



REFORMED

— P A V I L I O N —

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*For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion:
in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me;
he shall set me up upon a rock.
—Psalm 27:5*

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Moreover thou shalt make the tabernacle. —Exodus 26:1

The Glorious Tabernacle

The tabernacle was glorious. Its size, its material, and its construction were glorious. And rightly so! It was the place where Jehovah would be pleased to dwell in the midst of the children of Israel! For hundreds of years the tabernacle would serve as God's sanctuary among his people. During all the journeys of Israel in the wilderness, during all the conquest of Canaan, during all the history of the judges, and during the reigns of kings Saul and David, the tabernacle would be Jehovah's abode. Of course it was glorious!

What would it be like? The main, towering tent of the tabernacle would be surrounded by an outer court marked by a white curtain of fine linen hung between wooden stakes seven and a half feet tall. Inside this court would be the altar of burnt offering for sacrifices and the brass laver for washing.

The main tent of the tabernacle would be supported by pillars and boards of acacia wood covered in gold and set in silver sockets on the ground. Hung over the boards of the tabernacle would be layers of fabric. The first layer would be fine twined linen dyed blue, purple, and scarlet and embroidered with figures of cherubim. The second layer would be made of goats' hair and would be similar to fine wool. The third layer would be leather made of rams' skins dyed red. The fourth layer would be sealskin ("badgers' skins").

From the outside the tabernacle would be glorious for its size, workmanship, and fine materials. On the inside the tabernacle would be stunning. The blue, purple, and scarlet colors would be fit for royalty. The inside would be

divided into two rooms. The larger room would be the holy place, or sanctuary. The smaller room would be the most holy place, or the holy of holies. In the sanctuary would be the golden candlestick, the altar of incense, and the table of shewbread. A huge curtain would separate the sanctuary from the holy of holies. This curtain would be known as the veil, which would also be blue, purple, and scarlet and would be hung over four pillars. Inside the holy of holies would be the ark of the covenant and the mercy seat. The whole tabernacle would be made for traveling. It would have clever fastenings and joinings that could be taken apart so that the whole massive thing could be taken down and carried in pieces through the wilderness.

The tabernacle would be glorious! Except...it would be dead. The rams and seals whose skins covered the tabernacle would be dead. The trees whose wood made up the pillars and boards would be dead. The whole tabernacle, beautiful as it would be, would be made of dead earthly materials. And after all, it would only be a tent.

Now, let us behold the true tabernacle and its perfect glory. The tabernacle of God, in which he dwells with us, is Jesus Christ. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt (literally, *tabernacled*) among us" (John 1:14). Christ's body is the "greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building" (Heb. 9:11). His blood is the new and living way for us through the veil into the holiest, so that we enter into the presence of God through faith in this high priest and his perfect sacrifice (10:19–22). This Tabernacle is glorious!

—AL

THE CANONS OF DORDT

Translation Comparison: Conclusion

Corrected Translation

Conclusion.

And so this is the clear, simple, and forthright declaration of the orthodox doctrine concerning the five articles that have been disputed in the Netherlands, as well as the rejection of the errors by which the Dutch churches have been troubled for some time. The synod judges that this doctrine and the rejection of errors are derived from the word of God and are in agreement with the confessions of the Reformed churches. Whence it clearly appears that those men are without any truth, equity, or charity, who, though it is not right of them in the least, wish to persuade the public:

That the doctrine of the Reformed churches concerning predestination and the heads annexed thereto, by its own inherent nature and necessary tendency, carries away the souls of men from all piety and religion; that it is a “pillow” for the flesh and for the devil, and the stronghold of Satan, from which he lies in wait for all, wounds multitudes, and mortally pierces through many with the darts both of despair and of security. And again, that the Reformed doctrine makes God the author of sin, unjust, a tyrant, and a hypocrite; and that it is nothing more than a dressed-up Stoicism, Manicheism, Libertinism, Turkism.

Current Translation

Conclusion.

And this is the perspicuous, simple, and ingenuous declaration of the orthodox doctrine respecting the five articles which have been controverted in the Belgic churches, and the rejection of errors, with which they have for some time been troubled. This doctrine the synod judges to be drawn from the Word of God, and to be agreeable to the confessions of the Reformed churches. Whence it clearly appears that some whom such conduct by no means became have violated all truth, equity, and charity, in wishing to persuade the public:

That the doctrine of the Reformed churches concerning predestination, and the points annexed to it, by its own genius and necessary tendency, leads off the minds of men from all piety and religion; that it is an opiate administered by the flesh and the devil, and the stronghold of Satan, where he lies in wait for all, and from which he wounds multitudes and mortally strikes through many with the darts both of despair and security; that it makes God the author of sin, unjust, tyrannical, hypocritical; that it is nothing more than interpolated Stoicism, Manicheism, Libertinism, Turcism; that it renders men carnally secure, since they are persuaded by it that nothing can

Original Latin

Conclusio.

Atque hæc est perspicua, simplex, et ingenua Orthodoxæ de Quinque Articulis in Belgio controversis doctrinæ declaratio, et errorum, quibus Ecclesiæ Belgicæ aliquamdiu sunt perturbatæ, rejectio, quam Synodus ex verbo Dei desumptam, et Confessionibus Reformatarum Ecclesiarum consentaneam esse judicat. Unde liquido apparet eos, quos id minime decuit, citra omnem veritatem, æquitatem, et charitatem, populo inculcatum voluisse:

‘Doctrinam Ecclesiarum Reformatarum de prædestinatione et annexis ei capitibus, proprio quodam genio atque impulsu, animos hominum ab omni pietate et religione abducere: esse carnis et Diaboli pulvinar, arcemque Satanæ, ex qua omnibus insidietur, plurimos sauciet, et multos tum desperationis, tum securitatis jaculis lethaliter configat: eandem facere Deum authorem peccati, injustum, tyrannum, hypocritam; nec aliud esse quam interpolatum Stoicismum, Manicheismum, Libertinismum, Turcismum: eandem reddere homines carnaliter securos, quippe ex ea persuasos electorum saluti,

And again, that the Reformed doctrine renders men carnally secure, their being certainly persuaded by it that, since nothing can hinder the salvation of the elect, no matter how they live, they therefore may safely perpetrate every species of the most dreadful crimes; and that nothing can be of any use for the salvation of the reprobate, even if they would truly perform all the works of the saints.

And again, that the Reformed doctrine teaches that God, by a mere arbitrary judgment of will, without the least regard for or consideration of any sin, predestinated and created the greatest part of the world for eternal damnation; that in the same manner in which election is the fountain and cause of faith and good works, reprobation is the cause of unbelief and impiety; that many infants of believers are torn, guiltless, from their mothers' breasts and tyrannically plunged so deeply into hell that neither baptism nor the prayers of the church at their baptism can at all help them; and many other things of the same kind, which the Reformed churches not only do not recognize as theirs, but even detest with their whole heart.

Wherefore, this Synod of Dordrecht, in the name of the Lord, implores as many as piously call upon the name of our Savior Jesus Christ to judge of the faith of the Reformed churches, not from the calumnies which are heaped upon it from every side; nor even from the private statements of a few authorities, whether ancient or modern,

hinder the salvation of the elect, let them live as they please; and, therefore, that they may safely perpetrate every species of the most atrocious crimes; and that, if the reprobate should even perform truly all the works of the saints, their obedience would not in the least contribute to their salvation; that the same doctrine teaches that God, by a mere arbitrary act of His will, without the least respect or view to any sin, has predestinated the greatest part of the world to eternal damnation, and has created them for this very purpose; that in the same manner in which the election is the fountain and the cause of faith and good works, reprobation is the cause of unbelief and impiety; that many children of the faithful are torn, guiltless, from their mothers' breasts and tyrannically plunged into hell, so that neither baptism, nor the prayers of the church at their baptism, can at all profit them; and many other things of the same kind, which the Reformed churches not only do not acknowledge, but even detest with their whole soul.

Wherefore, this synod of Dordt, in the name of the Lord, conjures as many as piously call upon the name of our Savior Jesus Christ to judge of the faith of the Reformed churches, not from the calumnies which on every side are heaped upon it; nor from the private expressions of a few among ancient and modern teachers, often dishonestly quoted or corrupted

quomodocunque vivant, non obesse, ideoque eos secure atrocissima quæque scelera posse perpetrare; reprobis ad salutem non prodesse, si vel omnia sanctorum opera vere fecerint: eadem doceri Deum nudo puroque voluntatis arbitrio, absque omni ullius peccati respectu, vel intuitu, maximam mundi partem ad æternam damnationem prædestinasse et creasse: eodem modo, quo electio est fons et causa fidei ac bonorum operum, reprobationem esse causam infidelitatis et impietatis: multos fidelium infantes ab uberibus matrum innoxios abripi et tyrannice in gehennam præcipitari, adeo ut iis nec baptismus, nec Ecclesiæ in eorum baptismo preces prodesse queant.'

Et quæ ejus generis sunt alia plurima, quæ Ecclesiæ Reformatæ non solum non agnoscunt, sed etiam toto pectore detestantur.

Quare quotquot nomen Servatoris nostri Jesu Christi pie invocant, eos Synodus hæc Dordrechtana per nomen Domini obtestatur, ut de Ecclesiarum Reformatarum fide, non ex coacervatis hinc inde calumniis, vel etiam privatis nonnullorum, tum veterum tum recentium doctorum dictis, sæpe etiam aut mala fide citatis, aut corruptis, et in alienum

which statements are often either quoted in bad faith or else falsified and twisted into a different meaning; but from the public confessions of the churches themselves, and from this very declaration of the orthodox doctrine that has been confirmed by the unanimous consent of each and every member of the entire synod. Furthermore, the synod earnestly warns the false accusers themselves to consider how heavy a judgment of God awaits those who bear false witness against so many churches, that is, against the confessions of so many churches; who trouble the consciences of the weak; and who busy themselves to make many mistrust the fellowship of the truly faithful.

Finally, this synod exhorts all their brethren in the gospel of Christ to conduct themselves piously and religiously in handling this doctrine, both in the schools and in the churches; to direct it, as well in discourse as in writing, to the glory of the divine name, to holiness of life, and to the consolation of afflicted souls; to regulate, in harmony with scripture, according to the analogy of faith, not only their thinking but also their speaking; and finally, to abstain from all those expressions that go beyond the genuine sense of the holy scriptures, which are the bounds prescribed to us, and that could furnish arrogant sophists with a convenient pretext for insulting, or even vilifying, the doctrine of the Reformed churches.

and wrested to a meaning quite foreign to their intention; but from the public confessions of the churches themselves, and from the declaration of the orthodox doctrine, confirmed by the unanimous consent of all and each of the members of the whole synod. Moreover, the synod warns calumniators themselves to consider the terrible judgment of God which awaits them for bearing false witness against the confessions of so many churches, for distressing the consciences of the weak, and for laboring to render suspected the society of the truly faithful.

Finally, this synod exhorts all their brethren in the gospel of Christ to conduct themselves piously and religiously in handling this doctrine, both in the universities and churches; to direct it, as well in discourse as in writing, to the glory of the divine name, to holiness of life, and to the consolation of afflicted souls; to regulate, by the Scripture, according to the analogy of faith, not only their sentiments but also their language; and to abstain from all those phrases which exceed the limits necessary to be observed in ascertaining the genuine sense of the Holy Scriptures, and may furnish insolent sophists with a just pretext for violently assailing, or even vilifying, the doctrine of the Reformed churches.

sensum detortis, sed ex publicis ipsarum Ecclesiarum Confessionibus, et ex hac orthodoxæ doctrinæ declaratione, unanimes omnium et singulorum totius Synodi membrorum consensu firmata, judicent. Calumniatores deinde ipsos serio monet, viderint quam grave Dei iudicium sint subituri, qui contra tot Ecclesias, contra tot Ecclesiarum Confessiones, falsum testimonium dicunt, conscientias infirmorum turbant, multisque vere fidelium societatem suspectam reddere satagunt.

Postremo hortatur hæc Synodus omnes in Evangelio Christi symmystas, ut in hujus doctrinæ pertractatione, in scholis atque in ecclesiis, pie et religiose versentur, earn tum lingua, tum calamo, ad Divini nominis gloriam, vitæ sanctitatem, et consternatorum animorum solatium accommodent, cum Scriptura secundum fidei analogiam non solum sentiant, sed etiam loquantur; a phrasibus denique iis omnibus abstineant, quæ præscriptos nobis genuini sanctarum Scripturarum sensus limites excedunt, et protervis sophistis justam ansam præbere possint doctrinam Ecclesiarum Reformatarum sugillandi, aut etiam calumniandi.

May Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is seated at the right hand of the Father and who gives gifts unto men, sanctify us in the truth, lead those who err to the truth, stop the mouths of those who speak lies against sound doctrine, and endue the faithful ministers of his word with the spirit of wisdom and discretion, that all their utterances may promote the glory of God and the edification of their hearers. Amen.

That we thus believe and decide, we certify by the signature of our hands.

Here at the conclusion, as well as after each head of doctrine, follow the names of the president (Johannes Bogerman), assistant presidents (Jacobus Rolandus and Hermannus Faukelius), and secretaries (Sebastianus Damman and Festus Hommius) of the synod, the names of the professors of theology in the Dutch churches, and the names of all the members who were deputed to the synod as the representatives of their respective churches, that is, of the delegates from Great Britain, the Electoral Palatinate, Hesse, Switzerland, Wetteraw, the Republic and Church of Geneva, the Republic and Church of Bremen, the Republic and Church of Emden, the Duchy of Gelderland and the County of Zutphen, South Holland, North Holland, Zeeland, the Province of Utrecht, Friesland, Transylvania, the State of Groningen and Omland, Drenthe, and the French churches.

Following the signatures of the churches' delegates to the Synod of Dordt, the states' delegates attested to the accuracy of the above record:

May Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who, seated at the Father's right hand, gives gifts to men, sanctify us in the truth, bring to the truth those who err, shut the mouths of the calumniators of sound doctrine, and endue the faithful minister of His Word with the spirit of wisdom and discretion, that all their discourses may tend to the glory of God and the edification of those who hear them. Amen.

That this is our faith and decision we certify by subscribing our names.

Here follow the names, not only of president, assistant president, and secretaries of the synod, and of the professors of theology in the Dutch churches, but of all the members who were deputed to the synod, as the representatives of their respective churches, that is, of the delegates from Great Britain, the Electoral Palatinate, Hesse, Switzerland, Wetteraw, the Republic and Church of Geneva, the Republic and Church of Bremen, the Republic and Church of Emden, the Duchy of Gelderland and of Zutphen, South Holland, North Holland, Zeeland, the Province of Utrecht, Friesland, Transylvania, the State of Groningen and Omland, Drent, the French churches.

Filius Dei Jesus Christus, qui ad dextram Patris sedens dat dona hominibus, sanctificet nos in veritate, eos qui errant adducat ad veritatem, calumniatoribus sanæ doctrinæ ora obstruat, et fidos verbi sui ministros spiritu sapientiæ et discretionis instruat, ut omnia ipsorum eloquia ad gloriam Dei, et ædificationem auditorum, cedant. Amen.

Ita nos sentire et judicare, manuum nostrarum subscriptione testamur.

Thus have all things been carried out as recounted above concerning the five disputed heads of doctrine, which we, the most Illustrious and Sovereign Delegates of the States General deputed to this synod, certify by the signature of our hands.

Here follow the names of the delegates from the States General who were deputed to the synod as the representatives of their respective provinces, that is, of the delegates from Gelderland, Holland, Zeeland, the Province of Utrecht, Friesland, Transylvania, and the State of Groningen and Omland.

Hæc omnia de Quinque Doctrinæ Capitibus Controversis supra comprehensis, ita esse gesta testatur Illustrissimorum ac Præpotentium DD. Ordinum Generalium ad hanc Synodum Deputati, manuumstrarum subsignatione.



Conclusion

And so this is the clear, simple, and forthright declaration of the orthodox doctrine concerning the five articles that have been disputed in the Netherlands, as well as the rejection of the errors by which the Dutch churches have been troubled for some time. The synod judges that this doctrine and the rejection of errors are derived from the word of God and are in agreement with the confessions of the Reformed churches. Whence it clearly appears that those men are without any truth, equity, or charity, who, though it is not right of them in the least, wish to persuade the public:

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tyrannically plunged so deeply into hell that neither baptism nor the prayers of the church at their baptism can at all help them; and many other things of the same kind, which the Reformed churches not only do not recognize as theirs, but even detest with their whole heart.

Wherefore, this Synod of Dordrecht, in the name of the Lord, implores as many as piously call upon the name of our Savior Jesus Christ to judge of the faith of the Reformed churches, not from the calumnies which are heaped upon it from every side; nor even from the private statements of a few authorities, whether ancient or modern, which statements are often either quoted in bad faith or else falsified and twisted into a different meaning; but from the public confessions of the churches themselves, and from this very declaration of the orthodox doctrine that has been confirmed by the unanimous consent of each and every member of the entire synod. Furthermore, the synod earnestly warns the false accusers themselves to consider how heavy a judgment of God awaits those who bear false witness against so many churches, that is, against the confessions of so many churches; who trouble the consciences of the weak; and who busy themselves to make many mistrust the fellowship of the truly faithful.

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May Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is seated at the right hand of the Father and who gives gifts unto men, sanctify us in the truth, lead those who err to the truth, stop the mouths of those who speak lies against sound doctrine, and endue the faithful ministers of his word with the spirit of wisdom and discretion, that all their utterances may promote the glory of God and the edification of their hearers. Amen.

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Republic and Church of Geneva, the Republic and Church of Bremen, the Republic and Church of Emden, the Duchy of Gelderland and the County of Zutphen, South Holland, North Holland, Zeeland, the Province of Utrecht, Friesland, Transylvania, the State of Groningen and Omland, Drenthe, and the French churches.

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REFORMATION DAY LECTURE

THE MATERIAL PRINCIPLE OF THE REFORMATION

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 31, 2025 | 7:00PM

What was the great sixteenth-century Reformation of the church about?

Well, it was about a great many things.

- It was about popes and penance.
- It was about corruption and conscience.
- It was about monks and masses.
- It was about the truth and the lie, Christ and antichrist, righteousness and unrighteousness.
- And much more besides.

Yes, but what was the Reformation about? What was it essentially about? What was the heart and the kernel of the Reformation? What was the issue that lay at the root of all that was said and done in the great Reformation of the church? What, in short, was the Reformation about?

Ah, therein lies the gospel. For the Reformation was about justification by faith alone.

We call the doctrine of justification by faith alone the material principle of the Reformation. That is, justification was the doctrine, the essence, the heart, the kernel, the issue—the material—of the entire Reformation.

And what marvelous material is justification by faith alone! For it is the gospel of our salvation in Jesus Christ alone.

This Reformation Day, we would be delighted if you would join us to hear about and rejoice in the wonderful gospel of justification by faith alone, the material principle of the Reformation.

HOST

**Remnant Reformed
Church**

SPEAKER

Rev. Andrew Lanning

FORMAT

**Lecture followed by
Q&A and refreshments**

VENUE

Pavilion Christian School, 9181 Kenowa Ave. SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49534

lawgospel.com

Article CXXVIII: The New King and His Kingdom: Circumcision— Its Significance

“A seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised.”—Rom. 4:11

The meaning of circumcision as a sign became clear to us. The Word of God tells us that it was a token of the covenant between God on the one side and Abraham and his seed on the other. According to this covenant, God was Abraham's Friend and the Friend of his seed, would keep and bless them, be their shield and exceeding great reward, and make them heirs of the world. And according to that same covenant relationship, Abraham and his seed were friends of God, always choosing his side and standing for the glory of his name, fighting his battle in the world. We found that there is, indeed, analogy between the sign of circumcision and the thing thus signified. Scripture tells us that the real circumcision is that of the heart, and that of this spiritual circumcision, of this cutting away of the flesh in the spiritual sense by the power of God's grace, the cutting of the foreskin was a symbol. Moreover, the fact that this cutting of the flesh was to be performed upon the generative organ of Abraham and his male descendants pointed to the fact that the covenant of God with his people was to run in the line of Abraham's generations continuously. And thus, finally, the sacrament of circumcision looked forward to the coming of the Great Seed, in whom Abraham would become a blessing to all the nations of the world. When he is born baptism must take the place of circumcision. For the latter is the sacrament of the promise, looking forward toward its realization; the former is the sign of the blood that has been shed, in whose sprinkling there is the power of justification and full redemption.

But circumcision is more than a sign for the saints of the old dispensation.

It also was a seal. A seal of the righteousness which is by faith.

Thus the Apostle Paul tells us in Rom. 4:11: “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had being yet uncircumcised.” In the chapter the apostle is speaking of the righteousness which is by faith in contrast with the righteousness of the works of the law. He reasons that Abraham was justified not by the works, but by faith. And in the verses preceding the eleventh he asked the question whether Abraham was thus justified in the circumcision or without the circumcision. Which was first, Abraham's righteousness or circumcision? To this he answers that Abraham was first declared righteous by the Word of God, righteousness was reckoned to him before the circumcision. And circumcision was instituted, a seal of that righteousness which he already had while he was still uncircumcised. It was God's seal upon the righteousness by faith.

What is a seal? What is its meaning, its idea? If in olden times a document was drawn up that needed to bear on its face the testimony of royal authority, the seal of the king was pressed upon it. It was a sign that such a document was genuine, authoritative, that the highest authority of the state stood back of it. A seal witnessed of the veracity and genuineness of the thing sealed. It gave the thing sealed an inviolable character. With a somewhat different purpose the seal was used to safeguard the contents of certain documents against their being read by anyone but the party intended. Thus we also read in Scripture of

the sealing of things and persons. The book on the hand of him that sitteth on the throne in Rev. 5 is sealed with seven seals. The people of God are spoken of sealed by the Spirit, and the one hundred and forty and four thousand in the book of Revelation appear sealed with the seal of God on their forehead. In every case the seal is a sign of divine authority, whether to assure, to keep secret, to safeguard or to protect and keep.

Thus circumcision is called a seal by the Apostle Paul. It is, therefore, a sign, a token from God himself, witnessing that the thing sealed by it is from him, is genuine and true, may be received as possessing the approval, the authoritative backing of the Most High, the Sovereign of heaven and earth.

But the question arises: What was sealed by the sign of circumcision? Was it the person circumcised? Was the sign of circumcision a seal of God upon every person that was circumcised, that such a one was righteous before him? If that were the case, every Israelite was truly righteous before God, for all were circumcised. All were sealed then by God, all possessed in their flesh the inviolable seal of him that cannot lie, that is faithful and true, that they were righteous according to his righteous imputation. The whole question of righteousness before God was, then, simply a question of being circumcised in the flesh. To be circumcised was to be righteous. Not to be circumcised was to be without that assurance. The Pharisee, who looked for righteousness by the works of the law, was righteous before God as well as Abraham, for both carried the sign and seal of God in their body. And yet we feel immediately that this cannot be true. Not all was Israel that was called thus. Not the Pharisee that sought the righteousness of the law was truly justified before God, even though he was circumcised, but he that believed that God justifies the ungodly was righteous before the Most High. Circumcision was a seal of God, truly. It was a seal, moreover, which all the children of Israel received. Every male child of the descendants of Abraham had to be circumcised. But the thing sealed was not

the person, but the righteousness which is by faith. It bore divine testimony, it was God's own sign of authority, it was the inviolable assurance from the Most High himself that he justified the ungodly that believed.

Thus Paul presents the matter in Rom. 4:11. He calls circumcision a seal of the righteousness of faith. Mark, it is not simply a seal of righteousness in general. It is not an authoritative testimony from God to the person that received it that he was righteous. But it is a seal of God upon the genuineness and validity before him of the righteousness which is by faith. A seal it is, which serves as God's own authoritative assurance of the fact that faith is reckoned by him for righteousness. If anyone believed in him that justified the ungodly, he could point to the sign of circumcision as an indubitable testimony from God that he was righteous. The inseparable relation between faith and righteousness was sealed by God in the sign of circumcision.

That relation between faith and righteousness we have discussed before. It did not mean that God looked upon faith as a sort of work meriting righteousness. That would be quite impossible, for the righteousness of faith is by grace, not of works. Neither did God reckon faith as righteousness from the consideration that this faith would ultimately result in good works, for even then it would not have been of grace but of works by anticipation. Nor must we say that faith merely justifies us before our own consciousness, for Scripture plainly teaches that God reckons faith as righteousness. But faith is the tie that binds us to Christ. He is the Righteous One for us. He is our righteousness. By faith we are ingrafted into him. And though personally we have no work of the law to show, though we have violated all the law and still are inclined to all manner of wickedness in ourselves, our being in Christ Jesus makes us righteous before God. And thus, according to strictest justice God reckons faith as righteousness before him and justifies the ungodly.

It is not difficult to see that there is divine wisdom and grace in the fact that God gives his

own seal as an authoritative testimony of this relation between faith and righteousness. There is, perhaps, nothing more difficult to believe and fully appropriate than the truth that God justifies the ungodly. Added to this is the fact that in the old dispensation the Righteous One had not yet come. The old dispensation stood in the sign of the promise. Atonement had not been made as yet. Christ had not yet come. The saints of the old dispensation lived in the hope and expectation that the promise should be fulfilled. By faith they stood connected with the God of their salvation, but his full manifestation as such in Christ was still expected. And the question that arises in the hearts of many of God's people today even might so easily rise from the hearts of the old dispensational believer: Does God really justify us, ungodly men, that daily

transgress all the commandments of God? And the answer was: God justifies the believer. He that believes in him that justifies the ungodly is righteous before God. Righteousness is no more connected with the works of the law, but with faith in the God of our salvation. And as a seal of that righteousness God gave the sign of circumcision.

If this is clear, it will also be evident that it served as a seal of God to the believing Jew. Surely, the Pharisee was mistaken when he founded his righteousness upon circumcision as such. He failed to understand that circumcision sealed the relation between faith and righteousness with God's own authority. But to him that believed, circumcision certainly was a seal of God that he was righteous, and that as a righteous one he was received in God's eternal covenant.

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