

THE GREAT CONTROVERSY: WHICH IS THE CHANNEL OF SALVATION?

Faith? or The Sacraments?

Church Association Tract 163

BY THE REV. J. B. WADDINGTON

Vicar of Low Moor, Clitheroe, Lancashire

“What must I do to be saved?”

“Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and thou shalt be saved.”—Acts xvi. 30, 31.

THE GREAT QUESTION for all who are anxious to escape the wrath due to their sins, is this:—
HOW ARE THE MERITS OF CHRIST’S DEATH TO BE CONVEYED TO MY SOUL?

Now this is just the point of the great controversy between the Church of Rome and the Protestant Churches; between Evangelicals and High Churchmen (Sacerdotalists).

Let us consider this vital question—which is one of life and death, yea, of eternal life and eternal death to precious souls—with the Bible in our hands.

How is a saving interest in the vicarious sufferings of the Great Sin-Bearer to be obtained and continued?

Through earthly priests, and rites performed and sacrifices offered by them? or direct from Him Who is both Priest and Sacrifice?

Is it through THEIR ministrations or HIS?

To put it plainly, Are the *Sacraments* or is *Faith* the Divinely appointed channel through which the Salvation purchased by the SAVIOUR’S Blood is received by an anxious soul?

The Church of England states emphatically in *Article XI. Of the Justification of Man*: “We are justified BY FAITH ONLY.” In the *Homily of the Salvation of Mankind, by only Christ our Saviour, 2 Part*, we read: “By Faith only, we obtain remission of our sins.” In the *Homily of the Death and Passion of our Saviour Christ, 2 Part*, we read: “Almighty GOD . . . hath also ordained a certain mean, whereby we may take fruit and profit to our souls’ health. “What mean is that? Forsooth it is Faith. . . . John iii. 6. Here is the mean, whereby we must apply the fruits of CHRIST’S death unto our deadly wound. Here is the mean, whereby we must obtain eternal life; namely, FAITH. Rom. x. 10; Acts xvi. 31; John xx. 31.”

But in a question of such vital consequence we must not trust to any man or creed, but must go to the Fountain head of all truth—THE WORD OF GOD HIMSELF. (Acts xvii. 11; 2 Tim. iii. 15. See *Article VI*.) There we find no uncertain sound, for salvation is clearly stated (Eph. ii. 8) to be “BY GRACE”—GOD’S free, unmerited, loving-kindness to guilty sinners; “THROUGH FAITH,” or by simply trusting, as did the jailor at Philippi and the dying thief on the cross, to the merits and promises of an Almighty SAVIOUR. (Heb. X. 14. See John iii. 14-18, 36; v. 24; Acts xiii. 38,39; xvi. 30, 31; Rom. iii.28; Gal. ii. 20.)

DEAR READER,—Do you now see that Salvation—pardon and acceptance—must be received direct from CHRIST, not from the priest? Through FAITH, and therefore not through the sacraments or priestly ministrations?

The moment that you are led by the SPIRIT to give up all trust in ceremonies, ministers, or your own merits, and trust only in CHRIST and His “finished” work, eternal salvation is yours. (John iii. 14; v. 24; Rom. viii. 14-17.)

Then will you find it a great refreshment, and esteem it your high privilege to draw near with a contrite and thankful heart to your LORD’S Table, taking the Bread and Wine in grateful remembrance of His death upon the cross, when He suffered in your stead; by faith realizing His blessed presence in your soul—that faith confirmed, as well as grace increased, by means of that sacred ordinance in which we “shew the LORD’S Death till He come.” (1 Cor. xi. 26.)