

# George Walker

## **Socinianism in the Fundamental Point of Justification Discovered and Confuted**

Fragmented Bits & Pieces from a Volume by George Walker; entitled, "Socinianism in the Fundamental Point of Justification Discovered and Confuted," 1641. George Walker, 1581-1651, an English Theologian, imprisoned for Non-Conformity in 1638 by William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, and became a member of the Westminster Assembly in 1643; who in 1641 published this work which was directed against the Arminian John Goodwin. {The Truth for which you shall fight is strong, and will prevail; all power, might, glory and victory belongs to God, for whose cause you stand; and our Lord Jesus Christ, on whose Perfect Righteousness you strive to keep the Crown, hath all power given him in heaven and in earth.}

The notion that Faith in the judgment of every man is the condition required by God, on man's part, to bring him into that communion of Justification and Redemption, which Christ hath purchased &c., is that which I find delusion and falsehood. --- That faith is the condition of the New Covenant, which man must on his part perform, instead of all Righteousness, which the Law requires; and so it is in the New Covenant, the condition of life. This is the very heresy, and damned error of Socinus, who doth here make the Covenant of Grace, a covenant of life, not freely, but upon a condition performed on man's part, and so a covenant of works, contrary to Scripture. {Rom.11.6} I know that all Orthodox Divines abhor and detest this opinion. --- They therefore teaching that faith in a proper sense is counted for righteousness, do teach that we are justified by a work of obedience to the Law performed in our own persons. God requires on our behalf, no other righteousness for Justification, which Doctrine the Apostle utterly condemns; for no righteousness can justify which is not a perfect obedience and conformity of the whole man to the whole Law in his whole life, from the beginning to the end. Therefore their opinion and exposition is heretical and more impious than the Pelagian and Popish heresies concerning Justification. Secondly, that which was properly imputed to Abraham, and is so imputed to true believers is righteousness, so the Apostle in plain words expresses, {Rom.4:1-11,} but faith in a proper sense is not righteousness. For righteousness is perfect conformity to the Law, as sin is transgression of the Law; yea human righteousness is a man's keeping of the whole Law, and his observing to do all God's commandments with his whole heart all the days of his life, as we read. {Deut.8} Thirdly, this opinion that God counts faith for righteousness; that is thinketh, judgeth and esteemeth it to be righteousness, in a proper sense, charges God with error and falsehood in his judgment. For faith is not any true righteousness properly. Therefore this opinion is blasphemy, {for that which charges God with error and falsehood in his judgment is blasphemous,} if they plead that God by his absolute sovereignty of power, may accept and repute that for righteousness which is not true righteousness; this doth but more entangle them and involve them in error. For God and his sovereign power are all one; as God cannot lie, nor make contradictories true, so his Sovereignty of power cannot either make that to be righteousness which is not, or truly judge it so to be. Neither can his infinite justice be satisfied without perfect fulfilling of his Law, nor allow any man to be justified without

righteousness; nor will his truth suffer him to count any just who is not just. Therefore by this base shift, and wicked pretense devised to hide and cover their blasphemy, they do run further into blasphemy, and make his Sovereign Power a tyrant and oppressor of his Justice and Truth. Fourthly, that opinion which taketh away, and denieth the means by which God is revealed to be infinitely just, merciful and wise, and makes the Satisfaction of Christ and his perfect fulfilling the Law, a vain and needless thing, is most heretical, impious, and blasphemous; for this opinion, that God by his sovereign power can and doth accept and count imperfect faith for perfect righteousness, takes away the means by which God's justice, mercy, and wisdom are revealed to be infinite; yea, it extenuates and vilifies God's justice, mercy, bounty, and wisdom, and makes Christ's full Satisfaction a vain, superfluous and needless thing. Therefore it is an impious and blasphemous opinion. That which reveals God to be infinitely just is, that he cannot be reconciled to men that have sinned without execution of justice to the full, and a full satisfaction made according to his just Law, not by men in their own persons, which is impossible, yet by their Mediator and Surety, in their behalf, and by him communicated to them, and made theirs, as truly as if they had fulfilled the Law in their own persons. --- God is said to justify the ungodly, which cannot be meant of counting, judging, and pronouncing, but of making them righteous by the Communion of Christ's righteousness. For to justify the wicked by judging and pronouncing them righteous, without making them such, is abomination to the LORD. {Prov.17:15} --- When God's infinite justice was so strict, that nothing could satisfy it, nor redeem mankind, but a satisfaction of infinite value made for them. And when all the world was not able to find such a satisfaction; that his wisdom should find one out, and have it ready before hand in her eternal treasures, even a full satisfaction performed in man's nature, by God the Eternal Son, and also the means to make it truly and really the satisfaction of every man truly believing. --- In that God the Father would in this case give his only begotten Son, to be humbled in our nature, and to obey, suffer, and make such a satisfaction for poor miserable men, in that the Son would willingly take all this upon him to do and suffer whatsoever justice could require, and in that the Holy Ghost, when this satisfaction could not otherwise profit men nor be made theirs, makes them sensibly to enjoy him with all his benefits. This most wonderfully shows God's infinite mercy, bounty and free goodness. And all these means which are manifested and maintained by our Doctrine of Justification, this wicked opinion of the Socinians doth utterly take away. First, it denies God's justice to require man's communion of such an infinite Satisfaction made by Christ for him; it treads God's justice under foot by his sovereignty of power and meager justice, it makes man's imperfect faith to go current for righteousness, and to be accepted for perfect righteousness, to justification. Secondly, if God by sovereignty of power can bear down justice, and make any weak and imperfect thing such as man's faith is; serve instead of Christ's full satisfaction and perfect righteousness; then he might by the same power have appointed the sacrifice of a lamb, or any clean beast, or the satisfaction of any mere man, and so it will follow that the giving of his Son to be made man, was no point of wisdom, but a going far about, and spending much, even Christ's blood, when less might have served the tune. As for God's goodness mercy and bounty, they are hereby made painted shows and shadows, yea needless prodigality, and Christ's Satisfaction is made vain and superfluous. Therefore this opinion which brings in such impious consequences is blasphemous and heretical. --- Furthermore, this opinion overthrows the sacraments {rather, 'ordinances' of the Gospel, the term 'sacraments' being of Popish origins, implying a mystical conveyance of grace} of

the Gospel, and takes away the true use of them, is heretical, profane, and impious. This opinion that Christ's righteousness is not imputed to the faithful doth so. For the sacraments are seals of our union, and communion with Christ. Baptism {that is, the baptism of the Spirit, whereby we are sensibly placed into Christ in regeneration,} seals {testifies to} our engrafting into Christ in our New Birth, by which we become one {are identified; or, as in Water Baptism, identify ourselves as professed partakers of his benefits} with him. The Lord's Supper is such a lively seal of our communion with Christ, in the benefits of his death, passion, and full satisfaction, expressed under the terms of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, that it is commonly called, the communion of the faithful, when it is rightly received. But these Heretics by imputing faith in a proper sense, they exclude the imputation of Christ's righteousness to the faithful, they deny their communion and union with Christ, they take away the truth and the use of the Sacraments, for if the faithful are regenerate, and by one Spirit engrafted into Christ, and united unto him, as Baptism signifies, and sealeth; and if they have spiritual communion with Christ of his Righteousness, and all other benefits which the Lord's Supper signifies, and is thereof a seal to them; then God whose judgment is according to truth, cannot but impute Christ's righteousness to them, and accept it for them, and account it theirs. They who deny God's imputing of it do either charge God with injustice and error of judgment in not counting and judging that to be theirs in which they have communion and interest, or else they deny the union and communion of the faithful with Christ and make the sacraments lying signs and seals of false things, and things which are not. Therefore their opinion is most abominable, profane, impious, and blasphemous. --- Likewise, that opinion which is invented and maintained by Heretics, who deny the eternal Godhead of Christ, and tends mainly to persuade that there is no use of Christ's being God and Man in one Person is Heretical and Blasphemous. Such is this opinion of the Socinians, it is an invention of Heretics, and tends to take away the use of Christ's being God, and to persuade men that there is no necessary use of his being God and Man in one Person. For all Orthodox Divines give this reason, why it was necessary that Christ the Mediator should be God in our nature, even that the obedience and suffering which he did undergo in man's nature, might be the obedience and suffering of God, and so of infinite value, and though of him alone, and but for a time, yet of more worth, than if all men in their own persons had obeyed as much as he did and suffered forever in Hell. --- We affirm also that first for the removing of so great evils, as the infinite wrath of God, eternal death, and torment in Hell; and secondly, for purchase of so great a good, as is the state of righteousness, and of grace, and also of eternal glory in Heaven. God's justice could require no less satisfaction and righteousness, nor be satisfied with any other, but that which is performed by him, who is God and man, in one person, that is the perfect righteousness and satisfaction of Christ which alone by the infinite value which it receives from his God-head, is fit to remove so infinite an evil, and to procure so infinite a good to men. But the maintainers of this Socinian opinion by denying that God's infinite justice stands in strength to exact such a satisfaction being overruled, and oppressed, by absolute sovereignty of power; and by teaching that mercy, and bounty run beyond reason, freeing men from all need of such an infinite satisfaction to be communicated and imputed to them, and justifying them freely without righteousness, they do take away the use of Christ's God-head in his mediation, and the causes, and reasons, for which it was necessary that he should be God as well as man; and in conclusion, in places where they dare be bold to disclose the secret thoughts of their hearts, they roundly

deny Christ to be the Son of God, of the same substance with God the Father. Therefore this opinion is most impious, blasphemous, and heretical; and indeed it is never found in Histories, to have been maintained by any but Socinian Heretics and deadly enemies to Christ's Deity. --- That opinion which is built upon an heretical, and blasphemous ground, and is upheld, and maintained by blasphemous arguments, which do shake, and even raze the main foundations of true Religion, must needs be most wicked and blasphemous; and such is this opinion; for it is built upon this blasphemous ground, that God by his sovereign power may do and will things contrary to his justice; that is, count and accept that for righteousness, which is no righteousness, nor worthy to be accounted an act of perfect righteousness, for such is the faith of frail man taken in a proper sense. --- Though they seem to acknowledge Christ to be God, yet they take away the use of his being God as well as man in the work of our redemption. For if God by his Supreme Sovereign Power can dispense with the law of his justice, and instead of Christ's full satisfaction made for us to the law, and imputed to us, and made ours, can and doth accept our weak faith for the perfect righteousness of the Law; what use is there of Christ's being God in our nature? For all Orthodox Divines do give this reason, why it was necessary that Christ should be God in our nature; namely, that his suffering and righteousness performed in our nature, might be of value to justify all the sons of men, who have communion of them, and to whom they are imputed. This communion and imputation which he denieth, he takes away the use of Christ's being God in our nature. --- Secondly, in affirming that Christ obeyed the whole Law in every letter, jot, and title, he doth mock, and delude his hearers, and readers; for he doth not hold, that he fulfilled the Law only for us, but primarily for himself; his words imply so much, for he saith, he obeyed the Law, as far as concerned himself, while he continued in the flesh; and he doth hereafter roundly affirm, that Christ was bound to fulfill the Law for himself, which is in effect, a denying of his Eternal God-head; for if he be God, infinite in glory, and excellency, his God-head must needs exempt the Manhood personally united to it from all bondage of the Law, and make it worthy of glory at God's right hand, from the first assumption of it. He continued in the flesh, and obeyed the Law, only for us without all doubt, as the Prophet foretold, Isa.9:6, saying, "unto us a Child is born, and to us a Son is given." --- Thirdly, as he denies the Satisfaction of Christ to be imputed to us, so he denies the imputation of our sins to Christ; and that very closely and cunningly, under color of that challenge which Christ made to the Jews, "which of you can convince me of sin?" For our Saviour speaks of sin committed by himself, and such aspersion none can say upon him; but all our iniquities God laid upon him, and he bare all our sins; {Isa.53;} and was made sin for us, {II Cor.5:21,} and to cast this aspersion of all our sins on him is a sure foundation of the peace and safety of the Church. --- In the second proposition, he doth most notoriously equivocate, and play the hypocrite; first in that he seems to acknowledge the sacrifice of Christ to be an atonement, and satisfaction for the world, and a propitiatory sacrifice for the sin of it. Secondly, in that he denieth his Lord and Master Socinus, and calls the spirit which wrought in him a spirit of error; whereas indeed he himself is led by the same spirit, and doth deny Christ to be the propitiatory sacrifice for our sins, as far as Socinus ever did; for in a propitiatory sacrifice, offered to purge sin, and to make atonement, there were three necessary requisites: First, the thing offered, must be of his own proper goods, for whom it was offered, so the Law required, and therefore David durst not offer for his sin, that which was not his own, purchased with his money. {II Sam.24:24} Secondly, the owner, whose expiatory sacrifice it was, did lay his hand upon the head of the

beast which was to be offered, and thereby in a type imposed all his sin, and guilt upon it, so that it became his sin, and his guilt, {Lev.5:6 & Ex.30:10,} and did bear upon it all his sins. {Lev.16:22} Thirdly, this sacrifice offered up by the Priest in that manner which God prescribed in the Law, God accepted as a Propitiation for him, it was set on his score, and covered his sin, as the Hebrew word 'atonement' signifies. {Lev.1:4} He who denies any one of these, overthrows the sacrifice of atonement. Now this dissembler doth with Socinus deny all these things in Christ's offering of himself a sacrifice of atonement to purge sin. First, he denies the true real Spiritual Union between Christ and the persons pardoned, and justified; by which Christ, and they are made one body, and he is their Head, and they his members; for if he, and the faithful be one, then all his goods are theirs, and their debts are his, and his Satisfaction, and Righteousness is theirs, and is set on their score, which he denieth, and altogether opposeth, and so denies their interest, and propriety in Christ, and their union with him, as his Master Wotton did, in express word, in his Essays of Justification. Secondly, he also denieth that the sins of the faithful, were laid on Christ, and imputed to him; and in this he charges God with notorious injustice, who laid the punishments of all our sins on Christ. For he saith, that Christ bare the punishments, though he had no share in our sins by any imputation. Thirdly, he denieth that the sacrifice of Christ's suffering and obedience offered up by him, is imputed to us, set on our score, and accepted for us. And thus in the doctrine of Christ's satisfaction and atonement he declares himself a true disciple of Socinus, led by the same spirit of error, and of the same opinion, though in words he denies it. And what he here seems to grant, is no more but what all Socinians yield unto. --- In the third proposition; namely, that Christ is the sole and entire miraculous cause of every man's justification, &c., he doth equivocate and delude the simple, and while he deceives them, he is deceived himself, as the Apostle saith of wicked seducers. {II Tim.3:13} For if he doth understand his own words, that Christ is the sole meritorious cause of every man's justification, that is justified by God, he must needs grant that Christ's Satisfaction, made to God's Justice, and his perfect Righteousness, as it is meritorious, and of incalculable value in itself; so it is appropriated, communicated and imputed to him; that is, it is made actually meritorious for him, and makes him worthy to be counted righteous, and to be justified; for his words signify so much, though he is in his purpose and meaning, as contrary, as darkness is to light; for he means no more, but that Christ merited for himself, that God should gratify and honor him with the justification of those that believe in him, so he explains himself in the last words. It is certain that a thing may be meritorious in itself, for the worth of it, but it cannot be meritorious to any particular person, till it be appropriated to him and set on his score. Wotton his Master, {this point being proved to his face with undeniable arguments} was driven to disclaim the word "merit," denied Christ's meriting for the faithful, and rejected it as a thing not named in Scripture, in his Essays on Justification. But this profound Doctor, {Goodwin,} with that stamp and superscription of rational authority, which he conceiveth to be set on him, hath not yet searched into the deep things of God; but we take him rather for a mad man, and put a fools feather in his cap, and cast him out of the doors, by the head and shoulders, for a saucy companion; for he had not best therefore use such speeches, nor write such phrases with his pen, for if they once proceed out of his mouth, and come to other men's ears, he will thereby purchase to himself much score and derision. --- Furthermore, I find many errors, and untruths, as first that a man's conscience can hardly think of being justified by God, without a perfect legal righteousness. Every regenerate man and true

believer can upon his own knowledge and experience give him the lie, and tell him that the weakest conscience of any, who hath true Faith, being taught by the Gospel, can very easily think and believe that God justifies him by an Evangelical Righteousness, even Christ's perfect fulfilling of the Law, which is far more perfect than that legal righteousness, which the Law requires of every man in his own person. This Abraham believed, and was fully persuaded of, this David professes, and Saint Paul preached, and I know no true Christian who doth not both think and believe it. If any man be found doubting of this, it is because the spirit of Antichrist and Socinus doth work strongly in him. --- For whosoever denieth such a Spiritual Union and Communion between Christ and the penitent, and believing sinner justified, as doth make Christ's Righteousness and Satisfaction to become his ransom and righteousness, and to be imputed by God to him, and to make him accepted by God, as one clean from the guilt of sin, and righteous in his sight, this man denieth Christ to be the meritorious cause of the Justification of a sinner. --- These and divers other errors which were here and there interlaced, I did at the first discover in some sermons, to be no Doctrines of Sacred Truth by him dug out of the deep mines of Holy Scripture and newly brought to light {as his seduced Disciples proclaimed them to be} for the enlightening of the blind world in these last days of darkness and perilous times; but the old errors and Heresies of Servetus and Socinus, newly revived and raked out of hell by Arminius, Bertius, {Petrus Bertius, 1565-1629, a Flemish theologian; Bertius was a friend of Jacobus Arminius, and spoke at his funeral in 1609. In 1612 Bertius published a Latin work - "Hymenaeus Desertor," - that went further than Arminius in theology, against the advice of fellow Remonstrants. In 1620 he converted himself to the Roman Papal System,} and others of their Faction. --- All our learned and judicious Divines do hold that the full Satisfaction and Obedience of Christ being communicated and imputed to true believers is that by which they are absolved, and have their sins pardoned, and are counted, and judged righteous by God; as men who have satisfied the Justice, and just Law of God, by Christ their Head and Surety; not in their own persons, which the Law in strict terms requires, and this is Justification in the Judiciary sense, which is approved by the learned. --- That Judiciary sense, improperly so called, which our enemies approve and allow in this dispute, is an Heretical and Socinian concept; for so long as God the Supreme Judge of all the world is immutable and infinite in Justice, he neither can, nor will dispense with his Law, in any jot or tittle, but will have it perfectly fulfilled either by ourselves or some sufficient surety in our behalf, and will forgive no sinner, without a full suffering and satisfaction made to the Law in the same sense which the law requires, though not in every man's person; and this full satisfaction must be communicated to everyone, and made his own by union with Christ his Head; before that God will judge or account him righteous, and pardon all his sins. To imagine a mitigation to some degree in consideration whereof God forgives sinners, and accepts them as if they were righteous; besides the full satisfaction of God's Justice and just Law, is to conceive God to be mutable, and not the same in his infinite justice at all times; and to affirm it is Socinian Blasphemy. --- We do not plead for our Justification, any consideration according to the Law; that is, we do not plead our own innocency, nor satisfaction and righteousness performed in our own persons; but we plead more than somewhat done for us, even all Christ's obedience active and passive, by God's free grace communicated to us, not obtained, or merited by our works of the Law. Though the Law justifies no sinner, but threatens the curse, death and condemnation as the due reward of the transgressors of it; yet it justifies all who are free from all sins committed against it,

and are made righteous by the perfect fulfilling of it to the utmost. The Gospel hath brought us to the Communion of Christ's full Satisfaction. --- The arguments by which it is commonly maintained are also blasphemous, and wicked; to wit, first they argue, that Christ's righteousness is not imputed to true believers, neither can be made or counted theirs by God; because Christ's righteousness is the righteousness of another far different from them; and God cannot justify one by another's righteousness, and therefore we are not justified by Christ's righteousness, neither is it imputed in Justification. Now what is this but a denying of the union of the faithful with Christ, for if he be one with us, and we one with him, then are our sins made his by communion, and in him satisfied, and his righteousness and satisfaction is made ours, and we thereby are pardoned, and justified, by it as it is made ours, and is not the righteousness of a stranger, nor of one who is another so different from us, but that he and we are one spiritual body, and all his benefits are ours, and we have an interest in them, and possess them, and enjoy them; so far as everyone hath need of them. - And though God's justice exacted of Christ our Surety a full ransom, and did not abate him the least farthing of our debt, yet we are freely pardoned, and have free forgiveness, and are freely justified by God's grace, because he did freely give his own Son to satisfy and fulfill the Law for us, and doth freely by his grace, and the free gift of his Spirit unite us to Christ, and make us partakers of his Satisfaction, and imputing his Satisfaction freely to us doth for it freely forgive our sins, and justified us. --- They allege that in the New Covenant God requires faith and believing, which we on our part must perform for justification, life and salvation. And hereby they abolish the freedom of the New Covenant, and make it a Covenant conditional, and not of Free Grace. For whatsoever is covenanted and promised, upon a condition to be performed, is not absolutely free nor freely given; and so according to their Doctrine, they that are justified are not freely justified by grace, whereas they plead Scripture for their error, and allege that justification and life is promised upon condition of believing. If you believe, you shall be saved. I answer that, this is a gross and absurd mistake. For every conditional proposition doth not propound the condition of a Covenant, which the party to whom a thing is promised, must perform, that the promise may be made good to him; for such a condition whenever it is performed, makes the thing covenanted a due debt which the Promiser is bound to give. But oftentimes a conditional proposition propounds the means, by which a free gift is received; or the qualification by which one is made capable, and fit to receive, and enjoy a free gift; as for example, it is often said in Scripture: "If ye will hear and hearken, ye shall eat the good of the land, and shall live, and not be destroyed," {Is.1.19, Jer.26.3,} and many other places. "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us." {I Jn.4:12} "If we walk in the light, we have fellowship one with another." {I Jn.1:7} "If we confess our sins, he is faithful, and just to forgive." {I Jn.1:9} "If a man be just, and do that which is right he shall surely live." {Ez.18:5,21} In all which, and the like places, there is no condition of the Covenant propounded, {Christ having met all the conditions,} but only the way and means to receive blessing, or the quality and condition, by which men are made capable and fit to enjoy the blessing, and sometimes the signs, tokens, and effects of them, that are in a blessed estate. And even so when God's Word saith, "If you believe, ye shall be saved," there is no condition of the Covenant, propounded to be performed on our part for justification and salvation, but only the means by which he enables us to receive {rather, perceive by faith} righteousness, and to lay hold on salvation, which is freely given to us in Christ. Upon these particulars severally observed out of their own words, and writings, I

strongly conclude, that this opinion being builded upon such a blasphemous and heretical ground, and upheld, and maintained by such blasphemous arguments, must needs be most impious, heretical and blasphemous. --- Lastly, they take away the true end and use of Justification; namely, the Revelation of God's infinite justice, mercy, bounty, and free grace; for they overthrow his infinite justice, while they teach that God by his sovereign power puts his justice to silence; and without Christ's full Satisfaction, made to it, for us, and made ours by Imputation, doth accept our weak faith instead of it, and makes himself as countable for it in all rewards, as he would do for the perfect fulfilling of the Law by ourselves, or by Christ in our stead. They extenuate and vilify God's mercy, bounty, and free grace; by setting up faith instead of Christ's perfect righteousness, and making it the condition of the New Covenant. For whatsoever is given or promised to us, upon a condition to be on our part performed, is not a gift of free grace and bounty. And when justice may be turned out of doors, without a complete satisfaction; there is nothing left for mercy wherein to show the power of it. The infinite mercy of God doth appear in this, that, when his infinite justice required that we should all be damned without a full satisfaction {which none could make but the Son of God in our nature} and that performed for us, and made ours; He would give his only Son for us to satisfy in our stead, and his Holy Spirit to unite us to his Son, and to bring us to communion of his satisfaction. Thus we see that they shut up the door of Heaven, and stop that only way to eternal life, by overthrowing justification, which is the making and accounting of men righteous, by that only Righteousness of Christ, besides which there is not any other to be found sufficient, and able to bear us out before God's tribunal of justice. Now let all true Christians well weigh and consider the difference, between truth and error, life and death, true Christianity and Antichristian infidelity; for such is the damned Socinianism before discovered. And if any man in the midst of the light of the Gospel shining so clearly, and discovering so plainly cursed heresy, will be blind, let him be more blind still; and if any will be filthy, let them be more filthy still. And if any love not the LORD Jesus, but hate and blaspheme his truth, let him be Anathema Maranatha. Amen. George Walker, "Socinianism in the Fundamental Point of Justification Discovered and Confuted," 1641.