

Chapter 4

That Abraham was not iuftified by his owne power, but by God's grace, in whom he beleued (6. which is a way for the finner alfo to come to iuftice.) 9. And that, feeing he was not as then circumcified; not only the circumcified Iew, but alfo the vncircumcified Gentil may by beleueing the Chriftian faith, come to iuftice, as Abraham did: 11. fpecially confidering alfo, that Abraham was promifed to be Father of the whole world, and not only of the Iewes, to whom only the Law was giuen: and that, not to fulfil the promife, but for another caufe.

What shal we fay then that ¹Abraham did find, our Father according to the flesh? ² For if Abraham were iuftified ¹by works he hath glorie, but not with God. ³ For what faith the Scripture? *Abraham beleued God, & it was reputed him to iuftice.* ⁴ But ¹to him that worketh, the reward is not imputed according to grace but according to debt. ⁵ But ¹to him that worketh not, yet beleueth in him that iuftifieth the impious, his faith is reputed to iuftice according to the purpofe of the grace of God. ⁶ ¹As Dauid alfo termeth the bleffednes of a man, to whō God reputeth iuftice without works: ⁷ *Bleffed are they, whose iniquities be forgiuen, and whose finnes be ¹couered.* ⁸ *Bleffed is the man to whom our Lord hath not imputed finne.*

⁸ This bleffednes then doth it abide in the circumcifion, or in the prepuce alfo? For we fay that vnto Abraham faith was ^areputed to iuftice. ⁹ How was it reputed? in circumcifion, or in prepuce? Not in circumcifion, but in

Gen. 5, 6.

Gal. 3, 6.

Ia. 2, 23.

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Pf. 31. 1.

^a The word *Reputed*, doth not diminish the truth of the iuftice, as though it were reputed for iuftice being not iuftice indeed; but fignifieth, that as it was in itfelf, fo God efteemed & reputed it: as the fame greeke word muft needs be taken *v. 4.* next going before, & *1. Cor. 4, 1.* and elfwhere.

Gen. 17, 10. prepuce. ¹⁰ And he receiued ^a)the figne of circuncifion, [♣]a feale of the iuftice of faith that is in prepuce: that he might be the Father of al that beleuee by the prepuce, that vnto them alfo it may be reputed to iuftice: ¹¹ and might be Father of circuncifion, not to them only that are of the circuncifion, but to them alfo that follow the fteps of the faith that is in the prepuce of our Father Abraham. ¹² For not by the Law was the promife to Abraham, or to his feed, that he fhould be heire of the world; but by the iuftice of faith. ¹³ For if they that are of the Law, be heires; faith is made void, the promife is abolifhed. ¹⁴ For the Law worketh wrath. For where is no Law, neither is there preuarication. ¹⁵ Therefore of faith: that according to grace the promife may be firme to al the feed, not to that only which is of the Law, but to that alfo which is of the faith of Abraham, who is

Gen. 17, 4. the Father of vs al, (as it is written: ¹⁶ For *a Father of many Nations haue I appointed thee*) before God, whom he beleueed. ‘thou didft beleuee,’ who quickneth the dead; and calleth thofe things that are not, as thofe things that are. ¹⁷ Who contrarie to hope beleueed in hope; that he might be made the Father of many Nations, according to that

Gen. 15, 5. which was faid to him: *So fhall thy feede be*, as the ftarres of Heauen, and the fand of the fea. ¹⁸ And he was not weakned in faith; neither did he confider his owne body now quite dead, whereas he was almoft an hundred yeares old, and the dead matrice of Sara. ¹⁹ In the promife alfo of God he ftaggered not by diftruft; but was ftrenghened in faith, giuing glorie to God: ²⁰ moft fully knowing that whatfoeuer he promifed, he is able alfo to doe. ²¹ Therefore was it alfo reputed him to iuftice.

²² And it is not written only for him, that it was reputed him to iuftice; ²³ but alfo [♣]for vs, to whom it fhall be reputed beleueing in him, that raifed vp IESVS CHRIST our Lord from the dead, ²⁴ who was deliuered vp for our finnes, and rofe againe for our iuftification.

^a Our Sacraments of the new Law giue *ex opere operato*, the grace and iuftice of faith which here is commended: whereas circuncifion was but a figne or marke of the fame.

ANNOTATIONS

1 Abraham.) The Apofte difputing in this chapter, as before, againft them that thought they might be iuftified by their works done without the grace of Chrift & faith in him, propofeth Abraham for an example, and proueth that he had no iuftice nor eftimation of iuftice before God by any works done before he had faith, or that proceeded not of faith & God's grace.

Abraham's works before faith.

2 By works.) If Abraham did any commendable works before he beleueed Chrift, as many Philofophers did, men might count him iuft therefore; but in God's fight (who accepteth nothing without faith in him, or that proceedeth not from his grace) he should neuer haue had the eftimation of a iuft man. Therefore God in the Scriptures reputed him as a iuft man, giueth the caufe thereof, faying: *Abraham beleueed God, and it was reputed to him for iuftice.*

Iuftice before men, & iuftice before God.

4 To him that worketh.) That is to fay: He that prefumeth of his owne works as done of himfelf without faith, God's help, and grace: and faying, that grace or iuftification were giuen to him for his works; this man doth challenge his iuftification as debt, & not as of fauour & grace.

Not works, but mere grace is caufe of our firft iuftification.

5 To him that worketh not.) He worketh not (in this place) that hath no works or alleageth not his works done in his infidelitie as caufe of his iuftificatiō, but faith in Chrift, & that proceeding of mere grace. Wherupon S. Auguftin faith: *Know thou that faith found thee vniuft. And if faith giuen to thee, made thee iuft, it found thee a wicked one whom it might make iuft. If it found thee wicked, and of fuch an one made thee iuft, what works hadft thou being then wicked? None couldeft thou haue (nor canft haue) before thou beleueedft. Beleuee then in him that iuftifieth the impious, that thy good works may be good works indeed. Auguft. In Pfal. 31.*

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6 As Dauid termeth.) The Proteftants for, *termeth*, tranflate, *defcribeth*, for that they would haue the ignorā̄t beleuee, the whole nature & definition of Iuftificatiō to be nothing els but remiffion of finnes, and no grace or inherent iuftice giuen from God at al. When the Apofte would fay nothing els, but that in the firft iuftification God findeth no good works or merits to reward, but only finnes to forgiue vnto fuch as haue faith in him.

Heretical tranflation.

7 Couered. 8. Not imputed.) You may not gather (as the Heretikes doe) of thefe termes, *couered*, and, *not imputed*, that the finnes of men be neuer truly forgiuen, but hidden only. For that derogateth much to the force of Chrifts bloud & to the grace of God, by which our offences be truly remitted. He is the Lamb that *taketh avway* the finnes of the world, that *walsheth*, and *blotteth out* our finnes. Therefore to couer them, or, not to impute them, is, not to charge vs with our finnes, becaufe by remiffion they be

What is, *Sinnes couered* or *not imputed*.

Io. 1, 29.
2. Cor. 6, 11.
Apoc. 1, 5.

cleane taken away: otherwife it were but a feined forgiueneffe. See *S. Auguftine in Pfal. 31. enarrat. 2.*

10 A feale.) The Heretikes would proue hereby, that the Sacraments of the Church giue not grace or iuftice of faith, but that they be notes, markes, and badges only of our remiffion of finnes had by faith before, becaufe Abraham was iuft before and took this Sacrament for a feale therof only. To which muft be answered, that it followeth not that it is fo in al, becaufe it was fo in the Patriarch, who was iuft before, and was therfore as it were the Founder of Circumcifion, or he in whom God would firft eftablifh the fame: no more then it followeth that, becaufe the Holy Sacrament of the Altar remitted not finnes to Chrift nor iuftified him, therfore it hath that effect in none. Look *S. Auguftine de Baptifme contra Donatiftas li. 4. c. 24.* Where you fhall fee that (though not in Abraham) yet in Ifaac his fonne, and fo confequently in the reft, the Sacrament went before, and iuftice followed.

The Sacramēts are not mere markes, but caufes of iuftification.

23 For vs, to whom it fhall be reputed.) By this it is moft plaine againft our Aduerfaries, that the faith which was reputed for iuftice to Abraham, was his beleefe of an Article reuealed to him by God, that is to fay, his affent & credit giuen to God's fpeeches: as in vs his pofteritie according to the fpirit, it is here plainly faid, that iuftice fhall be reputed to vs by beleeuing the Articles of Chriftes death and Refurrection, and not by any fond fpecial faith, *fiducia*, or confidence of each mans owne faluation. To eftablifh the which fictiō, they make no account of the faith Catholike, that is, wherewith we beleeu the Articles of the faith, which only iuftifieth, but cal it by contempt, an hiftorical faith: fo as they may terme Abraham's faith, & our Ladies faith, of which it was faid, *Beata quæ credidifti, Bleffed art thou that haft beleued.* And fo in truth they deny as wel the iuftification by faith, as by works.

By what faith we are iuftified.

Luc. 1, 45.