

T H E

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JUSTIFICATION.

THE mode of the sinner's justification with God is a matter of deep interest and importance to all, but especially to those convicted of sin and its desert, and neither philosophy, nor scientific investigation, nor discoveries in the arts, afford real comfort and satisfaction to such, until they learn how God can be just and the justifier of the ungodly. Reason and nature give no information in regard to this matter; they teach many important and essential truths, but they are silent upon this theme. It is revelation that makes known the ground of pardon and acceptance, exhibiting the Lord Jesus Christ as the alone Saviour of sinners, the only way of access to the Father, assuring us "being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Justification is not a change of nature, but of the state of the guilty in reference to the law; while inseparably connected with sanctification, it is distinct from it. It does not consist in infusing righteousness into men (as the Church of Rome asserts), by which they are made externally just, or righteous, "but is the act of God's free grace, wherein he pardoneth all our sins and accepteth us as righteous in his sight." It is a forensic term, used in courts of human judicature, denoting not the making a man just, but showing, declaring that he is just, or conformable to law. In the Scripture it is used in antithesis to condemnation—"The judgment was by one man to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences to justification." Condemnation is a judicial act, the judge passing sentence upon a man that has been accused and convicted. It does not consist in making the man a criminal; it is the act of the judge declaring his guilt, pronouncing it publicly, and sentencing to punishment: and justification is the act of the judge, judicially absolving the guilty, and declaring him to be righteous.

It is the act of God; the justified "are the ungodly" sinners, violators of the divine law, rebels to the throne and government of Jehovah, the creatures of God, responsible to him as moral Governor, and liable

MISSIONARY.

FOREIGN MISSION.

THE Board have letters from Dr. Metheny of July 6th, from Mr. Beattie of July 15th, and from Mr. Dodds of August 2d. The following painful intelligence is given by the letters:

"I have just to-day received the startling and painful intelligence of the death of our friend in London, Mr. Lyde. He fell from the platform of a rail road station, and was crushed by a train just coming in. I received my information from Mr. Beattie, who read it in a newspaper. Our whole church will be saddened by the tidings of the sudden and untimely death of this excellent Christian man. He has been a true and beloved friend to our mission in Latakiah. Learning from a slip of paper written in pencil, that his late brother, who died in Egypt, after laboring for some time among the Nusairiyeh, purposed to provide an annuity of sixty pounds for their religious instruction, he has voluntarily remitted that amount every year to our mission, and in addition, has at times made other generous contributions. His death is every way a loss to the mission. It may be that this resource will now be exhausted, and if so the Lord and Master, whose hand is in the dispensation, calls upon us for larger sacrifices to meet the exigency that has arisen. Are we willing and ready to do it?"

The following letter from Mr. Dodds will be read with interest, and will, we hope, awaken a spirit of earnest prayer on behalf of our brethren and the interests of the mission. We regret that a communication from Mr. Beattie, intended for publication, has failed to reach us. Recent letters from Dr. Metheny speak of his onerous and increasing labors in the medical department. He is unable to meet the calls that are made upon him, though exerting himself to the utmost of his power to do so.

AUGUST 2, 1869.

MESSRS EDITORS— In my last I gave you a brief account of a communion held at Idlib, in June, and informed you of the admission to our fellowship of two men brought up in the Greek Church. The elder of the two has since died. He was an old man. I think he could not have been much less than seventy. I have translated for the benefit of your readers the following extracts in relation to his death from a letter from Muallim Isa, our catechist at Idlib, under date of July 7th.

"And now I have sad and afflictive news to impart. We are now full of sorrow over that painful dispensation of divine providence which has taken place in relation to our brother Hanna Khal. He fell sick on Thursday, and continued ill on Friday and Saturday without my knowledge. On Sabbath morning when we were met for prayers, I inquired for him, and Jurjis Kurnub told me that he was sick. So when prayers were over, and the brethren had gone home, I went to see our poor brother, and finding him laid on his bed, I went to him and saluted him. He was in a most pitiable condition, very ill indeed, and I spoke to him of preparation for death, and told him to direct his thoughts to that only Saviour, and to commit his spirit into the hand

of the Lord Jesus, who had bought it with his blood, and his constant response was, 'Lord Jesus, into thy hand I commit my spirit.' I asked him, 'Are you afraid to die?' and after a little hesitation he replied, 'No, I am not conscious that I am afraid to die.' I said to him, 'Why do you not fear to die, are you not a sinner?' 'Yes,' said he, 'I am a sinner, but I commit my spirit into the hand of the Lord Jesus.' Then after the middle of the afternoon, when we had got through with Bible class, I and the brethren went to see him. He was worse than in the morning, and his speech had become thick. We asked him how he was, and he replied, 'I am taking my departure for the world of spirits,' and then began to take leave of the brethren, and we, on our part, spake such words as might turn his thoughts to Christ, and then united in prayer, and left him. After we went out priest Jirjis came in and said to him, 'My son Hanna, I am come to confess you; will you not confess to me?' He replied, 'I have already confessed to the Lord; I have partaken of the communion, too. I will not confess to you.' So the priest went out from him in great wrath, and at once went to the other priest, and said to him, 'Hanna Khal is sick, and very low, and he will probably die in the morning. I have been with him and asked him to confess, and he has refused. He must not be buried in our burying ground, nor carried to the grave on our bier.' And to this they both agreed.

"But to return to our suffering brother. He remained in great pain, still commending his spirit to Jesus, till midnight, when he expired. On Monday morning the brethren assembled and went to his house. We found his weeping wife, the house full of women and the court full of men. I stood up among them, and opened the Testament and read a part of the twenty-third chapter of Luke, and addressed to them an exhortation.

"In the morning, before the time of the funeral, we had sent three men to dig a grave in the Greek burying ground, but the clergy were not at all willing that he should be buried in the burying ground, and attempted to stir up mischief against us among the Greeks. The affair was, however, at last peaceably adjusted between us and them. The clergy, when disappointed in this direction, gave orders that no one should give us the bier out of the church yard, nor any of their people accompany the funeral. But we took a ladder and laid the corpse on it, and it was so borne on the shoulders of men to the burying ground, whither we were accompanied also by some of the Greeks, and there we buried him in the midst of the other graves; and having completed his interment, we went to condole with and comfort his widow and son Yusif. May your life be long and our Lord have you in his keeping.

"And now, I beg that you will not forget us in your prayers, and that you will remember the widow and the orphans left by our brother, Hanna Khal, and if it seems good to you to contribute something that we may buy them some bushels of wheat, give us your orders to that effect, and we also will contribute to their wants, for they are in want of what is necessary for their subsistence, and do not forget them in your prayers. Yours, &c.,

ISA EL HAURAUl."

Hanna Khal, when the Protestant Mission in Aleppo made Idlib an out-station, six or seven years ago, was making a precarious living by teaching a school under the patronage of the Greek Church. His attention being called to the word of God, he soon saw how contrary to it were the teachings of the Greek Church, with her hierarchy, her mass, her many mediators, her manifold atonements, her burdensome fasts and feasts, her adoration of pictures, crosses, saints, angels and the virgin, &c., and begun to avow his renunciation of all these abominations for the pure teachings of the gospel. With this change of views thus openly avowed, he could no longer be employed by the Greeks to teach their children. Dr. Wortebat or Mr. Brown, I do not remember which, placed him in the mission school as an assistant to Isa, with the small remuneration of five dollars per month, partly to keep him from starving, and partly that he might be able to leave the school a part of the day for the purpose of visiting people in their shops and other places of business.

When we took charge of the work two years and a half ago, one of the first things we did was to turn him out of employment, as we did not feel any necessity for his services in the school. This was a very severe trial of his fidelity, for he was very poor, and his employment in the school was the only way then open to him of making a living. If he had been professing Protestantism only from mercenary motives, he would certainly have left us then and returned to the Greeks, who would have reinstated him as the teacher of their children. The prevailing opinion in the East, even among persons considerably enlightened, is that missionaries not only ought not to turn out of employment needy persons who attach themselves to them, but ought to make employment for them, and this feeling is very strong. However, Hanna stood firm, and I am the more encouraged to think it was by the grace of God, as he was very far from being a man of any acuteness of intellect or strength of character. When he was examined for admission to the communion he evinced a good acquaintance with the doctrines of the gospel. At the same time, if they had been assailed in his presence, he could have defended them only to the extent of throwing in the face of his adversary the appropriate proof texts. To cunningly devised objections he could have replied only by reiterating the doctrine and the texts. His behavior on his death-bed as reported to me by Mualim Isa in the letter given above, was such as a man might attain to either with or without the grace of God, but I think that upon the whole it is unlikely that a man brought and living till the age of sixty in the abominations and superstitions of the Greek Church should die so without "some good thing accompanying salvation." This refusal of the rites of the Greek Church on his death bed will make all the more impression as a testimony against error, on account of his being a man of little strength of mind. If he had died in the condition in which he was seven years ago, he would have spent his last hours, as all Greeks do, in calling on the virgin.

He leaves a widow advanced in years and very poor, who was bitterly opposed to his becoming a Protestant, and two orphan grandchildren, the son and daughter of a son who died a few years ago and

left them in his care. The little grandson has been pretty well instructed in the way of salvation in our mission school, but is under the pernicious influence of his relatives, who are bigoted Greeks. And that is all that you need to know about Hanna Khal.

You see from what Isa writes that the Greek priests do not consider valid the act of any man by which he leaves their church and joins another, and that there is no Protestant burying ground at Idlib.

Yours, truly,

R. J. DODDS.

NEW YORK CITY MISSION.

MESSRS. EDITORS — This mission, which was first authorized by the Presbytery in the fall meeting of 1867, was, at the last meeting, continued indefinitely, so that it may now be regarded as fairly established. The mission is located now, as it has been since Jan., 1868, in a commodious hall near the corner of Fifty-fourth street and Third avenue. The population of that part of the city is chiefly German. The Irish who dwell there are mostly Papists, and so are also many of the Germans. The children who attend the Sabbath school, averaging between 80 and 100, are mostly from German families. They are docile, but as the home influence is, almost invariably, in opposition to the proper observation of the Sabbath, and to any true regard to the truth, it is exceedingly difficult to make abiding impressions upon the children. I am, in my canvassing and visits, well received, invariably so in Protestant families, and in all the visits which I have made, in hundreds of families, there have been only five instances in which I have met with rebuffs, and these were from Papists. They (the Papists) will usually talk with freedom. I endeavor, in my conversations with them, to suggest difficulties in their system, in the light of Scripture truth, and to inculcate the absolute need of simple, undivided dependence upon the work of Jesus, if they would be saved. Some of the Popish families are willing that I should pray with them, and in cases where the English language is understood, I have only found two families where there has not been a ready assent to my offer of prayer. In most cases, where they are not in the habit of attending preaching, promises to attend with us are readily made, but these promises are often broken. There is abundant opportunity, not only to learn the "refuges of lies" under which men seek to hide themselves, but also to give needed warnings and instructions, more personal than they could be made in preaching.

I find that the first and great want is a true knowledge and sense of sin. I asked an old colored woman if she was not a sinner; she answered, unhesitatingly, "No." In another case I was told expressly the same thing. I have found, in numerous instances, that while they would confess that they have done wrong things, yet when they are not guilty of crimes of which the human law and penalty take note, they are not sensible of sin. One sensible and well educated German told me that "If he did what was right between man and man, that was all God required of him." I had been urging upon him the duty of reading the Bible, of prayer, and of worshipping God in public, and this was his