

Special Note:

**The following
pagination shown as
per original.**



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C

with me his 8th Year. See Life p. 111.

Baxter's Life part 1. p. 111.

In my Confession I said in whole Obedience
of Antinomianism while I stood, and I
thought to be justified by blood alone of
the Law. But I

George Dingle
29th Oct. 1807
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Barter's
Confession

W^m French's Book

1786

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Wm French's Book 1786

RICH: BAXTER'S *13. a. 26*

Confession of his Faith,

Especially concerning the Interest of Repentance and sincere Obedience to CHRIST, in our

JUSTIFICATION & SALVATION.

Written for the satisfaction of the misinformed, the conviction of Calumniators, and the Explication and Vindication of some weighty TRUTHS.

1 TIM. 4.8.

Godliness is profitable to All things, having promise of the Life that now is, and of that which is to come.

REV. 22. 14.

Blessed are they that Do his Commandments, that they may have Right to the Tree of Life, and may enter in by the Gates into the City.

LONDON,

Printed by R. W. for Tho. Underbil, and Fra. Tyton, and are to be sold at the *Anchor and Bible* in Pauls Church-yard, and at the three Daggers in Fleetstreet. 1655.

Greg. Nazianzens Direction to his Flock, what a Pastor to choose when he was gone.

Hoc unum requiro : Ut ex eorum numero sit, qui aliis invidia sunt, non miserationi : qui non in omnibus rebus, cunctis obsequuntur, sed qui in quibusdam etiam, ob Recti studium, in hominum offensionem incurrunt. Alterum enim in præsens jucundissimum est : alterum in posterum utilissimum.

A Theme for Calumniators.

Concil. Arelatens. prim. Can. 14.

De his qui falso accusant fratres suos, Placuit, eos usq. ad exitum non Communicare : sed falsum testem, juxta Scripturam, impunitum non licere esse.

The Preface to the Readers; Especially my Reverend Brethren of the Ministry.



S is the Moon with the Stars unto the expanded Firmament; As are the well ordered Cities with their Ornaments and Fortifications to the Woods and Wildernes; Such is the Church to the rest of the World. The felicity of the Church is in the Love of God, and its blessed influences, whose face is that Sun which doth enlighten and enliven it. If earth and sin had not caused a separation and eclipse, the World and the Church would have been the same, and this Church would have enjoyed an uninterrupted Day-light. It is the Earth that moveth and turneth from this Sun, and not the Suns receding from our Earth, that brings our Night. It is not God, but Man, that lost his Goodness; Nor is it necessary to our Reparation, that a change be made On him, but on us. Christ came not into the World to make God Better, but to make us Better; Nor did he Die to make him more disposed to do Good, but to Dispose us to Receive it: Though as he is extrinsically Denominated from the particular Object, to be particularly *Willing of this or that*, and to *Love* that which he *Loved* not before; so we may well say, that Christ dyed to purchase for us the Love of God, and to procure his willingness of a present effecting our Remission, and so to Accept and Approve us as his own. But his purchase was not Actually to change the mind of God, nor to incline him to have Mercy, who before was dis-inclined: but to make the Pardon of mans sin a Thing convenient; for the Righteous and Holy Governour of the world to bestow, without any impeachment of the Honour of his Wisdom, Holiness or Justice: yea, to the more eminent Glorifying of them all.

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Two things are requisite to make man to be Amiable in the eyes of God, and a fit Object for the most Holy to take pleasure in : One is in his suitableness to the Holiness of Gods Nature: The other respecteth his Governing Justice. We must in this life see God in the Glass of the Creature, and specially in Man that beareth his Image. If a good man be the Ruler of a Common-wealth, as he is Ethically Good, he cannot but loath the Evil, and love the Good : And as he is a Wise and Righteous Governour, he must preserve the honor of his Laws, and thereby his own, by doing Justice on them that violate them, and preserving and encouraging those that do obey them. As man is first considerable as Man, before he be to be considered as a Governour; and as a good Man, before as a good Governour, the first being his Natural Goodness, commonly called his universal Justice, the other his Rectoral Goodness, commonly called his particular Justice, flowing out from the first : so must we (through the necessity of our present weakness) conceive of God. Were we Holy, he would love us as a Holy God: and were we Innocent, he would encourage us as a Righteous and Bounteous Governour. But as there is no particular Governing Justice, without that universal Natural Justice, which it presupposeth, and floweth from; so can there be no such thing as Innocency in us as Subjects, which floweth not from a Holiness of our Natures as Men. We must *Be Good*, before we can *Live* as the Good. In both these respects man was Amiable in the eyes of his Maker, till sin depraved him, and deprived him of Both. To *Both* these must the Saviour again Restore him : and this is the work that he came into the World to do, even to seek and to save that which was doubly lost, and to destroy that two-fold work of the Devil, who had drawn us to be both *Unholy* and *Guilty*. As in the Fall the natural Real Evil was Antecedent to the Relative (Guilt); so is it in the Good conferred in the Reparation. We must in order of nature be first Turned by Repentance unto God, through
Faith

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Faith in the Redeemer, and then receive the Remission of our sins, *Acts* 26. 18. *Rom.* 8. 30. And as it was man himself that was the subject of that two-fold unrighteousness, so is it man himself that must be restored to that two-fold Righteousness which he lost, that is, Sanctity and Not-Guiltiness. Christ came not to possess God with any false opinion of us; nor is he such a Physitian as to perform but a supposed or Reputative Cure: He came not to perswade his Father to judge *Us* to be *Well*, because *He* is *Well*; nor to leave us uncured, and to perswade God that we are Cured. It is *We* that were guilty and unholy; it is *We* that must be justified or condemned; and therefore it is *We* that must be restored unto Righteousness. If Christ only were Righteous, Christ only would be reputed and judged Righteous, and Christ only would be Happy. The Judge of the world will not justify the unrighteous, meerly because another is Righteous: Nor can the Holy God take Complacency in an unholy sinner, because another is Holy. Never did the blessed Son of God intend in his dying or merits, to change the holy Nature of his Father, and to cause him to Love that which is not Lovely, or to Reconcile him to that which he Abhorreth, as he is God. We must bear his own Image, and be Holy as he is Holy, before he can Approve us, or Love us in Complacency. This is the work of our blessed Redeemer, to make Man fit for Gods Approbation and Delight. Though we are the Subjects, he is the Cause. He Regenerateth us, That he may Pardon us; and pardoneth us, that he may further sanctifie us, and make us fit for our Masters use. He will not remove our Guilt till we Return; nor will he Accept our actual services till our Guilt be removed. By supernatural operations must both be accomplished: A Regress from such a Privation as was our Unholiness, requireth a supernatural work *upon* us: And a deliverance from such Guilt and deserved Punishment, requireth a supernatural operation *for* us. The one Christ effecteth by his sanctifying Spirit, through the instru-

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instrumentality of his Word, as *Informing* and *Exciting*: The other he effecteth by his own (and his Fathers) Will, through the instrumentality of his *Gospel-Grant*, by way of *Donation*, making an universal conditional Deed of gift of himself and Remission and Right to Glory, to all that Return by Repentance and Faith. His Blood is the meritorious cause of both, but not of both on the same Account: For it was directly Guilt only that made his Blood Necessary for our Recovery: Had there been nothing to do but Renew us by Repentance and Sanctification, this might have been done without any Bloodshed, by the work of the Word and Spirit: As God at first gave man his Image freely, and did not sell it for a Price of Blood: Nor doth he so Delight in Blood, as to desire it, or accept it for it self, but for the ends which it must, as a convenient means, attain. Those ends are the Demonstration proximately of his governing Justice, in the vindication of the Honour of his Law and Rule, and for the awing of others: ultimately and principally, it is the Demonstration of his natural sin-hating Holiness, and his unspeakable Love to the sons of men, but specially to his Elect: In this sense was Christ a Sacrifice and ransom, and may truly be said to have satisfied for our sins. He was not a sinner, nor so esteemed, nor could possibly take upon himself the same Numerical Guilt which lay on us (the Accident, if removed from its Subject, perisheth) nor yet a Guilt of the same sort, as having not the same sort of foundation or efficient; ours arising from the Merit of our sin, and the Commination of the Law, and *His* being rather *Occasioned* then *Merited* by our sin, and occasioned by the Laws threatening of us (both which are, as we may call them, but *Pro-causes*, as to him) having neither sin of his own, nor merit of wrath from such sin; nor did the Law oblige him to suffer for our sins; but he obliged himself to suffer for our sins, though not as in our Persons strictly, yet in our stead, in the person of a Mediator.

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The Lord our Redeemer having thus laid the foundation, by paying a sufficient ransom for all mankind, and perfectly finished his work of satisfaction, he taketh a longer time for the conveyance of the fruits of it. As the Expiatory sacrifice was for All, so will he have the tenour of his Grant in the Gospel to be Universal, without restraint to any, or excepting any: All shall have Pardon and Right to life Eternal, if they will Believe and Repent, and none shall have them that Refuse these Conditions: Antecedently to Believing, All have an equal Conditional Gift of pardon, and None have an Absolute, nor an Actual Right: The Gospel findeth us equal, and makes no inequality, till we first make it our selves: But the secret unsearchable workings of Divine Grace do begin the difference, and make it *in us*, before it is made *by us*. As an Eternal Purpose did Design it, so an insuperable Victorious hand doth execute it: When the same Christ hath dyed for All, and the same Conditional Grant is made to All, and the same Promulgation of it is made to many, even to All that hear it; Yet the same Victorious Internal Grace is not afforded to All; nor doth God give All a Heart to Believe and Accept of what the Promise offereth them. The Spirit is as the wind, that bloweth where it listeth. All have sufficient Objective Grace, that live under the Gospel; and all have a sufficient Help External or Internal, to make them Better, and bring them Nearer to Christ than they *were*: But All have not *sufficient* Internal Grace Immediately to cause them to *Believe*: much less *Effectual*. That this is denied to *any*, is long of themselves, who abuse that Commoner Grace which was sufficient to have made them *Better*: That it is Granted to *Any*, is from the Bounty of God: That it is Granted to *This* man rather than to *That*, is from his Absolute

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Dominion, and Will, and his Differencing Grace. We do not only All deserve Death, by Original sin, but we did All Deserve to be Denied the Grace of Christ, by a following Demerit : And All that want the Gospel, or the special efficacy of it in Regeneration, do by sin against some Common Grace, Deserve that *want* : (We still suppose Infants Involved in their Parents case) so that God will Judge none on the meer terms of the rigid Law of Nature, nor Condemn them only for Original sin. They that say otherwise, do too injuriously extenuate both the Grace of God, and the sin of man. If All have some Grace shewed them (that is, some Mercy contrary to their Merit) then all have some sin against Grace : and then All shall be Judged by the Procurer of that Grace, for their sin against it. It is not the least wrong that the Pelagians, Jesuites and Arminians have done to the Church, that by making Grace Universal further than was just, they have tempted others in way of Opposition to deny that Grace of God which is indeed Universal, or which is Common to more than the Elect alone : and by making Christ to have dyed for All with an equal Intention of saving them, they have occasioned so many to deny that indeed he did dye for All : So that had not the Notions of an Universal sufficiency of Christs Death, and of an Universal Offer of him in the Gospel, through the Great Mercy of God been preserved among us, and these had much Influence into our Popular and Practical Preaching, we had been drawn very neer to a subverting of the very foundation, and should have been too like to them that preach *another Gospel*, to the great danger of the souls of our hearers, and the dishonour of our Redeemer.

The two great works of Christ in the Application or Collation of the Benefits which he hath Merited, are those

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those before mentioned : Justification , and Sanctification : under the first I contain Remission, Acceptance, Absolution , and Implied Adoption, and our Right to Glory. Under the latter I comprehend , the Giving of the Spirit, and all its Purifying Works upon our souls.

I think it had been well for the Church, if we had used less in our Disputes the term *Justification*, or had differenced better between the Name and the Thing, and discerned about which it was that we contended : and when we once saw that there was no Hope of agreeing about the sense of that word, if we had treated more fully and distinctly about Remission of sin alone, and under that term, and tryed how we could have agreed upon that : Could we yet be so discreet, I think the Church would reap much benefit by it. Doubtless we might much easier convince a Papist, who will allow us so much of that which we demand about Remission of sin, while they contend against us in the point of Justification : when so many of ours do take Remission and Justification for the same thing.

It pleaseth our Physician in a sweet equality to carry on both these happy Works, Remission and Sanctification, and not to let one go so far before the other, as those think, who suppose our sins to be pardoned before they are sins, or that our Pardon is absolutely perfect before our Death. As we shall have more sins to remove by further Sanctification, so shall we have more still to pardon, to the last : and one of these works as well as the other, will be imperfect, till we are perfected. And they that take Pardon and Justification for the same, or the former to be any part of the latter, must then confess that Justification is no more perfect than Pardon is.

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They are very different Questions, How we are constituted just, or put into a Justified state at our Conversion? and how we are sentenced just, or justified at Gods Judgement Seat? They that will needs (to the great disgrace of their understandings) deny that there is any such thing as a justification at Judgement, must either say that there is no Judgement, or that All are Condemned; or that judging doth not contain Justification and Condemnation, as its disjunct species; but some men shall then be judged, who shall neither be justified or condemned. To which end, when they have first taken down the Authority of Christ, who tells us that *By our words we shall (then) be justified, or by our words we shall be condemned*, they must next take down the Authority of Lawyers, and then, of our common custom of speech, and must set up their own Authority instead of all. To say, God will then but declare us just, is no answer, till they have proved that it is not by a sentence of judgement that he will declare it; or else, that declaring by a sentence of judgement, is no justification; yea, that it is not the most proper and full justification imaginable.

I have said enough in the following Treatise, to shew my thoughts of the Necessity and Excellency of Holiness, and sincere obedience. We are taught to pray for it in the Lords Prayer, (in the three first Petitions) before the forgiveness of sin (in the fifth) And doubtless it is that higher Blessing, which forgiveness tendeth to, as a means to the end: Even that God may have his own again, which was lost, and man may again be neerer and liker to God, and fitter to know, love and honour him, and be happy therein. I scarce know any one error that hath subjected the Church and Christian Religion so much to the jealousies and reproach of unbelievers, or
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the Reformed Churches to the scorn of the Papists, and so hardened them in their way, as some mens misunderstanding, and misreporting the doctrine of the imputation of Christs Righteousness to a sinner. But especially by those men, who affirm that we are justified even before we repent or believe, and that through the imputation of Christs Righteousness, God judgeth the most swinish impenitent wretch, (so he be elect) to be righteous in his sight, and the object of his complacency. As if a man should fall in love with a Toad, upon a false supposition that it is a Lark. Christs Righteousness is ours for the pardon of our sin, and the merit of Grace and Glory for us: but not to be instead of Faith, Repentance, Sanctification or sincere Obedience. He that hath not these, shall never be saved by Christs Righteousness. So far as we are sinners, a Pardon is our Righteousness: but so far as we are holy, it is not so: And he that hath not somewhat better then sin in him, is none of Christs.

As the very constitution of Faith and Repentance to be conditions of pardon, and sincere Obedience to be a condition of Salvation, hath plainly excepted final infidelity and impenitency, and Rebellion, from the number of those sins that shall be pardoned, and we shall be justified from; so must their contraries be found in us at Judgement, if we will be then justified. And then, as the Blood and Merits of Christ (or as commonly its called, his imputed Righteousness) must be the matter of our justification from the guilt of all other sins (that is, from the guilt of all sin, which believers did commit) so must our own personal Faith, Repentance, and sincere Obedience be the matter of our Justification from the particular false Accusation, (potential or actual) of final non-performance of these conditions of the Gospel, and

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of our having no part in Christ and Life, for want of those conditions. This is the Justification by works (as many are willing to call it, to make it odious) which I do assert and defend, and which I judge so necessary to be believed, that I shall endeavour to acquaint those with it whom I must Catechise.

The summe of what I have said is this; That Mans perfection and felicity is finally in God; and that his Recovery consisteth in being brought back to him, which must be done, as by the Merits of Christ, so by Union with him, and consequently by communication of Life from him: And having union with Christ, it necessarily followeth that we have union with the Church, which is his Body, and communion with it. Were we not One among our selves, we were not *A Body*: and were we not One in Christ our center and Head, we were not *His Body*. As we have internal communion in the same Spirit, in the same Faith, Hope, and Love; so have we external communion in the same Profession of Faith and Piety (in the essentials) and in the same Practise of Worshipping God through our Lord Iesus Christ, and in sincerely assisting each other for our Salvation.

There is therefore as One only Head and Lord, so one Only Body and Catholike Church, and one only true Religion in the world, and that is the Christian Religion: All that hold the Essentials of this Religion sincerely, are of the true Church, and of the true Religion, and all of One Religion, how different soever in lesser things. Though they may each appropriate Christ and the Church, and the true Religion to themselves, and censoriously exclude all others (as do the Papists) yet are their censured Brethren nevertheless Christians, and of the true Church and Religion for all their censures. Every Child is not a Bastard, nor disinherited, nor cast out of
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the Family, whom an angry brother shall call Bastard in their fallings out. The relative union holds, even when local conjunction and communion in actual worship, and in the profession of lower Truths is disclaimed. Yea, if a froward Christian say, *I am not of the same Church or Religion as you*, yet is he not the less of the same (if the other be a Christian) : nor doth that break him off, seeing he intendeth not to disclaim Christians as Christians, but as Erroneous. Yet such dislocations, and breaches, and divisions, are the great rejoycing of the enemy of the Church, and the great dishonour of our sacred profession, and tendeth to the great hurt and ruin of the dividers; and hath ever been an exceeding hinderance of the Gospel.

AS it is thus the great design of Christ, by Unity and Purity to bring his Church to perfect felicity, in the full enjoyment of the ever blessed God; so is it the design and daily business of Satan to counter-work him, and to keep men from felicity in God, by keeping them from Christ, from Unity, and from Purity.

His first work is to disgrace the Christian Faith, and to tell men how improbable it is to be true; and to that end to hide the Evidence from their eyes. If he cannot thus totally keep them from Christ, he usually perswadeth them to take up with a bare opinionative assent; and putteth before them the Idols of Pleasure, Profits, and Vain-glory, that they may by a seeming felicity be detained from God.

And as knowing how much the Churches welfare, and the saving of souls, dependeth upon the Teachers and Leaders of the Flocks, his chiefeft endeavors are for
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the perverting of them ; that they may become his instruments, to the perverting of the rest.

For Magistrates, he would first taint them with secret infidelity ; or else engage them to the utmost in a carnal self-interest, and perswade them that Christs Interest doth stand in their way. He would delude them so far as to cause them to mistake where their interest lyeth, and so to espouse them to an interest inconsistent with Christs ; and then will they be involved before they are aware into a seeming necessity of fighting against Heaven, and secret or open opposition of the Church : The deceiver would make them forget, that *from Christ* they have their power, and *under him* and *for him* must they hold it, and exercise it. A fairer opportunity indeed he hath to draw the Princes and Great ones of the world, to forget that they are but men, and servants, and to forget the fading vanity and danger of their condition, and to Rebel against Christ by self exaltation, then with the meaner and poorer inhabitants of the earth: He offereth them a more golden and glorious bait, and thereby hath hitherto befooled the most of them, to fall upon that stone that will dash them in pieces. Or else if he cannot taint them with the common Profaness, he will at least engage them to a hatred of the power of Godliness. Or if he can taint them (as he did *Constantius*) with Heresie, he will engage them to fall upon the soundest in the Church. Or can he but delude them to sit by, and as Neuters to look on, as being indifferent between Christ and him, at least, he will deprive the Church of the benefit of their power, or of that special interest in them, which they may claim from their commission. As *Nazianzen* calls the Magistrate the Vice-gerent of Christ ; so may the Church justly say as *Tertullian* did, *Apologet. cap. 33. Imperatorem necesse est ut suspiciamus, ut eum quem*

Dominus