



Charlottesville Jan 26<sup>th</sup> 1858

My Dear Sir

It is only because of absence & sickness that I have delayed complying with your request, communicated a month since by \_\_\_\_\_ that I should write to you. I should be sincerely glad if anything I could say, might by the blessing of God, at all promote your spiritual good. Be decided, resolved, you desire to be a Christian, gather up all the energies of your soul, ask God to keep you, and deliberately, resolutely determine, that by his grace a Christian you will be, that, whether you have any "sense of being forgiven" or not, you will always continue to seek the Lord, perseveringly to pray for mercy. Remember how our Saviour's "spoke a parable to this end, that men ought always to pray & not to faint, But they do not suppose, that conversion can of necessity, only come as the result of a long series of devotional exercises. Reading the scriptures, & prayer are inestimably useful, but they are means to an end, why not bring the matter to a point at once? What does the Gospel teach you, and offer you? Briefly this, you are a sinner, you know it is true, and it is a part of your sinfulness & an aggravation of your guilt, that the consciousness of having grievously



Unnied against God, does not impress you more deeply, does not overwhelm you with sorrow. But although feeling it, far less, than you ought, you know you are a guilty sinner, As such you are condemned, not an accused person awaiting trial, but already condemned, awaiting punishment, you deserve to perish, and the wrath of God abideth on you, you must perish, for Gods holiness requires it.

How can such a person be relieved from the penalty of sin, and delivered from its power? How can one, condemned, & depraived be taken into the favor of God, and dealt with as his dear child? Infinite wisdom, and infinite love, have ~~devised~~, devised, and executed a plan by which this may be accomplished. We cannot expect fully to comprehend this plan in all its aspects & relations, for it has infinite elements, which of necessity transcend our powers. But we can see something of its beneficial working. The atoning death of our Saviour exhibits Gods displeasure against transgression - as forcibly as our eternal destruction could do, and at the same time exhibits his compassion toward the transgressor. It condemns sin, and at the same, proposes to save the sinner. It makes it just, that God should justify the sinner, who seeks it on this ground. Reflect upon this treat Romans III 21-6



And what is meant by justify, not to make  
just, that is the work of sanctification, distinct,  
tho' not separate from being justified, and a  
gradual life long process. But to justify in  
the technical sense of the Apostle, is to treat  
as if we were just. How would God deal  
with you, if you were a just, a holy being?  
He would take you to his bosom, would  
smile upon you as his dear Child - would  
guide you through life - & then receive you to  
the better life of heaven. Now all this he offers  
to do for you, though not holy, for Jesus' sake,  
to deal with you as if you were just, though  
you are not. But is that right? It is the very  
object of Christ's atoning death to make it right  
(Rom III 26) & whether we can fully understand  
it, or not, God's word declares that thus it is  
right, and that while he does not propose to  
treat guilty men, universally, as if they were  
just, he does offer thus to deal with all ~~men~~  
those, who believe in Jesus, who ask to be justified  
on the ground of what Jesus has done, and suffered  
for us, confessing, that they deserve to perish, but  
asking, that they may be treated as if just, on this  
ground alone. Now this justification is offered  
as immediate & complete. Asking it for  
Jesus' sake, we are accepted into God's favour,  
and made heirs of everlasting life. But then  
it might be done with an ignorant, and



vicious child adopted by a King, and  
trained for the throne) we are put under  
the discipline of Gods spirit, and gradually  
prepared for that everlasting inheritance,  
the title to which is conferred as a gift,  
at once, & from the beginning, through the  
merits of Christ. And here again is seen  
the peculiar excellence of the atonement,  
not ~~only~~ merely because only thus could  
the spirit's influences be granted at all,  
but because the dying love of our Saviour  
furnishes the mightiest of all motives  
to a holy life, that we might please  
him, who pleased not himself, that  
we might live for him, who died for us.  
Now then embracing your guilt, and  
determining by Gods gracious help to  
forsake your evil ways, and be the Lords  
now, cast yourself just as you are, upon  
the merits of the saviour - ask for that for his  
sake God would justify you, that he would  
mercifully take you now to be his child,  
and graciously keep you to live, always  
hereafter, and more, and more continually  
as his child ought to live, ask him, that  
he would according to the offer of his  
word, accept you as "his son, his servant  
bought with blood"



Can it be that he will do this? Do you  
suppose he may? He says that he will  
"He that believeth on the son, hath everlasting  
life" "Being justified freely by his grace  
through the redemption, that is in Christ Jesus"  
"Them that counsel to me, I will <sup>in</sup> no wise  
cast out" Is it presumption to hope, that  
God will keep his word?

It is midnight, and I cannot write more,  
I have tried to give you, if possible, a  
somewhat clearer conception of that  
blessed provision, on which rest all my  
own hopes of salvation. May I a  
guilty, helpless sinner, be allowed to  
hope, that on this ground I shall be saved,  
may not you? Can God's promise be relied on?  
Read again my dear Sir, what I  
have written & try now, at once, just as  
you are, to commit yourself to Christ  
for life forever. And the Lord keep you  
to live with a strong & ever growing confidence  
in Him. as you "Love & Righteousness, your  
Saviour & your all.

Believe me

your sincere friend  
John A. Broadus