JUSTIFICATION.

A Brief Introduction to Some Difficulties and
Obscurities relating to Anglican and Roman
Catholic Teaching.

by

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§1. The doctrine of justification was unquestionably the central theological issue during the initial phase of the Reformation. Although the precise relationship between the ·initia theologiae Lutheri and the initia theologiae Reformationis remains obscure, it is clear that the theology faculty at Wittenberg was committed to a programme of reform by the year 1518 which was essentially a reflection of a new interest in scripture and Augustine, especially in relation to the doctrine of justification. The unusually great care taken by the Tridentine fathers in preparing the decretum de iustificatione may also be taken to reflect an awareness of the seriousness of the issue at stake. Although Loofs has argued that the phrase articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae dates from as late as 1718, our work on early Lutheran and Reformed dogmatic works indicates that the phrase articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesiae dates from at least one hundred years earlier, and apparently reflects a common modus loquendi of the period.

Literature: F. Loofs, "Der articulus stantis et cadentis ecclesiae", Theologische Studien und Kritiken 90 (1917) pp. 323-400; E. Wolf, "Die Rechtfertigungslehre als Mitte und Grenze reformatorischer Theologie", Evangelische Theologie 9 (1949-50) pp. 298-308; A.E. McGrath, "Der articulus iustificationis als axiomatische Grundsatz des christlichen Glaubens", Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche 81 (1984), in press.

§2. In the past, proper discussion of the apparent differences between Anglicans and Roman Catholics on justification has been greatly hindered by the absence of any proper understanding of the historico-theological questions underlying these differences. The last fifty years has seen an enormous advance in our understanding of the nature of later mediaeval theology and its influence upon the development of the Reformation, and puts us in a much stronger position to discuss the emerging differences between Protestant and Roman Catholic theology on the matter. In turning to consider the relationship between Anglican and Roman Catholic teaching on justification, it is important that you exclude from your considerations those theological works which rest upon historico-theological foundations which have been shattered by recent scholarship. A case in point is John Henry Newman's Lectures on Justification which, although of interest to Newman scholars, are

hopelessly inaccurate in their presentation of Protestant and Roman Catholic teaching on justification. Although Hans Küng's Justification represents an enormous improvement upon Newman's incompetent scholarship, it is still open to criticism. The most reliable guide to the subject currently available is the final statement of the U.S. Lutheran - Roman Catholic dialogue group, which it is quite impossible to fault on any major point of substance. It is therefore strongly recommended that you base your discussions upon this document alone, and use it with the total confidence which its masterly scholarship permits.

Literature: "Justification by Faith", by the Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue Group in the United States, Origins 13 (1983) pp. 277-304. Also: H. Küng, Justification. The Doctrine of Karl Barth and a Catholic Reflection (London, 1964); H.G. Pöhlmann, Rechtfertigung. Die gegenwärtige kontroverstheologische Problematik der Rechtfertigungslehre zwischen der evangelisch-lutherischen und der römisch-katholischen Kirche (Gütersloh, 1971). Küng's choice of Barth as a subject for comparison with Trent, as well as his exposition of Trent itself, is open to criticism: A.E. McGrath, "Justification: Barth, Trent and Küng", Scottish Journal of Theology 34 (1981) pp. 517-529. On Barth's unusual understanding of justification and its consequences, see A.E. McGrath, "Karl Barth and the articulus iustificationis. The Significance of his Critique of Ernst Wolf within the Context of his Theological Method", Theologische Zeitschrift 39 (1983) pp. 349-361; idem., "Karl Barth als Aufklärer? Der Zusammenhang seiner Lehre vom Werke Christi mit dem Erwählungslehre", Kerygma und Dogma 30 (1984), in press.

§3. In view of the fact that the report Justification by Faith is so reliable, the present paper will not attempt to duplicate its findings, but will deal with 1) questions relating to the specifically Anglican understanding of justification, and 2) questions which Justification by Faith does not consider, or does not consider adequately, which will be of assistance to you in your discussions. Throughout the present paper, it will therefore be assumed that you have read both the text and the footnotes of Justification by Faith.

§4. It is important to appreciate that Protestant doctrines of justification cannot be characterised solely with reference to their admittedly anti-Pelagian character. The third and fourth decades of the sixteenth century saw the concept of forensic justification gain widespread acceptance within the emerging Protestant churches. Whereas the earlier western theological tradition had been unanimous in regarding justification as the process by which man became

righteous, Protestant theology as a whole came to adopt a signific-
antly different understanding of the concept. The following features
are characteristic of Protestant understandings of justification in
the period 1525-1710, as judged by an exhaustive analysis of
original sources:

i.   Justification is understood to be the <u>forensic</u> <u>declaration</u>
       that the Christian is righteous, rather than the process by
       which he is <u>made</u> righteous, involving a change in his <u>status</u>
       rather than his <u>nature</u>.

ii.   A deliberate and systematic distinction is made between
       <u>justification</u> (the event in which the sinner is declared to
       be righteous), and <u>sanctification</u> or <u>regeneration</u> (the process
       of inner renewal through the Holy Spirit, by which the sinner
       is made righteous).

iii.   Justifying righteousness, or the formal cause of justification,
       is understood to be the alien righteousness of Christ, which
       is imputed to man and remains external to him, rather than
       a righteousness which is inherent to man, located within him,
       or which can be said to in any way belong to him.

For the Protestant, the term "justification" thus refers to the
external pronouncement on the part of God that the sinner is to
be regarded as righteous in his sight, which marks the beginning
of the Christian life. For the Roman Catholic - who, in this matter,
continues the common teaching of the western church - the same term
refers to the event which begins the Christian life <u>and</u> the process
by which it is continued, as the believer grows in righteousness
and holiness. In other words: the Roman Catholic understands by
"justification" what the Protestant understands by "justification"
<u>and</u> "sanctification" linked together. This semantic distinction is
of considerable importance, as the following section will make clear.

Literature: A.E. McGrath, "Forerunners of the Reformation? A Critical Examination
of the Evidence for Precursors of the Reformation Doctrines of Justification",
<u>Harvard Theological Review</u> 75 (1982) pp. 37-60. The point is developed and
justified in our larger work, <u>Iustitia Dei. A History of the Christian Doctrine
of Justification</u> (3 vols: Clarke, Cambridge, to be published late 1984), although
this will not be published in time for your deliberations. For the origins of
the concept of forensic justification, see idem., "Humanist Elements in the Early
Reformed Doctrine of Justification", <u>Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte</u> 73
(1982) pp. 5-20.

§5. The importance of this semantic point is best appreciated
when the following two statements are considered:

A.   Man is justified by faith alone.

B.   Man is justified by faith and by holiness of life.

In terms of popular polemics, the former is generally identified
as the Protestant, and the latter as the Roman Catholic, position.
The essential point we wish to make is that the different concepts
of "justification" associated with Protestant and Roman Catholic
lead to considerable confusion. Consider statement A. To the
Protestant, this implies that the Christian life is begun through
faith, and through faith alone, which corresponds to the general
Protestant position. To the Roman Catholic, this implies that
the Christian life as a whole is begun and continued by faith alone,
which appears to exclude any reference to holiness, obedience,
regeneration, charity or good works within that context - and is
therefore totally unacceptable, amounting to a form of naive
libertinism.   Consider statement B. To the Roman Catholic, this
means that the Christian life, although begun through faith, is
continued and developed through holiness of life - which is obviously
the teaching of the New Testament. To the Protestant, this implies
that the Christian life is begun through faith and holiness, which
appears to amount to a doctrine of justification by works. It will
be clear that statement A, understood in the Protestant sense, and
statement B, understood in the Roman Catholic sense, are essentially
equivalent - and yet a failure to appreciate the semantic difference
underlying the two statements would inevitably obscure this point.

§6.   It will therefore be evident that the very use of the term
"justification" is fraught with potential difficulty, in that it
will probably be used in different senses by those contributing to
your discussion. Although it is true that Roman Catholic biblical
scholars, such as Bonnetain and Huby, have tended to draw a
distinction between δικαίωσις and ἁγιασμός, or δικαιοσύνη and
ἁγιωσύνη, this distinction has not passed into the dogmatic theology
of the Roman Catholic church. To avoid such confusion, there would
clearly be considerable advantage in avoiding using the term "just-
ification" wherever possible, or at least in making it clear precisely
what it is intended to convey by the term.

§7. A further possible source of confusion is the Protestant slogan "justification by faith alone", usually encountered in the form of the Latin tag sola fide, although more accurately in the form per solam fidem. This phrase is frequently interpreted as follows: all that it is necessary for man to do in order to be justified is to believe, and he is thence justified on its account. The obsession with the phrase sola fide actually represents the failure of an earlier generation of Luther scholars to penetrate to the heart of Luther's doctrine of justification. In part, this failure arose through absence of proper critical editions of Luther's works, particularly those of his Wittenberg lectures of 1513-1518. The most significant such source is the 1515-16 Romans lectures, which were only discovered and published in 1908. It is now clear that the distinctive feature of Luther's early teaching on justification is the concept of iustitia Christi aliena, and that Luther himself rarely used the slogan sola fide. Where Luther does refer to the idea of justification by faith, it is clear that he is referring to the general principle that man is incapable of justifying himself, and requires to be given everything involved in his own justification. For Luther and the Reformers in general, "faith" is understood as a divine work within man, rather than as a human response to God. Faith is not a condition for justification which man may fulfil as he pleases, but a free gift which is bestowed by God through the Holy Spirit. The justifying word effects its own reception. The phrase "justification by faith alone" is therefore to be understood as a statement of man's inability to justify himself, rather than a statement of the condition necessary for justification. The phrase "justification per fidem propter Christum", employed in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, is an excellent summary of the general Protestant position: man is justified on the basis of the work of Christ, and receives the benefits of his passion in a passive manner, mediated through faith.

§8. The assumption that the Reformers understood faith as a human work is characteristic of the Caroline Divines of the Restoration period, and John Henry Newman's Lectures on Justification. It is on the basis of their astonishing conclusion that Protestants teach justification by faith, and Roman Catholics teach justification by works (both of which they censor as inadequate) that they deduce the via media to be justification by faith and works. We shall

return to this point later in our discussion.

§9.   With these points in mind, we now turn to consider the specific question of the relationship between Anglican and Roman Catholic teaching on justification. This is, in fact, considerably more difficult than might at first appear to be the case, for a number of reasons, as will become clear during what follows.

See A.E. McGrath, "ARCIC II and Justification. Some Difficulties and Obscurities relating to Anglican and Roman Catholic Teaching on Justification", Anvil (An Anglican Evangelical Journal for Theology and Mission) 1 (1984) pp. 27-42.

I.

SOME DIFFICULTIES AND OBSCURITIES RELATING TO ROMAN CATHOLIC TEACHING ON JUSTIFICATION.

§10.   The definitive Roman Catholic teaching on justification is generally regarded as encapsulated in the decretum de iustificatione, promulgated on 13 January 1547. Nevertheless, this decree has been subject to a variety of interpretations subsequently, and the question of how the decree should be interpreted e mente auctorum is of considerable importance to your discussion. In his magisterial history of the Council of Trent, Hubert Jedin states with characteristic brilliance the fundamental principle which governs Tridentine hermeneutics:

> Since the Council's intention was to draw a line of demarcation
> between Catholic dogma and Protestant teaching - not to settle
> controverted opinions in the Catholic schools of theology - it
> follows that in all doubtful cases, previously professed
> theological opinions may continue to be held.

This opinion is supported by the Tridentine proceedings on justification, as edited by the Goeresian Society, which make it abundantly clear that the Tridentine fathers were not concerned with sorting out the chaos of later mediaeval theology, but with stating the spectum of theologies contained within it in a new form (avoiding scholastic terminology where possible) which enabled it to be distinguished from Protestant heresy.

§11.   If this is the case - and it is near-certain that it is - then the interpretation of Trent cannot be restricted to a mete analysis of what Trent happens to say on justification. Unless the Council of Trent explicitly excludes a particular teaching which had previously been associated with Catholic theologians,

that teaching may continue to be held and regarded as Catholic.
It is for this reason that the <u>canons</u> of the decree are of such
importance, in that they explicitly condemn certain well-defined
positions, whereas the chapters of the decree tend to be phrased
in rather general terms, frequently capable of being interpreted
in a Protestant sense. As such, it is clearly as important to
establish what Trent does <u>not</u> condemn as what it <u>does</u> condemn:
if an opinion, previously held within the Catholic church, is
explicitly condemned by a canon, it may no longer continue to be
held; if an opinion, previously held within the Catholic church,
is <u>not</u> explicitly condemned by any of the canons, it may continue
to be held and regarded as truly catholic. The decree itself
(i.e., the <u>chapters</u>, rather than the <u>canons</u>) is not sufficiently
precise to allow such questions to be determined on its basis, and
was not intended to be treated in such a manner. As the Tridentine
proceedings themselves make clear, the real significance of the
decree lies in its appended canons.

§12. It will therefore be clear that it is of the utmost importance
to establish precisely what opinions on justification were current
within the Catholic schools of theology at the time, in order to
ascertain what teachings may be regarded as Catholic. As every
successive study of the later mediaeval period (which we here take
to mean the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries) demonstrates,
the period witnessed an astonishing diversity in theological
opinions on practically every subject conceivable, and certainly
in the case of the doctrine of justification. In practice, it is
extremely difficult to demonstrate that Trent explicitly condemned
<u>any</u> save the most perverse, so that Trent must be regarded as
legitimating an entire spectrum of theologies of justification,
each with a perfectly viable claim to be considered authentically
Catholic. The following conclusion therefore follows as a matter
of course: *it is meaningless to speak of "<u>the</u> Tridentine doctrine
of justification", in that there is no such single doctrine!* If
Trent is expounded in its proper historical context - and it is
perfectly clear that the Tridentine fathers intended this to be do
done - it is clear that a wide range of "Tridentine doctrine<u>s</u> of
justification" (N.B. the use of the plural) exists. It is therefore
quite improper to isolate one aspect of this spectrum, and present
it as <u>the</u> Tridentine teaching on justification (which is what Küng

appears to have done.

The mediaeval understandings of how man is justified coram Deo are analysed at some length in Volume I of our Iustitia Dei. For an indication of the diversity involved, see A.E. McGrath, "The Anti-Pelagian Structure of 'Nominalist' Doctrines of Justification", Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses 57 (1981) pp. 107-119; idem., "Augustinianism? A Critical Assessment of the so-called "Mediaeval Augustinian Tradition" on Justification", Augustiniana 31 (1981) pp. 247-267.

§13. It will therefore be clear that the essential question which you are faced with is the following: do "Anglican" theologies of justification fall within this spectrum of theologies which Trent legitimates? In practice, it is almost certain that this is the case. Two difficulties remain, however. The first relates to determining what features, if any, are characteristic of "Anglican" doctrines of justification. We shall consider this point shortly. The second relates to the fact that the Council of Trent did not end discussion on the question of how man is justified coram Deo within the Roman Catholic church. Further debate continued into the eighteenth century, and occasioned further magisterial decisions. It is with one of these that a further difficulty arises, and to which we now turn.

§14. On 8 September 1713, Clement XI condemned 101 propositions from the works of the French Jansenist Pasquier Quesnel in the papal constitution Unigenitus. This constitution was confirmed by Clement in the bull Pastoralis Officii (28 August 1718), and by Benedict XIV in the encyclical Ex omnibus orbis regionibus (16 October 1756). Many of the propositions censured correspond to Evangelical Anglican teachings on justification, while most of them appear to be quite inoffensive to Protestants in general. The real difficulty associated with Unigenitus is its status: as Vatican I defined papal infallibility in terms of the Pope pronouncing ex cathedra (i.e., "when discharging the duty of the office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal church"), it would appear that the constitution is endowed with a retrospective infallibility. If this is the case, the question of the proper interpretation of the propositions condemned by the constitution becomes acutely pressing for you, as you must demonstrate that the condemned propositions are not heretical in the sense in which they are used by Evangelical Anglicans. Unlike Trent, which is

open to a considerable degree of latitude in its interpretation, Unigenitus is extremely precise in its formulations. If the constitution is <u>not</u> infallible, you are under an obligation to clarify its status, and convince sceptics that the document is <u>not</u> regarded as infallible by the <u>magisterium</u>. If you are unable to resolve this matter, your final conclusions will have relatively little significance. It is one of the few weaknesses of <u>Justification by Faith</u>, that it glosses over <u>Unigenitus</u> with a disquieting ease (see §67 therein). To reiterate this point: <u>Unigenitus</u> is without doubt the most significant recent pronouncement of the <u>magisterium</u> relating to justification, and appears to fall under the aegis of infallibility, as defined by Vatican I. The question of both its <u>status</u> and <u>content</u> must therefore be resolved before any useful dialogue may begin.

Text of <u>Unigenitus</u> in Denzinger, <u>Enchiridion Symbolorum</u>, D. 1351-1451. For literature, see A. Schill, <u>Die Constitution Unigenitus</u> (Freiburg, 1876); V. Thuillier, <u>Fragment de l'histoire de la constitution Unigenitus</u> (Paris, 1901); J.F. Thomas, <u>La querelle de l'Unigenitus</u> (Paris, 1950). For the text of Vatican I's statement on infallibility, see D. 1839 "Romanum pontificem, cum ex cathedra loquitur, id est, cum omnium Christianorum pastoris et doctoris munere fungens pro suprema sua Apostolica auctoritate doctrinam de fide vel moribus ab universa Ecclesia tenendam definit, per assistentiam divinam ipsi in beato Petro promissam, ea infallibilitate pollere, qua divinus Redemptor Ecclesiam suam in definienda doctrina de fide vel moribus instructam esse voluit; ideoque eiusmodi Romani Pontificis definitiones ex sese, non ex consensu Ecclesiae, irreformabiles esse." It is beyond dispute that <u>Unigenitus</u> falls under this category. It used to be said that no Pope had ever used this authority, so that <u>ex cathedra</u> pronouncements did not actually exist. However, <u>Ineffabilis Deus</u> appears to have discredited this. The concept of retrospective infallibility (defined in 1870) is certainly invoked in the case of <u>Ineffabilis Deus</u> (1854), and certainly seems to be implicated in <u>Unigenitus</u>. It is almost certainly beyond the competence of ARCIC II to resolve the question of the status of <u>Unigenitus</u>, and you should seek clarification on this matter from the appropriate authorities. This suggests, incidentally, that the question of authority cannot be excluded from your discussion of justification!

§15. To conclude these brief comments on Roman Catholic teaching on justification: it is almost certain that Trent legitimates a broad spectrum of theologies of justification, which encompasses most Anglican positions. Nevertheless, Trent is not the only magisterial pronouncement of relevance to your discussions, nor does it appear to be the most important. The <u>status</u> and <u>interpretation</u> of <u>Unigenitus</u> must be established before your discussions can be of any significance, and this clarification must be <u>authoritative</u>, and not merely the opinions of those present at ARCIC II.

II.

SOME DIFFICULTIES AND OBSCURITIES RELATING
TO ANGLICAN TEACHING ON JUSTIFICATION.

§16. The idea that Anglicanism possesses a via media doctrine of
justification is now generally regarded as a delightful yet untenable
myth. If the notion of a via media can be held in any sense, it is
merely to the effect that the tension between Evangelical and
Anglo-Catholic within the Anglican church is such that a broad
spectrum of theologies of justification exists within a single
church, so that the Anglican church, but not its individual members,
may be said to possess a via media doctrine of justification. On
this, as on so many other matters, Anglicans exhibit considerable
theological incoherence. It is no more and no less meaningful to
speak of a Anglican via media doctrine of justification than it is
to speak of an Anglican via media doctrine of the sacraments.

§17. John Henry Newman's attempt to "build up a system of divinity
out of the Anglican divines", of which his Lectures on Justification
are an excellent example, is based on the most questionable of
historical presuppositions. The most coherent period of Anglican
theology is generally regarded as being the Caroline divinity of
the seventeenth century. However, when the teachings of the Caroline
divines on justification are analysed, it is clear that they fall
into two quite distinct groups: those who wrote before the Civil
War, and those who wrote after the Restoration. The former group
reproduced the essential features of Protestant doctrines of
justification, although many adopted a theology of grace less severe
than that of the Reformed church; the latter group adopted an
essentially eclectic doctrine of justification, which combined
certain features of a misunderstood Protestantism with those of
an equally misunderstood Roman Catholicism. It must be emphasised
that there is no coherent Anglican understanding of justification
evident over the period 1570-1700. As such, it is extremely
difficult to define what characteristics are typical of Anglican
doctrines of justification, given their diversity.

On this, see A.E. McGrath, "The Emergence of the Anglican Tradition on Just-
ification 1600-1700", Churchman 98 (1984) pp. 28-43; idem., "Some Difficulties
and Obscurities relating to Anglican and Roman Catholic Teaching on Justific-
ation", Anvil 1 (1984) pp. 27-42.

§18. The low status accorded to the confessional material of the Church of England suggests that there is no generally-accepted arbiter concerning whether a particular doctrine of justification is authentically Anglican. As such, one of the most pressing difficulties relating to your discussion will be the obscurity surrounding the theological content of the epithet "Anglican" in this context. The criteria advanced by Evangelical and Anglo-Catholic in this respect are likely to be substantially difficult, if each is to be faithful to his respective tradition. The following observations may be of assistance to you.

§19. Article XI, which deals with the question of the justification of man coram Deo, refers to the "Homily of Justification" for further discussion. This homily is actually the Homily of the Salvation of Mankind, which must be regarded as an essential aspect of the Articles' teaching on justification. The contents of this Homily unquestionably reflect the Lutheranism of Philip Melanchthon, as reflected in the Loci Communes. This being the case - i.e., that Cranmer intended Anglican understandings of justification to be modelled on the moderate Philippist teaching - you may use the material of the U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue Group from §94-§164 without the need for extensive modification to the Lutheran position.

§20. It is advisable to avoid attempting to define "Anglicanism" with reference to what leading Anglican theologians have taught on the question of justification, for the simple reason that this definition would rest upon highly questionably historico-theological assumptions, which would be challenged by your critics, and thus unnecessarily undermine the status of your discussions. This point is particularly forceful in connection with the radical discontinuity in Anglican teaching on justification associated with the period immediately before and after the Commonwealth, but can also be illustrated with reference to the moralist latitudin-arianism of the eighteenth century when compared with the "optimism of grace" associated with the Evangelical Awakening of the same period, to give but one example.

§21. If you adopt a pragmatic or empirical approach to establishing "Anglican" teaching on justification - i.e., by establishing the positions of those Anglicans present at ARCIC II - you will encounter the same difficulty which led to the failure of Ratisbon (1541).

Although individual theologians from the Lutheran and Roman Catholic churches were able to reach agreement upon justification, this agreement is generally regarded as a mere concordia palliata (to use Contarini's phrase). Two factors were of particular significance in effecting this negative evaluation at Rome and at Wittenberg. First, it was evident that the agreed statement on justification was quite superficial, involving a considerable degree of latitude in relation to crucial terms such as "justification". One modern Roman Catholic scholar rightly refers to the agreement as a "scissors and paste job". This criticism will not apply to you, as there is every reason to expect that you will be basing your discussions upon theological scholarship and insight comparable to that characteristic of the outstanding U.S. Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue Group statement. The second criticism is the more significant, and will inevitably affect you. The delegates at Ratisbon were not regarded as representative by their respective churches. As Hubert Jedin so shrewdly observed, the institutional differences between the two churches far outweighed the individual agreement which it was possible to reach between some of their members. As in all your discussions, the question of the representative character of the constituent members of ARCIC II will loom large over any agreement which you may reach. The doctrine of justification is particularly sensitive in this respect, as the following will make clear.

§22. As we have pointed out, neither Anglicanism nor Roman Catholicism can be said to define one single doctrine of justification which is binding upon, or universally recognised by, their members. Both Trent and the ill-defined Anglican theological tradition legitimate a range of theologies of justification, thus permitting a considerable degree of variation in emphasis and substance within each church. It is perfectly clear that these ranges or spectra overlap, so that there is an area within each range which is acceptable to some members of both churches. It will also be clear that the ranges are not coterminous. The extent and nature of any agreement which you will be able to reach will therefore inevitably be dependent upon the persons present at your consultation, viewed in relation to their own positions within these theological spectra, and the extent to which they are prepared to permit variations in emphasis or in

substance. This conclusion does not necessarily apply to any
other discussions which you may be engaged in, but is certainly
valid in the specific case of justification (see §§10-12).

§23. The difficulties noted above can, however, be circumvented
without undue difficulty, on account of developments within Roman
Catholicism during recent decades. As Article VI emphasises, the
final court of appeal for matters of doctrine must be regarded as
scripture itself. This point, which has the salutary effect of
permitting any of the Articles' teaching to be called into question
if it cannot be shown that it is consonant with, or a necessary
consequence of, scripture, permits agreement upon justification to
be reached on the basis of a combined hermeneutical approach to
passages which relate to justification, good works, etc.. The
increasing emphasis which is being placed upon the biblical material
within Roman Catholic circles within recent decades, linked with a
new emphasis upon the proper contextualisation of biblical passages,
has meant that considerable agreement is now possible on the proper
interpretation of those biblical passages which lay at the heart
of the debates on justification during the sixteenth century. As
the U.S. Lutheran - Roman Catholic Dialogue Group final report
indicates (§§122-149), a re-examination of the controversies and
the terminology of the Reformation period in the light of the
biblical evidence allows a considerable degree of convergence
to be achieved between Protestant and Roman Catholic. This point
may also be illustrated with reference to Küng's Justification,
particularly the appended essay on "Justification and Sanctification
according to the New Testament".

Text of Article VI (1563; Article V, 1552, with omissions): "Scriptura sacra
continet omnia, quae sunt ad salutem necessaria, ita ut quicquid in ea nec
legitur, neque inde probari potest, non sit a quoquam exigendum, ut tanquam
Articulus fidei credatur aut ad necessitatem salutis requiri putetur."

§24. This approach has the following to commend it:
1. It allows the hopelessly clumsy modus loquendi theologicus of
Protestant scholasticism and the mediaeval schools to be circum-
vented. This modus loquendi should be regarded as outmoded, rather
than incorrect.
2.   There is every possibility that agreement may be reached on
the meaning of terms such as "justification" and "faith" as they
occur within the New Testament, even though these terms are used in
a more precise sense within dogmatic works. As the New Testament

is regarded as authoritative by both Anglicans and Roman Catholics
(although it must be granted that there will be differing views
upon the extent and nature of that authority among your members),
agreement upon the general thrust of the New Testament's teaching(s)
on justification will inevitably imply a comparable agreement upon
the doctrine of justification itself.

3. An analysis of previous attempts to reach such agreement
on justification suggests that this approach has produced the most
enduring results.

Other, more theological, considerations ought also to be noted, including:
4. The tendency, from the time of Augustine to the opening of the twelfth
century, to use commentaries upon the Pauline epistles as vehicles for positive
theological speculation, with the consequence that the Pauline material which
served as a basis for this speculation came to exert a decisive influence over
its content.
5. The theological method employed within the theological renaissance of
the twelfth century, and later developed within the early Dominican and
Franciscan schools, with their tendency to regard sacra doctrina as theologia,
quae in scriptura traditur (St. Thomas, In librum Boethii de Trinitate 5,4).
6. The importance of biblical hermeneutic in relation to the Reformation,
in that Luther's theological breakthough appears to be linked to a new
understanding of biblical hermeneutic, distinct from the Quadriga - see G.
Ebeling, "Die Anfänge von Luthers Hermeneutik", Zeitschrift für Theologie und
Kirche 48 (1951) pp. 172-230.

§25. What you can hope to achieve through this procedure is the
delightful realisation that Anglican and Roman Catholic are far
closer in their teaching on the main lines of the doctrine of
justification than many realise to be the case. Your task, in
fact, is one of uncovering, rather than establishing, such
agreement. This, of course, has already been done by the U.S.
Lutheran-Roman Catholic Dialogue Group, whose conclusions mark a
decisive ecumenical landmark in this respect. You should therefore
be able to reach agreement on every one of the twelve elements of
material convergence noted in that report (see § 156 therein),
and possibly others as well. You are covering well-trodden ground,
and all the hard work has already been done for you. You can,
however, improve upon Justification by Faith in a number of ways.
1. By attempting to define those areas of the doctrine where
material convergence is not possible. For example, the question
of the scope of justification immediately raises the question of
the Immaculate Conception, and thence of Mariology in general, on
which you will find agreement difficult. It would be valuable to
learn of those areas in which work has still to be done, or on

which the possibility of agreement appears remote.

2.   By considering questions which Justification by Faith does
not deal with adequately. The most obvious of these concerns
Unigenitus, as noted above.

3.   By attempting to identify differences in emphasis between
Anglican and Roman Catholic teaching on justification.

4.   By considering the question of whether Anglicans tend towards
"semi-Pelagianism" in their teaching on justification. This charge
is so frequently pressed against many Anglicans that it would seem
appropriate to consider it, and hopefully to refute it.

CONCLUSIONS

1.   You should use the U.S. Lutheran - Roman Catholic Dialogue
Group's report Justification by Faith as the basis for your
discussion, and avoid using any other work, unless it has been
totally vindicated as reliable by modern (i.e., post-1950)
scholarship.

2.   You should be able to reach agreement upon at least twelve
points of significance, as indicated in §156 of Justification by
Faith. It is therefore recommended that you base your initial
discussions upon these twelve points.

3.   You should discuss, and attempt to clarify, the status of
Unigenitus.

4.   You should avoid any attempt to define "Anglicanism" which
makes a subsequent agreement vulnerable to criticism on the basis
of its historical presuppositions. This attempt is quite
unnecessary.

5.   You are strongly recommended to by-pass the thought-world of
the mediaeval and Reformation periods, and proceed directly to
a sustained analysis of the New Testament material.

It will be evident that the desire to produce a brief paper has led to enormous
compression of argument, both in relation to the theological and historical
aspects of the questions dealt with. The appended personal bibliography indicates
the amount of published work which underlies these comments. If required to
justify or amplify anything within this paper, I should be pleased to do so.

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PUBLISHED WORKS RELATING TO THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION.
(Those marked with an asterisk (*) are of particular relevance to your
discussions).

BOOKS

Iustitia Dei. A History of the Christian Doctrine of Justification.
3 volumes. To be published by James Clarke, Cambridge. Deals with
the historical development of the doctrine within the western
theological tradition from the earliest of times to c. 1950.

Luther between Scholasticism and Reformation. The Development of
Luther's Doctrine of Justification 1509-1519. (Basil Blackwell, Oxford)
This work, which is nearly completed, deals with the relation of
Luther to late mediaeval thought, and is particularly concerned
with the nature of Luther's theological breakthrough over the years
1514-1519.

ARTICLES.

1. Articles dealing with the historical development of the doctrine.

"The Anti-Pelagian Structure of 'Nominalist' Doctrines of Justification",
Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses 57, 1981, pp. 107-119.

"Rectitude. The Moral Foundation of Anselm of Canterbury's
Soteriology", Downside Review 99, 1981, pp. 204-213.

*"Augustinianism? A Critical Assessment of the So-called "Mediaeval
Augustinian Tradition" on Justification", Augustiniana 31, 1981,
pp. 247-267.

"Justification: Barth, Trent and Küng", Scottish Journal of
Theology 34, 1981, pp. 517-529.

"Humanist Elements in the Early Reformed Doctrine of Justification",
Archiv für Reformationsgeschichte 73, 1982, pp. 5-20.

*"Forerunners of the Reformation? A Critical Examination of the
Evidence for Precursors of the Reformation Doctrines of Justification",
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"'The Righteousness of God' from Augustine to Luther", Studia
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*"John Henry Newman's Lectures on Justification. The High Church Misrepresentation of Luther, Churchman 97, 1983, pp. 112-122.

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*"The Emergence of the Anglican Tradition on Justification 1600-1700", Churchman 98, 1984, pp. 28-43.

*"ARCIC II and Justification. Some Difficulties and Obscurities Relating to Anglican and Roman Catholic Teaching on Justification", Anvil 1, 1984, pp. 27-42.

"Justification in Earlier Evangelicalism", Churchman 98, 1984, forthcoming.

"The Influence of Aristotelian Physics upon St. Thomas Aquinas' Discussion of the Processus Iustificationis", Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale 51, 1984, forthcoming.

"Some Observations Concerning the Soteriology of the Schola Moderna", Recherches de Théologie Ancienne et Médiévale 51, 1984, forthcoming.

2. Articles dealing with the theological significance of the doctrine.

"Justice and Justification. Semantic and Juristic Aspects of the Christian Doctrine of Justification", Scottish Journal of Theology 35, 1982, pp. 403-418.

"Karl Barth and the Articulus Iustificationis. The Significance of His Critique of Ernst Wolf within the Context of his Theological Method", Theologische Zeitschrift 39, 1983, pp. 349-361.

"Homo Iustificandus Fide. Rechtfertigung, Verkündigung und Anthropologie", Kerygma und Dogma 29, 1983, pp. 323-331.

"Justification and Christology. The Axiomatic Correlation between the Historical Jesus and the Proclaimed Christ", The Theological Review 1, 1984, forthcoming.

"Karl Barth als Aufklärer? Der Zusammenhang seiner Lehre vom Werke Christi mit der Erwählungslehre", Kerygma und Dogma 30, 1984, forthcoming.

*"Der Articulus Iustificationis als axiomatischer Grundsatz des christlichen Glaubens", Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche

81, 1984, forthcoming.

"Christologie und Soteriologie. Eine Entgegnung an Wolfhart Pannenbergs Kritik des soteriologischen Ansatzes in der Christologie", Theologische Zeitschrift 42, 1986, forthcoming.