

Samuel Torshell

Satisfaction of Christ

The design of the true meritorious cause of our justification. The text declares it to be Jesus Christ by his merits in his obedience, in doing, and suffering. Take it in a brief head thus; where there cannot be justification by plea, it must be by some other proportional means, which we call Satisfaction. The Satisfaction must be proportioned to the offense; this being infinite, that must be alike infinite. Man therefore cannot satisfy, for both his doings, and his sufferings are limited. It must be done by another; now all creatures are both unholy, and finite; and the two requisites necessary to be in the one who satisfies are Righteousness and Infiniteness. These are solely in God, but God cannot be satisfied by himself, that were only to forgive, so he would not be fully just. It necessitates therefore, that he who must satisfy, must be God, truly Righteous, truly Infinite; and in somewhat different from God, that there may be a complete fitness. Let nature fetch this mystery, she will easily be confounded; nay, let the soul that sinned be put upon the search, it leaves studying and falls to despairing. Briefly, it must fall upon the appointment of an higher wisdom; namely, Christ in whom Righteousness and Infiniteness do both meet. Therefore, the righteousness of the justified is that which formally is in Christ only. See how the Apostle enlarges and explains himself in this, in his holy zeal, against proud zealots, who being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God. {Rom.10:3-9} See the same Apostle, in a more practical expression, by his own resolve, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ; and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ." {Phil.3:8,9} The determination of the Apostle was to go out of himself, and fly directly unto Christ; for he is our Hiding Place, and must be our Strength. "Surely, shall one say, in the LORD have I righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come; and all that are incensed against him shall be ashamed. In the LORD shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." {Is.45:24,25} We must not look upon the Law or works, but see them both hid in Christ. This mystery was exactly shadowed when God commanded the ark wherein were the tables of the covenant to be covered with a propitiatory, upon which the cherubs stretched their wings. {Ex.25:17-22, Heb.9:4,5} Christ is that Propitiatory. {Rom.3:25} Let us not presume to uncover the ark, or to take out the Decalogue, for it is happy that the Law is kept shut, and enclosed from us; but let us fasten our eyes upon the Mercy Seat and see how sweetly the cherubs sit and mind not what the chest contains; for to lift up the lid of that, were like the opening of the box of the harmful Pandora and would unleash horror to the imprudent and curiously unwise. Samuel Torshell {Three Questions, 1632}