The Rise of Moralism

THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL FROM HOOKER TO BAXTER

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Preface

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Those readers who wish to ingest the essential argument presented here and avoid the detail of interest to specialists could omit, to my sorrow, chapters 2, 5, 6, 7, and 8.

Sewanee 1965

C.F.A.
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Introduction

The terms "orthodox" and "classical" employed in this study to characterize the early seventeenth-century period of Anglican theology may annoy some and perplex others. It will be helpful, then, here at the outset to explain what these terms mean in the pages that follow.

The early seventeenth-century divines—notably Hooker, Andrews, Donne, and Davenant—established an Anglican theology: a theology that, before them, had been developing but had not come to fruition and was incomplete. Relying heavily upon the Councils of Nicaea and Chalcedon, and taking issue especially with the Council of Trent, those theologians defined the position of Anglicanism and distinguished it from that of Rome, on the one hand, and from the Reformed continental positions, on the other. Doing so, they incidentally accomplished a synthesis within Anglicanism that had not obtained previously and that became the basis upon which the best of Anglican thought builds: a synthesis of thought and sensibility (the special contribution of John Donne), of preaching and practice, of theology and devotion, and, most significantly, of doctrine and ethics. It is to this synthesis within Anglicanism that reference is made when the terms "orthodox" and "classical" are applied to the Anglican theology of the early seventeenth century. The representative figures of this period have never properly received the attention and respect they deserve. Neither the bitter polemic which characterized the sixteenth century nor the tendency toward Pelagianism and Socinianism which developed in the next half century can be found in the theology of this period. Only the uncritical tendency to sycophantic acquiescence
in the Stuart concept of Divine Right seems distinctly embarrassing in the theology and sermons of the early seventeenth century.

This study has not, however, been undertaken primarily to argue that Anglican orthodoxy should be historically assigned to the early seventeenth century. Whether that theology be called orthodox or not, it will be argued here that the later Carolines—with powerful assistance from certain non-Anglicans—radically abridged the Anglican synthesis and prepared the way for a moralism that has afflicted English theology ever since and still afflicts it to-day, a moralism which is less than the full gospel. In making this argument, three points will emerge that depart importantly from the usual interpretation of seventeenth-century theology and history. Let us identify those points briefly in order to indicate the scope of the discussion that follows.

1. The question of the formal cause of justification, it will be demonstrated, is central to an understanding of seventeenth-century soteriology. Subsequent scholarship has been seriously distorted because it has been based upon an assumption that the issue of formal cause was not, in fact, crucial. Most scholars have blandly assumed, without evidence, that Hooker, Andrewes, Donne, and Bellarmine (Anglican and Roman Catholic) were all wrong when they explicitly stipulated that the question of formal cause is the fundamental issue posed to Christian soteriology. Careful examination of the evidence confirms that differences over formal cause basically divided Anglicanism from the teaching of the Council of Trent, and, furthermore, determined the direction of a new school of thought that arose during the Civil War in England, a school neither "orthodox" Anglican nor Tridentine. This latter school of thought grew in influence over the succeeding centuries until it became predominant within Anglicanism and English-speaking Christianity in general. A return to an emphasis upon the disputes over formal cause in Christian soteriology would go a long way towards clearing up other misunderstandings that have developed with respect to modern inadequate treatments of such terms as "infusion", "imparting", and "imputation".

2. The new school of thought which arose during the English
Civil War has never been adequately studied with due attention to its development, inconsistencies, moralistic tendencies, contrasts with "orthodox" Anglicanism, or its subsequent vast influence. It was represented, among others, by such disparate figures as Jeremy Taylor, Henry Hammond, Herbert Thorndike, George Bull, and Richard Baxter. Of subsequent students of the period, Samuel Taylor Coleridge alone affords a responsible criticism of the theology of Jeremy Taylor. It was Coleridge who acutely observed: "Socinianism is as inevitable a deduction from Taylor's scheme as Deism and Atheism are from Socinianism." This remark not only exposes the fatal flaw in Taylor's own theology but also sums up the trend from orthodoxy in the early Caroline period to a moralism and deism in the eighteenth century and on to the secularism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Coleridge failed, however, to give the evidence for his dictum or to detect that his criticism of Taylor's theology as set forth in published works did not apply to the theology explicit in Taylor's prayers and devotions. The fact is, as we shall see, that Taylor held one position in his sermons and theology and another opposite theology in his prayers. It is important to inquire, as we shall, what led Taylor into this odd and embarrassing posture.

3. From the new school of thought, which might be called the new moralism, has issued the characteristically modern notion that deliberate sin is invariably more pernicious than sin founded in ignorance or grounded in the unconscious. This grotesque distinction, which inevitably puts premiums on ignorance and suppression, was first formally propounded at the fifth and sixth sessions of the Council of Trent, and was taken up by the later Carolines and by post-Civil War Protestants. It has come to be the prevalent theology of the whole Christian Church in the West with consequences disastrous for the Christian community. Lest it be supposed that this study will be an uncritical encomium to the genius of the early Carolines, let it be said that we shall seek to identify those weaknesses in the theology of Hooker, Andrewes, Donne, and Davenant that, as it were, gave an opening to Taylor and others for the development of their destructive doctrine. It
would also be negligent to ignore the traumatic impact of the English Civil War upon the Christian Church, upon both the Anglican and the Puritan traditions; and we shall seek to indicate how the "troubles" intruded into the realm of theology. Finally, that we may not be thought too provincial in our argument, we shall try to relate the tendency toward disintegration in seventeenth-century theology to the wider split that was occurring at the time in Western culture between thought and feeling, consciousness and unconsciousness, as has been pointed out, for example, by the late T. S. Eliot. That split, as it manifested itself in theology, is most painfully detectable as a radical seventeenth-century separation of ethics from doctrine.

Respect for seventeenth-century divines, early or late, has tended to be undiscriminating. There is indeed much to respect, but there is also much to deplore. And the longer the century went on, the more there came to be that was deplorable in theology. Surely no one, not even those recent scholars who have written so uncritically of Jeremy Taylor's theology, has ever approached Holy Communion having fulfilled the conditions Taylor established for a worthy communicant. One will search the sermons preached in England in the century after 1640 almost in vain if one looks for suggestions of the kerygma (possible exceptions will be noted in chapter 8). The later Carolines departed not only from the teaching of Hooker, Andrewes, and Donne but as well from the Prayer Book itself. It is an extraordinary fact that the "Arianism" of John Milton has been often discussed but (Coleridge excepted) the heretical inclinations of Jeremy Taylor have been ignored. The new moralism has achieved virtual dominion over theology, especially latterly, on account of its influence through the Latitudinarians, the Nonjurors and, less directly, the Wesleyans and the Tractarians. So great has been its influence that Church scholarship itself seems to have been effectively debilitated. A scholar to-day who ventures to criticize seriously either Taylor or Baxter would do well first to ponder another dictum of Coleridge: "Truth is a good dog; but beware of barking too close to the heels of an error, lest you get your brains kicked out."
1

Classical Anglicanism

We sometimes overlook how much agreement existed among Christians at the beginning of the seventeenth century. There was, for example, general acceptance of the dogmas of the Trinity and Christology, and the prevalent teaching on atonement was widely shared among Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Reformed, Anglican, and Puritan theologians. The end of the same century saw nothing like this agreement. A tradition of consistent and interrelated Christian teaching on creation, revelation, incarnation, and atonement had been largely undermined of its soteriological foundations. It is important to discover what happened to these foundations in the course of the seventeenth century. This requires that we first understand what the issues were as the century opened. The crucial argument, at that point, concerned the nature of the Gospel, and it was focused upon soteriology. The question posed itself this way: As recipients of the Gospel, what causes our new relationship with God to be what it is?

RICHARD HOOKER
1554-1600

Richard Hooker is one theologian who concerned himself with this problem, and his argument is typical of the position taken by Anglicans. He attempts, for one thing, to reassure those people who feared that if they had any doubt of their election, it meant they were, in fact, not of the elect. He points out that no man is "so enlightened in the knowledge, or so established in the love of that wherein his salvation standeth, as to be perfect, neither doubting nor shrinking at all".¹
At the same time, however, Hooker points out the differences between the Anglican Church and the Council of Trent concerning the doctrine of justification. He notes the areas of agreement between them: they both teach that all have sin and are destitute of justice; that it is God who justifies; that no one has ever attained this justice except by Christ; and that this action of Christ must be applied to the sinner.

Wherein then do we disagree? We disagree about the nature of the very essence of the medicine whereby Christ cureth our disease: about the manner of applying it, about the number and the power of means, which God requireth in us for the effectual applying thereof to our soul's comfort.²

The Council of Trent declared that the righteousness whereby a Christian man is justified is infused and inherent in the soul of man. As the body is warm by the heat which is in the body, so the regenerate person is righteous by his own infused, inherent grace.³ Hooker argues that this position "doth pervert the truth of Christ"⁴ and becomes the basis of other inevitable errors.

Whether they [Roman Catholics] speak of the first or second justification, they make the essence of it a divine quality inherent, they make it righteousness which is in us. If it be in us, then it is ours, as our souls are ours, though we have them from God, and can hold them no longer than pleaseth him; for if he withdraw the breath of our nostrils, we fall to dust: but the righteousness wherein we must be found, if we will be justified, is not our own; therefore we cannot be justified by any inherent quality. Christ hath merited righteousness for as many as are found in him. In him God findeth us, if we be faithful; for by faith we are incorporated into him. Then, although in ourselves we be altogether sinful and unrighteous, yet even the man which in himself is impious, full of iniquity, full of sin; him being found in Christ through faith, and having his sin in hatred through repentance; him God beholdeth with a gracious eye, putteth away his sin by not imputing it, taketh quite away the punishment due thereunto, by pardoning it; and accepteth him in Jesus Christ, as perfectly righteous, as if he had fulfilled all that is commanded him in the law. . . .⁵

On the other hand, Hooker also argues that there is an inherent righteousness in sanctification.
Now concerning the righteousness of sanctification, we deny it not to be inherent; we grant, that unless we work, we have it not; only we distinguish it as a thing in nature different from the righteousness of justification.\(^6\)

In other words: Christians are justified by the righteousness of Christ whereby they dwell in him and are thus acceptable to God, but this is not on account of any inherent righteousness of their own. The righteousness of sanctification is that whereby we grow in grace by virtue of being in Christ. It is a grateful response to a gratuitous justification.

The argument centred around a scholastic term: formal cause. The formal cause of a thing was that which made it to be what it is, as heat makes a thing hot. The Council of Trent held that the formal cause (\textit{unica formalis causa}) of justification was the inherent righteousness of a regenerate person infused into him. Hooker insists that this righteousness of our own is the righteousness of sanctification, and, being imperfect, can never be that which makes our acceptance by God what it is. The righteousness whereby we are accepted by God is the righteousness of Christ imputed to us when we are incorporated in Christ.

Hooker was criticized by Walter Travers, the Puritan theologian, for using scholastic terms, and for suggesting that the English Church agreed in many respects with the Council of Trent. In reply, Hooker argues that Travers is unfair to the Roman Catholics when he states that they deny Christ's righteousness as the meritorious cause of taking away sin. Hooker further asserts that “no man doubteth but they (Roman Catholics) make another formal cause of justification than we do”.\(^7\) As to the use of scholastic terms he says that Travers' “opinion is no canon”,\(^8\) and goes on to argue that the question of formal cause is “the very essence”\(^9\) of the problem, and is the basis of other, secondary disagreements with Roman Catholics.

His use of scholastic terms does not make Hooker's understanding of the Gospel dry or academic. His theological positions seem to have come from a pastoral understanding of sin and redemp-
tion. He insists, for example, that one essential emphasis of the Gospel is the initiative taken by God for our salvation.

. . . it is no unnecessary thing that we note the way or method of the Holy Ghost in framing man's sinful heart to repentance. A work, the first foundation whereof is laid by opening and illuminating the eye of faith, because by faith are discovered the principles of this action, whereunto unless the understanding do first assent, there can follow in the will towards penitency no inclination at all. . . . For fear is impotent and unable to advise itself; yet this good it hath, that men are thereby made desirous to prevent, if possible they may, whatsoever evil they dread. 10

Because fear is "impotent and unable to advise itself" the Christian Gospel consists of more than law and the threat of judgement. It also communicates the love of God to man. The Gospel is more than an exhortation to repentance. "Howbeit, when faith hath wrought a fear of the event of sin, yet repentance hereupon ensueth not, unless our belief conceive both the possibility and the means to avert evil. . . ." 11 Fear is thus powerless to effect repentance. It is the Gospel which provides the necessary good news of a merciful God. Hooker adds that we cannot "possibly forsake sin, unless we first begin again to love. . . . I therefore conclude, that fear worketh no man's inclination to repentance, till somewhat else have wrought in us love also." 12

This may seem an obvious and pedestrian point, but in view of its absence among later Anglican theologians, it is important to take note of the emphasis Hooker gives to it. Even the calamities of judgement are seen by him in the context of God's prior love and action.

So hard it is to cure a sore of such quality as pride is, inasmuch as that which rooteth out other vices, causeth this; and (which is even above all conceit) if we were clean from all spot and blemish both of other faults and of pride, the fall of angels doth make it almost a question, whether we might not need a preservative still, lest we should haply wax proud, that we are not proud. What is virtue but a medicine, and vice but a wound? Yet we have so often deeply wounded ourselves with medicines, that God hath been fain to make wounds medicinable; to cure by vice where virtue hath stricken; to
suffer the just man to fall, that, being raised, he may be taught what power it was which upheld him standing. I am not afraid to affirm it boldly, with St Augustine, that men puffed up through a proud opinion of their own sanctity and holiness, receive a benefit at the hands of God, and are assisted with his grace, when with his grace they are not assisted, but permitted, and that grievously, to transgress; whereby, as they were in over-great liking of themselves surplanted, so the dislike of that which did surplant them may establish them afterwards the surer. Ask the very soul of Peter, and it shall undoubtedly make you itself this answer: My eager protestations, made in the glory of my ghostly strength, I am ashamed of; but those crystal tears, wherewith my sin and weakness was bewailed, have procured my endless joy; my strength hath been my ruin, and my fall my stay.13

Hooker's understanding of the Gospel reflects an acute pastoral concern. He objects to any teaching of assurance and election that creates despair for the hearers on account of doubt or sin. He objects to the teaching of the Council of Trent that our inherent righteousness is the righteousness of our justification. He sees this teaching as the foundation of subsequent errors of the Church of Rome concerning merit14 and works of supererogation.15

JOHN DAVENANT

1572-1641
Bishop of Salisbury

This crucial difference, discerned by Hooker, between Anglicanism and Roman Catholicism was explored more thoroughly by Davenant than by any other Anglican theologian. His work provides a detailed discussion of soteriology as it was commonly conceived by Anglicans prior to the Civil War (1640). In A Treatise on Justification or the "Disputatio de Justitia Habituali et Actuali"16 (published in 1631) Davenant contrasts Anglican doctrine with the doctrine of justification proclaimed by the Council of Trent and defended by Robert Cardinal Bellarmine. Davenant does not attempt to discuss justification and works in its entirety, but by discussing certain aspects of it, he clarifies the total problem which confronted soteriology in the early seventeenth century.
His treatise is a two volume work, in reply to Cardinal Bellarmine, in which the principal arguments of Hooker are amplified in great detail.

Man's righteousness is from God and cannot be clothed with any semblance of merit or worthiness, nor can it be a causal condition for the free gift of justification. This righteousness, as Davenant construes it, involves two terms: habitual and actual righteousness. Habitual righteousness is, for Davenant, inherent righteousness, or "the supernatural gift of sanctifying grace opposed to Original Sin . . . both repairing and renewing that image of God which through Original Sin was defiled and lost". Actual righteousness is the performance of good works.

Davenant agrees with Bellarmine that habitual righteousness is infused into the justified. He denies, however, Bellarmine's charge that Protestants hold sin to be covered up by God's acceptance in justification. On the contrary, he argues that Luther, Calvin, and the English Protestants hold that there is a real infusion of righteousness in justification. He insists that this habitual (or inherent) righteousness does not exclude original sin, nor does it formally justify believers in the sight of God. It is on these points that Davenant takes exception to Bellarmine's interpretation of the Council of Trent.

Formal cause was agreed upon by all sides as the central problem in a discussion of justification. The form—or formal cause—of a thing is "that by which a thing is what it is". There was agreement that Christ's satisfaction was the meritorious cause ("on account of which") and faith was the instrumental cause ("with which") of our justification. It was, however, the formal cause ("by which") of justification that separated Roman Catholic from Reformed theologians. Bellarmine defends the argument of the Council of Trent that the sole formal cause of justification is the infusion of inherent righteousness. That "which made our justification what it is", that "by which" we are justified, is an infusion of habitual (or inherent) righteousness into the soul of man. This infusion of inherent righteousness is, by its very nature, that "by which" we are justified.
The effect of infused love is, that it reconciles man to God, that is, makes him acceptable and a friend to God; and this effect follows absolutely, from the nature of the thing. 20

For Bellarmine, this infusion accomplishes two things: washing and sanctification. Thus, justification is not merely forgiveness or remission of sins but also sanctification. It could not possibly be an imputation of righteousness. For anyone to be accounted righteous when only imputatively so would be fictitious, dishonest, and under anathema according to the Council of Trent.

Davenant does not deny that habitual righteousness is infused by God's grace, but he does deny that it is the formal cause of justification. He argues that it requires intolerable pride to assume that there is within us a righteousness of our own that makes us acceptable to God and righteous in his sight. He considers such an assumption a presumptuous infringement upon God's justice. Infused righteousness cannot perfectly and absolutely overcome the evil in man, and thus it is, in itself, an insufficient cause of justification. The difference on this question between Bellarmine and Davenant is reflected in their respective comments on Rom. 7:17-19: "For the good I would, I do not and the evil that I would not, that I do."

Bellarmine

We learn hence that to be justified by Christ is not to be accounted or pronounced just, but truly to be made and constituted just by the obtaining of inherent righteousness absolute and perfect (de Just. lib. 2, cap. 3).

Davenant

We do not deny that inherent righteousness is infused into the justified by Christ . . . but we affirm that, whilst in this life it is inchoate and imperfect, and therefore not the cause of our justification, but the appendage. 21

The Council of Trent held that concupiscence in the regenerate is not sin. Because grace and sin are mutually exclusive, the infusion of righteousness in justification has eradicated all that has the formal nature of sin, and there is nothing remaining in a justified person that is hateful to God. 22 It also held that:
Original sin is true death of the soul and constitutes man an enemy to God: but concupiscence remaining in the regenerate is by no means fatal, nor does it place them in a state of enmity with God; therefore, it has not the nature of sin.

If concupiscence is sin, then has Christ not truly, but imputatively only redeemed us from sin; and the devil is more powerful than Christ; in as much as he has truly defiled us while Christ has not truly washed us.

Davenant held, on the other hand, that, though real change takes place in justification, there is nevertheless sin in justified persons. The infused righteousness, though real, is imperfect, and consequently is not, and cannot be, the formal cause of justification. He expresses this basic difference with Bellarmine and the Council of Trent in the following remarks:

Whether, by infusion or inherent grace, whatever hath the true nature and proper character of sin is forthwith eradicated and entirely taken away in the justified. We deny it, the Papists affirm it, . . . the questions involved in this one point lie at the foundation of all the other disputes concerning justification and works.

For, according to our adversaries the formal cause of justification expels by inhesion whatsoever is in itself hateful to God, or worthy of punishment.

Original sin has been “broken” and “hewn in pieces”, but (despite the Roman Catholic assertion to the contrary) sin does exist in the regenerate along with infused grace. The justified must, therefore, continue to struggle against sin. There is no perfectionism for Davenant. No man fulfils the law and all men sin. He argues that Rom. 7.19 (“The evil I would not . . .”) is a description of regenerate persons as much as it is of those still living under the old covenant. Though justified, the regenerate still struggle against the “old Adam”. He describes original sin as having infected the understanding, the will, and the affections. Concupiscence is seated, not in the sensual power alone, but in the will, and even in the soul itself, and it is always tainted with the residue of original sin. Bellarmine (following the Council of Trent) main-
JOHN DAVENANT

tains that venial sin does not have the formal nature of sin. Davenant claims that the distinction between mortal and venial sin is an evasion. By making this distinction, and by denying that concupiscence is tainted with residual original sin, Bellarmine, in Davenant's opinion, attempts to avoid the inadequacy of inherent righteousness as the formal cause of justification. Davenant's argument that sin persists in the regenerate precludes any possibility that the infusion of inherent righteousness might suffice as the formal cause of justification.

The formal cause of justification, according to Davenant, is the imputation of Christ's righteousness.

To impute any thing, then, to any one is the same, in this question, as to reckon and account it in the number of those things which are his own and belong to him. But not only our own peculiar passions, actions, or qualities may be imputed to us; but also certain external things, which neither flow from us nor inhere in us. . . . We grant the form of justification to be that, by which man is not only accounted and pronounced justified before God, but is made or constituted so. But . . . it is not absolutely necessary that this term be derived either from an inherent form, or that it should imply an inherent form. 29

For instance: when a son is admitted into Royal favour in recognition of the loyalty and service of his father, it may be said that the qualities of the one are imputed to the other. The same may be said of a murderer who is pardoned in recognition of a favour or satisfaction made on his behalf by someone else.

Davenant's point, then, is that the quality of heat is the formal cause of a thing being hot, but moderate heat can make a thing only moderately hot.

So imperfect and incipient righteousness renders a man just but imperfectly and inchoately; but not but that which is itself perfect and absolute can render him perfectly and absolutely so. And to such righteousness God has respect, when he either justifies the wicked at first, or, when regenerate, he esteems and accounts him as justified. Therefore let the former be the formal cause . . . (sanctification) but this latter alone will be the formal cause of this absolute and judiciary justification. 30
Infusion of inherent righteousness, in other words, is the formal cause not of justification but of sanctification. For Davenant, salvation includes the cause of it and way to obtain it. The cause of human salvation is the free mercy of God putting away our sins, through the work of Christ and accepting us to life eternal on account of his obedience; and this gracious act of God we call justification. The way to salvation, or to the kingdom, is to serve God in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life. But that we may be able to enter upon this way of salvation God heals the weakness of our minds and restores and repairs his “image” in us; and this act we call sanctification or regeneration. God is said to save us by both acts. 31

Justification is perfect and thus requires the imputation of Christ’s righteousness as its formal cause. Sanctification is imperfect and requires the grace of God acting in our own lives.

Davenant does not deny the infusion of inherent righteousness, but he does deny that it is sufficient to be the formal cause of justification. Bellarmine did not consider it possible that God, by the righteousness and obedience of Christ alone, should reckon us as justified. The benefit of the imputation (which he did not deny) is restricted, in his view, to obtaining the effect of inherent righteousness. That is the substance of the difference between the Anglican view, represented by Davenant, and the view of the Council of Trent, represented by Bellarmine.

The question of formal cause is the basis of other differences between the two schools of thought. Works of supererogation are dismissed by Davenant, not only by appeal to Scripture and the Fathers, but equally by his argument that the regenerate, being yet imperfect, are unable perfectly to fulfill the law. Works over and above what is required by God seem, to Davenant, absurdly impossible.

He also denies, on the same basis, any merit of condignity (or claim by the regenerate on God’s justice) on account of the supposed worthiness of good works. The regenerate is a child by adoption, a servant of God, and therefore can never claim a reward from God on the basis of justice. Furthermore, all the works of
man are tainted with sin, and fall short of the righteousness of God. Nor will Davenant allow any claim on God's justice on account of his promise, because a promise does not confer parity between a good work and its reward. Our righteousness is acceptable to God only by virtue of his gracious mercy.

Good works may be said to be necessary to justification as concurrent or preliminary conditions only so long as they are not understood in a causal or meritorious sense. Good works are necessary, Davenant argues, in the sense of chronological conditions or order. They may even be considered as "the way appointed to eternal life"—but never in the sense of cause. He gives two illustrations:

1. A beggar must acknowledge his destitution, go to a place where alms are given, and hold out his hand; but he does not merit or cause the alms to be given by taking these necessary actions.

2. To be knighted a man must go and kneel before the sovereign as a necessary condition and act. It would be absurd to infer from this, however, that going to court and falling on his knees is the cause of his knighthood.

Davenant concedes, following the same argument, that good works are necessary to preserve a state of justification, but he insists that such works do not and cannot cause justification to be preserved. So concerned is he about possible confusion on this point, Davenant actually urges great restraint in saying that good works are necessary to justification. He fears that if the necessity is conceded, it will be construed as a concession that good works cause justification. He points out that the Church frequently refrains from certain expressions which, though true in themselves, lend themselves to false inferences in particular situations. Thus, though it is said with perfect truth that

the blessed Virgin is the Mother of Christ; yet the Holy Fathers were unwilling to use that expression, lest they should appear to make a concession to Nestorius, who denied her the title . . . Mother of God.29

For the same reason, he concludes, in discussions with Roman theologians great care should be taken when acknowledging the neces-
sity of works not to permit any inference that works are the cause of justification.

Cardinal Bellarmine seeks to demonstrate the causal necessity of good works for salvation by the illustration of Matt. 25:34: “Come ye blessed of my Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you from the beginning. For I was an hungered, and you gave me to eat. . . .” Davenant answers that the conjunction “for” does not imply meritorious cause but is only a sign of the cause. He illustrates his point by the example of a doctor who is told, “Come, take this place prepared for you for you are wearing the garb of a doctor”. “For” here has reference, says Davenant, not to the cause of a situation but to a sign of that cause. In the same way, “for” in the text from Matthew represents not the cause of salvation but the signs or marks of a state of salvation. The Matthew text, and others like it, are descriptions not of the means of salvation but of the way of salvation, and thus are descriptive of the people who are to inherit the kingdom.

Davenant’s understanding of the place of faith in justification as set forth in reply to Bellarmine’s assertion that Protestants wrongly claim salvation is possible only by faith. Davenant argues that faith is not the formal cause of justification (any more than infused righteousness or good works). The function of faith is merely “to apprehend and apply to us the meritorious cause”. The question whether a man is justified by faith, even though he be a persistent sinner, is ridiculous and meaningless according to Davenant. Faith and works are, he asserts, separate but related. Faith is independent of good works with respect to efficacy, and can exist apart from good works with respect to operation. The very act of apprehending salvation, which is faith, necessarily issues in good works. Davenant draws an analogy to the act of the eye alone in perceiving colours. The neck, chest, and trunk are not necessary, except by presence, for this operation. Yet it would be wrong to infer that the eye alone would be able to see if a person were without neck, chest, and trunk. Though the eyes perform the operation of seeing, they cease to be able to do so without the presence of the other members. Similarly, faith
can apprehend salvation without their [good works] concurring in the very act of apprehending it; yet it cannot, if they are separated as to their existence; for by such separation faith itself will be destroyed. 34

Faith that justifies is not, then, the same for Bellarmine as it is for Davenant. Justifying faith for Bellarmine is general assent to the total revelation of God. Davenant concurs that justifying faith assents to total revelation, but insists that it is nevertheless principally grounded in Christ the mediator, and his (gratuitous) promises concerning the remission of sins. He quotes Aquinas, interestingly, to support his view that faith as justification does not subsume the total revelation of God, but only God in the action of remitting sins. Davenant maintains, none the less, that his basic difference with Bellarmine concerning justification is not really on the level of faith and works at all. Good works, he says, are never perfect, are always tainted with sin, even in the regenerate. The basic difference, he insists, rests in the question of formal cause.

It rests with them [Roman Catholics] to endeavour to prove that wretched man, encompassed with this mortal and corruptible flesh, is nevertheless furnished with so perfect a righteousness, that he can present this his inherent righteousness, even before the scrutinising eye of God, for the purpose of receiving a plenary justification. Nay, more, they must also maintain this point, that from this infused righteousness flow works so purified from all defilement, so free from all stain of sin, that any regenerate person can say—truly to God—"If I have deserved it give me the kingdom of heaven; if my works do not deserve it on the principle of condignity, refuse me!" O intolerable pride! O desperate madness! . . . We have then to shew, that God imparts to the justified the first fruits of the Spirit and certain eminent gifts of sanctification, yet so that we are entirely dependent upon his mercy and the grace of our mediator; but that sin is not so entirely rooted out from this mortal body, as that we can derive from that infused and inherent righteousness, a ground for justification before God. This also we have to shew, that the works which flow from this inchoate righteousness, however pleasing and acceptable to God, are still not in themselves so absolutely perfect, as that life eternal should be, not the gift of God in Christ (Rom. 6.23), but a reward paid, on the principle of condignity, to these our works. . . . It is not therefore more difficult to shew that the doctrine of free justification
is true, and to exhibit the deficiencies of man's righteousness, than it is to point to the light of the sun.35 . . .

Davenant's whole thrust goes to the gratuitous nature of the Gospel. His conviction that sin is present in the regenerate is the foundation of his attack on the Tridentine formal cause of justification. It is significant that his emphasis on free grace is not motivated by antinomianism or belief that God makes fewer (or easier) demands under the new covenant. On the contrary, it is precisely his conviction that God's righteousness is absolute which leads him to insist that any righteousness of our own is wholly inadequate for salvation. He makes a penetrating point that some men think one way concerning justification in their public disputes and theological polemics, and quite another way in their private meditations and prayers.

None of them speak of their own inherent righteousness before the Divine tribunal, but they fly full of fear to the mercy and acceptance of God in Christ. But if they were willing to stand by their doctrine, they must either depend upon this formal cause, or give up hope of salvation.36

This insight of Davenant is remarkably prophetic, as we shall see, of later developments in the treatment of the Gospel in the seventeenth century.

GEORGE DOWNNAME

d. 1652

George Downname (sometimes Downham), Bishop of Derry, also wrote a work devoted to the doctrine of justification which was published in 1639. Its full title provides a summary of the contents:

_A Treatise of Justification: Wherein is First Set Down the True Doctrine in the Causes, Effect, Fruits, and Consequences of it, according to the Word of God. And then all Objections and Cavils of the Adversaries to God's free Justification by Grace are answered and confuted, especially of Robert Bellarmine, Jesuite and Cardinal. Wherein also the Popish doctrine of merits is refuted and disproved, with many other weightie points of Christian Religion occasionally handled and discussed, and difficult places of holy Scriptures expounded, and vindicated._
Bishop Downname's doctrine manifests the same concern as that of Davenant for the gratuitous nature of justification, and their views of the doctrine are similar in many other respects. Downname's understanding of the relationship of faith and justification is quite like that of Davenant and follows from the position taken by Hooker. The focus of justifying faith is Christ (as mediator), and this faith is essentially trust in Christ for the remission of sins. There are two senses in which it may be said that faith alone justifies. First, we are justified by the righteousness of Christ and not by any righteousness inherent in ourselves. Second, the righteousness of Christ may be apprehended by faith alone.

Not that justifying faith is or can be alone: but because of there being many graces in the faithful which have their several commendations; yet none of them serveth to apprehend Christ's righteousness but faith only and yet that faith which is alone severed from all inward graces and outward obediences, doth not justify either alone or at all; because it is not a true and lively, but a counterfeit and dead faith.37

For justification, therefore, "Good works are not necessary by necessity of Efficacie".38

God does, however, make and constitute righteous those whom he has justified. He does this in two ways: by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and by actual infusion of righteousness. Downname agrees with Davenant that the former is the righteousness of justification, and the latter is the righteousness of sanctification. Justification, then, is the imputation of Christ's righteousness, which is an action of God without us. Sanctification is an infusion of righteousness, which is our own and within us. Justification is perfect. Sanctification, which is only begun in this life, will be perfected only in the life to come. There are degrees of sanctification whereby inherent righteousness is increased by the practice of good works, but there are no degrees of justification. Downname defines justification as that

... whereby a faithful man is taught to believe and know, that he being a sinner himselfe, and by sinne obnoxious to eternal damnation; is by the mercies of God, and merits of Christ through faith, not only freed from guilt of his sinnes and from everlasting damnation, but also
accepted as righteous before God in Christ, and made heir of eternal life.39

That righteousness by which we are justified must be perfect, and because our own righteousness is imperfect, only the righteousness of Christ is sufficient to effect our acquittal at the bar of God's justice. The presence of sin in the regenerate, Downname argues, makes it impossible to consider inherent righteousness as the formal cause of justification. Furthermore:

Eternal life is not to be had without perfect fulfilling of the Law, which is no where to be found but onely in Christ. And therefore, by the onely meritorious obedience of Christ . . . we are saved. But how should we be saved by his obedience, if it be not communicated unto us, and made ours for our selves? How can it bee made ours, but by imputation?40

Consequently, the formal cause of justification is the imputation of Christ's righteousness.

Cardinal Bellarmine argues that Christ's righteousness cannot be the formal cause of justification because it is the meritorious cause. Downname answers that the point is not that Christ's righteousness is the formal cause of justification, but rather that the imputation of it is. He goes on to describe the efficient, principal, moving, and instrumental causes of justification. The crucial issue, however, as with Davenant, is the formal cause.

Downname also rejects the attempt by some Protestants to make remission of sins the formal cause of justification. This is, in fact, the principal concern of his treatise. He concedes that justification is both remission of sins and imputation of righteousness, but he insists that only the latter can be the formal cause. He argues that if remission of sins be considered the entire formal cause, then the following errors will be necessary to maintain this "maine error": no righteousness will concur in justification with remission of sins; the righteousness by which we are justified will be solely the effect of Christ's righteousness (remission of sins); and, finally, the act of faith, not the righteousness of Christ, will be imputed for righteousness. This criticism of remission of sins as the formal cause of justification does not appear in Davenant's work, but his general
GEORGE DOWNAME

Theology would surely have led him to the same conclusions. Downame’s discussion of works of condignity and supererogation is almost the same as that of Davenant. They share concern for the gratuitous nature of justification. They agree that imputation of Christ’s righteousness is its formal cause. The conviction of sin in the regenerate is the common basis of their criticism of the Roman doctrine of merit and formal cause.

Downame’s discussion of justification differs, however, from that of Davenant in one significant respect:

We consider it [justification] not as a sudden and momentary action, which is of no continuance, as if all our sins both past, present, and to come are remitted in an infant... for while we continue sinners, we have still need to be justified. And as we always have sinne in this life... we have need, that Christ’s righteousness should be imputed unto us: and as we sinne daily so Christ our advocate should continually make “intercession for us”... But if justification should be wrought once and at once,... then must we erroneously conceive, that the sins which after the first moment of our justification we doe commit, are actually remitted before they bee committed; Whereas God forgiveth only sins past, Rom. 3.25. So shall we not only set open a gap to all licentiousness... but also shall open the mouths of our adversaries....

Davenant, on the other hand, argues that justification cleanses us from the guilt of sin, uprooting it, and implanting within us the grace of Christ by the Spirit. This is done “in one moment, and perfectly; sanctification cleanses from the very indwelling contagion and filth of sin, little by little, and gradually”. Davenant seems to have involved himself in a difficulty on this point. If the imputation of Christ’s righteousness is justification, and this is “in one moment”, then how are subsequent sins forgiven? Since inherent righteousness (sanctification) is an imperfect basis for forgiveness of our sins, by what are we forgiven and accepted after our justification, or, for that matter, in the final judgement?

Downame’s objection to the claim that justification is a “suddaine and momentary” action may well have been an implicit criticism of Davenant’s position. There is little in Davenant that could be used to defend him from this criticism. It must be remembered,
however, that Davenant specifically states that it is not his intention to discuss the whole doctrine of justification. His work is devoted almost entirely to justification in the sense of initial forgiveness and acceptance by God. Perhaps in a more complete discussion of justification his difficulty would have been overcome. It remains true, however, that his description of justification as an act "in one moment" raises problems that are not solved elsewhere in his work.

Downname discusses the relationship of justification and sanctification differently. The Bishop of Derry maintains that justification is a state as well as an act. It has made us a member in Christ. He distinguishes the righteousness of imputation, which is outside of us in Christ, from inherent righteousness which is within us. Inherent righteousness is infused "by the influence into them from Christ their heads". The righteousness which is infused by this "influence" is the righteousness of sanctification. The relationship of imputed and inherent righteousness in Christ is explicated in his discussion of baptism.

Thus in Baptisme we are incorporated into Christ, and in it we put on Christ, who is our righteousness and it is the Sacrament, not only of remission of sinne and of justification, but also of regeneration and sanctification, we being therein conformed to his death and resurrection.44

JOSEPH HALL
1574-1656

Joseph Hall, successively Bishop of Exeter and Norwich, shares with Jeremy Taylor and Herbert Sanderson the distinction of leadership in Anglican moral theology in the seventeenth century. His views on the Gospel enjoy a considerable reputation. He does not discuss soteriology extensively as Davenant and Downname do, but his views parallel theirs. He, too, believes that inherent righteousness is infused by the Holy Ghost. God's justification of the wicked man does not leave him still wicked, but effects real change in him. Those whom he justifies he also sanctifies. The two acts are gratuitous and inseparable. However, the righteousness wrought in us by the Holy Ghost
JOSEPH HALL

... is not so perfect, as that it can bear us out before the tribunal of God. It must be only under the garment of our Elder Brother, that we dare come in for a blessing; his righteousness made ours by faith, is that, whereby we are justified in the sight of God: this doctrine is that, which is blasted with a Tridentine curse. 45

He views the controversy not as conflict over the relation of faith to works but as a dispute about the formal cause of justification. The issue is

... what that is, whereby we stand acquitted before the Righteous Judge; whether our inherent justice, or Christ's imputed justice apprehended by faith. The Divines of Trent are for the former: all Antiquity, with us, for the latter. A just volume would scarce contain the pregnant testimonies of the Fathers, to this purpose. 46

He mentions Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome, Gregory, Augustine, and Bernard. Hall asserts that no Reformed divine could more disparage our inherent righteousness, or more magnify the imputed righteousness of Christ than these Fathers did.

Like Davenant and Downname, his basic criticism of inherent righteousness as the formal cause of justification is based upon the claim that sin is present in the regenerate. He cites Rom. 7.19-25 as evidence of sin in a justified person. Righteousness infused by the Holy Spirit is imperfect and cannot be that by which we are absolved and accepted. Bellarmine's argument for such a formal cause is, Hall declares, not only unscriptural, unsupported by the Fathers, and an innovation, but is also contrary to reason.

To say now, that our actual justice, which is imperfect through the admixture of venial sins, ceaseth not to be both true, and, in a sort, perfect justice (Bellarmine, de Jusuf. 1. ii. c. 14), is to say, there may be an unjust justice, or a just injustice; that even muddy water is clear, or a leprous face beautiful. 47

Hall contrasts the imperfection of inherent righteousness with the perfect righteousness of Christ which is imputed to us in justification. Daily growth in grace and the increase of our renovation is accompanied to the very last by the prayer, "forgive us our trespasses". This daily reminder of the imperfection of our regeneration
should convince us of “the impossibility of justification by such inherent righteousness”.

Hall vigorously dismisses the possibility that the dispute about justification is merely a misunderstanding. Like Hooker, he concedes that both sides agree on many important points, and that they both acknowledge inherent righteousness. Hall insists, however, that they do not conceive of inherent righteousness in the same manner nor for the same end. Inherent righteousness is the cause of justification for Bellarmine and the Romans; it is the effect of justification for Protestants. This distinction is of the utmost importance to Bishop Hall because he maintains, as does Hooker, that grave errors result from holding inherent righteousness as the formal cause of justification. The Roman doctrine, he argues, denies the disparity between our righteousness and God’s, and breeds presumption in men while reducing the concept of God’s righteousness to the level of imperfect righteousness found in the regenerate. Inherent righteousness cannot be considered to have satisfied God’s justice. Who, he asks, can boast of perfect righteousness within himself? Only those who have lowered the concept of God’s justice can do so.

Perhaps some Isidore may say thus of himself, which voluntarily protested, that, for forty years’ space, he found not in himself any sin; not so much as in his thought; not so much as any consent to anger or inordinate desire. Or perhaps, some Baronius or Bellarmine may report this of their late St. Gonzaga: or the offal of the Schools may say so of Bonaventure; in whom, if we believe them Adam sinned not: or Manicheus may say it of his elect masters: or, perhaps; Priscillian, Evagrius, Jovinian, the Messalians may brag thus of themselves . . . Otherwise, we shall come to that point, which Innocentius condemned in the Pelagians: “What need have we of God?”

Hall argues vehemently that all such errors necessarily follow from the notion that inherent righteousness is the cause by which we are justified. He suggests:

Let Bernard now, to conclude, shut up this stage. “Not to sin”, saith he, “is God’s justice; but the justice of man, is the pardon of God.”
A similar view of justification is held by Archbishop Ussher. James Ussher’s doctrine of justification is set forth briefly in a catechism entitled *The Method of Christian Religion*, written, he tells us in a preface, when he was still in his early twenties, and was published later to correct erroneous quotations which had been made from it over the years. The doctrine is more fully explicated in four sermons delivered in Oxford in 1640. Ussher takes a position much like that of Hooker, Davenant, Downname, and Hall. His emphasis, also, is upon the gratuitous nature of justification. He agrees that the imputation of Christ’s righteousness is the formal cause of justification, and he asserts that Bellarmine and the Roman Church deny any “grace of justification” by proclaiming a doctrine of “infusion”.

Ussher himself argues that justification is forgiveness of sins and the imputation of Christ’s righteousness. Forgiveness and imputation cannot be separated but are integral components of God’s action in justification. As the darkness disappears when light is brought into a room, so our sins are forgiven when God imputes to us the righteousness of Christ.

Now there is a double kind of righteousness, the one imputed, and the other inherent; the one is righteousness of Christ, an act a transient from another, which cannot be made mine but by imputation. Besides this, there is another which is inherent, a righteousness in us.

The latter righteousness is sanctification. This is the point, he declares, of real difference “between us and Rome”. It is not a dispute about faith and works. It is rather that Bellarmine and the Romans deny God’s initial acceptance by imputation of Christ’s righteousness, and instead claim that we are justified by an inherent righteousness infused into us. Thus, Ussher argues, the Romans rule out any grace of justification. To see the difference as an argument about the relative efficacy of faith as against works is to miss the point completely.
Ussher agrees with Downname and Davenant that there is sin in
the regenerate, noting, for example, that St Paul spoke of himself
as a sinner.\textsuperscript{54} Inherent righteousness (which is the grace of sanctifica-
tion) grows throughout earthly life but is never perfect in earthly
life. Gross sins may even be committed, but a truly regenerate man
never finally and irrevocably falls from grace. Repentance, although
it is not an “instrument of justification”,\textsuperscript{55} is necessary in the life of
the regenerate because it “clears passages through which faith can
act”\textsuperscript{56}.

The righteousness of Christ alone suffices for justification. It is
imputed to us not “in one moment” (as for Davenant), but con-
tinuously throughout our sanctification. The difficulties which
Davenant encountered holding justification to be “in one moment”
Ussher avoids by holding that justification is a state as well as an
act. Christ continually imputes his righteousness to us. Ussher also
criticizes Bellarmine for arguing that it is infidelity to pray for justi-
fication \textit{after} the remission of sins.\textsuperscript{57} Ussher points out that justification
is not only an act done, but an act continued.

The point then is this: as long as we continue in the world, and by
contrary acts of disobedience continue to provoke God to discontinue
his former acts of mercy, and our sins being but covered, therefore so
long must we pray for forgiveness.\textsuperscript{58}

Ussher insists, in other words, that justification and sanctification
operate simultaneously. There is grace of justification, the imputa-
tion of Christ's righteousness, which “is without me”\textsuperscript{59}; and there
is grace of sanctification, the infusion of righteousness, which is

... within me, the one receives degrees, the other not. As a man that
is holy, may be more holy; but imputed righteousness doth not more
forgive one man than another. Imputation is without augmentation or
diminution ... The contrary to justification is condemnation; but the
contrary to sanctification is wickedness, and false dealing ... \textsuperscript{60}

Justification for Ussher is by faith \textit{only}, but not by faith \textit{alone}
(apart from good works). He employs the illustration Davenant
suggests: the eye alone sees but not as severed from the rest of the
body. (Ussher also uses this illustration in another connection.\textsuperscript{61})

There is, however, a difficulty implicit in the illustration which is
not adequately disposed of in the works either of Davenant or Ussher. If the faith that justifies is accompanied by good works as the body is connected with the eye in seeing, this implies a body of good works present before justification and not, therefore, a consequence of justification. Davenant admits the necessity of certain actions (as in his example of a beggar stretching forth his hand to receive alms) before justification, but his major argument clearly requires that good works are possible only after God has justified. Justification is, in fact, a free act of God which brings sinners into the covenant where grace is then given to perform good works. Perhaps we may assume that (since Ussher considers justification a state as well as an act) faith and works, in this situation, refer to faith by which we are continuously justified and works which are the companion instruments of sanctification.

This assumption is consistent with Ussher’s understanding of the relationship between justification and sanctification. Ussher does argue, fundamentally, that justification is a free act of God, apprehended through faith, and by which good works are in grace enabled. He makes this clear in his discussion of the apparent conflict between St James and St Paul on the nature of justification. When St Paul says we are justified by faith, and not by works, he is speaking, says Ussher, of the “first acceptation”. When St James states that we are justified by works, and not by faith alone, he is speaking of justification in the “second acceptation”. The latter is, according to Ussher, sanctification. The works required by St James occur in sanctification, and demonstrate the validity of faith by which alone we are justified. He does not agree with those who attempt to resolve the conflict by arguing that St James is speaking of justification before men and St Paul of justification before God. Both are speaking of justification before God, Ussher insists, and the confusion arises from different uses of the terms “justification” and “sanctification”. The same confusion, he adds, also afflicted the Fathers.

And so that which the Fathers call justification, is taken generally for sanctification; that which we call justification they call forgiveness
of sins; that which we call sanctification, they call justification: so that the difference is only the terms.  

JOHN DONNE  
1572-1631  

The writings of John Donne are different in style from those of the theologians already discussed, but his soteriology is nevertheless similar to that of the foregoing divines. We shall consider here the remarkable sermons of the great poet, sermons mostly composed during his service as Dean of St Paul’s (1621-31).

Donne argues with Hooker and Davenant that there is sin in the regenerate. He asserts, for example, that though “St Paul speaks of himself in his best state, still he was sold under sin, because still, that concupiscence . . . remains in him. And that concupiscence is sin . . .”

... then wee shall meete the Apostle confessing himselfe to bee the greatest Sinner, not only with a fui, that hee was so whilst hee was a Persecutor, but with a present sum, that even now, after hee had received the faithful Word, the light of the Gospell, yet hee was still the greatest Sinner; of which [Sinners] I [though an Apostle] am [am still] the Chiefest.

Like Davenant (and St Paul), he protests that, although he has been washed and forgiven, there is yet a residue of original sin in him. Donne expresses it this way:

... though I have washed myselfe in the tears of Repentance, and in the blood of my Saviour, though I have no guiltinesse of any former sinnes upon me at the present, yet I have a sense of root of sinne, that is not grub’d up, of Originall Sinne that will cast me back again.

Roman Catholics are “Puritans”, he suggests, when they assert that there is sinlessness in the regenerate. By this doctrine, Donne argues,

... a man may not only be empty of all sin, but he may be too full of God’s presence, overfreighted with his grace, so far that (as they make Philip Nerius, the founder of their last order, their example) they shall be put to that exclamation, Recede a me Domine, O Lord
depart farther from me, and withdraw some of this grace, which thou pourest upon me.67

(St Philip le Neri was founder of the Order of the Priests of the Oratory in Italy. b. 1515, canonized in 1622.) To Donne, every sin is a violation and wounding of God, and the Roman distinction between venial and mortal sin is, therefore, a “frivolous and yet impious doctrine”.68

Inherent righteousness, he argues, is infused into us by God, but it is imperfect and tainted with sin. We are neither worthy of the righteousness before God gives it to us, nor are we made worthy by receiving it. There is

... no spark of worth in us, before God call us; but that first grace of his, doth not presently make us worthy ... If we love not Christ, more than all, and take our cross, and follow him, non dignus sumus we are not worthy of him. Nay all this doth not make us worthy really, but imputatively; they shall be counted worthy to enjoy the next world, and the resurrection, says Christ.69

That which makes us worthy in God’s sight is that we are in Christ. Donne’s emphasis upon our life in Christ, and the constant imputation of his righteousness to us, is even stronger than that of Downname.

Though mine iniquities be got over my head, ... my head is Christ; and [being] in him ... all my sins shall no more hinder my ascending into heaven ... then they hindered him ...70

Reconciliation has already been accomplished by Christ for us while we were still in our sins. To become a member of Christ we need only accept the gift of reconciliation. The parable of the wedding garment illustrates that God accepts us only as we are covered with the righteousness of Christ.71

And from this, from putting on Christ as a garment, we shall grow up to that perfection ... He shall find in our bodies his wounds ... in our hearts and actions his obedience. And ... he shall do this by imputation ...72

Donne is not hesitant to exhort good works. Salvation is achieved only by the will of man working in harmony with the will of God, and God saves no man without (or against) his will.
Till he have found faith and belief in God, he never calls upon good works, he never calls them good; but when we have faith, he would not have us stop nor determine there, but to proceed to works too.73

There are reservations, Donne says, in regard to the new covenant, but they are in respect only of the possibility of falling away. His emphasis is upon the necessity of prevenient grace for entrance into the new covenant, since only then are we enabled to do good works.74

Man, in a state of nature, is in such a predicament that he is not of himself able to help himself, and must depend wholly upon the free gift of reconciliation. This gift cannot be acquired; it can only be accepted. Donne’s numerous exhortations to righteousness, repentance, and good works are directed at those in the process of sanctification. Justification is by God’s grace, and we are unable of ourselves to do anything but accept it. God does not, however, sanctify us without our participation. Justification is by faith, but this faith must issue in good works if sanctification is to occur. Just as

God gave a reformation to his church, in prospering that doctrine, that justification was by faith only: so God gave us a unity to his church, in this doctrine that no man is justified, that works not.75 Furthermore, howsoever our adversaries slander us, with a doctrine of ease, and a religion of liberty we require . . . more exactness, and severity, than they do.76

Donne agrees with Davenant on the place of good works in the accomplishment of salvation. Salvation is essentially by grace through faith. Good works declare and testify that salvation is being worked out, but they cannot be the means of salvation. Donne’s comment on the problem of assurance illustrates his view of fides formata (whether faith itself contains the righteousness of obedience).

This assurance (so far as they will confess it may be had) the Roman Church places in faith, and so far, well; but then In fides Formata; and so far well enough too: In those works which declare and testify that faith; for though this good work do nothing toward my Salvation, it does much towards the neerness, that is, towards my assurance of this Salvation; but herein they lead us out of the way, that they call these works the soul, the form of faith: for though a good tree cannot be without good fruits, yet it were a strange manner of speech to call that good fruit, the life or the soul, or the form of that tree; so is
it, to call works which are the fruits of faith, the life or soul, or form of faith: for that is proper to grace only which infuses faith.\textsuperscript{77}

Donne’s soteriology has two strong foundations: the depth of sin and the freedom of man. The depth of sin makes necessary God’s action in justification, and man can do no more than accept the gift of reconciliation. The emphasis, therefore is on justification as a free gift. On the other hand, grace never destroys nature nor does it compromise the essential freedom of man. God will not save man except through man’s freedom. Donne, therefore, also places emphasis upon repentance and exhortation to good works as necessary for sanctification.

Donne strongly insists that sin goes much deeper than mere transgressions: “Wee have sinne upon us, sinne to condemnation, original sinne before we know sinne, before we have committed any sinne.”\textsuperscript{78} Sin is separation from God, and our transgressions are merely symptoms or expressions of that separation. This interrelation of sin has direct bearing on Donne’s doctrine of justification. Christ’s righteousness is imputed to us as not only satisfaction for our transgressions, but also in order to establish in us a new state or condition of being. The justified person becomes a member of Christ, and his separation from God is overcome.

Donne clearly advocates a soteriology shared by Hooker, Davenant, Downname, Hall, and Ussher. They are agreed on the following crucial points: their concern to proclaim the gratuitous nature of justification; their conviction of the presence of sin in the regenerate; their criticism of the Tridentine doctrine of inherent righteousness; their insistence that we are justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us; and their understanding of justification as that by which we are begun to be made righteous.

We come last (but certainly not least) to the soteriology of Lancelot Andrewes, successively Bishop of Chichester, Ely, and Winchester. He, too, was critical of the Tridentine doctrine of inherent righteous-
ness as the formal cause of justification. "For it is not in question whether we have an inherent righteousness or no, or whether God will accept it or reward it"; but whether it is that by which we are justified. He asserts that Bellarmine and the Schoolmen are "nipping at the name of Christ" when they claim that the formal cause of justification is our inherent righteousness.

All which I put you in mind of to this end, that you may mark that this nipping at the Name of Christ is for no other reason but that we may have some honour ourselves out of our righteousness. There are two forms of righteousness, "one ours by influence or infusion, the other by account or imputation. That both these are, there is no question." It is only by the latter, however, that we are acceptable to God. Andrewes makes the same point as Davenant when he argues that the very schoolmen themselves, take them from their questions, quodlibets, and comments on the sentences, let them be in their soliloquie, meditations, or devotions, and especially in directing how to deal with men in their last agony ... you would not wish to find Jehovah justitia nostra better or more pregnantly acknowledged than in them you shall find it.

He suggests that the way to settle this controversy is to consider which righteousness will adequately serve us in the final judgement, our own inherent righteousness or that of Christ imputed to us.

But let us once be brought and arraigned coram Rege justo sedente in solio, let us set ourselves there, we shall then see that all our former conceit will vanish straight, and righteousness in that sense will not abide the trial.

In the sight of God no man's inherent righteousness is sufficient. This is what Andrewes takes to be the meaning of "justification by faith only".

The Papists ask where we find "only" in justification by faith? Indeed we do not find it, but we do find that "by faith" and nothing else we are "justified", and so we may well collect it by faith only. "By grace we are saved through Faith; and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God." And on this warrent have many of the ancient Fathers been bold to add the word "only"; as Origen upon Romans
Hilary upon Matthew 9 and divers others say, “Faith only justifieth”. 84

The theme of Andrewes’ argument against the Romans is that they wrongly credit eternal life to inherent righteousness. He grants that there is an inherent righteousness, and that good works are truly worthy in themselves. However, in comparison with God’s righteousness, judgement, and final reward, none of our works is worthy—“it is neither our fear, nor our works, all is but God’s gracious acceptation”. 85 He quotes St Augustine and St Chrysostom to support his contention that God accepts even the very best of good works only by his gracious mercy, and never because of their inherent merit or condignity.

Although Andrewes criticizes the doctrine of inherent righteousness primarily in the context of the last judgement, his views are those of Hooker and Davenant on the other issues of soteriology. He discusses the phrase, “make you perfect in all good works” (Heb. 13.21) in a sermon prepared to be preached on Easter Day, 1624. He suggests that the verb καταρπίσατε means “to set you in joint”. That our nature “is not right in joint is so evident that the very heathen ... have confessed it. And by a fall of things come out of joint, and indeed so they did ...” 86 He goes on to say that good works are impossible to be willed, much less to be done, until we are “put in joint”.

Good works are possible only by the Holy Spirit, which is freely given to all who hear the Gospel and receive the Sacrament. Andrewes not only argues that the presence of sin in the regenerate makes their inherent righteousness imperfect, but he also contends that the Romans are seriously in error when they suppose that infused righteousness absolutely replaces sin. The Lord’s Prayer does not make sense unless we understand the daily necessity to ask forgiveness of sins. Andrewes’ emphasis in discussing the doctrine of justification is upon the inadequacy of inherent righteousness before God, and the consequent necessity of the imputed righteousness of Christ, especially in the context of the last judgement. He stresses the absolute nature of God’s righteousness, and the gratuitous nature of grace.
Anglican soteriology in early seventeenth-century England was marked, then, by emphasis upon God's initiative and forgiveness, and man's initial, continual, and final necessity to rely upon his relationship with Christ as that which makes him acceptable to God. Perhaps the best summary of this position is found in the later hymn of William Bright.

Look, Father, look on his anointed face,
And only look on us as found in him;
Look not on our misusings of thy grace,
Our prayer so languid, and our faith so dim;
For lo! between our sins and their reward,
We set the passion of thy Son our Lord.

The theology of the divines in this chapter represents a soteriology that we shall call the classical Anglican position.
The seventeenth century began, as we have seen, with an understanding of the Gospel according to which Anglican divines (such as Hooker) discerned as the crucial problem of Christian soteriology the question: What is the formal cause of justification? These divines agreed that in justification a change is effected in the regenerate person and his inherent righteousness is established. They were, however, equally agreed that assigning inherent righteousness as the formal cause of justification was a profound error on the part of the Council of Trent which inevitably introduced other grave distortions of the Christian Gospel.

About the time of the Civil War, English Christianity was exposed to another doctrine of justification, equally incompatible with the doctrine of Trent, and also a radical departure from the earlier Anglican position.

The only theological unanimity detectable in this period (embracing Roman Catholics, Anglicans, and Protestants) is a universal assumption that the formal cause of justification is the key to the problem of soteriology. Disagreement about the nature of that formal cause abounded, but, with rare exceptions, all were agreed that therein lay the crucial issue. Whether it be "infusion of inherent righteousness", "imputation of Christ's righteousness", "imputation of faith", or some combination of the same, the formal cause invariably appears as the crux of each system, statement, or controversy concerned with soteriology. The very definition of formal cause—"that which makes a thing what it is"—assures, of course, that it will be (must be) the crux of the issue.

Is the formal cause, however, really in fact what is crucial in the development of soteriology? Anglicans did indeed differ among
themselves as to precisely what is the formal cause, but it is significant that the groupings, or schools of thought, into which they divided themselves, were groupings most clearly distinguished by what each concluded the formal cause to be. Anglicans primarily concerned with the gratuitous nature of grace agreed that the formal cause of justification is the imputation of Christ’s righteousness. Those whose primary emphasis is placed on holy living and a fear of antinomian inference from the Gospel proclaimed the imputation of faith to be the formal cause. The most coherent understanding of the doctrine as set forth by the “non-episcopal” divines was directly drawn from discussion of the nature of the formal cause. The two notable attempts at synthesis of conflicting doctrines were focused upon the problem of the formal cause: Jackson’s solution was simply to deny its existence; Forbes attempted the other way out of the dilemma and postulated a twofold formal cause.

Jackson, as has been demonstrated, actually did assume a formal cause (the imputation of Christ’s righteousness) and his soteriology does not, in point of fact, differ from that of the classical Anglicans. When he denied the existence of a formal cause, he was equating the term “to be righteous” with the term “to be justified”. (In that sense, when he denied a formal cause of justification he was really denying the existence of justification itself.) Forbes’ twofold formal cause is an attempt at a soteriology that would combine the doctrine of the Council of Trent with that of Taylor, Jackson, and Hammond. It is also interesting to note that John Owen’s adherence to the imputation of Christ’s righteousness as formal cause leads him to describe justification in a way that differs very little from the classical Anglican doctrines (which also assumed the same formal cause).

On the other hand, Richard Baxter was in accord with the “holy living” divines that the imputation of faith is the formal cause, and this accord finds a parallel in other points of agreement he had with Taylor, Hammond (in their public works), Thorndike, and Bull despite radical differences he had with them on many other issues of Christian doctrine and polity.
The doctrine of imputation of faith for righteousness as argued by the above-named four, and as enunciated by Baxter in his *Aphorisms*, generated a major controversy among non-episcopal divines of the Caroline period. Baxter's statement was challenged by at least eight ministers, and the consequent confusion found Independent and Presbyterian divines on both sides of the argument. Some thirty writers were eventually drawn into the dispute. Much of the argument was concerned with attempts to clarify the relationship of the doctrine of predestination to the doctrine of justification, but the major issue, once again, was over the formal cause of justification. Owen, Graile, Thomas Gataker, Jessop, Eedes, Lawson, and Walker insisted that the formal cause is the imputation of Christ's righteousness. Baxter, Cartwright, Goodwin, Wooton, and Woodbridge insisted just as firmly that it is rather the imputation of faith for righteousness. Thomas Tully, Principal of St Edmund Hall, also stressed the centrality of the issue of formal cause in his argument denouncing Bull, Baxter, and Bellarmine as the real enemies of Christianity. All three differed from Tully radically on the question of formal cause. Tully might have included Robert Barclay, the Quaker, who would have fitted in not only alliteratively, but was also yet another who denied Tully's doctrine of the formal cause of justification. Barclay, agreeing with Bellarmine, held the formal cause to be the infusion of inherent righteousness,¹ whereas Baxter and Bull considered it to be the imputation of our faith. It may be that this apparent relationship between the formal cause of justification and one or another particular school of soteriology was coincidental or causal, or it may be that the different understandings of soteriology were symptoms or results of the various doctrines of formal cause. In either case, it remains an historical fact that during the seventeenth century divines on all sides of theological controversies considered formal cause to be the crux of the soteriological problem. It is certainly significant that agreement on any one doctrine of the formal cause invariably was accompanied by agreement on many other issues of soteriology.
No matter what their internal differences the Caroline theologians were virtually unanimous in criticism of the Tridentine doctrine of infusion of inherent righteousness as the formal cause of justification. There were six basic objections to the doctrine of Trent.

First, the Anglicans argued that any inherent righteousness infused into the regenerate is less than the righteousness God demands of us or intends for us. Inherent righteousness, furthermore, is acceptable only on account of God's mercy in Christ and never on the basis of his justice alone. The forgiveness of justification is granted by, and on account of, Christ's atonement. The gratuitous nature of forgiveness precludes, for the Anglicans, any association of it with inherent righteousness, which they considered only begun in justification and to be continued in the process of sanctification.

Second, if the formal cause of justification were to be inherent righteousness infused into the regenerate at justification, then there would be no point in the regenerate praying "forgive us our trespasses . . .". Such a doctrine would also preclude the "eternal priesthood" of our Lord and the necessity of his continued mediation.

Third, such a doctrine would place the concept of a "state of grace" on the basis of the righteousness of the regenerate rather than on the righteousness of Christ where it belongs. If our inherent righteousness were to be considered the very form of justification, the resultant "state of grace" would be no more or other than what the Anglicans regarded as the grossly inadequate righteousness of the justified.

Fourth, the Anglicans complained that if inherent righteousness infused into the regenerate were to be considered perfect, or nearly perfect, this would breed presumption in the regenerate. If a regenerate person, in other words, were to consider himself acceptable and forgiven because of sufficient righteousness infused into
him and by which God’s demands have already been met, then he would no longer need humbly to beg mercy.

Fifth, if, on the other hand, inherent righteousness were considered to be only the minimum that God will accept, then any growth in righteousness, any righteousness over and above the righteousness infused in justification, would appear to be more than what God requires as acceptable righteousness. Thus, what Hooker, Donne, and Hall called the “pernicious” doctrine of works of supererogation becomes a logical and ineluctible consequence of the inherent righteousness doctrine.

Sixth and finally, although the “infusionists” firmly asserted that any description of the cause by which one is justified that does not provide for actual infusion of inherent righteousness is merely a “legal fiction”, they did not themselves altogether escape the same problem. It was argued that for God to justify the ungodly, for him to pronounce as righteous those not actually righteous, was in fact, to base the doctrine of justification upon a lie. The Anglicans retorted that acknowledgment of flaws or imperfection (or even venial “concupiscence”) in the regenerate necessarily includes even those who advocate the “infusion” doctrine; they, also, are embraced by the “lie” that God has justified anything less than what is righteous. To avoid such an absurdity the only alternative would seem to be either to adulterate the quality of God’s righteousness or to be dishonest and hypocritical about sin in the regenerate. Thus argued the Anglicans. It was this very dilemma, of course, which led the Council of Trent to visit anathema upon any who profess that concupiscence in the regenerate has the formal nature of sin and to assert that God hates nothing in the regenerate.

This question—whether there be any sin in the regenerate—was so closely associated with justification and the issue of formal cause that it became an integral part of the controversy over Christian soteriology. For many Anglicans the question of sin in the regenerate was the test of the dispute. If there be no sin in the regenerate, then they were prepared to grant that infusion of inherent righteousness is the formal cause of justification. But they found it so evident that the regenerate indeed do sin that they felt compelled to conclude
that inherent righteousness cannot be the formal cause of justification.

There was a vast disagreement about the proper exegesis of Romans 7:19-25. Most Anglicans considered it a description of St. Paul even in his regenerate state, or, if not that, it was at the least theologically a description of a regenerate person after justification. Those others who conceived the infusion of inherent righteousness to be the formal cause of justification were compelled to deny that this passage from Romans could be a description of a justified person. The later “holy living” divines were similarly inclined, but they were less consistent about it than was the Council of Trent. It is significant that Bellarmine and Bull and Davenant, representatives of the three important doctrines of justification, were agreed on one thing, that the doctrine of justification depended upon how sin in the regenerate was understood. If Romans 7 is a description of the regenerate, Bull acknowledged that his doctrine was thereby false, and Bellarmine conceded, on the same basis, that his doctrine of inherent righteousness would be rendered untenable. Davenant, on the other hand, allowed that if there is no sin in the regenerate, then the infusion of inherent righteousness must be the formal cause of justification. Thus, the question of sin in the regenerate was regarded on all sides as the supreme test of validity for the doctrine of justification, and the controversy over exegesis of Romans 7 is a notable indication of the central emphasis assigned by all to a satisfactory definition of the formal cause of justification.

The formal cause of justification was considered, by most of the Anglicans, to be the imputation of Christ’s righteousness. Archbishop Ussher; Bishops Andrewes, Davenant, Downname, Hall, Sanderson, Barlow, Nicholson, Beveridge; Richard Hooker, John Donne, Isaac Barrow, and Thomas Tully—all rejected the Tridentine doctrine of inherent righteousness, and all embraced the imputation of Christ’s righteousness as the formal cause of justification. Despite Jackson’s explicit denial that there is such a formal cause, he actually entertained, as we have seen, the essential doctrine of the classical Anglicans.
THE DOCTRINE OF "THE LOWERED MARKET"

Jeremy Taylor's doctrine must be described as exceptional. His theological works, sermons, and public devotional writings consistently reflect a doctrine of justification by imputation of faith, which Taylor defines in such a way as to include repentance, amendment of life, and sincere endeavours. We are justified, according to Taylor (in his public works), by God's acceptance of our inadequate strivings and sincere endeavours on account of the more lenient terms of the new covenant purchased for us by Christ. Taylor cautioned that much of what was said or written about justification included inferences that tended to discourage serious concern for Christian ethics and casuistry. It was this threat to "holy living" which motivated him to undertake his work on repentance. He sought, in other words, to rectify a doctrine which might undermine holy living, before he launched his major work on ethics.

Much of Taylor's public theology—especially that which focuses discussion on soteriology—is contradicted by the theology of his (private) prayers. In the prayers it is not our "sincere endeavours" that render us righteous; the grounds of petition are, on the contrary, Christ's righteousness alone. Sinlessness is the ground and prerequisite for forgiveness and justification in his public works, but in his prayers sinlessness is precisely what we are incapable of except by God's merciful forgiveness and justification through Christ. In the pulpit, justification is said to be by repentance and holy living; in the attitude of prayer, it is said that justification is by Christ's gratuitous and merciful forgiveness of sinners. In his public theology Romans 7.19-25 is not (cannot be) a description of a regenerate person; in a litany to be recited prior to Holy Communion the very words of Romans 7.19-25 are used as a description of the regenerate. In certain sermons Taylor contests the validity of death-bed confessions on the grounds that God does not forgive without repentance, which specifically includes turning from all unrighteousness and performing those acts of obedience which are necessary for forgiveness; there are, none the less, certain prayers.
of Taylor composed especially for such occasions, which invoke God’s mercy, his gratuitous grace and forgiveness, and (significantly) the example of the thief on the cross. Taylor’s theological description of the worthy communicant excludes all who are not confident of their own righteousness; his prayers for communicants explicitly proclaim deliberate and/or unconscious unworthiness. Taylor, in short, did not practise in prayer what he preached from the pulpit (or published for the edification of the public).

Apparently Taylor fundamentally believed what he said in his prayers, but his profound concern lest antinomianism be encouraged by preaching and teaching gratuitous forgiveness led him publicly to exhort holy living as the only hope for justification. His publicly stated conditions for justification become, in the prayers, consequences of the grace of justification. Taylor’s teaching that sinlessness is a condition of entrance into the covenant of grace involved him in a doctrine which Bishops Warner, Sanderson, and Barlow (as well as Herbert Thorndike) condemned as Pelagian. There is, however, no suggestion whatever of Pelagianism in Taylor’s prayers, which repeatedly make clear that no righteousness is possible for man without God’s grace. If we assume that Taylor is fundamentally to be judged by his prayers, then we may place him within the classical Anglican tradition.

Dr Henry Hammond’s soteriology was similar to that found in Taylor’s sermons and theological works. We possess fewer of Hammond’s prayers, but such as we have suggest a dichotomy like Taylor’s in so far as the problem of sin in the regenerate is concerned. Herbert Thorndike’s public theology was also in line with that of Taylor and Hammond, but he published no prayers, and further parallel is therefore not possible to make. We may speculate that Hammond’s theology of justification was at least more ambiguous than what he wrote. This speculation is supported by his statement that he gave up the imputation doctrine because it did not seem sufficiently to guard against the pestilent heresy of the antinomians. Thorndike too, in other words, doctored the doctrine of justification largely out of fear of antinomianism and of the moral chaos that
might be encouraged by improper inference. He escaped the charge of Pelagianism but the price he paid for his escape was inconsistency.

Bishop William Forbes of Edinburgh was moved particularly to settle the prolonged, confusing, and heated controversy over justification and only secondarily by any fear of antinomianism. His motive was more irenic, and less a concern for holy living such as was characteristic of Taylor, Hammond, and Thorndike. He failed in his primary objective. Combination of "infusion" with "remission of sin" as the formal cause of justification involved him in the difficulties of both but solved the problems of neither. He admitted (as had the classical Anglicans) that inherent righteousness is not adequate as a doctrine of justification, but refused to concede that his position was thereby overthrown. We are also, he noted, justified by remission of sin, "nay by it principally".

THE CLASSICAL VIEW

The work on justification by Bishop Davenant of Salisbury was probably the most impressive produced in the Caroline period. He was certainly most frequently and favourably quoted by his contemporaries. He was also the most representative theologian of the dominant school of seventeenth-century Anglican theology. His work established the classical position with respect to formal cause, the relationship between works and salvation, the problem of sin in the regenerate, the gratuitous nature of justification, and, in general, the relationship between justification and sanctification.

On this last subject alone Davenant was not representative of the prevalent school of thought. While the major concern of this school was to safeguard the gratuitous nature of justification, they did not (Davenant excepted) minimize the importance of works. To resolve the dilemma they tended to argue that works are necessary for sanctification but not for justification. We are, the argument went, accepted and covered by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, and we are thereby established in a relationship to God which enables us to perform the works of sanctification. Justification was conceived as the beginning and ground of salvation, freely given, without works, and to be apprehended only by faith.
Sanctification is not an action but a state of being: a growth in grace little by little in the life of obedience and good works. That is to say, justification, while preceding sanctification, is concomitant also with it. Hooker, Andrewes, Jackson, Downname, and Ussher (classical Anglicans all) felt that, although sanctification is consequent to justification, the latter cannot be an act once and for all and "in a moment", as Davenant said, because justification is just as necessary to the process of sanctification and for the final judgement. Forgiveness of sins in the regenerate and our disposition at the last judgement cannot be made to depend upon our own imperfect sanctification, but must be assigned wholly to Christ's righteousness imputed to us. Thus, sanctification follows justification in the same sense that the righteousness and obedience of sanctification follow necessarily the grace of justification.

Justification is, nevertheless, a continuing relationship with God. We never cease to suffer the need of being freely justified and forgiven by an acceptance of our imputed righteousness, despite the unworthiness of our sanctification. Thus, instead of holding justification to be "in a moment" as Davenant did, Hooker, Andrewes, Ussher, Donne, and Downname affirmed the continual necessity of justification. Justification is concomitant with sanctification throughout the whole state of salvation. The dominant concern of Lancelot Andrewes, when he attempted to refute the doctrine of inherent righteousness as formal cause, was not so much to stress the gratuitous nature of initial forgiveness and adoption, but rather specifically to deny that at the final judgement we shall be able to plead anything other than Christ's free, unearned, unmerited love, mercifully forgiving us despite the utter inadequacy of any (inherent) righteousness of our own. Ussher and Downname emphatically concurred that justification is necessary for the process of sanctification. It was Jackson's conjecture that the continuing necessity of Christ's atoning work is the real meaning of his eternal priesthood (which, Jackson alleged, was contravened by the inherent righteousness doctrine of the Council of Trent).

John Donne adhered in substance to this same school of thought, but his method of discussion is very different, even idiosyncratic.
Other sermons of the period which discussed justification tended to be scrupulously worked out essays expounding a particular statement of formal cause, the relationship between justification and sanctification, imputation, infusion, and so on. This was true of Andrewes, Ussher, Barrow, Taylor, and, to a somewhat lesser extent, of Hooker. Contrasted with the other surviving sermons of the period the sermons of Donne are unique. Donne's discussions of the doctrine of justification eschew the technical theological language, the special vocabulary, and the abstraction of most seventeenth-century polemical theology. His sermons do manifest a clear soteriological doctrine, but we do not find in them much use of such terms as formal cause, imputation, infusion, and the like. Justification is described in particular situations and proclaimed in terms of specific actions. He preached justification; he did not preach about justification. He eloquently evoked the qualities and properties of sanctification, but he did not preach about sanctification. It might be contended that Donne preached of soteriology "existentially"—and that he was alone in his century in so doing.

The predominant view of the Gospel held in seventeenth-century England assumed justification to be a doctrinal description of the application to sinners of the atonement. Justification initially confers entrance into the new covenant, and it is subsequently the ground of all forgiveness and sanctification. All Anglicans rejected the Tridentine doctrine of justification and most considered the formal cause of justification to be the imputation of Christ's righteousness. Justifying faith was regarded not as "assent to doctrine" but as trust and affirmation in the atoning work of God in Christ. Faith was said to justify only as an instrument which apprehends grace, and not as a work imputed for righteousness. Justification, however, was regarded as only an aspect of salvation, inseparable from sanctification, the growth in grace through good works of obedience.

There were certain questions posed by the classical Anglican doctrine which did not receive altogether satisfactory answers. Few of the Anglican divines attempted to explain how the unrighteous are initially contacted and justified, and most contented themselves with the assertion that a sinner's transgressions are, in fact, freely
forgiven, his sin is rooted up (though not totally extirpated) and covered, and himself, therefore, reckoned or imputed as righteous, pronounced so, and begun to be made so. This would seem to mean that, for example, if an unrighteous man were to die immediately after his justification, he would be granted entrance into heaven: without that righteousness specifically required by Scripture—“unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees you will in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven”.

ORIGINS OF ANOTHER, NEW DOCTRINE

Solutions to such difficulties in the classical position were attempted by the school of Taylor, Thorndike, and Hammond. To guard against the possibility that an unrighteous sinner might get to heaven they postulated a minimum degree of righteousness under the term “faith”, which would be acceptable to God as righteous on account of the righteousness of Christ which has purchased the new covenant. The Council of Trent had, on the other hand, attempted to circumvent the same difficulty by a declaration that in justification God actually infuses into the sinner a righteousness for which, since it is in him (inherent), God regards him as righteous. A justified person, therefore, who died at once would be already righteous, and there can be no question of his entrance into heaven.

Taylor, Thorndike, Hammond, and Bull agreed with the earlier Carolines that the regenerate had in them no such inherent righteousness infused at justification. They differed, however, from other Carolines and from Trent, in the way they attempted to meet the two difficulties. They approached the problem, in fact, by formulating a new doctrine of the covenant of grace. Sinners are justified when they turn from their wickedness and show a measure of true righteousness. Thus, if a person dies soon after justification, he may have at least some righteousness on entering heaven. Righteousness required as a condition of the covenant is not, however, considered acceptable for justification in the way that Trent’s inherent righteousness is, but it is considered and accounted as adequate because of the more lenient conditions of the new covenant. Some measure of righteousness is required for justification, then, but such imperfect
righteousness is acceptable for salvation because the conditions of the new covenant are more lenient. This doctrine disposed of the problem of an unrighteous justified person (who dies immediately afterwards) getting to heaven by requiring only that he be a little righteous. The problem of "legal fiction" was solved by asserting that God in justification reckons as just one who may, in fact, be only a little just.

Not only does this argument fail adequately to remove the difficulties it was meant to answer, but it also introduces two new problems which are even more vexatious. One problem concerned the possible Pelagianism involved in requiring righteousness as a prior condition of forgiveness and justification. This was the basis of much of the contemporary criticism of the new school. Another problem concerned the propagation of the strange doctrine of a "more lenient covenant" with its concept of a "lowered market". Having denied that the infusion of inherent righteousness or the imputation of Christ's righteousness may be taken as the cause by which one is justified, this doctrine forced a conclusion that, on account of Christ's atonement, God accepts and reckons as righteous our sincere but otherwise wholly inadequate righteousness. Taylor, Hammond, Thorndike, Bull, Baxter, Fowler, "J.W.", and the author of The Whole Duty of Man were so preoccupied with antinomian inferences in the more gratuitous descriptions of the Gospel, that they frequently prescribed for the unregenerate more severe and arduous conditions for justification than they required of the regenerate within the covenant.

The works of Hooker, Jackson, Andrewes, Davenant, Donne, Downname, and Ussher were produced before the shock of the Civil War (and the subsequent flood of published Puritan theology). The "second generation" of Carolines were removed by more than time from their predecessors, and it is perhaps not surprising that they introduced radically new and strange doctrines to Anglican theology.

Bishop Barlow's observation that their new "moralism" could be dated from 1640 is substantially correct. The responsible Anglican figures, so far as the doctrine of justification is concerned, belonged
to a previous generation. The two generations were separated not only by their respective doctrines but also by convulsive historical events. The effect of those events upon Anglican soteriology, and the subsequent significance for theology of the new teaching that came about, will be the subject of the concluding chapter.
Conclusions

A radically significant and often unnoticed turning point for English Christianity was the watershed in the middle of the seventeenth century which separated the view of the Gospel held in the first half of the century from the view of the second half with its trend toward moralism. The earlier view, though by no means perfect, manifested a blend of doctrine and ethics, Christian dogma and morals, justification and sanctification, and produced a devotional literature that was profoundly and functionally pastoral. The later view rent the fabric of soteriology and split the elements of religion so radically that doctrine became almost irrelevant and ethics became so harsh as to be cruel. There was an ineluctable movement away from the Christian faith of the earlier divines towards a moralism masquerading as faith.

The divines who introduced this trend towards moralism postulated a freedom of will in sinners that was of Pelagian proportions. Their remedy for sin consisted largely of exhortations to lead a holy life. Moreover, the only verifiable significance attached to the atonement was the moral example of Christ. (One of the titles of Jeremy Taylor’s life of Christ was, appropriately, *The Great Exemplar.*) Starting from assumptions that can be characterized only as Pelagian, soteriological thought, by an implacable logic, moved inexorably through an exemplarist atonement, to an adoptionist christology, to a Socinian deity, and finally from deism to atheism. The tragedy is that many of the divines responsible saw what was happening but were unable to see how they themselves were contributing to it.

George Bull, for example, clearly discerned the threat to Christian faith inherent in Socinianism and tried desperately to forestall it
with his *Defence of the Nicene Faith*. However, it is impossible to
defend the Trinitarian position of Athanasius while in effect con­
futing his soteriology. Trinitarian theology is unnecessary and
irrelevant to such a doctrine of salvation as Bull unfolds in *Har­
monia Apostolica*. Coleridge’s dictum, directed at Jeremy Taylor, is
actually applicable to the whole situation—“Socinianism is as inevit­
able a deduction from Taylor’s scheme as Deism or Atheism is from
Socinianism.”

It is, therefore, certainly worthwhile to evaluate the meaning of
this trend away from orthodoxy, to attempt to explain why it
occurred, and to point out some of its unfortunate consequences,
especially for devotional and pastoral theology.

The “holy living” school of thought was not merely a minority
position expounded by a few Anglicans during the seventeenth
century. On the contrary, Hammond, Taylor, and Thorndike be­
longed to the “second generation” Carolines, and their doctrine of
justification, along with that of Richard Baxter, seems to have been
proposed no earlier than 1640. Despite the many opposing views on
the subject of justification among contemporary Carolines, there was
relatively little criticism of the “holy living” school of thought.
Though there was indeed abundant criticism of Bull’s work, the
mere fact that it was produced and twice defended by him in
subsequent works is evidence of the strength of the newer doctrines,
especially notable when contrast is made with the virtual unanimity
that had prevailed among the Carolines before 1640.

It is, however, easier to demonstrate the existence of the trend
towards moralism than to weigh its importance. It is true that
Hammond, Taylor, Thorndike, and Bull are but a few by com­
parison with the far larger number of Anglicans who adhered to
the “gratuitous justification” school, but the former were enormously
more influential than their numbers might suggest. Few divines of
the seventeenth century (and probably no Anglicans) had so vast
an influence as Jeremy Taylor. *Holy Living* had reached its four­
teenth edition in the year after the death of Charles II, and *Holy
Dying* its twenty-first edition by 1710! Henry Hammond’s *Practical
Catechism* had had its twelfth edition by 1685. Nor may we ignore
the widespread impact of *The Whole Duty of Man* upon such as William Law, John Wesley, Charles Simeon, and the Tractarians. If the influence of Thorndike was restricted on account of his preponderously awkward style, this was more than offset by the promulgation these views enjoyed in the more lucid works of Richard Baxter. It is indeed unlikely that we could overstate the influence of the latter great Independent divine. It is, for example, astonishing to contemplate the uncritical use made of Baxter’s writings by John Wesley, who published without any criticism whatever Baxter’s earliest and least defendable work, *Aphorisms on Justification*.

The prodigious influence of Taylor, Baxter, and *The Whole Duty of Man*, the relative absence of contemporary Anglican criticism of their new doctrine, the mere fact that Bull produced his works at all, and the absence of any respectable alternative discussion of soteriology, make it incontestably apparent that the trend during the seventeenth century away from the classical or orthodox Anglican position possessed a remarkable virulence and an implacable momentum.

**SOME HISTORICAL OBSERVATIONS**

The trends in doctrine during the seventeenth century can be understood only in the light of other transitions occurring at the same time. The shaking of the very foundations of established society in the mid-seventeenth century had a profound effect upon the theology produced in the midst of it. The concern about immorality and lawlessness, occasionally expressed under Charles I, grew into a spectre of antinomianism which cast a darker and darker shadow over nearly all the theology written well into Restoration times. Seventeenth-century teaching concerning the Gospel cannot be separated from antinomianism and the fear of it.

Until 1640 English theologians were in substantial agreement in their understanding of the Gospel, but following the upheavals in society which began with the Long Parliament a new soteriology began to emerge. Richard Baxter, as a young chaplain in the army, became alarmed by what he considered to be a lawless and libertine
gospel being preached to the soldiers. To counteract such libertarian practices he produced his first work, *Aphorisms on Justification*. Although he belatedly excused himself by noting that this work was written without benefit of libraries, he nevertheless spent much of his career defending it without ever appreciably modifying his position. Thorndike acknowledged that it was fear of antinomianism which moved him to alter his position on the doctrine of justification from that which he had been taught at Cambridge. Bull, like Baxter, began his work with similar motives (to correct the immorality of Restoration behaviour). Again, like Baxter, he defined his position in his first work and spent much of the balance of his career defending it. It would seem that the most plausible explanation of the dichotomy within the works of Taylor and Hammond is that they believed that they could not preach or teach during such chaotic times what they really believed to be true concerning the Gospel because of the antinomian inferences which might be drawn from such a candid exposition.

Some historians of the period reckon the doctrine of “free justification” or “justification by grace” as a Puritan concept unleashed during the Long Parliament. Quite the contrary is the fact. Nearly every theologian, prior to 1640, whether Anglican, Roman Catholic, or Protestant, accepted “free justification” and “justification by grace”. It was only during and after the events of “the troubles” that a new doctrine, that of Baxter, Taylor, Thorndike, Hammond, and Bull arose—a doctrine also propounded by numerous non-episcopal divines and by the Quaker Barclay.

There were, to be sure, a few exceptions to the unanimity that prevailed before 1640. While Bishop William Forbes’ work, written in 1634 (but not published until 1658), was not in detail parallel to the position of the later “holy living” divines, it did afford a foretaste of that doctrine, by requiring, for example, obedience as a prior condition of justification. But Forbes basically considered justification to be both free and by grace (the formal cause, he held, is infusion of inherent righteousness together with remission of sins). Forbes was, however, in at least some of his teachings an exception to the Caroline theology of justification prior to the Civil War. His
departures from orthodoxy may be explained by the special historical and geographical context in which he lived and worked. He was, after all, a bishop in Scotland in the 1630s, and the disruption of religious order had reached Scotland well before it overtook England. Forbes was the first major Caroline divine to demur importantly from classical Anglicanism. When events led to upheaval in England, many more would demur, Anglicans and non-episcopal divines alike. Bishop Forbes was, in fact, their precursor.

Antinomianism (coupled with the fear it engendered) must be accounted a very significant contributor to the growth of the new moralism. It is evident, from any point of view, that antinomian inferences could more easily be drawn from the soteriology typical of Anglicanism at the beginning of the seventeenth century than from that of the Council of Trent or of the “holy living” school of thought. Whatever the abstract relationship of an ordered and secure society to the substance of the doctrine of justification, there was manifestly in seventeenth-century England a profound interaction of the two. Emphasis upon the free nature of grace and forgiveness tended to threaten the ordered structure of society, which led to modification of the doctrine itself in favour of “conditions” intended to guard against antinomianism, and also it led to a new emphasis upon the centrality of holy living.

Archbishop Ussher affords us an instructive example of how an atmosphere of stress and fear can affect the concern for soteriology. In 1656, in the midst of the “troubles”, an anonymous writer entreated the Archbishop to explain his views on justification and sanctification “because I had formally heard him preach on these points things that seemed to make those mysteries more clearly intelligible to my poor capacity than anything I had heard from any other”. Ussher had been indeed deeply concerned in the 1630s to explicate such matters lucidly, but by 1656, in these “perilous times”, concern for orthodox soteriology withered. He barely mentioned the matter about which he was interrogated, but launched immediately into dire predictions of an imminent apocalypse as the certain consequence of disturbing contemporary events.

Fear of antinomianism cannot, of course, be separated from the
historical events which evoked it. The impact upon seventeenth-century theology of extra-theological events is indicated, for example, by the conference convened at the Duke of Buckingham's house to discuss Montague's works, which terminated in a request by five bishops for a royal injunction banning public discussion of specified controversial theological matters. That request was granted. Charles I and Archbishop Laud seem to have suppressed an explosion of religious controversy which had been seething under the surface for some time before the Long Parliament. It is probable that the religious unrest prevalent in sixteenth-century Europe was deferred in England by Tudor authority and did not erupt there until well after the advent of the Stuarts. Historical myopia (viewing the seventeenth century from a nineteenth or twentieth-century perspective) has led us to hold an inadequate appreciation of the tenuousness and precariousness with which people had then regarded the religious structure of society. The concept of tolerance, now so prominent, did not develop suddenly, and it was inconceivable in 1640 that different theological doctrines and polity should or could coexist in the same society.

Even the sects who were themselves under oppression exclaimed against their rulers, not as being persecutors at all, but as persecuting those who professed the truth; and each sect, as it obtained the power to wield the secular weapon, esteemed it also a duty, as well as a privilege, not to bear the sword in vain. 8

Episcopal, Presbyterian, Independent, and Roman Catholic divines (and also the Quakers and Anabaptists) preached distinct, often antagonistic gospels, frequently disagreeing even among themselves, and the resultant controversies excited a concern and alarm that is all too easily underestimated to-day. It is indeed easier to appreciate the precariousness of the social and political situation that developed in mid-seventeenth-century England than to grasp the disorder of theology. To a theologian nurtured in the seventeenth-century relationship between Church and State and the rôle of the Episcopacy within this concept, the events of the century must have been well-nigh traumatic. There was, at any rate, great alarm expressed by divines on all sides over the events which seemed to them to threaten
the very foundations of society. Whatever its causes may have been, this alarm had profound and, on the whole, adverse effects upon Christian soteriology.

The paucity of Anglican criticism of the “holy living” teaching about a more lenient covenant and the “lowered market” not only indicates the strength of the trend but was also directly a factor in its growth. There was, to be sure, some contemporary objection to Jeremy Taylor, but it was characterized by a notable reticence. In a letter to Bishop Barlow, for example, Bishop Sanderson laments that “Dr Taylor is so peremptory and pertinacious of his error, as not to harken to the sober advices of his grave, reverend, and learned friends”, and he urges Barlow not to name Taylor in reproving the error, “that there might be in these times of so much dislocation as little notice taken of differences amongst ourselves, as is possible . . .”.

Contrast this reception of Jeremy Taylor’s work with that accorded the two works of Richard Montague some thirty years earlier. Though Montague’s views were not nearly so vulnerable to criticism as Taylor’s they elicited far more adverse response. Montague was even indicted before Parliament, and his works were the cause of a conference at the Duke of Buckingham’s house of some half-dozen learned divines who solemnly deliberated upon their orthodoxy. Bishops Laud, Howson, and Buckeridge later wrote to Buckingham that some of the arguments Montague’s accusers had made against him were indeed “such as are expressly the resolved doctrine of the Church of England, and these he is bound to maintain”.

Following the Civil War, however, the situation so changed that Thorndike could publicly acknowledge that he had abandoned the doctrine of the Thirty-Nine Articles, and Taylor himself was able to advance flamboyant new doctrines without effective public opposition. This shift of attitude can in part be explained by reference to the remark of Sanderson that “in these times of so much dislocation as little notice [should be] taken of differences amongst ourselves as possible”.

From a responsible theological perspective, as a matter of fact, the “holy living” doctrine of justification is actually much more vul-
nerable to criticism than was that of the Council of Trent (which was unanimously rejected by all Carolines). The "holy living" divines involved themselves in much the same difficulty about sin in the regenerate as did Trent, but they compounded confusion by requiring obedience before the grace of justification, an error Trent had carefully avoided. Even so, George Bull's theology represented a more extravagant departure from classical Anglicanism than that of any other member of the "holy living" school. While it evoked considerable criticism, it remains difficult to explain how so radical a departure would occur, and how it came to be so influential as it did.

Bull was fortunate to have as his bishop a powerful and influential patron. Bishop Nicholson had suffered excessively during the Commonwealth, and was later appointed to the See of Gloucester. His patronage of Bull is surprising because he espoused very different theological positions. He was a close friend of Jeremy Taylor (having been associated with him in an educational enterprise during the Commonwealth), but in his sermons and catechism he expounded a view of the Gospel much closer to that of Davenant than to that of Bull. The latter informs us that the Bishop approved and encouraged the publication of the *Harmonia*, and, without doubt, it was published with Nicholson's consent. We are forced to conclude either that Nicholson had changed his views on justification, or that he had decided that different views should be taught about justification.

Two explanations have been given for the influence of Bull's doctrine of justification. Morris Fuller, in his *Life of Bishop Davenport*, suggests that Bull's work on justification gained prestige from his work on the *Nicene Faith*. The latter work, however, was not published until fifteen years after the *Harmonia*, and could not possibly have enhanced its reputation during the Caroline period. In fact, Bull had great difficulty in getting the Nicene work published, having been turned down by three publishers and only finally getting it to press through the influence of John Fell. Bull was not at the time the influential Bishop of St David's he was to become,
but a relatively unknown priest just venturing upon the publication of his first work.

A second explanation for Bull’s influence suggests that the flattering biography of him by his devoted pupil, Robert Nelson, enlarged his reputation. This may help to explain his fame in later days, but again it cannot account for his initial popularity since the biography was not written until the eighteenth century. Fear of antinomianism and reluctance on the part of the episcopacy to criticize Taylor, Thorndike, and Hammond during the Commonwealth may be construed as contributing factors to the growth of the “holy living” doctrine. Such considerations are, however, less applicable in the case of Bull who wrote, after all, during the reign of Charles II. Bull was criticized not only by Tully and Gataker, but by Bishop Morley in a pastoral letter, and by Dr Barlow in some lectures at Oxford. Later, as Bishop of Lincoln, Barlow wrote two private letters to a priest of his diocese strongly reiterating classical Anglican soteriology, but he was, in these letters, only implicitly critical of Bull. The fact that his letters were not published until after Barlow’s death is another indication of the reticence of controversial discussion that developed among Anglicans. Neither lack of criticism nor fear of antinomianism, however, fully explains the growth of “holy living” moralism, especially as it proliferated towards the end of the seventeenth century.

SOME THEOLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

More important than fear of antinomianism or paucity of criticism as negative contributions to the growth of the new soteriology was the absence of a viable systematic theology. There was no systematic theology that enjoyed a general acceptance. Confusion and disagreement were more characteristic of discussions about soteriology. Eschatological issues such as the doctrine of purgatory were disposed of, for the most part, merely by denouncing the Roman doctrine. It was an eschatological concern that moved Hammond to reject the notion that justification does not include and presuppose sanctification with the argument that, if justification came first and the
justified died an instant later, “it must follow, either that the un-
sanctified man is glorified, or the justified man is not glorified”.

Denial of the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory excluded the
possibility of growth in grace after death, and this, in turn, neces-
sarily impoverished seventeenth-century soteriology.

Doctrines of grace in seventeenth-century England were more
often than not either Calvinistic or downright heretical. Such Caro-
lines as escaped the influence of Calvin seem to have escaped as
well from any real concern for theology itself. To avoid charges of
heresy or of Calvinism after the first quarter of the seventeenth
century it was almost necessary to eschew theology altogether. Laud,
Heylyn, and Cosin were not Calvinistic but, for the most part, they
confined their attentions and their writings (not inconsiderable in
volume) to practical matters, to specific questions like transubstantia-
tion, or to catechetical writings on the creed. There was among all
the Carolines not one systematic theologian. Those who ventured at
all into substantive theological discussion expressed themselves
mostly in the vocabulary and arguments of the prevalent Reformation
theology of nature and grace.

Controversies about substantive issues such as election and free
will proved disturbing to many authorities. Another letter written
to the Duke of Buckingham (eight months earlier than the one cited
above) concerning Richard Montague and signed by Laud, Andrewes,
Neile, Montaigne, and Buckeridge pleads, “that his Majesty
prohibit all parties . . . any further controverting of these
questions by public preaching or writing . . . ”. This was an
“earnest” of the theological unrest that came with the Long Parlia-
ment, and the efforts that were made to preserve a semblance of
order by prohibiting public discussion and debate on controversial
theology. Such a theological moratorium is indicative of the confu-
sion about soteriology (specifically about the doctrines of grace and
election) which rapidly spread, and of the absence of any effective
theological response to the confusion. The conclusions to which the
doctrines of grace and election were forced were denounced as
dangerous or ignored as embarrassing. The negative and political
approach to (or withdrawal from) the problem (however necessary
it may have been) certainly demonstrates powerfully the complete lack at the time of any responsible alternative systematic theology. Election, grace, and freedom proved annoying to the bishops in 1625, and to the Presbyterians and Independents in the 1640s and 1650s, and the same problems (which might have provided a theological context for discussion of the doctrines of justification and sanctification) were actually, by the extremes to which they were often carried, a source of anxiety, recrimination, and disrepute.

Even more important and basic was another deficiency which had a most adverse effect upon the stewardship of the Gospel in the seventeenth century. The conception of sin set forth by most theologians, especially after 1640, was one of transgression. Sin was seldom described as a condition of separation (alienation) from which transgressions flourish as symptoms. Bishop William Nicholson, contending against Pelagianism, speaks of the transgressions of un-baptized infants rather than their situation or condition of sin. Hammond and Forbes discuss sin almost exclusively as if it constituted acts of transgression. Sin for Taylor is an avoidable act. Sin for Bull is breaking the law, disobeying a demand which could have been obeyed. Even Davenant, discussing the sinful nature of concupiscence, stresses the transgressions which spring from concupiscence.

The distinction between sin as a separation and sins as expressions of disobedience became increasingly rare as the century unfolded. Since sin was considered by most as an action rather than as a condition, imputation was all too often described as merely an external reality. Imputation of Christ’s righteousness became more and more external to the justified person in the attempt to avoid any internal (inherent) pretension of infused righteousness in the regenerate. In contrast to earlier theologians such as Hooker, Donne, and Downname (also George Walker and John Owen), there came to be a general failure to conceive justification in terms of a new situation, a new being. Failure to appreciate the ontological nature of sin precluded for most Carolines any ontological description of justification.

Coleridge points out that Taylor and his contemporaries so pre-
occupied themselves with the phenomena of sin that they lost sight of its noumenous origins. Coleridge had studied the writings of Emmanuel Kant in Germany, and it might be assumed that it was from the German philosopher that he acquired these terms. It is, however, also possible (and particularly significant for this study) that he might have learned them from Richard Hooker. In a discussion of our new relationship with Christ Hooker remarks that "Christ is in us, saith Gregory Nazianzene, not κατὰ τὸ φανόμενον but κατὰ τὸ νοούμενον". Such a grasp of noumenous reality as Hooker displayed had largely vanished by mid-century.

The weakness of classical (orthodox) Anglican soteriology which led to its gradual demise as an element of Anglican theology under Charles II may well have been its lack of ontological dimensions, especially as related to the doctrine of "imputation of Christ's righteousness". Whatever its use in confuting the Tridentine doctrine of inherent righteousness, it remains that, at times, it led to the unhappy conclusion that justification is external to the regenerate. Emphasis upon sin as a transgression had a comparable effect upon the theology of the "holy living" divines. When they discussed justification as a property of the new covenant they explained it more as a method of overcoming transgressions than as a wholly new situation of being—as a new ontological condition. Thus, with rare exceptions, inadequate understanding of the nature of sin issued inevitably in an inadequate understanding of the Gospel.

SPIRITUAL ENTROPY

Study of soteriology in seventeenth-century England provides an interesting historical illustration of what might be called "spiritual entropy" (the dissipation or "running-down" of energy), or the tendency of theological positions originally designed to be critical of pretension to become twisted or turned into the basis of another, more pernicious pretension. For instance, justification was originally conceived to be "by faith" in contrast to the pretension of soliciting the favour of God by virtue of (man's) works. But out of the same tradition over a period of time this article of faith became the foun-
dation of a far more preposterous pretension. Faith itself became a work which by virtue of its righteousness as a (good) work merited justification.

Similarly, the doctrine of election (originally a humble affirmation of God’s initiative) became, during this period, the basis of a presumptuous and obnoxious exclusiveness. The doctrine of “assurance” (intended to be a comforting confirmation of the love and forgiveness of God) was gradually corrupted into a doctrine of undoubted election for a select (and self-appointed) minority. The word “imputation” had been exercised as a witness against any presumption that righteousness within a person could satisfy the requirements God has established for righteousness. However, in time “imputation” came to mean, not the “imputation of Christ’s righteousness”, but the “imputation of faith”, and faith was reconstructed to mean our “sincere endeavours” and our “evangelical” righteousness: thus, the imputation of our righteousness, not the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, eventually became that by which we are justified. 20

THE DISSOCIATION OF SENSIBILITY

There was a multi-dimensional and pervasive split of thought and passion in Western civilization that began in the sixteenth but reached its culmination in the seventeenth century. Paul Tillich describes it this way:

The history of industrial society, the end of which we are experiencing, represents the history of the victory of the philosophy of the unconscious, irrational will. The symbolic name for the complete victory of the philosophy of consciousness is René Descartes; and the victory became complete even in religion, at the moment when Protestant theology became the ally of the Cartesian emphasis on man as pure consciousness on the one hand, and a mechanical process called body on the other hand. 21

Blaise Pascal was the cultural embodiment of a blend of consciousness and unconsciousness that expired when Western civilization elected the contrary “rationalism” of his contemporary, René Descartes. This was indeed a “Cartesian Faux Pas” (though in a quite
different sense from that intended by William Temple). Since Pascal neither culture nor the Church has grasped the totality (and therefore the Christianity) of the "grandeur and misery of man".

Professor Owen Chadwick has pointed out the wider context in which any particular judgement of the seventeenth-century split in soteriology must be grounded.

The reaction against Calvinism was a European movement. Indeed it was a movement not confined to Protestantism, for the developments of the theology of the Counter-Reformation at the end of the sixteenth century and during the seventeenth often went beyond normal limits in emphasizing the power of the human will to salvation and the needs of the soul to co-operate with grace upon the roads to sanctification and to heaven. The perils of the Jesuit theology of grace in the seventeenth century are nearly as well known as the perils of their moral theology which Pascal portrayed in the Provincial Letters. 22

T. S. Eliot, as was noted at the outset of this study, has pointed to a phenomenon in literature whereby the profound and pervasive philosophical, theological, and psychological separation manifested itself among seventeenth-century poets as a "dissociation of sensibility". Jeremy Taylor and George Bull obviously did not cause this development (any more than Milton and Dryden were causes of its exfoliation into poetry), but they were dynamic symptoms of it.

An effort to explain the unfortunate transition in exegesis of the Gospel from Richard Hooker to Richard Baxter would have to include at least these considerations: rampant fear of antinomianism, profound social and religious upheavals (postponed by Tudor authority) characteristic of the reign of the Stuarts (and the interregnum), paucity of criticism of the new soteriology as it began to proliferate, the influence of distortions of such related doctrines as election and grace, the absence of any viable alternative systematic theology, outright "spiritual entropy", and the pervasive schizophaenia in Western culture during the seventeenth century between thought and passion ("dissociation of sensibility") which infected not only literature and philosophy but also theology and religion. Whatever the causes, the seventeenth century bequeathed to the
eighteenth century in England a soteriology which hopelessly alienated ethics and moral theology from their foundations in theological doctrine. What had been the typical synthesis of Anglican theology came to have no effective champion, and exegesis of the Gospel within the burgeoning moralism that afflicted the end of the century was full of awkward and debilitating consequences.

**CONSEQUENCES OF THE IMPOVERISHMENT OF SOTERIOLOGICAL ORTHODOXY**

Whatever the limitations of the Anglican position in the first part of the seventeenth century, its criticism of the Council of Trent has historical importance. Classical Anglicanism never objected to actual righteousness infused at justification; it recoiled only at the proclamation of such a doctrine as the formal cause of justification. It shuddered away from and shunned, prophetically, any teaching which, in effect, denied the possibility of a person being justified and a sinner at one and the same time. Father Victor White, Roman Catholic Dominican specialist on the work of C. G. Jung, describes well the limitations that the Council of Trent put upon pastoral and moral theology. He points out that conscious transgressions against established sanctions rarely are the cause of sickness, but rather it is unconscious tension and conflict which is ordinarily destructive to health and humanity.

This idea of “unconscious sin” is often a difficult one for the moral theologian to grasp. *Especially if* he has been brought up in the traditions of post-Reformation Catholicism, he may find it particularly hard to square with his correct notions that mortal sin must be voluntary, performed with full knowledge and full consent. But it is a fact that the psyche is much less indulgent to unconscious breaches of its own laws and demands . . . and will revenge itself for their disregard . . . 23

Father White offers a poignant and enlightened example of the pastoral implications of post-Tridentine moral theology:

*We know of a young woman who had lived for some time with a married man, fully aware that what she was doing was morally wrong*
in the eyes of her church and her parents, but with no psycho-pathological symptoms. Her parents came to hear of the liaison, brought strong pressure upon her to break it up, succeeded in doing so, and in bringing her home to the parental roof. At once, obsessive guilt took hold of her, and she became quite incapacitated for life. Her sense of guilt was clearly to be attributed, not to her having lived with her lover, but to her having left him and submitted weakly to parental pressure and allowing herself to accept externally the parents’ moral judgement in spite of her own convictions. Whatever the objective standards of right and wrong, she had “sinned psychologically” in an infantile regression to dependence on the parents, in which she felt she had abdicated her adult autonomy and responsibilities.24

He appends this valuable observation:

The exclusive emphasis of later theologians on “full knowledge and consent” can have the unfortunate result of putting a certain premium on unconsciousness, irresponsibility and infantilism.25

To escape the anathema of the Council of Trent, “unconscious sin”, in this context, must be put in inverted commas, and the notion that “mortal sin must be voluntary, performed with full knowledge and consent” must be considered “correct”. However, it was not only the classical Anglicans, but also the Saints Thomas Aquinas, Bernard, and Augustine, who recognized that sin is also in part unconscious and acts of sin may be committed in ignorance.

English Christianity after the Civil War, however, tended to share with Trent a peculiar pastoral myopia suggesting that somehow compulsion, surprises, passion, inadvertent and unconscious feelings or even actions are morally less culpable or not even sin at all. The consequence, of course, is that an unwholesome premium is placed on ignorance, irresponsibility, and infantilism. Morality is deprived of its roots, and is disastrously separated from orthodox Christian dogma. This was the origin and the curse of the moralism which now is ascendant in the West. It exhorts a power of freedom that fallen man does not possess; it is a religion of control (called “self-control”) and not redemption, and it ends inevitably in despair rather than in hope. The moral imperatives exacted of men are predicated on a definition of sin as only wilful and deliberate,
thereby implying that the problem of sin is essentially superficial, a misconception that culminates in a false hope of self-justification.

The seriousness of this development is difficult to appraise nowadays because we are all afflicted with the consequences of the thing we seek to appraise. Eight or ten twentieth-century theologians have written books discussing Jeremy Taylor’s theology, and not one of them has discerned its grave imperfections. The pastoral cruelty of the theology of Taylor (or of The Whole Duty of Man) is usually countenanced as a legitimate aspect of Christian teaching, or as a necessary corrective to antinomian inferences from the Gospel. What goes largely unnoticed is the radical distinction of the doctrine of the second half of the seventeenth century from that of the first half—and the loss of theological integrity that occurred. There was no lack of exhortations to good works and of denunciation of sin in the works of Hooker, Andrewes, Davenant, and Donne, and these continue throughout the century but without the corresponding emphasis on forgiveness and God’s initiative. All is exhortation and denunciation in the public works of Taylor, Hammond, Bull, and in The Whole Duty of Man.

Contrast Holy Living and Holy Dying by Jeremy Taylor with Disce Mori: Learn to Die (1600) and Disce Vivere: Learn to Live (1602) by Christopher Sutton. Sutton rose to none of the majesty of Taylor’s prose, but neither did he descend with Taylor to an exclusion of God’s love from sinners. Or, contrast Richard Hooker’s treatment of despair with that found in The Whole Duty of Man. Hooker recognized that we cannot overcome sin, or more particularly despair, until we have first learned how to love. He was explicit that “fear worketh no man’s inclination to repentance, till somewhat else have wrought in us love also”. The unknown author of The Whole Duty of Man did not manifest a comparable kerygmatic concern. Christianity’s purpose, he said, is to produce righteousness, and the method is to persuade sinners of their own damnation and its nearness. The assumption is plain that the power of sin can be broken by the power of good will. No wonder, then, that, according to The Whole Duty of Man, the purpose of preaching is to “remind us of our duties”.

Typical modern discussions of the work of Jeremy Taylor evidence no dissatisfaction with the pastoral consequences of his rootless moralism.

When he [Taylor] comes to deal with excessive grief for the inroads of death upon those whom we love he still calls for unquestioning faith in the goodness of God and he reinforces his religious advice with arguments drawn from the moralists of Greece and Rome to show that grief is not only wrong but unreasonable.²⁹

Too few theologians since the age of Hooker and Donne have understood how extraneous and futile it is to tell a person in excessive grief that submission to his condition is sinful.

To understand the existential manifestations of grief or guilt it is helpful in our day to hearken to those who regularly encounter the results of moralistic theology. Gilbert Russell, a London psychiatrist, tells us of a woman whose history is, it seems to me, a parable of what resulted from the movement from orthodoxy to moralism in the seventeenth century.

A woman in middle life consulted an analyst on account of fatigue, agitation, insomnia and depression, and an inability to get on with her job which amounted at last to breakdown. She was the daughter of a well-known professional man who, she said, was notorious for his marital infidelities. After many years of abuse and humiliation his wife, the patient's mother, broke down under the strain and was taken to hospital, where she stayed for many months. The daughter was at this time fourteen years old. While she and her father were living alone in the house (so her story went), he seduced her, and for the whole period of her mother's absence she slept in her father's bed. (This may have been fact or fantasy: in this connection, it matters little which.) Her mother returned in due course to her home and husband, but soon became worse and died. The girl's distress and misery were beyond description. It seemed to her that she could not forgive her father for such a betrayal. She was consumed by hate. She went to one confessor after another, seeking relief and pardon—a search that continued for the next thirty years. The advice she received from them all was in substance the same: it was not for her to pass judgment upon her father, outrageous though his conduct had certainly been; she must strive to forgive him, however impossible it seemed. In spite—or because—of this counsel, and determined efforts
to apply it, her anxiety increased. In the end she resolved to consult a psychiatrist. Asked if she had any dreams, she replied that one dream, which terrified her, recurred again and again. In it she and her father were walking together, each with a dog on a lead. She was making frantic attempts to get away from her father, but whenever she started to leave him he whistled to her dog, to which she was so much attached (by affection as well as the lead) that she could not abandon it; when the dog turned back to her father, she must needs go too.

The dream revealed in a moment what thirty years of spiritual counselling had not—that her problem was not to forgive a father she hated, but to forgive herself for still loving him. No pastoral help could avail until there was first laid bare the incestuous bond which held her. She was still in love with her father, and burdened with the guilt of that unnatural relationship. The dream showed what her real problem was, and psychotherapy helped her to deal with it. Until we are brought face to face with the actual cause of our symptoms and conflicts, on the level where they exist and not on the level where we expect to find them, we are in the hopeless position of a man exploring the roof for a burglar at work in the cellar.80

Russell’s “case history” reminds us that there is a level of man’s need not touched by much that has been called religion. Theologically, we have in large part lost touch with this deeper level since the time of classical Anglican theology. This woman’s whole sense of duty (her “holy living”) required that she control, suppress, and eradicate her sin without the consolation she might have derived from the reassurance of forgiveness by God while she was still in her sins. Had she been nurtured in the Christianity of John Donne’s sermons, the devotional literature of Christopher Sutton, and the theology of Richard Hooker, there is every likelihood that she would never have become ill.

The theology of John Donne deserves more conscientious attention than it has so far received. He was not only an eloquent advocate for orthodox Anglicanism before it became corrupted by moralistic innovations, but he achieved a theological integrity unique even in that splendid age. While he was seldom quoted or referred to by contemporary theologians, his doctrinal respectability was none the less outstanding among his colleagues and admirable when compared with that of his successors.
Justification, according to Donne, is not finished "in one moment", nor is imputation merely some external intervention. A justified person is accepted as a new creature in Christ, and, as such, his inadequate righteousness is made wholly acceptable by the righteousness of Christ. This new relationship is not only the source of that grace which nurtures the imperfect, but is also the embryonic righteousness which will inform the regenerate. Because he understood clearly the relationship of grace and freedom, Donne did not become involved in the unfortunate freedom-denying positions which marred the works of some of his contemporaries. Nor did he stumble into the error of requiring as a condition of justification a righteousness that is only possible by the grace of justification. Donne's sermons elaborated a simple and effective criticism of the Tridentine formal cause of justification which was not inferior in theological content to that of Hooker, Hall, or Davenant. His insight that God will not save us without our participation led Donne to a vigorous exhortation of good works and holiness in sanctification. His consciousness of the severe and arduous demands of righteousness in the process of sanctification stands in marked contrast to the more lenient covenant doctrine of the "holy living" school.

Donne's apprehension of the power of sin, however, constrained him to stress that our wills are not able to effect but only to accept the gift of justification. Thus, the condition of sin must first be overcome by God's initiative in a free justification before our wills are enabled to perform the good works necessary for sanctification. Donne's theology of freedom was, in fact, the key to his doctrine of sanctification, and his theology of sin was the key to his doctrine of justification.

John Donne was consistent in describing sin as more than mere perverse acts or transgressions, an error of superficiality that came to prevail as the century rolled on. Sins, he argued, are symptoms and expressions of a much deeper state of sin, which is a situation of radical separation.

Scarce any man considers the weight, the oppression of Originall sinne. No man can say, that an Akorn weighs as much as an Oak; yet in truth, there is an Oak in that Akorn: No man considers that
Original sinne weighs as much as Actual or Habitual, yet in truth, all our Actual and Habitual sins are in Original.

This doctrine of sin coloured Donne’s doctrine of justification in a profound and constructive way. Because sin is a situation of separation, justification, for Donne, is nothing less than a new reality, bridging that separation, and establishing a new being in Christ. Donne’s soteriology, with its emphasis upon being in Christ (in a new ontological condition) was a blend of ethics and doctrine comparable in integrity to the blend of thought and passion that dignified his literature. A radical dissociation infected literature and theology in the next generation, and from it have flowed, to this very day, unfortunate consequences, rarely contested, for the whole Christian Church.