

A

F R A G M E N T

O F T H E

True RELIGION.

Being the SUBSTANCE of

T W O L E T T E R S

F R O M A

*Mr. Berridge*

METHODIST-PREACHER in *Cambridgeshire,*  
to a Clergyman in *Nottinghamshire.*

*see End*



L O N D O N :

Printed for J. WILLIAMS under St. Dunstan's Church,  
Fleet-Street. MDCCLX,

(Price Sixpence.)

From the collection of the  
Rev. Dr. Frank Baker

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THE  
P U B L I S H E R  
TO THE  
R E A D E R.

Grantham, Feb. 2, 1760.

**I**F the Reader should think it material to know, how these Papers came into my Hands, it may be sufficient to inform him, that numberless Copies of them are handed about in this Neighbourhood, and that I got a Nephew of mine, who goes to the Grammar School here, to write one over for me. I hope, for my young Man's Credit, that it is spelled and transcribed with tolerable Exactness, tho' I could hardly prevail with him to finish it. Dicky, you must know, is designed for Orders, and he was very angry, as he was copying the Letters, to find the Universities treated so slightly in them, and to meet with so many sly Wipes on the black Coats.

The worthy Author of these Letters travels round the Country as carefully as a London-Rider; yet I do not hear, that he sells any Thing, or takes any Commissions. Abundance  
of

of Customers resort to him, to whom he gives his Advice and Instruction gratis ; nor do I know of any Return they make him, except that many of his Followers call themselves after his Name. This Mark of Respect will not indeed buy him clothes, nor make his Pot boil ; but he is very indifferent about such Matters. However, as he is attended by several idle fluts, whom he has taken such Pains to *cleanse from all Filthiness of Flesh and Spirit*, I have often thought it a burning Shame, that they should never undertake to mend his Clothes, or to wash his Linnen. I have heard him preach many an excellent Discourse, when, poor Man ! he was sadly out at the Elbows, and his Shirts, I declare, were almost as black as the Chimney.

This gentleman has, I think, a much more sincere Regard for his Countrymen, than Dr. Mount-stage, whatever he may pretend. The Doctor, to be sure, does a World of Good, and sells a vast deal of useful Medecines for a little Money. But Mr. B. is at as much Pains, does as much Good, and takes no Money. I have often thought it would be very clever for both of them, if they could contrive to carry on Business in some kind of Partnership. Dr. Rock, I am told, a very learned Physician of great Note, used to attend Mr. Whitefield on Kennington-Common and other places ; when he seized the lucky Occasion of recommending  
and

and dispensing his Medicines to the good Company, which Mr. W. had drawn together for another Purpose. By their united Endeavours, should it be thought proper to adopt this Plan, the Country would be at once provided with useful Remedies for bodily and spiritual Disorders, and secured against any Maladies which might befall either the outward or inward Man.

I constantly attended the Parson of our Parish, and heard his Sermons for a great while together. He is commonly reckoned a good Preacher, but yet he did not acquaint us with many Things which this Gentleman has done, tho' it is his Business, and he is so handsomely paid for it. I had a great Mind to know his Sentiments about these Letters, and carried my Copy to him; he desired me to leave it and call again the next Day. When I came, I found him in a great Fume; he fired and reddened, and asked me "What good I could possibly do  
 " to myself or any body by meddling with such  
 " Stuff; said that the Doctrine was rank Me-  
 " thodism; that I should be esteemed an Enemy  
 " to the Church and the Clergy, if I read or  
 " approved or gave Countenance to such Writ-  
 " ings; that as many of his People gave too  
 " much ear to these disorderly Field-Preachers,  
 " he would soon answer them from the Pulpit,  
 " and endeavour to preserve his Flock from so  
 " dangerous an Infection," &c. One may easily  
 guess,

gues, I think, at the true Reason of all this Anger: He enjoys a good Stipend for teaching us what we ought to do; but Mr. B. has let us into the Secret, that we are to do nothing for ourselves, and cannot indeed consistently with our Duty and Obligations attempt to do any Thing; for that Christ has already done every Thing for us.

The Reader may be assured, that these excellent Letters are the Genuine Productions of the Authour, to whom they are ascribed. But tho' Copies of them are now in a thousand Hands, and the more Hands they are in, of the more extensive Use they will be; yet the Writer refused to consent to the Publication of them, which one of my female Acquaintance here much wished for, and offered to undertake. This Refusal indeed one may attribute to his great reserve and known Modesty: Qualities, which tho' very commendable in themselves, yet ought not to be too much consulted in Matters of public Concern and Utility. He, who in Spite of all Discouragements, is indefatigable in spreading those important and interesting Truths, which I and every body ought to know, cannot really be offended with me for carrying on the same useful Design. However, I submit, what I do, to his candid and favourable Interpretation.

FAITH WORKLESS.



Rev. and dear Sir.

\* \* \* \* \*  
\* \* \* \* \* In order to this, it may be  
needful to give you a little previous Infor-  
mation of my manner of Life from my Youth  
up to the present Time. When I was about  
the Age of fourteen, God was pleased to  
shew me that I was a Sinner, and that I  
must be born again before I could enter into  
his Kingdom. Accordingly I betook myself  
to reading, praying, and watching; and was  
enabled hereby to make some Progress in Sanc-  
tification. In this manner I went on, tho' not  
always with the same Diligence, till about half  
a Year ago. I thought myself in the right  
Way to Heaven, tho' as yet I was wholly out  
of the Way; and imagined I was travelling  
towards Sion, tho' I had never yet set my Face  
thitherwards. Indeed God would have shewn  
me that I was wrong, by not owning my mi-  
nisty, but I paid no regard to this for a long  
Time, imputing my want of Success to the  
naughty Hearts of my Hearers, and not to  
my own naughty Doctrine. You may ask,

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perhaps,



perhaps, what was my Doctrine? Why, dear Sir, it was the Doctrine that every Man will naturally hold whilst he continues in an unregenerate State, viz. That we are to be justified partly by our Faith, and partly by our Works. This Doctrine I preached for six Years at a Curacy, which I served from College: and tho' I took some extraordinary Pains, and pressed Sanctification upon them very earnestly, yet they continued as un sanctified as before, and not one Soul was brought to Christ. There was indeed a little more of the Form of Religion in the Parish, but not a *Whit* more of the *Power*. At length I removed to Everton, where I have lived altogether. Here again I pressed Sanctification and Regeneration as vigorously as I could; but finding no Success, after two Years preaching in this manner, I began to be discouraged, and now some secret Misgivings arose in my Mind, that I was not right myself. (This happened about Christmas last.) Those Misgiveings grew stronger, and at last very painful. Being then under great Doubts, I cried unto the Lord very earnestly. The constant Language of my Heart was this, — ' Lord, if I am right, keep me so; if I am not right, make me so. Lead me to the Knowledge of the Truth as it is in Jesus.'

AFTER



AFTER about ten Days crying unto the Lord, he was pleased to return an Answer to my Prayers, and in the following wonderful Manner. As I was sitting in my House one Morning, and musing upon a Text of Scripture, the following Words were darted into my Mind with wonderful Power, and seemed indeed like a Voice from Heaven (*viz.*) ‘*Cease from thy own Works.*’ Before I heard these Words, my Mind was in a very unusual Calm; but as soon as I heard them, my Soul was in a Tempest directly, and the Tears flowed from my Eyes like a Torrent. The Scales fell from my Eyes immediately, and I now clearly saw the Rock I had been splitting on for near thirty Years. Do you ask what this Rock was? Why it was some secret Reliance on my *own Works* for Salvation. I had hoped to be saved, partly in my *own* Name, and partly in *Christ’s* name; tho’ I am told ‘there is Salvation in no other Name except in the Name of Jesus Christ, Acts iv. 12.’—I had hoped to be saved partly thro’ my own Works, and partly thro’ Christ’s Mercies; tho’ I am told ‘we are saved by Grace thro’ Faith, and not of Works, Eph. ii. 7 & 8.’—I had hoped to make myself acceptable to God partly thro’ my *own good Works*, tho’ we are told, ‘that we are accepted thro’ the beloved, Ephes. i. 6.’—I had

hoped to make my *Peace* with God partly thro' my *own* Obedience to his Laws, tho' I am told ' that Peace is only to be had by Faith, Rom. ' v. 1.' I had hoped to make myself a Child of God by Sanctification, tho' we are told, ' that we are made Children of God by Faith ' in Christ Jesus, Gal. iii. 26.' I had thought that Regeneration, the new Birth or new Creature, consisted in Sanctification, but now I know it consists in Faith, 1 John v. 1.—Compare also these two Passages together, Gal. vi. 15,—and Gal v. 6,—where you will find that the new Creature is *Faith working by Love*. The Apostle adds these Words, *working by Love*, in order to distinguish a *living* Faith from a *dead* one. I had thought that Sanctification was the Way to Justification, but now I am assured that Sanctification follows <sup>4</sup> after Justification; or in other Words, that we must first be justified by Faith before we can have any true Sanctification by the Spirit. When we are justified it is done *freely*, i. e. gratuitously, without any the least Merits of ours, and solely by the Grace of God thro' Jesus Christ, Rom. iii. 24.—Rom. iii. 28. All that is previously needful to Justification is this, that we are convinced by the Spirit of God of our own utter Sinfulness, Isai. lxiv. 6.—convinced that we are Children of Wrath by Nature, on Account of our Birth-

Birth-

Birth-sin, Eph. ii. 3.—and that we are under the Curse of God on Account of actual Sin, Gal. iii. 10.—And under these Convictions come to the Lord Jesus Christ, renouncing all Righteousness of our own, and relying solely on him, who is appointed to be the Lord *Our* Righteousness. Jerem. xxiii. 6. Again, Christ says, come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden (with the Burden of Sin) and I will give you rest, i. e. I will take the Burden away, I will release you from the Guilt of Sin. Where you may observe, that the only Thing required of us when we come to Christ, is to come burdened, and sensible that none can remove this Burden but Christ. Again, Christ did not come to call the Righteous but Sinners to Repentance. See also Luke iv. 18. Hear how he cries out in Isaiah lv. 1. “Ho, every one that thirstest, come ye to the Waters, and drink: come buy Wine and Milk (i. e. the Blessings of the Gospel) without Money and without Price.” Where we are ordered to bring no Money, i. e. no Merits of our own: we must not think to make a Purchase of these Blessings by any Deserts of ours. They are offered freely, i. e. gratuitously, and must be received freely. Nothing more is required from us but to *thirst* after them. Why was the Pharisee rejected?

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(Luke xviii. 10, &c.) because he came pleading his own Works before God. He was devout, just, chaste, and abstemious; and *thanked* God for enabling him to be so. Very well; so far all was right. But then he had some Reliance on these Works, and therefore pleads the Merits of them before God. Which shewed that he did not know what a Sinner he was, and that he could only be saved by Grace through Faith. He opens his Mouth before God, and pleads his own Cause: tho' God declares that every Mouth shall be stopped before him, and the whole World brought in Guilty before God. Rom. iii. 19.—And why was the Publican justified? Not on Account of his own good Works, but because he was sensible of his evil ones; and accordingly came self-accused, self-condemned, and crying out only for Mercy. And now, dear Sir, hear what is the Rise and Progress of true Religion in the Soul of Man. When the Spirit of God has convinced any Person that he is a Child of Wrath and under the Curse of God, (in which State every one continues to be till he has received Jesus Christ into his Heart by Faith) then the Heart of such an one becomes broken for Sin; then too he feels what he never knew before, that he has no Faith, and accordingly laments his evil Heart  
of

of Unbelief. In this State Men continue some a longer, some a less time, 'till God is pleased to work Faith in them. Then they are justified, and are at Peace with God, Rom. v. 1. i. e. have their Sins forgiven them, for that is the meaning of the Word *Peace*. See Luke vii. 48—50.—When we have received Faith from God (for it is his Gift, Ephes. ii. 8.) to justify our Persons, then we afterwards receive the Spirit to sanctify our Natures, Ephes. i. 13.—Gal. iii. 14. And now the Work of Sanctification goes forwards, now his Fruit is more and more unto Holiness; now the Love of God is shed abroad in his Heart by the Holy Spirit, Rom. v. 5. now he walks in the Comfort of the Holy Ghost, Acts ix. 13. Now he is filled with Joy and Peace in believing, Rom. xv. 13; now he rejoiceth with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, 1 Pet. i. 8. And now he hath the Spirit of God bearing Witness with his own Spirit, that he is a Child of God, Rom. viii. 16.—1 John v. 10.—These are Things that I was an utter Stranger to before, notwithstanding all my reading, watching, and praying; and these are Things that every one must be a Stranger to, 'till he is made a Child of God by Faith in Christ Jesus. But to proceed; tho' a Believer is continually more and more sanctified in Body, Soul and Spirit, yet  
his



his Hopes of Heaven are not built on his Sanctification, but on his Faith in Christ; he knows that he is only complete in Christ, Col. ii. 10. — And that the Moment he seeks to be justified by his *own* Obedience to God's Laws, that Moment he falls from Christ, and ceases to have an Interest in Christ, Gal. v. 4.—Accordingly, tho' he labours to abound in all the Fruits of Righteousness, yet, like St. Paul, he desires to be found only in Christ, not having, i. e. not relying on his own Righteousness, but on the Righteousness of God by Faith, Phil. iii. 8, 9. — And now let me point out to you the grand Delusion which had like to have ruined my Soul. I saw very early something of the Unholiness of my Nature, and the Necessity of being born again. Accordingly I watched, prayed, and fasted too, thinking to purify my Heart by these Means, whereas it can only be purified by Faith, Acts xv. 9. Watching, praying, and fasting are necessary Duties, but I, like many others, placed some secret Reliances on them, thinking they were to do that for me, in part at least, which Christ only could. The Truth is, tho' I saw myself to be a Sinner, and a great Sinner, yet I did not see myself an *utterly lost Sinner*, and therefore I could not come to Jesus Christ alone to save me; despised the Doctrine of Justification by Faith *alone*, looking



ing on it as a foolish and a dangerous Doctrine; I was not yet stript of *all* my Righteousness, could not consider it all as filthy Rags, and therefore I went about to establish a Righteousness of my own, and did not submit to the Righteousness of God by Faith, Rom. x. 3.— I did not seek after Righteousness thro' Faith, but as it were by the Works of the Law. Thus I stumbled and fell, Rom. ix. 31, 32.— In short, to use a homely Similitude, I put the Justice of God into one Scale, and as many good Works of my own as I could into the other, and when I found, as I always did, my own good Works not to be a Ballance to the Divine Justice, I then threw in Christ as a Make-weight. And this every one really does who hopes for Salvation, partly by doing what he can for himself, and then relying on Christ for the rest. But, dear Sir, Christ will either be a whole Saviour, or none at all. And if you think you have any good Service of your own to recommend you unto God, you are certainly without any Interest in Christ: Be you ever so sober, serious, just and devout, you are still under the Curse of God as I was, and know it not, provided you have any allowed Reliance on your own Works, and think they are to do something for you, and Christ to do the rest.

I now proceed to acquaint you with the Success I have lately had in my Ministry. As soon as God had opened my own Eyes, and shewed me the true Way to Salvation, I began immediately to preach it. And now I dealt with my Hearers in a very different Manner from what I used to do. I told them very plainly, that they were Children of Wrath, and under the Curse of God, tho' they knew it not, and that none but Jesus Christ could deliver them from that Curse. I asked them, if they had ever broke the Law of God once in Thought, Word, or Deed? If they had, they were then under the Curse: For it is written, 'Curfed is every one that continueth not in *all* the Things that are written in the Book of the Law to do them.' And again, 'He that keepeth the whole Law, and yet offendeth in *one* Point, is guilty of all.' If indeed we could keep the whole Law without offending in one Point; if we had *done* and could *continue* to do *all* the Things in God's Law, then indeed we might lay Claim to eternal Life on the Score of our own Works. But who is sufficient for these Things? If we break God's Law we immediately fall under the Curse of it, and none can deliver us from this Curse but Jesus Christ. There is an End for ever after of any Justification from our own Works. No *future* good Beha-

Behaviour can make any Attonement for *past* Miscarriages. If I keep all God's Laws to Day, this is no Amends for breaking them Yesterday. If I behave peaceably to my Neighbour this Day, it is no Satisfaction for having broke his Head Yesterday. If therefore I am once under the Curse of God, for having broken God's Law, I can never after do any Thing of myself to deliver me from this Curse. I may then cry out, O wretched Man, that I am! who shall deliver me from this Body of Sin? And find none able to deliver, but Jesus Christ, Rom. vii. 23, 24, 25.—So that if I am once a Sinner, nothing but the Blood of Jesus Christ can cleanse me from Sin. All my Hopes are then in him, and I must fly to him as the only Refuge set before me. In this Manner, dear Sir, I preached and do preach to my Flock, labouring to beat down Self-Righteousness; labouring to shew them that they were all in a lost and perishing State, and that nothing could recover them out of this State, and make them Children of God, but Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And now see the Consequence. This was strange Doctrine to my Hearers. They were surprized, alarmed, and vexed. *The old Man*, the carnal Nature, was stirred up, and railed, and opposed the Truth. However, the Minds of most were seized with some Convictions, and the Hearts of some were truly broken for Sin,

so that they came to me, as those mentioned in the Acts, throughly pricked to the Heart, and crying out with strong and bitter Cries, What must I do to be saved? I then laid the Promises before them, and told them, if they found themselves under the Curse, Christ was ready to deliver them from it; if they were really weary and heavy laden, Christ would give them Rest; if their Hearts were broken for Sin, and they would look up unto Christ, he would heal them. I exhorted them also to thank God for these Convictions, assuring them it was a Token of Good to their Souls. For God must first smite the Heart, before he can heal it, *Isai. xix. 22.* I generally found that they received Comfort from the Promises; and tho' they complained much of the Burden of Sin, and of an Evil Heart of Unbelief, yet they always went away refreshed and comforted. Many have come unto me in this Manner, and more are continually coming; and tho' some fall off from their first Convictions, yet others cleave stedfastly unto the Lord. They begin to rejoice in him, and to love him; they love his Word, and meditate much upon it; they exercise themselves in Prayer, and adorn their Profession by a suitable Life and Conversation. And now let me make one Reflection. I preached up Sanctification very earnestly for

six

fix Years in a former Parish, and never brought one Soul to Christ. I did the same at this Parish for two Years without any Success at all ; but as soon as ever I preached Jesus Christ, and Faith in his Blood, then Believers were added to the Church continually ; then People flocked from all Parts to hear the glorious Sound of the Gospel, some coming six Miles, others eight, and others ten, and that constantly. And now let me ask, what is the Reason why my Ministry was not blessed, when I preached up Salvation partly by Faith, and partly by Works ? It is because this Doctrine is not of God ; and he will prosper no Ministers but such as preach Salvation in his own appointed Way, (viz.) by Faith in Jesus Christ. Let me now apply myself to your own Heart, and may God dispose you to receive my Words in the Spirit of Meekness. Indeed, Sir, I love and respect you, else I could not have wrote to you so freely. Are you then in the same Error that I was in for near 40 Years, (viz.) that you must be saved partly by Faith, and partly by Works ? And have you constantly preached this Doctrine ? Then you may be certainly assured of these two Things : 1st, That you have never yet brought one Soul to Christ by your Ministry. And, 2dly, That you are not yet in the Way of Salvation yourself. Oh ! be not displeas'd with

me for telling you the Truth. But you will say, perhaps, that you have not only been sincere, but ever zealous in preaching the Word of God. So was I; but there is a Zeal which is not according to Knowledge; and that Zeal I had, tho' I knew it not. You may say farther, that you have read and prayed much, so have I, but I still knew nothing as I ought to know, 'till God was pleased to shew me that I was blind, and then I cried heartily to him for Light and Direction, and he opened mine Eyes, John ix. 39.—Dear Sir, will you attend to the following Advice? it is very safe Advice, be the State of your Soul what it will. Pray to God to lead you into the Knowledge of the Truth as it is *in Jesus*. Beseech God to keep you in the Truth, if you have received it; or if you are in Error, to reveal it unto you. If you will do this heartily and constantly, God will not suffer you to abide long in Darkness, if indeed you are in Darkness, James i. 5.—I now proceed to give you some further Account of myself, and of the Impediments which kept me from the Truth. When I first came to the University, I applied myself diligently to my Studies, thinking human Learning to be a necessary Qualification for a Divine, and that no one ought to preach unless he had taken a Degree in the University. Accordingly I studied



died the Classics, Mathematics, Philosophy, Logic, Metaphysics, and read the Works of our most eminent Divines; and this I did for 20 Years; and all the while was departing more and more from the Truth as it is in Jesus; vainly hoping to receive that Light and Instruction from human Wisdom, which could only be had from the Word of God and Prayer. During this Time I was thought a Methodist by some People, only because I was a little more grave, and took a little more Pains in my Ministry than some others of my Brethren; but in Truth I was no Methodist at all, for I had no Sort of Acquaintance with them, and could not abide their fundamental Doctrine of Justification by Faith, and thought it high Presumption in any to preach, unless they had taken holy Orders. But when God was pleased to open mine Eyes about half a Year ago, he shewed and taught me other Things. Now I saw that nothing had kept me so much from the Truth, as a Desire of human Wisdom. Now I perceived, that it was as difficult for a wise or learned Man to be saved, as it was for a rich Man or a Nobleman. 1 Cor. i. 26. Now I saw that God chose the foolish Things of this World to confound the wise, and the weak Things to confound the mighty, for two plain Reasons, 1st. that no Flesh should glory in his Presence.

1 Cor.

1 Cor. i. 29.—And 2dly, to shew that Faith did not stand or was not produced, by the Wisdom of Man, but by the Power of God, 1 Cor. ii. 5. Now I discerned, that no one could understand the Word of God, but by the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. ii. 12. Now I saw that every Believer was anointed by the Holy Spirit, and thereby led to the Knowledge of all needful Truths. 1 John ii. 20. And of Course that every true Believer was qualified to preach the Gospel, provided he had the Gift of Utterance. Now I saw that the Methodist Doctrine of Justification by Faith, was the very Doctrine of the Gospel; and I did no longer wonder at the Success which those Preachers met with, whether they were Clergymen or Laymen. They preached Christ's Doctrine, and Christ owned it; so that many were added to the Faith daily.—But you will say perhaps, that those Methodists are Schismatics. Let us therefore examine the Matter. A Schismatic is one that dissents and divides from an established Church, at least this is the general Notion of a Schismatic. Now I ask, what do you mean by a Church, or what is it that makes one Church to differ from another? It is the Doctrine. The Church of England differs from the Church of Rome, not by its Steeples, Bells, or Vestments, but by its Doctrines. Schism therefore consists in departing from the Doctrines of  
a Church,

a Church, and not from the Walls of a Church. In the Time of Stirbitch Fair, one Sermon is always preached in the open Fields to the People at the Fair, and preached by some Fellow of a College or Clergyman at Cambridge. Now I ask, would you call this Clergyman a Schismatic? No surely. And yet he preaches in the open Fields and upon unconsecrated Ground. It is plain then, that Schism doth not consist in preaching out of the Walls of a Church, but in preaching contrary to the *Doctrines* of the Church. And now, dear Sir, let me lay open my Sin and my Shame unto you. I solemnly subscribed to the Articles of our Church; and gave my hearty Assent and Consent to them. Amongst the Rest, I declared that, “ We are accounted righteous before God, *only* for the Merits of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by *Faith*, and not for our own Works or Deservings, and that we are justified by *Faith only*,” as it is expressed in the 11th Article. But tho’ I solemnly subscribed this Article, I neither believed nor preached it: but preached Salvation, partly by Faith and partly by Works. And oh, what dreadful Hypocrisy, what shameful Prevarication was this! I called and thought myself a Churchman, tho’ I was really a Dissenter and a Schismatic; for I was undermining the fundamental Doctrine of our Church

and the fundamental Doctrine of the Gospel, namely Justification by *Faith only*, and yet dreadful as my Case was, I fear it is the Case of most of the Clergy in England. Scarce any Thing is preached but Justification by *Faith and Works*. And what is the Consequence? Why, there is scarce any true Religion amongst us, the Gospel of Christ is not truly preached by us, and Christ will not own our Ministry. Look around the Parishes which are near you, and see whether you can find any Thing besides the Form of Religion, and not much of that. Nay, amongst those who are thought religious People; who are sober, serious, just and devout; who read and fast, and pray, and give Alms; amongst those you will scarce find one, who knows any Thing of the Power of Religion, and has experimental Knowledge of it. For if you ask such People in the very Words of Scripture, “Whether they know that Jesus Christ is in them, otherwise, they are Reprobates.” 2 Cor. xiii. 5. “Whether Christ dwells in their Hearts by Faith.” Eph. iii. 17. Whether their Sins are forgiven for Christ’s Name Sake. 1 John ii. 12. Whether they have received an Unction from the Holy one. 1 John ii. 20. Whether the Love of God has been shed abroad in their Hearts by the Holy Ghost. Rom. v. 5. Whether they are filled with Joy and Peace in believing. Rom. xv. 13. Whether they walk  
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in the Comfort of the Holy Ghost, and do ever rejoice with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory. Acts ix. 31. 1 Pet. i. 8. And lastly, whether the holy Spirit bears Witness with their own Spirit, that they are the Children of God. Rom. viii. 14, 15, 16. If, I say, you ask the better Sort amongst us, whether they have any *Experience* of these Matters; they would stare at you with the utmost Amazement, and would think you an Enthusiast, if they did not call you so. Now such People, who have all the *Form*, but none of the *Power* of Religion; who are *outwardly* reformed, but not inwardly renewed by the Holy Ghost; these are what our Saviour calls *whited Sepulchres*, beautiful without, but full of Rottenness within. They are striving to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but are not able: Because they do not strive lawfully. For they do not seek to enter in thro' Jesus Christ, but partly thro' Christ, and partly thro' themselves; partly by Faith, and partly by Works. These are *the almost*, but not altogether Christians.—And if at any Time it happens that some amongst us are seized with deep Convictions, and are made sensible of their utter Need of Christ, and that they can only be justified by Faith in his Blood; these People not finding proper Food for their Souls in our Churches, are obliged to go elsewhere, and seek it where they can find it. It is no Wonder



therefore that there are so few real Christians amongst us.—If you read over the Homilies of the Church, if you read the Fathers of the Church, if you read the Works of the good old Bishops that were published an hundred Years ago, you will there find the Gospel of Christ preached, and the true Doctrine of our own Church. But since that Time, I mean in the last Century, our Clergy have been gradually departing more and more from our Doctrines, Articles, and Homilies ; so that at length there was scarce a Clergyman to be found, but who preached contrary to the Articles he subscribed. And almost all the Sermons that have been published in the last Century, both by Bishops and Curates, are full of that Soul-destroying Doctrine, that we are to be justified partly by our own Works, and partly by Christ's Merits.

Do you ask, how all the Clergy came to fall into this pernicious Doctrine ? I answer, very easily. Every Man, whilst he continues under the Power of the carnal Mind, and is not awakened to see his utter lost Condition, is naturally disposed to embrace this Doctrine. For not being yet convinced by the Spirit of God, that all his Righteousness is as filthy Rags ; Isaiah lxiv. 6. and that he is without Help and Strength in himself. Rom. v. 6. I say, not being convinced of this he naturally goes about



to establish some Righteousness of his own, and cannot submit to the Righteousness of God by Faith. Not being yet sensible of his utter lost and helpless State, he must have some Reliance on himself: And thus instead of looking wholly to Jesus Christ for Salvation, he looks partly to Christ, and partly to himself: Instead of seeking for Righteousness and Strength from the Lord Jesus Christ, he seeks for it partly from Christ and partly from himself: Instead of seeking to be justified in the Lord, he seeks after Justification partly thro' the Lord, and partly thro' himself. But see what Christ saith of this Matter; Isai. xlv. 22, 23, 24, 25.—And now let me ask, how the whole Church of Rome happened to depart from the Simplicity of the Gospel, and to fall into this Doctrine of Works and Faith which we now preach. It was owing to the depraved Nature of Man, which makes him think himself to be something, and that he can do something, tho' he is nothing and can do nothing to justify himself in God's Sight. At the Reformation, our Church returned again to Jesus Christ, and placed Justification on the Gospel footing of *Faith only*. And so it continues to this Day: But tho' our Articles and Homilies continue sound and evangelical, yet our Clergy have departed once more from both, and are advancing to Rome again with hasty Strides; preaching in Spite of Articles and Sub-

scription,

scription, that most pernicious, papistical, and damnable Doctrine of Justification by Faith and Works. Which Doctrine, I am verily assured, no one can hold, and be in a State of Salvation.—But I trust God is once more visiting in Mercy our poor distressed Church. He raised up Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Wesley about 20 Years ago, who have courageously and successfully preached up the Doctrines of our Church. And he is now daily raising up more and more Clergymen. At Christmas last, I was informed, there were 40 Clergymen who were brought to the Acknowledgement of the Truth; and three more have been added to the Faith, within the last six Weeks. And Oh! for ever adored be the Mercy of God in opening my Eyes, and leading me to the Knowledge of the Truth as it is in Jesus.

I have sent you a Couple of Books and a Pamphlet, and I make you a Present of them. Read them over carefully. And before you begin to read at any Time always look up to the Fountain of Wisdom for Light and Direction. For if you rely on your own Abilities, or other Mens Labours, God may keep you ignorant of his glorious Gospel, as a Punishment for your Presumption and neglect of him.—When I sat down to writé, I did not intend to have filled more than half a Sheet, but when I took my Pen in Hand, I knew not how to lay it aside.

I have

I have wrote my Sentiments with great Freedom, and I hope without Offence. May God give a Blessing to what I have wrote : May he enlighten your Eyes, as he hath done mine, adored be his Mercy : May he lead you by his Spirit to the Knowledge of the Truth, as it is in Jesus ; and make you instrumental in bringing Souls from Darknes into Light, and translating them out of the Kingdom of Satan into the glorious Kingdom of his dear Son. Amen, Amen.

P. S. Let me advise you to read over Rawlin's Book in the first Place.

Everton,  
July 3, 1758.

Rev.



Rev. and dear Sir.

\* \* \* \* \* This I do, not thro' any Pain for the Contents of the Letter, nor yet thro' the Fear of a Paper War (which is almost as terrible a Thing as a Paper Kite with a flaming Lanthorn at the Tail of it in a dark Night) but out of Civility to you. The Letter was designed for your Perusal : Copies were taken of it, without my Leave, or even my Knowledge : And I was as much displeas'd as your self could be, when first I heard it had been copied. But enough of this Matter.— You charge me with being a Moravian. Credulous mortal ! Why do you not charge me with being a Murderer ? You have just as much Reason to call me one as the other. If you had lived in this Neighbourhood, you would have known that I am utterly detested and continually reviled by the Moravians. And no Wonder : For I warn all my Hearers against them both in public and private. Nay, I have been to Bedford, where there is a Nest of them, to bear a preaching Testimony against their corrupt Principles and Practices. However, since you are determin'd to call me a Moravian, and  
Mr.

Mr. Wheler is pleased to call me a mad Man, I think myself obliged to come down into the Country as soon as I can, and I hope it will be next Summer, to convince my Friends and your Neighbours, I am neither one nor the other. Whilst I continue with you, I shall go round the Neighbourhood, and, with God's Help, preach twice a Day. Twice a Day, you will say! Why then I am certainly mad; yea, and a Moravian too; and a Murderer into the Bargain. Well, be it so. I am much accustomed to hard Names; and by God's Grace, am pretty well enabled to bear them.—If your Brethren will allow me the Use of their Pulpits they shall have my Thanks: If they will not, the Fields are open, and I shall take a Mountain for my Pulpit, and the Heavens for my founding Board. My blessed Master has set me the Example; and I trust I shall neither be ashamed nor afraid to tread in his Steps.—I send you this Letter sealed, as indeed the other would have been could I have suspected what has happened. \* \* \*

Faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is arranged in several paragraphs and is too light to transcribe accurately.