1:3). The year 2010 is a year of opportunity. *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him* (Isa. 59:19). We have an opportunity to shake the universe; to change the fortune of kingdoms by our prayers. We are called to be active workers for spreading the knowledge of pure religion.



# Reflections on Newman's Theology\*

John Henry Newman's greatest weakness was his failure to grasp the nature of the gospel at its most fundamental level. We can agree with him that an abstract theory of forensic (legal) justification is not the gospel. But Newman's reduction of the gospel to a mystical internal experience is not the gospel either. The alternative to dry Protestant scholasticism is not mystical internalism.

The gospel is the proclamation of a historical event. The framework of the gospel is neither rationalistic nor mystical, but *historical*. In a concrete event, God broke into history in the person of his Son. In one infinite, awesome act of judgment and deliverance, Jesus Christ fulfilled all that the Old Testament had promised. He dealt with sins, defeated the enemy, destroyed death, brought in everlasting righteousness and reconciled the world to himself. In the Christ event, God recapitulated Old Testament history. He rewrote the history of Adam and Israel. And in the place of man's history of failure, He gave him a new holy history. The new creation took place in Christ, for in his death and resurrection humanity was saved from sin, made righteous and glorified at God's right hand. That is the gospel.

We cannot talk correctly about justification, new birth, the Spirit, faith, sanctification or anything that applies to the individual until we have first settled that the gospel is the

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\* This article was written by the former editor in December of 1979.



proclamation of the absolutely finished deed of redemption which has taken place in history altogether outside the individual's experience. When we talk about justification, new birth and sanctification, we are talking about the application and benefits of the work of Christ to the individual believer. In order to participate in and benefit from the saving event which took place in history, the sinner must be incorporated into this holy history of Christ – that is to say, he must become vitally identified with Christ in such a way that Christ's life, death, resurrection and ascension all belong to him and become part of his existence. In this context it is proper to talk about hearing the gospel, faith and the work of the Holy Spirit. By these the sinner is incorporated into the new history and the new creation which has already taken place in Christ. And by this baptism of faith and of the Spirit, he becomes justified, born again and

sanctified. All these are as inseparable as the fingers on a hand, but they are just as distinguishable.

This incorporation into Christ accomplishes the sinner's justification. Justification pertains to the way the sinner stands before the Judge and before the eyes of the law. When we say that justification is strictly forensic, we mean that justification is based on the holy history of Christ plus nothing. It means that the believing sinner must look to nothing in himself but solely to what Christ has done and suffered. If justification were not strictly forensic, then the righteous life and blood of Jesus would not be enough. Thus, a denial of forensic justification is a denial of the gospel.

We do not insist on forensic justification in order to maintain some legal abstraction, as Newman and the opponents of the Reformation faith claim. God's saving act in Christ constrains us to confess that nothing can be added or needs to be added to this perfect redemption. For the glory of Christ and for the comfort of troubled consciences, that finished work of Christ must remain the sole and all-sufficient basis of a right standing before the judgment of God.

Forensic justification does not mean a justification which takes place apart from regeneration and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. For when the sinner is incorporated into what exists for him in Christ, his state will be changed as well as his standing. He is given participation in the new creation and becomes a sharer of the Spirit and of the life of the new age. Thus, justification and regeneration are absolutely inseparable. But they must remain distinguishable since in this life the believer only experiences the firstfruits of the Spirit (Rom. 8:23). The believer's completeness is found only in Christ at God's right hand (Col. 2:9; 3:1-3). Since the righteousness by which he stands approved before the judgment of God must be whole and lacking nothing, the believer cannot find this in his regenerate state but only in what Christ has already done.

Newman, however, utterly confounded the believer's standing with the believer's state. He transferred the righteousness

of faith from the finished work of Christ to the unfinished work of the Spirit in the heart. In calling forensic righteousness a shadow and an abstract fiction, Newman showed how little he valued the holy history of Christ.

Not grasping the reality of what God has already done prior to either our justification or sanctification, Newman saw the work of Christ merely as a stepping stone to secure the Holy Spirit. Then he ascribed our justification to the work of the Third Person of the Blessed Deity rather than to the Second Person. Instead of seeing the Spirit's work as pointing us into the holy history of Christ, he saw the Spirit adding to the work of Christ.

Newman's failure to grasp the objective, historical gospel led him to propose that the individual's justification brings the new creation into existence. This is the theology of what has come to be called "effective justification." It contends that God's justification is not a "bare," "mere" verdict but a creative word which creates what it declares. Thus, when God declares a sinner to be righteous, His word is said to make the sinner righteous – just as God said, "'Let there be light,' and there was light."

The truth, however, is that the new creation or the making righteous took place prior to the verdict of justification. It took place in God's act in Christ, and this is what the gospel announces. Newman's creation analogy is inappropriate to describe the reality of justification, for the first is an imperative command and the second is a statement of a fact. The verdict of justification finds a truer analogy in what God declared at Christ's baptism: "This is My Son, whom I love; with Him I am well pleased" (Matt. 3:17). We would like to ask the advocates of effective justification two simple questions about God's verdict upon his Son. Did that verdict make Christ pleasing to the Father? And if not, is this precious statement from the lips of the Father to be called a "bare," "mere" verdict?

# Faith in the Atonement

by W. Simcox Bricknell

The Scriptural truth is as clear as it is simple. "When all were dead, Christ died for all;" so that "he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life." By one way alone can man possess the Son; that is, by believing in him. And therefore, faith alone can justify; faith alone can appropriate to us that remedy, which God has appointed for the healing of our plague: faith alone can give us an interest in that sacrifice, which God has accepted as the satisfaction for sin. Thus, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ."

It is true, that, being thus accepted with God, and endued with his Spirit, man becomes a new creature. But he is not accepted with God, because he is a new creature, but because Christ has made atonement for the wrath which in his old nature he had incurred. His faith in that atonement which led to his acceptance, leads also to his doing works meet for one who is accepted: but the works which follow his being justified, and are its effect, can never also be the cause of his Justification....

Experience proves, that the more we labour to establish ourselves in the practice of holiness, the more need we find of clothing ourselves in the righteousness of our Redeemer. And again, the more firmly we trust to that righteousness which is not our own, the nearer we advance towards the personal righteousness which we are striving to attain, and cannot be satisfied without attaining.

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\* An edited collection of judgments on the theology of Newman and his associates (known as the Tractarian theology) was published in 1845 by the Rev. W. Simcox Bricknell of Worcester College. The above statement from this collection is a clear note on the matter of justification. (Reprinted from W. Simcox Bricknell, *The Judgment of the Bishops upon Tractarian Theology* (Oxford: J. Vincent, 1845), pp. 356-60).



# Justification and the Work of the Holy Spirit

by James Buchanan \*



There is, perhaps, no more subtle or plausible error, on the subject of Justification, than that which makes it to rest on the indwelling presence, and the gracious work, of the Holy Spirit in the heart. It is a singularly refined form of opposition to the doctrine of Justification by the imputed righteousness of Christ, for it merely substitutes the work of one divine Person for that of another; and it is plausible, because it seems to do homage to the doctrine of Grace, by ascribing to the presence and operation

\* James Buchanan's masterful volume on *The Doctrine of Justification* was first published in 1867. It remains one of the greatest classics on the subject in the English language. We are pleased to reprint his lecture on the relation of justification to the work of the Holy Spirit. It is obvious that Buchanan wrote this superb passage for the purpose of refuting John Henry Newman's theory of justification by the indwelling Spirit (Reprinted from James Buchanan, *The Doctrine of Justification: An Outline of Its History in the Church and of Its Exposition from Scripture*, 1867 (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1977), pp. 387-404. See pp.213-19).

of the Holy Spirit the production of faith, and all the effects which are ascribed to it, whether these belong to our Justification or to our Sanctification. It is the more difficult to expose and refute error, when it presents itself in this apparently spiritual form, than when it comes before us in its grosser and more common shape, as a doctrine of justification by works, because it involves some great truths which are held as firmly by those who advocate, as by those who abjure, the Protestant doctrine of Justification. Yet, subtle and plausible as it is, and difficult as it may be to disentangle the error from the partial truth which is involved in it, nothing can be more unscriptural in itself, or more pernicious to the souls of men, than the substitution of the gracious work of the Spirit in us, for the vicarious work of Christ for us, as the ground of our pardon and acceptance with God; for if we are justified solely on account of what Christ did and suffered for us, while He was yet on the earth, we may rest, with entire confidence, on a work which has been already 'finished'-on a righteousness which has been already wrought out, and already accepted of God on behalf of all who believe in His name,-and we may immediately receive, on the sure warrant of His word, the privilege of Justification as a free gift of God's grace through Christ, and as the present privilege of every believer, so as at once to have 'joy and peace in believing.' Whereas, if we are justified on the ground of the work of the Holy Spirit in us, we are called to rest on a work, which, so far from being finished and accepted, is not even begun in the case of any unrenewed sinner; and which, when it is begun in the case of a believer, is incipient only,-often interrupted in its progress by declension and backsliding,-marred and defiled by remaining sin,-obscured and enveloped in doubt by clouds and thick darkness,-and never perfected in this life, even according to the low standard of a relaxed law, if that law is supposed to require any definite amount of personal holiness in heart and life. For these reasons, it is of the utmost practical importance, to conceive aright, both of the Mediatorial work of Christ, and of the internal work of His Spirit, in the relation which they bear to each other, under the scheme of Grace and Redemption....

The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are revealed as concurring together in the whole purpose and plan of man's

redemption; but as sustaining, each of them, a distinct office, and undertaking a different part of the work, in carrying that purpose and plan into effect.

Their common purpose of saving sinners, and their harmonious co-operation in its accomplishment, might be inferred from the unity of the divine nature, which necessarily implies unity in the counsels of the divine will; but the personal distinctions of the Godhead could never have been so clearly revealed in any other way than by the distinct offices and operations, which are ascribed to them in connection with the work of salvation....

The Father is revealed as representing the majesty, – exercising the sovereignty, – and maintaining the prerogatives, of the Godhead. It is said of Him that ‘He loved us,’ – that ‘He blessed us with all spiritual blessings in Christ,’ – that ‘He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world,’ – that ‘He predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the Beloved,’ – that ‘He gave His only-begotten Son,’ – that ‘He sent His Son to be the Saviour of the world,’ – that ‘He made Him to be sin for us,’ – that ‘He set Him forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood,’ – that ‘He spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up to the death for us all,’ – that ‘He commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us,’ – that ‘it pleased the Lord to bruise Him,’ – that ‘He raised Him up from the dead, and gave Him glory, that our faith and hope might be in God,’ – that He ‘crowned Him with honour and glory, and did set Him over the works of His hands,’ – and that ‘God hath exalted Him with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance, and remission of sins’ (John iii. 16; Eph. i. 3, 4, 5; 1 John iv. 14; 2 Cor. v. 21; Rom. iii. 25, viii. 32; Isa. Liii. 10; 1 Pet. i. 21; Heb. ii. 7; Acts v. 31).

The Son is revealed as acting in official subordination to the Father, – as ‘sent,’ – as ‘given,’ – as ‘coming to do His will,’ – as ‘making Himself of no reputation,’ – as ‘taking upon Him the form of a servant, and appearing in the likeness of man,’ – as ‘humbling Himself, and becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,’ – as being ‘made under law,’ – as being ‘made

sin for us, ‘ – as being ‘made a curse for us,’ – as ‘wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities,’ – as bearing ‘our sins in His own body on the tree,’ – as ‘giving Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour,’ – as ‘crucified in weakness, but raised in power,’ – as ascending up into heaven, and sitting down ‘for ever on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool,’ – as ‘highly exalted, and having a name given to Him which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord, to the glory of God the Father’ (Phil. ii. 7; Gal. iii. 13; Isa. Liii.; Eph. v.2; Heb. x. 12; Phil. ii. 9, 10).

The Holy Spirit is revealed as ‘proceeding from the Father,’ – as ‘sent by the Son from the Father,’ – as ‘testifying’ of Christ, – as ‘glorifying Christ,’ – as ‘bearing witness’ of Him, – as ‘convincing the world of sin, because they believe not on Him,’ – as ‘shining into the hearts of men, and giving them the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ,’ – as ‘renewing them in the spirit of their minds,’ – as ‘quickenning them’ into spiritual life – as ‘the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Christ,’ – as ‘the Spirit that dwelleth in us’ – that ‘worketh in us’ – that ‘guideth us into all truth’ – that ‘helpeth our infirmities’ – that ‘witnesseth with our spirits that we are the children of God,’ – as ‘the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance’ (John xv. 26, xvi. 14; 1 John v.6; John xvi. 8, 9; Eph. i. 17, 14).

These testimonies are sufficient to show, – first, that there is a real distinction between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, since many things are revealed concerning each of them which cannot be affirmed of the other two;—and secondly, that they sustain different offices under the same scheme of grace, and execute different parts of the same work of redemption. If these fundamental truths are clearly revealed, it follows that we can only involve ourselves in inextricable confusion by overlooking the fact that such distinctions exist, and by ascribing that to the Father which Scripture ascribes to the Son, – or that to the Son which Scripture ascribes to the Spirit, – or, conversely, that to the Spirit which the Scripture ascribes to the Son. Yet this is the very error

with which those are justly chargeable who substitute the work of the Spirit in us, for the work of Christ for us, as the ground of our Justification.

The work of the Holy Spirit is as necessary for our Justification as the work of Christ Himself; but it is not necessary for the same reasons, nor is it effectual for the same ends....

... It is said of the Son,— but never of the Spirit, — that He became incarnate, and ‘took upon Him the form of a servant, and appeared in the likeness of men,’ — that ‘He was made under law,’ — that He was ‘made sin for us,’ — that ‘He was made a curse for us,’ — that ‘He bore our sins in His own body on the tree,’ — that ‘He died for us, the just for the unjust,’ — that ‘He redeemed us to God by His blood,’ — that ‘He is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth on His name,’ — that ‘He obtained eternal redemption for us,’ — that ‘now once in the end of the world hath He appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself,’ — and that ‘this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.’ From these testimonies it is manifest that a peculiar work is ascribed to Christ which is nowhere ascribed, in whole or in part, to the Holy Spirit; a work which was ‘finished’ on the Cross, and is different even from that which He is still carrying on in the Church by the agency of His Spirit, and the instrumentality of His Word, — a work which had a direct reference to the expiation of human guilt, and the satisfaction of the law and justice of God, — and a work which constitutes the only, but all-sufficient, ground of our Justification. If that work accomplished the end for which it was designed, no other ground of acceptance is either necessary, or possible; and the work of the Spirit Himself cannot be supposed to supersede, or even to supplement, it, without dishonour to the efficacy of that ‘precious blood,’ and the merits of that perfect righteousness, by which Christ satisfied the Law and Justice of God. But this important truth will become still more evident, if from the peculiar work which is ascribed to Christ, we proceed to consider that other work, equally peculiar, which is ascribed to the Holy Spirit.

The work of the Spirit consists in ‘bearing witness to Christ,’ ... ‘It is the Spirit which beareth witness, because the Spirit

is truth;' (1 John v.6). and the great subject of His testimony is Christ – Christ crucified, and Christ exalted: – ‘He shall testify of Me;’ – ‘He shall glorify Me: for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you. All things that the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you.’ (John xv. 26, xvi. 14, 15). The testimony of the Spirit relates to Christ as the only Saviour of sinners; and He bears witness to Him both in the Word, which was written by His inspiration, and in the hearts of His people, when He is given unto them ‘as the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,’ ( Eph. i. 17). by which they obtain ‘the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.’(2 Cor. iv. 6) ...

... ‘He persuades... us to receive and rest on Christ alone for salvation as He is freely offered to us in the Gospel.’ This is the grand object of His whole work in conversion, to bring a sinner to close with Christ, and to rely on Him as his own Saviour. This result may not be effected without a preparatory process, of longer or shorter duration, in different cases; for the sinner must be convinced of his sin, and misery, and danger, before he can feel his need of a Saviour, or have any serious desire for salvation, – he must be enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, in the glory of His person, and the nature of His redeeming work, before he can see in Him the very Saviour whom he needs... for there is no barrier between him and Christ, except his own unbelief, or his own unwillingness. Receiving Christ by faith, he is united to Him; and being united to Him, ‘he is complete in Him,’...

If such be the nature of the Spirit’s work, its necessity for our actual Justification cannot arise from any defect in the righteousness of Christ, for its great design is to lead the sinner to receive and rest on Christ alone...

... The Holy Spirit, so far from withdrawing our confidence from Christ, that it may rest on His own work within, teaches us to rest on Him alone for all the blessings of salvation, and to ‘hold fast the beginning of our confidence even to the end.’ So far from making Christ less ‘precious’ to us, the Spirit endears Him to us the more, as at once ‘the Author and the Finisher of our faith,’ and teaches us to ‘rejoice in Him with joy unspeakable, and full of glory.’



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# Lead, Kindly Light

Lead, kindly Light, amid th'encircling gloom, lead Thou me on!  
The night is dark, and I am far from home; lead Thou me on!  
Keep Thou my feet; I do not ask to see  
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

I was not ever thus, nor prayed that Thou shouldst lead me on;  
I loved to choose and see my path; but now lead Thou me on!  
I loved the garish day, and, spite of fears,  
Pride ruled my will. Remember not past years!

So long Thy power hath blest me, sure it still will lead me on.  
O'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till the night is gone,  
And with the morn those angel faces smile, which I  
Have loved long since, and lost awhile!

Meantime, along the narrow rugged path, Thyself hast trod,  
Lead, Savior, lead me home in childlike faith, home to my God.  
To rest forever after earthly strife  
In the calm light of everlasting life.

John Henry Newman