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in his maturity, bewitched all present by the dignity and graciousness of his manner.

His baptism, as has been already mentioned, was delayed to the very close of his life, not because he hesitated to confess himself a Christian, but on account of a superstition, common at the time, that this ordinance could wash away sin and secure a straight passage to glory. After the act he refused to clothe himself with the purple any more, and, in a few days, amidst many expressions of happiness and faith, he passed away. He was buried in a church which he had caused to be erected in Constantinople, to be his mausoleum. It contained twelve pillars, to represent the twelve apostles; and he himself was interred, in an upright position, in a thirteenth pillar. This may explain the title given him in the calendar of the Eastern Church, "equal to the apostles," unless, indeed, the meaning of this title be "like to the Apostle"—that is, St. Paul—the reference being to the circumstances of his conversion, which bear not a little resemblance to the scene on the way to Damascus.

JAMES STALKER.

### *STUDIES IN THE PAULINE THEOLOGY.*

#### V. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD.

(1) IN the last Study the Need of Salvation was shown to be due both to the guilt and to the power of sin. Man's conscience witnesses against him that in his sin he is estranged from, and opposed to God, and that he, therefore, needs the forgiveness of God. He is also conscious of his weakness to withstand temptation, and to discharge duty, and seeks deliverance from the bondage of sin from God. It was argued, in criticism of current theological tendencies, that the one need is as real as the other. The sense of guilt is not an illusion, and the feeling of weakness only an actual-

ity. For Paul even the first need seems to be greater than the second. But it is not at all necessary thus to compare them ; for the salvation which cancels guilt is conceived as also renewing strength. It is the one act of God in the death and rising again of His Son, which offers forgiveness and breaks the fetters of evil habit. This needs to be insisted on, as there has been a tendency in a good deal of theological speculation on the theory of the Atonement to dis sever justification and sanctification, the forgiveness of sin, and the holiness of the forgiven. It is necessary to show, on the one hand, that both the divine grace which offers, and the human faith which receives pardon is pregnant with moral purpose and power ; and on the other, that Christian holiness has its roots in, and draws its nourishment from the forgiveness presented in Christ's Cross.

(2) Having recognized the close bond between the religious good and the moral task of the Christian salvation, we may venture, for clearness of statement, to treat them separately. The need which man feels of forgiveness because of the guilt of his sin is met in *the righteousness of God*, a characteristic Pauline phrase about which there has been much dispute. Luther's explanation is " the righteousness valid with God " ; while it is imparted to the sinner by God, it is the ground on which God receives him again to His fellowship. There can be no doubt that Paul was as much concerned as Luther about the sinner's acceptance with God ; and, therefore, we may be sure that this meaning is included in the term. But we want to go a little deeper than this : we want to know of what content is the righteousness which is valid with God.

Baur seems to take us a step further : he renders the phrase " a righteousness agreeable to the nature of God." That can be valid in God's judgment which is in accord with His nature. Over against theories of acceptilation

which regard the death of Christ as the condition of man's forgiveness by an arbitrary appointment of God, it is necessary to emphasize that God in forgiving sinners is true to Himself. The view now generally held is that the righteousness of God is the state of pardon and acceptance before God, which is the gift of God's grace and is welcomed by man's faith, and which has been provided by God for mankind in the work of Christ in His Crucifixion and Resurrection. There is no doubt whatever that this view explains many of the passages in which the term is used.

(3) In Romans x. 5, 6, it is contrasted with "the righteousness which is of the law" as "the righteousness which is of faith." It is not a reward earned, but a gift bestowed. In x. 3 the Jews' failure is thus explained: "Being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the righteousness of God." It is not the result of man's efforts, but contrasted with them. Coming from God to man, it claims man's submission. In the exercise of the faith which receives God's gift there is obedience to God in turning from the path of establishing one's own righteousness to the way God commands of accepting what He bestows. In Philipians iii. 9 Paul seeks to put his meaning beyond all doubt. "Not having a righteousness of mine own, *even* that which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." In Romans v. 17 "the gift of righteousness" is conjoined with "the abundance of grace," and in verse 21 grace is described as reigning "through righteousness unto eternal life." The grace of God, the desire and purpose of God to save mankind, is the ultimate cause; eternal life is the final result; the righteousness of God is the historical reality through which this cause effects this result. The difference between the grace of God and the righteousness of God is this, that in the right-

eousness of God this grace saves man, not in contradiction of, but in conformity with "the wrath of God which is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rom. i. 18). The wrath of God against sin, and His love for the sinner are moments in the righteousness of God; in other words, God judges the sin He forgives. It is because Paul attached so great importance to God's condemnation of sin in His forgiveness of it, that he did not use the simpler term forgiveness for this gift of God's grace, as many who do not share, and cannot understand his moral seriousness would have preferred him to have done. The righteousness of God means forgiveness, but forgiveness coming in such a way as adequately to express God's condemnation of sin, and so fully to satisfy the conscience which in the sense of guilt echoed that condemnation.

(4) Our conception of the righteousness of God will be superficial, however, unless we connect immediately the gift to the Giver. What God does shows what God is. Hence it has been maintained that the phrase means, "God's attribute of righteousness." There are several considerations which can be advanced for this view. It is in accord with Old Testament teaching, as in Psalm xcvi. 2, "The Lord hath made known His salvation, His righteousness hath He openly shewed in the sight of the nations." Paul himself uses the term of God's character, "But if our unrighteousness commendeth the righteousness of God" (Rom. iii. 5). The contrast of the revelation of the righteousness and of the wrath of God (i. 17, 18) at least suggests a quality of God shown in His action. It may be objected, however, that God cannot in His grace confer His own perfection on man as a gift to be received in faith. But surely the phrase may be elastic enough to embrace both the divine cause and the human effect, even as grace means both God's favour and the state of man which that favour confers. As the forgiveness

of sins means the restoration to fellowship with God, participation in the divine life, God gives Himself in His gift. There is a moral continuity between God, Christ, and Man, God's whole attitude to sin and sinners finds its expression in Christ's experience in the Crucifixion and the Resurrection, and the believer as crucified and risen with Christ is put in the same attitude. The sinner is saved from God's wrath against sin in his sense of guilt, which expresses only one moment in God's disposition and dealing with sinful men, by coming to share God's righteousness, the full expression of God's will. If Paul does not himself clearly and fully state this view of the phrase, "the righteousness of God," it is implied in his conception of saving faith as such moral unity with Christ in the act in which this righteousness of God is revealed.

(5) Having thus connected the gift with the character of God we may press the further question, What is the content we must give to this attribute of God? Is it judicial, governmental and penal only or is it more? It has already been suggested that the wrath of God, the antagonism of God to sin and His infliction of penalty on sin, is included in it. This is proved by Romans iii 25, "Whom God set forth to be a propitiation (or propitiatory), through faith, by His blood, to shew His righteousness, because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime in the forbearance of God; for the shewing, I say, of his righteousness at this present season, that he might himself be just, and the justifier of him that hath faith in Jesus." To this verse we must afterwards return; but the one point to be noted at this stage of the discussion is that Paul assumes here that God's revelation of His righteousness must include both the wrath and the grace of God; the term *propitiatory* cannot mean the one without the other, for the revelation must show adequate reason why God's punishment of sin did not always exactly corre-

spond with man's transgression. Judgment on sin is included in God's righteousness. But something more ; and that something more is suggested in the last clause, which, to bring out the close connexion with the term under discussion, would be better rendered, " righteous and reckoning righteous." This does not mean that God reckons righteous the believer in spite of His being righteous ; but rather that He reckons righteous just because He is righteous. His righteousness is not merely protective and punitive, but expansive and reproductive. As righteous God does not merely condemn and punish sinners ; it is His righteousness, His moral perfection, which prompts Him to seek their salvation, so that they too may become righteous even as He Himself is. This they cannot be unless they judge sin even as He Himself does, and, therefore, the penal is necessarily included in the redemptive energy of the character of God in the Cross of Christ. It may seem that we have read more into the phrase than Paul as a Pharisee could mean ; but (1) surely Paul's conception of God was one of the things made new in the conversion ? and (2) are we not entitled to put into the object of faith the fuller content which Paul himself suggests in Romans vi. in his revision of the conception of faith ?

(6) If we rightly conceive the gift offered to faith " the righteousness of God," we shall be in a better position to deal with another much disputed question : Does justification mean making righteous or reckoning righteous ? As regards the meaning of the term there is a growing agreement among scholars that it means *reckoning righteous*. For this view four reasons can be advanced. The whole class of Greek verbs formed in this way supports this meaning, and is opposed to the other. No instance of the other meaning has been yet cited from classical literature. This is the usual sense in the Septuagint, the extra-canonical

Jewish literature, and the New Testament, including the passages in Paul's writings where he is not dealing with this distinctive doctrine. Paul gives a definition in Romans iv. 5 which seems to be intended to put this sense beyond doubt, "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness." His teaching on this point clearly is that the ungodly are reckoned or treated by God as righteous, because He reckons as their righteousness the faith which has Christ, especially His propitiatory death, as its object, and which grows to such a union with Christ as to become a being crucified and risen with Him. But can we leave the question at this stage? If Paul's doctrine is to be made "worthy of acceptance" to-day, it seems to the writer we must show that it is not merely forensic, and that antinomianism or even moral indifference in the slightest degree is not a justifiable conclusion from it. We must avoid handling merely Paul's abstract theological definition instead of getting into as close touch as we can with the concrete moral and spiritual reality of his experience, which he was trying to express and explain in his doctrine. It is the righteous God who forgives in judging sin in the Cross of Christ, with whom the sinner through faith in Christ is brought into personal contact and communion. To be received into fellowship in being forgiven by such a God, to be thus brought under the direct influence of moral perfection, is surely to be treated as righteous in such a way as cannot but make righteous. The religious good received is of such a kind as to produce the correspondent moral change. The conclusion which it is desired to reach at this stage of the discussion may be put in this way. Will a taskmaster who rewards only those who have properly done their tasks and punishes all others in strict proportion to their failure secure by inspiring the best service, or will a Father who while making plain to His



children the holiness which He Himself is, and which as His children He desires them to become, treats them as His children even when they fail and fall short? To reckon as righteous in the way in which the righteousness of God is offered to men in Jesus Christ is to make righteous far more effectively than to leave men to win the divine favour by their own deserts. What needs emphasis is, to vary the terms, the impulse to holiness which forgiveness brings with it. We may thus connect "the righteousness of God" which seems at first only a legal conception with moral character in God and in man.

(7) The righteousness of God is manifested in the Cross of Christ. It needs no elaborate demonstration that Paul's thoughts about Christ centred in the Cross (Gal. vi. 14; 1 Cor. i. 18, ii. 2). That death he closely connects with man's sin (*ὑπὲρ τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ἡμῶν*, 1 Cor. xv. 3; *περὶ τ. ἀ. ἡ.*, Gal. i. 4; *περὶ ἁμαρτίας*, Rom. viii. 3; *διὰ τὰ παραπτώματα ἡμῶν*, Rom. iv. 25; *περὶ ἡμῶν*, 1 Thess. v. 10; *ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν πάντων*, Rom. viii. 32; *ὑπὲρ πάντων*, 2 Cor. v. 15). If we are not warranted in saying that Jesus died *instead of* us as well as *on our behalf*, in our interest, yet we may recall at this point the statement in a previous Study on the *Doctrine of Christ*, that Paul conceived Christ as assuming man's condition because of sin, as sent in the likeness of sinful flesh (Rom. viii. 3), born under the law (Gal. iv. 4), made sin (2 Cor. v. 21), and become a curse (Gal. iii. 13). While we must carefully avoid any attempt at estimating a quantitative equivalence between the suffering of Christ and the punishments of men, or even at describing His passion as qualitatively the same, that is, as penal, we do not interpret Paul's teaching adequately unless we lay due stress on this fact, that Christ took upon Himself the full consequences of human sin. It was not a legal substitution of one victim of divine judgment for another, but a voluntary

identification by Christ of Himself in love with the sinful race so as to share completely its condition. What purpose, we must ask, did this sacrifice serve? There can be no doubt that for Paul's thought Christ's sacrifice served the same end in God's moral order as the punishment of sinners, as well as effected their salvation.

(8) There are three words which must be examined more closely to justify this conclusion: *ἱλαστήριον* (Rom. iii. 25), *ἀπολύτρωσις* (Col. i. 13; 1 Cor. i. 30), *καταλλαγή* (Rom. v. 10, 11, and 2 Cor. v. 18, 20). As regards the first of these terms, it is not at all likely that Paul meant by *ἱλαστήριον*, the lid of the ark of the covenant, as the allusion would have been too obscure. More probable is the view that Paul meant the propitiatory victim, although no distinct evidence of such a use of the term has been produced. His allusions to the Old Testament ritual system are not so frequent as might have been expected, yet here he need not have been thinking of any of the Levitical sacrifices at all. He had mixed enough among Romans and Greeks to know about the human sacrifices offered to turn away the anger or to secure the blessing of the gods. This allusion, even if it were certain, would not help us in our interpretation of the passage. As there is some proof of the use of the word as an adjective, it is best to take the term in the widest sense possible. Paul does not directly affirm that the blood of Christ propitiates God; that would be an altogether pagan thought; but just as in Galatians iii. 13 he says that Christ became *a curse*, not accursed, so here he represents Christ's death as propitiatory in the sense that in it God reveals both His wrath against sin and His grace to the sinner, carries out judgment on sin as well as offers forgiveness to the sinner. The emphasis on the blood of Christ forbids our omitting this element of wrath or judgment, and the context absolutely demands it. The previous argument is intended to show

how the revelation of the wrath of God is superseded by the revelation of the righteousness of God. This is not effected merely by the cessation of the former revelation, but by the fulfilment of it in the latter revelation. Whatever necessity for the revelation of wrath there was is fully recognized in the revelation of righteousness which takes its place. Nay, even more than this. The revelation of wrath had not been in times past adequate to moral requirements. God had in His patience not exacted from men all the penalty they had brought upon themselves by their wrong-doing. Before forbearance could be changed into forgiveness, the passing over of sins into the blotting out, it was necessary that what the revelation of wrath had but imperfectly accomplished should be perfectly accomplished in the revelation of righteousness in the Cross. How does the Cross meet this demand? Possibly Paul did not ask himself the question. On the one hand, he was sure that sin ought to be punished; on the other, that God in Christ offered forgiveness: he solved the problem by assuming that in the Cross the moment of punishment is taken up into the moment of forgiveness. The Cross has a moral value for God and a moral efficacy for man far transcending all that punishment could effect for the expression and maintenance of God's moral order, as an act of moral obedience by Christ which more than compensates for the moral disobedience of Adam and of the human race (Rom. v. 12-21). The obedience of Christ so transcends the disobedience of Adam that the grace which comes through Christ abounds more exceedingly than the sin brought in by Adam (*vv.* 19, 20). If we compare with this statement by Paul the others in which he describes Christ as entering into man's condition, we are warranted in affirming that the value for God and efficacy for man morally of the Cross of Christ lies in His voluntary acceptance as required by the divine will of, if not the punish-

ment, yet the consequences of sin which for mankind are penal. The grace of God which in Christ bestows forgiveness confirms, approves, vindicates the wrath of God against sin by enduring the conditions imposed on sinful mankind. May we not say that in the obedience of the Son of God in enduring these final consequences of sin God's moral order in the world which necessarily expresses His moral perfection is fulfilled, expressed with a completeness and finality that the continuance of mankind under these penal conditions cannot reach? If as the Psalmist believed the broken and the contrite heart is a more acceptable sacrifice to God than the sacrifices of burnt offerings (Ps. li. 16, 17), if penitence for sin is an element in the faith which claims God's forgiveness, then this judgment of sin may be fitly regarded as necessarily included in the act of forgiveness. Antagonism too, and condemnation of sin, is an essential feature of moral perfection, and of its manifestation in word and deed. If man's moral nature is that in him which has most affinity with God, our thought does not presume too far in the conclusion that for God in revealing Himself it is absolutely necessary that His attitude to sin should be adequately and conclusively expressed.

(9) What further light on the matter Paul's use of the idea of redemption throws we must next inquire. In the passage we have been discussing the term *ἀπολύτρωσις* is used, "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom. iii. 24); but the idea is not made any clearer. In Colossians i. 13 "our redemption" is equivalent to "the forgiveness of our sins." In 1 Corinthians i. 30 it is conjoined with righteousness (*δικαιοσύνη*) and sanctification (*ἁγιασμός*), and we seem entitled to assume that it is used as combining both ideas. In Christ man is delivered from the guilt of sin by God's righteousness (*δικαιοσύνη*), and from its power by the

sanctification (*ἀγιασμός*) of His Spirit. Redemption is presented as deliverance from the law itself in Galatians iv. 4, "that he might redeem them which were under the law," and from its curse or penal consequences in death in iii.<sup>7</sup>13, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us." The last passage shows that Paul did think of a ransom paid for the redemption, and this is definitely stated in 1 Corinthians vi. 20, "Ye were bought with a price." Without committing ourselves to any judgment on the authorship of the Pastoral Epistles we may compare 1 Timothy ii. 6, "Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all," and Titus ii. 14, "Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a people for His own possession, zealous of good works." What the ransom consisted in has been made plain already: it was Christ's endurance of man's lot, not only to deliver man from all consequences of sin as well as sin itself, but also by so doing, as the last three verses quoted state, to bring men under such obligation to Himself as to make them His absolute possession. The means of justification is the motive of sanctification.

(10) Christ having been set forth as propitiatory, and man having been redeemed from sin by the Cross, there is reconciliation between God and man. That the reconciliation is mutual, of God to man and man to God, is taught by the two passages in which the doctrine is most fully stated. In Romans v. 10, 11 the removal of the enmity between God and man is declared. "For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, shall we be saved by His life; and not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation (*καταλλαγὴν*)." God is reconciled to man not in the sense that His disposition to man is changed from

an adverse to a favourable, but that the revelation of His wrath is, as we have already seen, taken up into the revelation of the righteousness in Christ as propitiatory. In 2 Corinthians v. 18, 20 the declaration of God's reconciliation to man is the reason for an appeal to man to become reconciled to God, that is, to lay aside his distrust, estrangement, and enmity to God. "But all things are of God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation. We are ambassadors therefore on behalf of Christ, as though God were entreating by us: we beseech you on behalf of Christ, be ye reconciled to God." It is only a very superficial interpretation of Paul's teaching which can assume that the reconciliation is only of man to God. The reconciliation takes place first as an objective fact through Christ; Christ propitiatory declares God reconciled to man. To men who have in faith accepted this divine gift is committed its proclamation to their fellows. The reconciliation of God to man consists in His "not reckoning unto them their trespasses." Men are entreated to accept this objective fact so as to be changed in their subjective feelings to God. It is God's forgiveness, which does not exclude, but includes, as we have again and again shown, judgment on sin, which casts out fear or hate of God, and awakens trust and love. It is not necessary for the present purpose to discuss Paul's extension of this idea of reconciliation in Colossians i. 20, 22 to all things, and in Ephesians iii. 16 to the relation of Jew and Gentile. This conception of reconciliation forms the link between justification and sanctification: and we may here note how the means of the one is fitted to be the motive of the other. It is not only the love of God shown in the Cross which awakens man's love. If there were no more in this

reconciliation, it would be a sentimental, and not a moral relation which would be constituted between God and man. God's love has a *moral content* in the Cross inasmuch as sin is judged as well as forgiven, and therefore it exercises a *moral constraint*, human love responding to it is humble and contrite, as well as grateful and devoted. It is the objective fact of God's reconciliation that gives its character to the subjective feeling of man's reconciliation.

(11) This doctrine of an objective atonement, a righteousness of God revealed in Christ propitiatory for the redemption of man from sin and evil and the reconciliation of God and man, is to many Christian thinkers foolishness and a stumblingblock. To avoid intellectual and moral offence, it is necessary that it should be stated with the utmost care ; that the wrath of God and the propitiation in Christ should be kept free of pagan associations of anger changed to favour by the shedding of blood ; that the sacrifice of Christ should not be spoken of as the endurance of penalty to the confusion of the distinction between man's guilty and Christ's sinless consciousness : that the moral character of divine grace and human faith and the suffering of Christ should be made evident and certain ; that forgiveness should be conceived as the necessary commencement of holiness. In maintaining all these safeguards it is not necessary for us to depart from Paul's teaching ; for his was a vigorous moral conscience and an intense religious consciousness. This doctrine of the righteousness of God in the sacrifice of the Cross is not of the husk which the Christian faith can without loss strip off, but of the kernel itself ; for however theories of the Atonement may have varied, religious revival and consequent moral reformation have in the history of the Church ever had their source in Christ Crucified as the power and wisdom of God unto salvation.

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